

# RECHARGE 2014

## Credit River Alliance Annual General Meeting

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### QUESTIONS EXPLORED AT THE AGM:

1. How do we work together to implement our Goals?
2. How do we stay connected and function as a network? How do we grow?
3. What's on the horizon, what are the upcoming issues that need our attention?

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## Charging forward

On March 6, 2014 members of the community of the Credit River watershed gathered together at the South Fletcher's Sportsplex in Brampton to hold the Annual General Meeting of the Credit River Alliance.

Together, representatives from various groups discussed the future of the Credit River watershed and opportunities for working together for the watershed.

The Credit Valley Conservation Authority's newly appointed CAO Ms. Deborah Martin-Downs started the evening off with an introduction to the current issues facing the Credit and its future directions. Approximately forty people were in attendance and participated through the evening.

After introductions, members conducted guided discussion groups, addressing the following three questions: How do we work together to implement our



**Annual General Meeting of the Credit River Alliance, held on March 6th, 2014**

goals?; how do we stay connected and function as a network; how do we grow?; What's on the horizon?; What are the upcoming issues that need our

attention?

Upon completion of the round table exercise, a wrap-up was conducted by the table facilitator, summarizing the main points raised by the representatives at each table.

After a group discussion was held, identifying the main points of interests raised, a summary of the evening and preceding next steps were highlighted by Rosemary Keenan, the Chair of the Credit River Alliance.

Moving forward, the various groups of the Credit River Alliance look forward to working together over the coming year to promote, protect, advocate for a the Credit River watershed, the largest watershed in the 905, from Halton Hills to Ajax.

## Finding new focus

A main theme discussed at the Annual General Meeting of the Credit River Alliance (CRA) was how to strengthen the Alliance can so that it can take on broader challenges across the watershed.

Many representatives present at

the AGM agreed that a more focused CRA that is coordinated and able to act as one voice, on behalf of the watershed, would be great benefit to the various representative agencies and the local conservation and environmental community-based organizations.

Options for how to bring the CRA into focus are explored in the following pages in this issue.





Poster for Recharge 2014 Annual General Meeting

## RECHARGE 2014 CREDIT RIVER ALLIANCE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Watershed map of the Credit, marked with comments from members at the AGM



# Taking Stock of CRAs Structure

One of the main topics of discussion centred on the evolution of the Credit River Alliance as an agency for watershed conservation.

Presently serving as an umbrella organization for the Credit, consisting of over 25 local NGO based groups, including the Sierra Club of Canada, Trout Unlimited, ACER and the Credit River Anglers Association, issues were raised regarding difficulties over connecting with each other in

a timely and coordinated manner, dispersed work and poor operational goals.

It was agreed that the CRA should work towards cohesion amongst groups and to seek ways of being more strategic with available resources.

Additionally, members of the CRA agreed that the formation of a charter, operational goals, an appointed/elected steering committee, regularly scheduled meetings, task assigned work groups based on priorities,

greater partnerships as well as fund raising for a part-time staff contact represented a positive step forward in this direction.

It was also agreed that the group should reach out to local ratepayers groups as a means of building the network and profile of the organization.

Moving forward, the CRA intends to meet and form a steering committee in mid-April in order to work towards achieving these goals.

## Getting Techie

Social media was a major discussion point at this Credit River Alliance (CRA) AGM and how it may serve to broaden membership and encourage community awareness of the watershed,

Several members suggested developing the CRAs website to include info on each group, including their goals with a link provided to each groups web-

site. Also, providing an up-to-date Events Calendar of all watershed activities posted on the CRA website as well as separate portal discussion boards, a facebook and twitter account and blog groups.

Participants also suggested using new forms of technology such as creating apps and QR codes for natural heritage features of interest.

In order to take things a step beyond the website, members suggested hosting a network café, Upper Credit watershed bus tours and meet-ups initiated through the online forums to strengthen membership.

All of this work could be conducted through a webmaster that may be hired on an as-needs basis to update the information when required.

