

**RES.#R13/17 -****2018 WATERSHED AND WATERFRONT EVENTS**

A summary of 2018 signature watershed and waterfront events.

Moved by: Andrew Vrana  
Seconded by: Margaret Broadbent

**THAT the report on 2018 watershed and waterfront events be received;**

**AND FURTHER THAT Regional Watershed Alliance members engage in watershed and waterfront events through collaboration, participation, volunteer and fundraising opportunities.**

**BACKGROUND**

TRCA hosts and delivers a wide range of public engagement programs and events each year. These events may range from conservation area family friendly events such as maple syrup festival at Kortright, to educational and stewardship workshops, community/business tree plantings and river clean up events, nature hikes, and professional education/ training seminars etc. TRCA staff also help support municipal events in our jurisdiction such as Region of Peel Water Festival. Information on these events are provided through specific invites and general posting on via TRCA's Events Calendar <https://trca.ca/events-calendar/>

For many years TRCA has also delivered large scale signature watershed and waterfront events across its jurisdiction to engage watershed residents, build public awareness, and to support the implementation of watershed priorities. The 2017 Community Engagement Strategy validated need for these watershed-based engagement activities and recommended the development of new large-scale public events to enhance public awareness and appreciation of our rivers and greenspace.

Some of TRCA's long standing watershed events have grown into more popular annual events, such as Paddle The Don which will be celebrating its twenty fifth anniversary this year. Paddle The Don was initially started by the Don Watershed Regeneration Council as a way to celebrate the Don by drawing attention to ongoing efforts to help improve the health of the Don River watershed. It has since become a fundraiser and to date has helped to raise over \$600,000 that goes towards ongoing restoration, stewardship programs and community engagement initiatives within the Don River watershed.

The following summary provides a snapshot of TRCA's signature watershed and waterfront events for 2018. These are events that TRCA hosts, often in collaboration with our partner municipalities and ENGO's and other agencies. Some of these events have a fundraising component and are hosted in partnership with The Living City Foundation.

There are various opportunities for Regional Watershed Alliance members to get involved. For example, members can engage with event planning or day-of volunteering, collaborate with TRCA on an event as a partner, or help with event promotion and seeking out sponsorship opportunities.

**WATERSHED SIGNATURE EVENTS SUMMARY****DON RIVER WATERSHED EVENTS****Manulife Paddle the Don**

Manulife Paddle the Don is one of TRCA's long running signature event. It represents a novel way for people to connect with the Don River watershed, by experiencing the river from a completely different vantage — from the water itself. Participants are provided an opportunity to paddle down the Don River from E.T. Seton Park to the Keating Channel in Lake Ontario. Through a partnership with Manulife, this event not only provides participants with a connection to the river, but also raises significant funds that go directly back into environmental initiatives in the watershed.

*Date:* Sunday, May 6, 2018

*Location:* Don River (E.T. Seton Park to Corktown Common), Toronto, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 1000

### **Mill Pond Splash**

Mill Pond Splash is an annual celebration of the Don River watershed held in Richmond Hill. The festival is a unique opportunity for community members to learn about their local ecosystems and connect with the environmental groups of their area. Mill Pond Splash has a nineteen year legacy of collaboration with the Town of Richmond Hill to engage the community in restoration work and introduce them to environmental principles that will last a lifetime.

*Date:* Sunday, June 3, 2018

*Location:* Mill Pond Park, Richmond Hill, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 3500

## **ETOBICOKE-MIMICO CREEKS WATERSHED EVENTS**

### **Heart Lake Dragon Boat Festival**

The Heart Lake Dragon Boat Festival was developed in celebration of the Etobicoke-Mimico Creeks watersheds. Funds raised from the Festival will go towards the naturalization and restoration work being done by TRCA within the two watersheds. Within the beautiful natural setting of Heart Lake Conservation Area, the Festival will deliver a day of excitement on the water and fun for everyone!

*Date:* Saturday, June 9, 2018

*Location:* Heart Lake Conservation Area, Brampton, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 150 – 300

### **Bike the Creek**

Bike the Creek is designed as a free, open, fun family event that showcases the Etobicoke Creek multi-use trail as an active transportation alternative. Participants cycle through the beautiful, ecologically and culturally important natural capital and heritage features within Brampton's and Caledon's urban river valleys. Five different rides are offered according to various skill levels. Pick up passport puzzle pieces at each pavilion for your chance to win great prizes. Bike the Creek runs rain or shine.

