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SLATE RIVER WATERSHED IN GOOD CONDITION

A recent study of the Slate River Watershed indicates the river is in good health.

Through the Student Summer Experience Program and Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation's Youth Internship Program, the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) studied the Slate River Watershed during the summer of 2008. The study involved taking surface water samples and field measurements at several locations along the River which runs 50-kilometres from its headwaters, south of Oliver Lake, to its confluence with the Kaministiquia River.

Water quality results indicated that some metals exceeded the Ministry of the Environment's *Provincial Water Quality Objectives*; however, this may be attributable to the underlying geology of the area. Phosphorous and E. coli levels, while elevated, were lower than results documented in 1990 during previous water quality analysis.

Although it was determined the shoreline could use more riparian buffer zones to provide shade for healthy benthic animal and fish populations, the stream banks were stable and showed little signs of erosion. The flora and fauna inventory indicated that Slate River supports a healthy population of birds.

The study concluded that the overall health of Slate River was found to be in good condition at the time of the assessment in 2008.

The information gathered during this study can now be used as a bench mark for future monitoring of the Slate River watershed.

This summer, the LRCA plans to conduct a similar study of the Wolf River Watershed in the Dorion and Hurkett area.