



LAKEHEAD REGION
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

URBAN NATURE

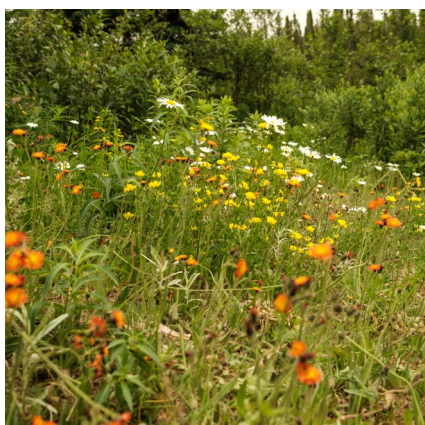


NEEBING-MACINTYRE FLOODWAY



Exploring nature in an urban setting is surprisingly rewarding and an opportunity to find out more of what natural wonders are present. Along the Neebing-McIntyre Floodway you can see a **variety of ecosystems right within our city, including forest, wetland and meadow.**

The **floodway was constructed** between 1980 and 1984 to protect low lying lands in the Thunder Bay Intercity area. In the event of a flood, water from the Neebing River is diverted to the McIntyre River. The design capacity of the Floodway is to provide **protection up to and including the Regional Storm** (193mm of rain in 12 hours). The construction of the Floodway has resulted in significant development in the Intercity Area.



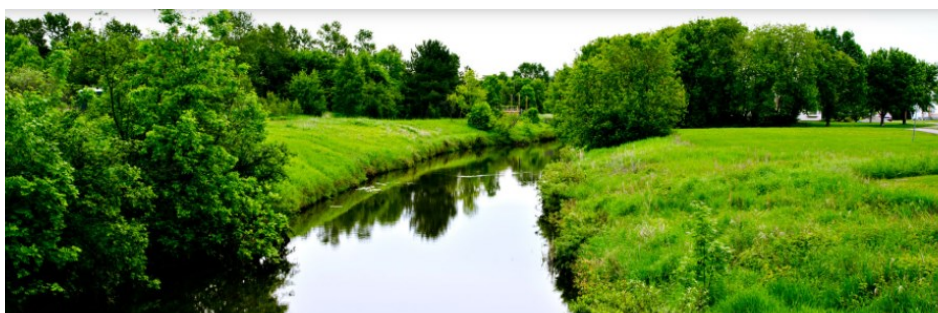
In addition to the constructed Floodway there are thousands of natural flood-preventers throughout the city; **trees!** Trees and other vegetation help to absorb water with their roots and evapotranspire it back to the air. Trees also intercept falling rain and evaporate the rain before it hits the ground. And vegetation helps to loosen the soil allowing for natural water infiltration into the ground. Green vegetation along with natural areas that allow for water infiltration, like rain gardens, low impact developments and wetlands are what are referred to as **green infrastructure** as they naturally provide water quality and quantity management.

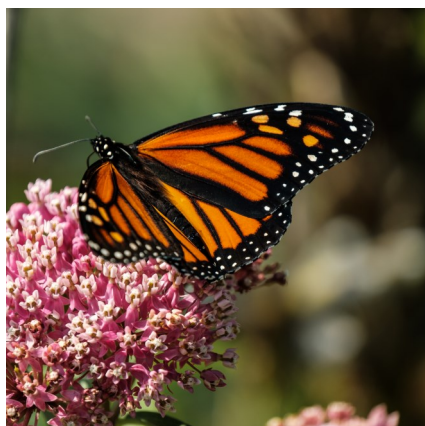


Let's take a look at some of the trees and shrubs along the water's edge and in the forest that provide food and cover for wildlife. Some **native trees and shrubs** you will see include Trembling Aspen, White Spruce, Jack Pine, Black Ash, Mountain Ash and White Birch. Some native shrubs you may find include Red Osier Dogwood, Beaked Hazel, Honeysuckles, Alders and Mountain Maple.

Keep your eyes and ears open while you search for **wildlife**. Can you see signs of groundhogs (dens), beavers (lodges), deer (tracks, scat, tree rubs, browsed shrubs)? Can you hear any birds such as the American Robin, the Red-Winged Blackbird or Red Breasted Nuthatch?

Get close to the water's edge and see what aquatic species you can find; fish, turtles, frogs, and invertebrates.





Sea Lamprey, which are an **invasive species** and look at first like a giant leech, have been prevented from entering the upper portions of our waterways with the Neebing Weir in front of DFC school.

Species at Risk like the **Monarch Butterfly** benefit from areas with native vegetation and pollinator gardens planted with species that provide both food and shelter

Are there ways you can **improve the habitat around your home** with more native trees, flowers or shrubs?

Enjoy the recreation trails along the floodway and diversion channel and see how many species you can spot.



Challenges:

iNaturalist:

Everyone can be part of contributing to community science. Using iNaturalist (www.inaturalist.ca) not only can you connect with nature that you find but you can contribute to the important monitoring of biodiversity health world-wide. Once you have your free account, simply take a picture, upload it with the date/time and location as well as your best guess as to its ID. Then real experts from around the world will confirm or improve upon your discovery.

Biodiversity Count:

Find a naturalized section of forest, perhaps near the waters edge. Now, count all the different species of living things you can find! You don't have to know them all, just that they are different. Don't forget to look at the tiny, like insects, moss, lichens, small plants. Remember your total number of species. Now find a grass lawn. Do your species count again for this area. Compare your two numbers. What does this tell you about the biodiversity of these two different environments?

Sit Spot:

Find a quiet area to sit, or lie down for 5 min or more. Experience that place and time with all your senses (taste at your discretion). What do you notice? How do you feel?

Watch how the Neebing-MacIntyre Floodway works with a detailed map and through a short video: <https://lakeheadca.com/flood-protection/neebing-mcintyre-floodway>

