

February 21, 2008

Visits to Mission Island Marsh Increase

A traffic analysis conducted last summer by the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority shows an increase in the number of visitors to the Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area.

Every year the Authority undertakes a traffic analysis at two Authority owned properties. During the summer/fall of 2007 traffic counters were placed at the entrance to Mission Island Marsh Conservation Area and Mills Block Forest. The counters were deployed on June 21, 2007 and were in place until September 22, 2007 (94 days).

Results indicate that an average of 168 vehicles a day entered Mission Island Marsh. That's an 18-percent increase from 2003 when a similar study determined an average of 134 vehicles a day visited.

This was the first time that a traffic analysis was conducted at Mills Block Forest, which is located at John Street Road and Community Hall Road. The study indicate an average of 12 vehicles a day visit Mills Block which features a four kilometre walking trail across a beaver dam and through a mixed forest.

Many of the Authority's eight Conservation Areas and other properties are popular for walking, wildlife viewing and outdoor education.

The increasing number of visitors has the potential to benefit the Conservation Areas, according to the LRCA's Chairman. Bill Bartley says "money collected from visitors, either through the \$2 per vehicle user fee or through the sale of our seasonal Explorer Card, is used to help maintain and upgrade the Conservation Areas."

Explorer Cards are available at the Authority office located at 130 Conservation Road.