*Date:* Saturday, June 23, 2018

*Location:* Jim Archdekin Recreation Centre, 292 Conestoga Dr., Brampton, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 700 – 900

### **Family Fishing Day**

In partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources the Family Fishing Day provides an opportunity to learn about safe fishing. Over a two hour session participants learn about fishing in

Ontario and get hands on experience on fishing at Heart Lake. Equipment is provided, and the cost is free to participate in the program.

*Date:* Saturday, July 7th & 8th, 2018

*Location:* Heart Lake Conservation Area, Brampton, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 40 people per session there are two sessions per day

## **HIGHLAND CREEK WATERSHED EVENTS**

### **The Salmon Festival at Highland Creek**

Held annually in Morningside Park, the Salmon Festival at Highland Creek is an event that brings watershed residents from across the region to view the annual salmon migration from Lake Ontario, up Highland Creek, through Morningside Park. The Salmon Festival offers children's activities, environmentally friendly vendors, live performances and guided nature hikes to celebrate the storied history of Highland Creek while witnessing nature in action in an urban setting.

*Date:* Sunday, September 30, 2018

*Location:* Morningside Park, Scarborough, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 2250

## **HUMBER RIVER WATERSHED EVENTS**

### **Humber by Canoe**

In partnership with the City of Toronto, TRCA launched the Humber by Canoe event which offered an opportunity for participants to get in a canoe to learn about the Humber River's rich cultural and recreational values and raise profile of the Humber River's Canadian Heritage Rivers designation. For a majority of the event participants this is their first experience being in a canoe. The event offers training by trained professionals.

In 2019, the Humber will be celebrating the Humber's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a Canadian Heritage River. The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations provide various opportunities for Alliance members to get involved from the event planning stages onwards.

*Date:* September, 2018

*Location:* Etienne Brule Park, Toronto, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 2,000

### **Dinner at the Farm: A Night of Culinary Enchantment in Support of Black Creek Community Farm**

Black Creek Community Farm hosts an annual on-farm fundraiser dinner in collaboration with some of the best chefs in the Greater Toronto Area. This is an opportunity to support the educational programming at this unique urban farm, celebrate urban agriculture in Toronto, and enjoy delicious tapas-style food right from the farm. Celebrate local food under the night sky and support a valuable community space in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood.

*Date:* Thursday, September 13, 2018

*Location:* Black Creek Community Farm, 4929 Jane Street (at Steeles), Toronto, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 250

## **ROUGE RIVER WATERSHED EVENTS**

### **Morningside Creek Festival**

As part of Rouge Days, the Morningside Creek Festival invites the community to learn about the Rouge River watershed by getting involved in habitat restoration and joining guided nature hikes. This family-friendly event invites partner organizations and community members to help TRCA and the City of Toronto achieve the goals of a multi-year restoration project along Morningside Creek.

*Date:* June, 2018

*Location:* Seasons Park, 40 Seasons Dr., Scarborough, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 500

## **WATERFRONT EVENTS**

### **Lake Ontario Evenings**

Lake Ontario Evenings are a public speaker series on topics affecting the lake hosted by the Toronto and Region Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Program. Three to four Lake Ontario Evenings are held annually which usually include three 20 minute presentations from the invited speakers and a question/discussion period. In 2017, topics included microplastics, Toronto water quality issues, and biodiversity and citizen science.

Evenings are free of charge, easily accessible by public transportation (usually held at the Gladstone Hotel), and include free snacks and drinks for purchase. Events are advertised through the RAP mailing list (mailchimp), on the RAP and TRCA website, and through social media (Twitter and Facebook). Participation generally ranges from 80 to 110 individuals, with representatives from all three levels of government, community groups, academia, and the general public in attendance.

RWA members could participate in Lake Ontario Evenings by attending or volunteering at events, advertising through their networks, and/or providing recommendations on speakers or topics to the RAP team.

*Date:* Various

*Location:* Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen St W, Toronto, ON

*Typical Attendance Numbers:* 80 – 110

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