

August 29, 2007

Conservation Areas and Local Waterways Benefit From Student Labour

A clean-up of three area waterways has resulted in more than six tonnes of garbage being taken to the landfill.

Each summer, the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority (LRCA) hires students who conduct a river clean-up as well as landscaping and maintenance at Conservation Areas. Four students were hired in 2007.

From early June to August 10, 2007, the students worked on cleaning debris from publicly accessible areas of the McIntyre River, Neebing River and McVicar Creek. Logs, clothing, toys, shopping carts and other garbage weighing 6,560 kilograms, or 6.5-tonnes was clean-up and taken to the John Street Landfill.

“What’s sad is that our students remove about the same amount of garbage from local waterways every summer,” says Authority Chairman, Bill Bartley. “The public has to learn to take better care of our water today if we want a safe supply in the future.”

Bartley notes that “Each of the rivers and creeks which were cleaned this summer empty into Lake Superior which is the sole source of drinking water for residents on the City of Thunder Bay Municipal water system. All garbage thrown into these streams has the potential to contaminate our water supply.”

Also this summer, the LRCA installed a new floating dock at Silver Harbour Conservation Area to replace one damaged in a storm; painted pavilions at several Conservation Areas; and did a thorough cleaning of the beach at Hazelwood Lake Conservation Area to remove washed up vegetation and debris. Staff also had to repair various acts of vandalism which occurred at Conservation Areas. The public is asked to report vandalism to police or Crimestoppers when they see it happening as repairing the damage costs everyone money.

More than 100,000 people a year visit the LRCA’s eight Conservation Areas to enjoy a variety of recreational activities including hiking, birdwatching and canoeing; as well as to attend Authority events such as Family Fishing Day and Waterfowl Viewing Days.