

OPG, SNC using three-year partnership to save habitats

FINCH – A three-year partnership with Ontario Power Generation (OPG) will allow South Nation Conservation (SNC) to expand programs that restore and create habitat for plants and animals in woodlands, grasslands, and wetlands.

“SNC is pleased to be working with OPG, to support conservation initiatives in the communities [that] we operate,” Karen Paquette, project lead, said.

Throughout the next three years, some of the initiatives in the woodland component of the partnership are to include expanding the conservation authority’s woodlot advisory services across the South Nation jurisdiction and planting 100,000 trees.

More woodlot site visits mean more opportunities to provide

valuable information to landowners on various topics, such as biodiversity, interior forest value, tree planting, and species at risk, as well as invasive species.

Through OPG’s support, and by working with private landowners, more than 150 acres of grassland habitat is to be restored, creating important habitat for species such as the Eastern Meadowlark, Loggerhead Shrike, and Bobolink, as well as pollinators.

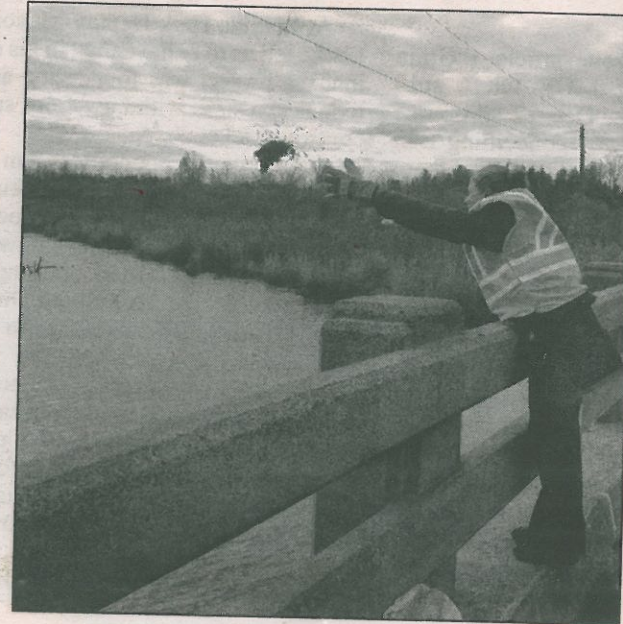
The partnership will also allow SNC to enhance wetland habitat by establishing riparian zones, planting wetland plant species, and increasing spawning opportunities for fish.

Increased monitoring of wetland amphibians and reptiles will complement the creation of turtle

nesting sites for the eight native turtle species, seven of which are at risk in Ontario.

“Another interesting strategy includes the installation of wood duck nest boxes that will make wetlands more welcoming for wood ducks,” Paquette said. “And wild rice will be sown throughout the watershed, to increase cultural values and food sources for wildlife.”

Community outreach and education are crucial components of the partnership in spreading the message for a healthy watershed. Youth presentations that include curriculum-linked hands-on lessons about woodlands, grasslands, and wetlands will help connect youth to the habitats found in their backyard.



The Ontario Power Generation (OPG) has entered into a three-year partnership with South Nation Conservation to expand programs that restore and create habitat for plants and animals. Lindsay Parks, OPG’s associate environmental advisor, is pictured sowing wild rice at Hosaic Creek.

Winchester Press, Rural Roots - Wed. October 29, 2014