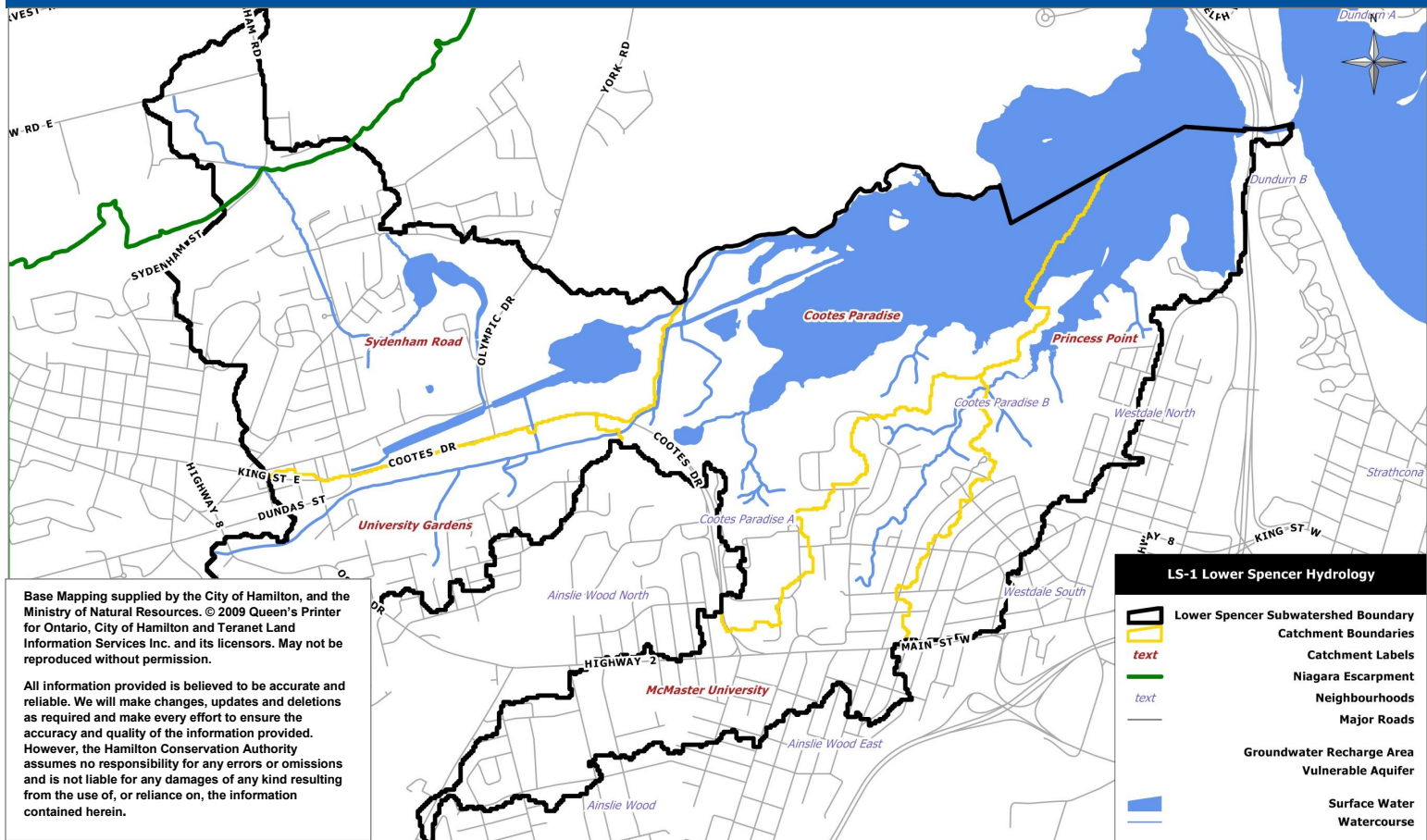


LOWER SPENCER CREEK SUBWATERSHED



The Lower Spencer Creek subwatershed, part of the Spencer Creek Watershed, begins above the Niagara Escarpment north west of Sydenham Road and flows down into the former Town of Dundas. The irregular shape of the western subwatershed boundary includes the Dundas Driving Park, Ainslie Wood, Ainslie Wood West and Ainslie Wood East neighbourhoods. Moving eastward, the subwatershed includes portions of the Westdale North and Westdale South neighbourhoods. The southern subwatershed boundary lies south of Main Street West, between Wilson Street East and Newton Avenue, tapering northward to the eastern boundary of the subwatershed which occurs at the Royal Botanical Gardens Fishway, where Cootes Paradise Marsh outlets into Hamilton Harbour.

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

Landscape Feature	Guideline	Subwatershed Status
Wetland	6%	21%
Streambanks Naturally Vegetated	75%	28%
Forest	30%	17.4%
Impervious Surface	<10%	61%

Lower Spencer is the last subwatershed in the Spencer Creek system before it outlets into Cootes Paradise Marsh - a 250 hectare, shallow area of both marsh habitat and open water. It is vital spawning, nursery and adult habitat for warm water fish communities. It is also critical habitat for a variety of flora and fauna, including migratory birds.



Lower Spencer Creek is a cool water system.

Some of the rare species that have been observed in this watershed are Yellow-breasted Chat, Hop-tree, Jefferson Salamander (pictured above), and White Wood Aster.

The two most prevalent stresses identified in the Lower Spencer Creek Subwatershed are:

- **Stormsewer Outfalls,**
- **and Habitat Fragmentation**

What are we doing to protect the habitat and health of the Lower Spencer Creek subwatershed?

In the Lower Spencer Creek subwatershed the Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) Aquatic Resource Monitoring Program has two stations that are 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 health of the Lower Spencer Creek watershed?

1. Re-establish habitat connectivity between tracks of natural area (pictured below right).
2. Re-establish riparian buffers where there are none.
3. Increase the width of existing riparian buffers (below, centre).
4. Wherever possible, use water more efficiently, for example disconnect downspouts (pictured below left) and collect water in rain barrels.
5. Replace impermeable surfaces with permeable surfaces.
6. Replace shallow rooted lawns with deeper rooted plants.



Sources: Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA). 2010. Lower Spencer Creek Subwatershed Stewardship Action Plan and the Canada-Ontario Environmental Farm Plan, Fourth Edition Workbook, 2013.



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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!**