

## **Navan Community Enhancement**

### *Natural Habitat and Nature Trails*

#### **Project Background**

In 2009, the Navan Community contacted South Nation Conservation (SNC) to explore the possibility of enhancing their community with nature trails and enhanced natural habitat. The site proposed to the Navan Community Association and Councilor Stephen Blais' office for the enhancement was at 999 Smith Road, Navan.

SNC secured funding in 2014 from Ontario Power Generation under their 'Regional Biodiversity Funding Program' and funding in 2016 from the City of Ottawa under the 'Water Environment Strategy' to complete the habitat enhancement project in Navan on property owned by the City of Ottawa.

At the request of the Community, the City of Ottawa committed funding in 2017 to create community nature trails at the same site in celebration of Canada's 150 anniversary.

#### **Location**

The proposed project site, located at 999 Smith Road, Navan, is owned by the City of Ottawa and is designated as park land (see Figure 1). The property is east of the Mer Bleue Bog and bordered to the south by the existing Prescott-Russell Recreational Trail.

The property is within the floodplain of McKinnon's Creek and therefore is unlikely to experience any future development or alterations. It is an ideal site for a habitat enhancement project as the area is naturally wet and is classified as a wetland. The community will be able to enjoy the increased biodiversity from the existing Prescott-Russell Recreational Trail and from the proposed new trail system throughout the project site.



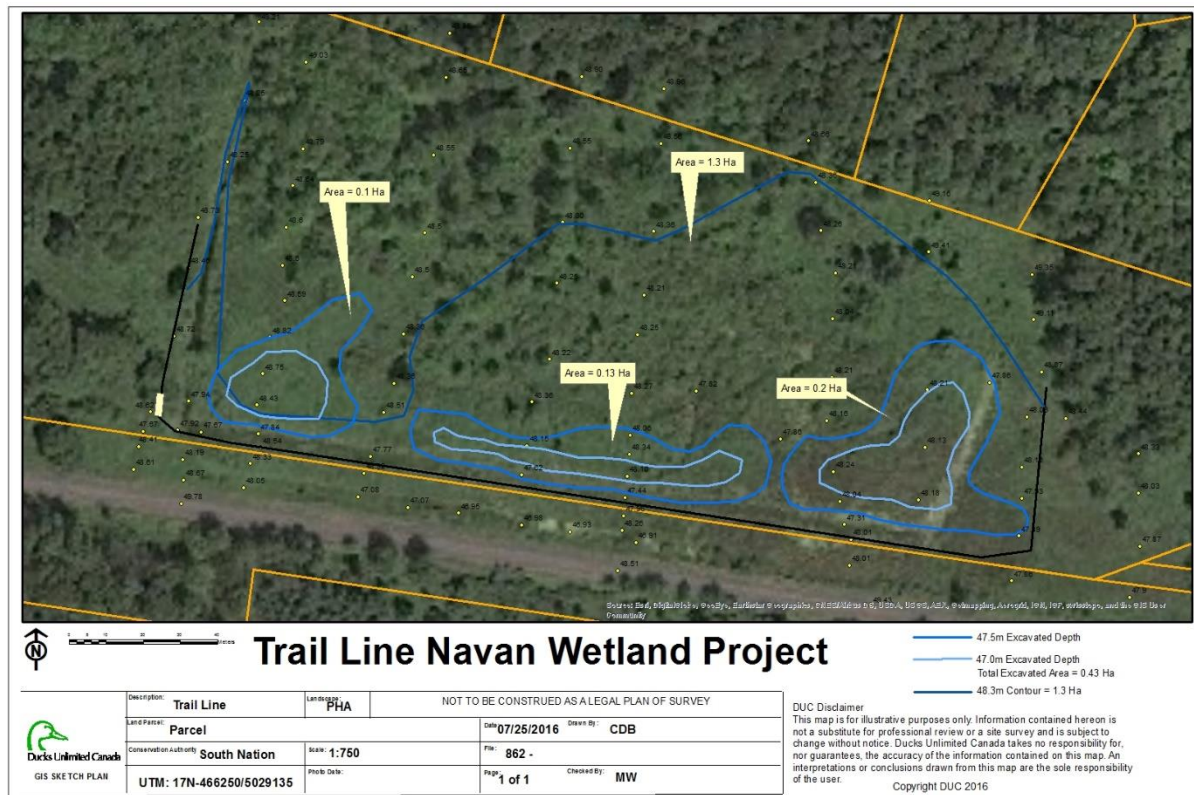
**Figure 1** – The *Navan Community Enhancement – Natural Habitat and Nature Trails* project site at 999 Smith Road, Navan.