## New Horizons

The future has much in store for the Credit River watershed. With an eye to the horizon, members raised a variety of watershed priorities for the CRA to focus on in the coming year 2015/2015, including

the following, referenced in no particular order:

- The review of The Greenbelt Plan and The Niagara Escarpment Plan
- Policy on low-impact development
- Fragmentation of natural spaces at high planning scales
- Headwater conservation
- Mitigating the impacts of road salts
- Bike paths—more community connections to natural spaces
- Improved public access to natural spaces
- Water quality and water quantity

# New Horizons (continued)



### Presenta- tion con- ducted by the Credit Valley Con- servation

- Remediation of aggregate land once industry leaves the disrupted site
- Promoting corporate adoption of a section of the creek in partnership with the CVCs Greening

#### Corporate Grounds program

Members suggested that these issues could be tackled by members of the Credit River Alliance (CRA) as well as in partnership with other government agencies.

It would be the responsibility of the new Steering Committee members to manage the progress and priorities of each major task and seek new ways of bringing groups together to best utilize human resources.

In order to operationalize these goals and objectives, the steering committee, once appointed, will meet to discuss how to move these ideas forward in late spring.

*In our every deliberation, we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven*

*generations.*

- From The Great Law of The Iroquois Confederacy

## Standing up for the Credit

It was widely recognized at the Credit River Alliance (CRA) AGM that the CRA needs to find a way of being part of the larger decision-making processes that impact the watershed.

Those present at the AGM believed that the CRA should be a voice to local politicians over watershed needs and priorities.

Members suggested this could be achieved by conducting delegations to local and regional municipalities in relation of Official Plans and other planning activities; working closely with the Conservation Authority and support their watershed initiatives; serving as a grass-roots resource to government and government agencies, informing them of issues as they arise; pro-

moting policy development and seeking opportunities to assist in the formation of policy development where applicable; reaching out to kids through school programming; connecting with the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nations; and lastly to engage with service clubs and school boards to conduct annual activities.

## Climate Change

Understanding the impacts associated with our changing climate was also addressed at the AGM. Given that 2014 was a year of extreme weather across Canada, seeking opportunities to promote community and watershed resiliency were raised as a priority.

Members agreed that promoting ways in which communities could

become more resilient for the betterment of the watershed in light of expected impacts from climate change was a top priority.

Given issues raised in the recent IPCC Fifth Assessment Report on mitigation of climate change, there remains much work to be done on global and local scales.

Raising awareness to the im-

portance of reducing sources and enhancing sinks of greenhouse gases, sustainable development and the intersection of social goals are high priority. Working towards goals raised at the AGM will contribute meaningfully to meeting the IPCC's goals



**West Credit in early spring.**



## The Credit River Alliance

*Giving Credit to Our River*



**NEWS!! The Ontario Headwaters Institute** invites comments from stakeholders on a concept paper seeking to identify and standardize indicators of health of Ontario's headwaters  
[http://www.ohwi.ca/The\\_Importance\\_of\\_Headwaters\\_to\\_Watershed\\_Health.pdf](http://www.ohwi.ca/The_Importance_of_Headwaters_to_Watershed_Health.pdf)  
Replies to the OHI [andrew@ohwi.ca](mailto:andrew@ohwi.ca)

The Credit River Alliance (CRA) is a non-profit organization comprised of 25 environmental and conservation groups in the Credit River watershed who share a common interest in protecting the quality of the river and it's natural systems. We represent an alliance of more 10,000 supporters who place a high priority on maintaining a healthy and sustained River system. Join us!

For further information, please contact **Chair, Rosemary Keenan** at [prmkeen@gmail.com](mailto:prmkeen@gmail.com).

# Don't Miss The Grey to Green Train Tour!!

Interested in a scenic old fashioned train tour of the incredible Credit watershed combined with great locally grown food and top-notch networking?

Then **The Grey to Green Train Tour** has you covered!

In partnership with the Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation and Credit Valley Conservation, the Credit River Alliance is actively meeting the needs of its members, as discussed at the AGM, by hosting a networking event that will explore policy issues and key areas of need in the watershed,

Topics explored include:

- The Greenbelt: Today and Tomorrow
- CVC Greenland Securement Planning
- Visible restoration projects
- Connections to proposed Heritage Tourism Trail

DATE: Saturday  
September 13th, 2014

TIME: 9:30AM to 3:30PM

PLACE: Whole Village  
Caledon's Ecovillage  
nestled in the Greenbelt

COST: \$45 per person

To RSVP, please contact Dave Beaton, Manager of Community Outreach at Credit Valley Conservation via email: [dbeaton@creditvalleyca.ca](mailto:dbeaton@creditvalleyca.ca)



**The Main Credit River in the late Fall**