

**Biodiversity:** The variety of life on the planet.

**Biosphere Reserve:** A label given to an ecosystem by UNESCO with plants and animals of unusual scientific and natural interest. This designation helps protect the ecosystem for research, education and management.

**Climate Change:** The change in long-term weather patterns. Climate change can be natural, or caused by changes people have made to the land or the atmosphere.

**Community Engagement:** The process of working collaboratively with community member and groups to address issues that impact the natural environment.

**Conservation:** The act of protecting nature – water, plants and wildlife.

**Conservation Area / Park:** A designated park operated by a local conservation authority.

**Conservation Authority:** In Ontario there are 36 conservation authorities responsible for watershed management, conservation areas, and providing outreach education and local stewardship activities.

**Corridor:** A stretch of land linking areas together. A wildlife corridor is an example of an area of land and/or water connecting wildlife to their habitat.

**Ecological Services:** The benefits of healthy ecosystems, such as purification of water and air, pollination of plants, and the decomposition of waste.

**Ecosystem:** A collection of living things and non-living things, and the environment in which they live.

**Flora & Fauna:** Flora refers to plant life, and fauna refers to animal life.

**Fragmentation:** The process of breaking or being broken into small or separate parts.

**Greenbelt:** Protected land in the Golden Horseshoe area of Ontario that includes the Oak Ridges Moraine and Niagara Escarpment.

**Habitat:** A place that is natural for the life and growth of an organism.

**Human-made Infrastructures:** Examples are roads, electricity and water.

**Infrastructure:** The basis systems and services needed for the operation of a productive and healthy urban centre.

**Multi-use Trail:** A designated pathway in a park along a trail system that is used by walkers, hikers, runners and cyclists. The rules of the road apply to a multi-use trail – pass on the left.

**National Parks:** Designated parks in Canada operated by the Government of Canada - Parks Canada.

**Naturalization:** The process of allowing a site to transform back to its natural / original state.

**Natural Infrastructures:** Examples of natural infrastructures are water, soil, plants and rocks. Natural infrastructures can be the building blocks for human-made infrastructures.

**Natural Spaces:** Places found in the environment that have not been disturbed by humans. Natural spaces provide habitats for living and non-living organisms; and provide ecological services.

**Niagara Escarpment:** A geological landform stretching 725 km from Lake Ontario near Niagara Falls to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron.

**Oak Ridges Moraine:** A geological landform that runs east-west across South Central Ontario, Canada.

**Ontario Parks:** Designated parks in Ontario operated by the Province of Ontario.

**Organism:** An individual form of life, such as a plant, an animal, or a fungus.

**Parks Canada:** National Parks, National Historic Sites, and National Marine Conservation Areas that are protected, but enjoyed in ways by people that leave them undamaged for present and future generations.

**Restoration Site:** A natural site where humans are helping to create habitats and maintain the ecosystem for native species.

**River:** A large natural stream of fresh water flowing along a specific course, entering into a larger body of water. For example, the Humber River flows into Lake Ontario.

**Rules of Enjoyment:** Rules posted in a park or a conservation area to ensure everyone's enjoyment and safety.

**Sustainability:** An ability or capacity of something to be maintained or to sustain itself. It's about taking what we need to live now, without endangering the potential for people in the future to meet their needs.

**UNSECO:** United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, based in Paris.

**Urbanization:** The process by which towns and villages grow into cities.

**Volunteer:** A person who voluntarily offers himself or herself for a service or action.

**Watershed:** A watershed is the area of land where all of the water that is on it or under it, drains into the same river, and eventually into a larger body of water, like a lake or ocean.

**World Heritage Site:** A place recognized by UNESCO as having a special cultural or physical significance; includes cities, buildings, monuments, deserts, lakes, mountains, forests and endangered places.