## Proposed Details

### *Habitat Enhancement*

The site at 999 Smith Road, Navan was once a thriving wetland habitat with many different types of plants and animals; however, it experienced alterations that no longer made the habitat appealing to wildlife. The local Community Association, with support of their councilor's office, identified this City-owned site as a priority area for enhancement.

This project involves habitat enhancement through native wetland vegetation plantings and the creation of small ponds, which will provide ideal habitat for amphibians (e.g. frogs) and waterfowl (e.g. ducks). SNC does not introduce animals into habitat. Once the conditions are favorable and plant material is present, animals, such as turtles, will naturally find a home here. Ducks Unlimited Canada were retained to prepare a site plan for the enhancement project (see Figure 2). The shallow ponds will range from 0.2 to 1.2 meters deep to encourage diversity of wetland vegetation and overall biodiversity. The excavated soil will remain on-site and will be graded and seeded with a native seed mixture. The final location and quantity of ponds is to be determined and will be finalized based on the input from the Navan Community.



**Figure 2** – Habitat enhancement plan prepared by Ducks Unlimited Canada for the Navan Community Enhancement project located at 999 Smith Road, Navan.

### Community Nature Trails

Community nature trails have many benefits including: connecting a community to nature right in their own backyard, preserving green space, and providing opportunities for physical activity and environmental education.

The proposed community nature trails will consist of a pathway and boardwalk throughout the enhanced wildlife habitat at 999 Smith Road, Navan. The nature trails will allow visitors to explore the enhanced ecosystem. The nature trail design will be prepared in consultation with the Navan Community.

Additional features of the pathway, as proposed by the Navan Community Association, may be added to the trail system in the future: plaques to commemorate the past and present Prime Ministers of Canada, benches to recognize the founding families of Navan, and signage to highlight interesting natural features (e.g. plants, insects, wildlife) along the path.

In 2011, SNC partnered with the Findlay Creek Community to build a 500 m boardwalk and install interpretive signage at the Leitrim Wetland in Ottawa South. The Community greatly

appreciates the recreational opportunity to enjoy their local environment. No parking is available at this site; the nature path was constructed for the benefit of the local community.

### Project Outreach and Timeline

June 9, 2016: SNC hosted a public meet and greet at the Navan Memorial Centre and Arena. The Navan Community was notified of this event via the Navan Nugget. Adjacent landowners to the project site were contacted directly.

November 9, 2016: A letter was circulated to the Navan Community with an update on the project proposal.

December, 2016: Site preparations began in December 2016 once the adjacent landowners were consulted on-site. Select obstructions were removed at the Birchtree Crescent easement to access the habitat enhancement site and some sediment and erosion control tools were put into place. The potential pond sites were assessed and preliminary site preparations took place. Currently, pond excavation has not occurred and site plans are being finalized in consultation with the Navan Community.

December 19, 2016: SNC attended the Navan Community Association meeting to answer any questions regarding the proposed project.

April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017: A public meeting was held at the Navan Memorial Centre and Arena to update the community on the project proposal and to allow the community to provide SNC with input.

### Next step

A second public meeting will be held on June 7, 2017 to finalize the project details with the Navan Community. Should the Community be in favor of the project as proposed, the habitat enhancement and community nature trails will be completed by the end of 2017.