

Simcoe Environmental Technology

Page 8 - October 21, 2005 - THE HERALD Weekend Edition, Alliston, Ontario

Local students help preserve Beeton Creek from erosion



By R.J. Welch

Banting Memorial High School (BMHS) students traded in their textbooks for hip-waders last Thursday along the bank of the Beeton Creek. With a \$149,400 grant, the New Tecumseth Streams Committee (NTSC) was able to hire additional staff as well as Brian Morrison, an aquatic biologist, to aid in the naturalization of the creek banks.

Twenty-eight students from BMHS, with teacher coordinators Andy Owens and Geoff Meadly, all got down in the mud as part of the stream bank rehabilitation project. Some of the students even had to put on hip-waders and get right into the creek. For five hours, the students worked in the rain and mud doing their part to help the environment.

The students formed teams and took up different tasks along the south and north banks of the creek. Old Christmas trees were strapped along the bank with steel cable ties as well as protective, biodegradable sheets, to protect from

erosion and sediment buildup. Some teams spent their time moving trees, and staking the sheets to the bank.

The Beeton Creek, in particular at Northwood Park, was chosen for this project because it runs through well populated areas and has always been, as Morrison put it, "...a relatively destructive creek with an unstable channel." The creek used to have nearly vertical sides, and during the spring thaw and rain, the creek was very dangerous, especially where it ran beside the children's playground at Northwood.

The sides of the banks were graded to be more gently sloped, using heavy machinery rented with the grant money, and the NTSC hopes that within a year they will be as green, beautiful and safe as the rest of the park.

Roger Caron, a local man with great interest in the environment, designed

and made the equipment used for this project. Even French foreign exchange student Lara Brand felt the importance of the project and was happy to help however she could. Brand commented that she didn't understand how so few students could have any interest in taking care of their local environment.

Within the next year, the NTSC plans to plant willow stakes and dogwoods along the banks of the Beeton Creek. Predrazzi told the students if they came back in another year, they wouldn't recognize the muddy, dangerous creek that some of them grew up playing beside.

The NTSC has used this process on stream banks in the past with great success, and, once done with Northwood Park, have further plans for the creek in other places. The Banting students were a few of many who helped out with the stream within the past week.

Wet work— Silvia Predrazzi, New Tecumseth Streams Committee member, and Jessy Peebles from Banting Memorial High School, work in Beeton Creek in hopes of preventing erosion. - R. J. Welch photo

Images taken at Beeton Creek workday - Thursday October 13, 2005. Students and teachers from Banting Memorial High School (BMHS), workers from Honda Environmental Department and Simcoe Environmental Technology assisted with the stream bank rehabilitation project. Soil Spike model SSSE-10 was used to anchor the spruce trees donated by Somerville Nurseries, Alliston, ON. Many thanks to Silvia Predrazzi from New Tecumseth Streams Committee for organizing the workday and members from Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (Brian Morrison - Biologist and Nicole Gibbson - BMHS Co-op student) for project implementation. Photos provided by Andy Owen - BMHS. Special mention goes to Remington Lacroix for volunteering and taking a dive in the creek for the Team. ☺



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