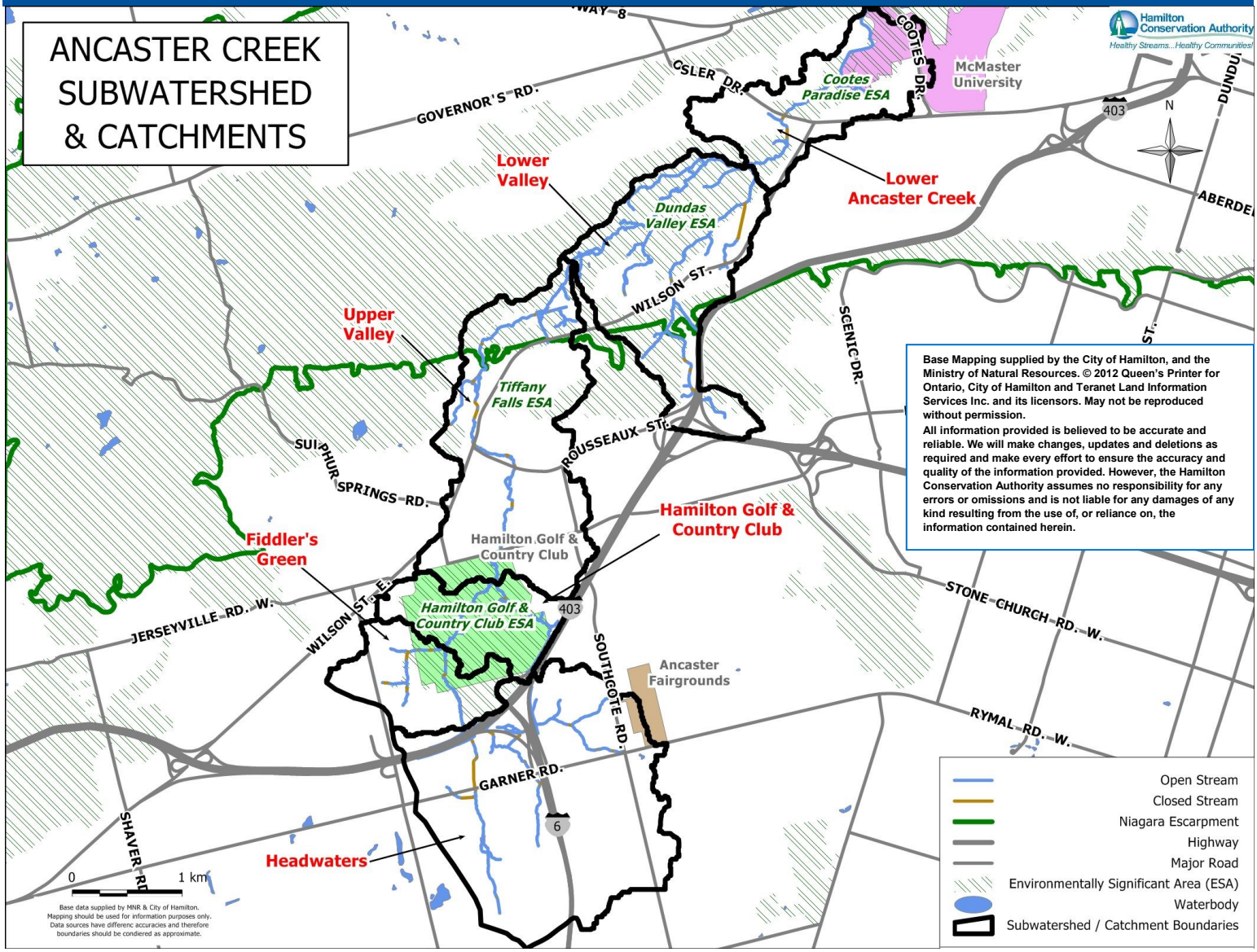
ANCASTER CREEK SUBWATERSHED



The Ancaster Creek subwatershed spans the former municipal boundaries of Ancaster, Dundas and Hamilton, ranging from Fiddler's Green Road in the west to Southcote Road in the east; the southern extent is located between Garner Road and Book Road East. The Niagara Escarpment is present within both the Upper and Lower Valley catchments of this subwatershed. Additionally, four municipally designated Environmentally Significant Areas (ESAs) are located within this subwatershed: Hamilton Golf & Country Club, Tiffany Falls, Dundas Valley, and Cootes Paradise.

Ancaster Creek subwatershed in comparison to Environment Canada's 'How much Habitat is Enough' Guidelines

Landscape Feature	Guideline	Subwatershed Status
Wetland	6%	**0.3%**
Forest	30%	28.5%
Impervious Surface	<10%	**36%**

These natural areas act as major ecological corridors for terrestrial species and serve to maintain water quality and quantity within the stream reaches that pass through these areas, to the benefit of aquatic species.

Ancaster Creek has historically been characterized as coldwater habitat.

Notable species that have been located in this subwatershed include: Red Mulberry, Eastern Milksnake, Cerulean Warbler and Longear Sunfish.

Settlers came to the Ancaster area as early as 1790 due to the high well-drained land, good spring water and streams for water power, and because the site was on the early road from Niagara to the western part of the province. Although the village was founded by Jean Baptiste Rousseaux from Lower Canada and James Wilson from Pennsylvania, Governor Simcoe gave it its name, after the hamlet in Lincolnshire in England. Hence, Ancaster Creek is named after the village in which it flows.

Three environmental stresses in the Ancaster Creek subwatershed, as identified within the Spencer Creek Stewardship Action Plans, are:

- **Insufficient riparian buffers (recommended width of 30 metres for coldwater systems) along creeks,**
- **The degradation of terrestrial habitats, and**
- **Online ponds.**

What are we doing to protect the coldwater habitat and health of the Ancaster Creek subwatershed?

The Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) Aquatic Resource Monitoring Program has a station in Ancaster Creek that is monitored in year two of a three year cycle. The program collects information on fish, fish habitat and benthic invertebrates to assess and track changes in the health of the aquatic ecosystem.

The Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program works with the public and private property owners to develop and implement initiatives and restoration projects that create and enhance natural areas and habitats in the HCA watershed. The program offers free on-site consultation to private property owners who have natural features on their properties. Property owners that undertake restoration projects that create or enhance natural habitats or water quality may be eligible to apply for financial assistance.

What can landowners do to restore and protect the cold water habitat and health of Ancaster Creek?

1. Re-establish riparian buffers where there are none and increase the width of existing riparian buffers.
2. Plant native trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants in front, rear and side yards.
3. Disconnect downspouts that direct water from roofs and eavestroughs to the storm sewer system and direct them to yards and gardens.
4. Consult with a Stewardship Technician for ways to reduce the negative impacts on creeks caused by on-line ponds.

Riparian Buffer along Both Sides of the Creek

Sources: Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) 2008. Ancaster Creek Subwatershed Stewardship Action Plan and the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan, Fourth Edition Workbook, 2013.

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

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Are you interested in information about how you can protect water quality and habitat on your property?

Call to arrange a free on-site consultation!