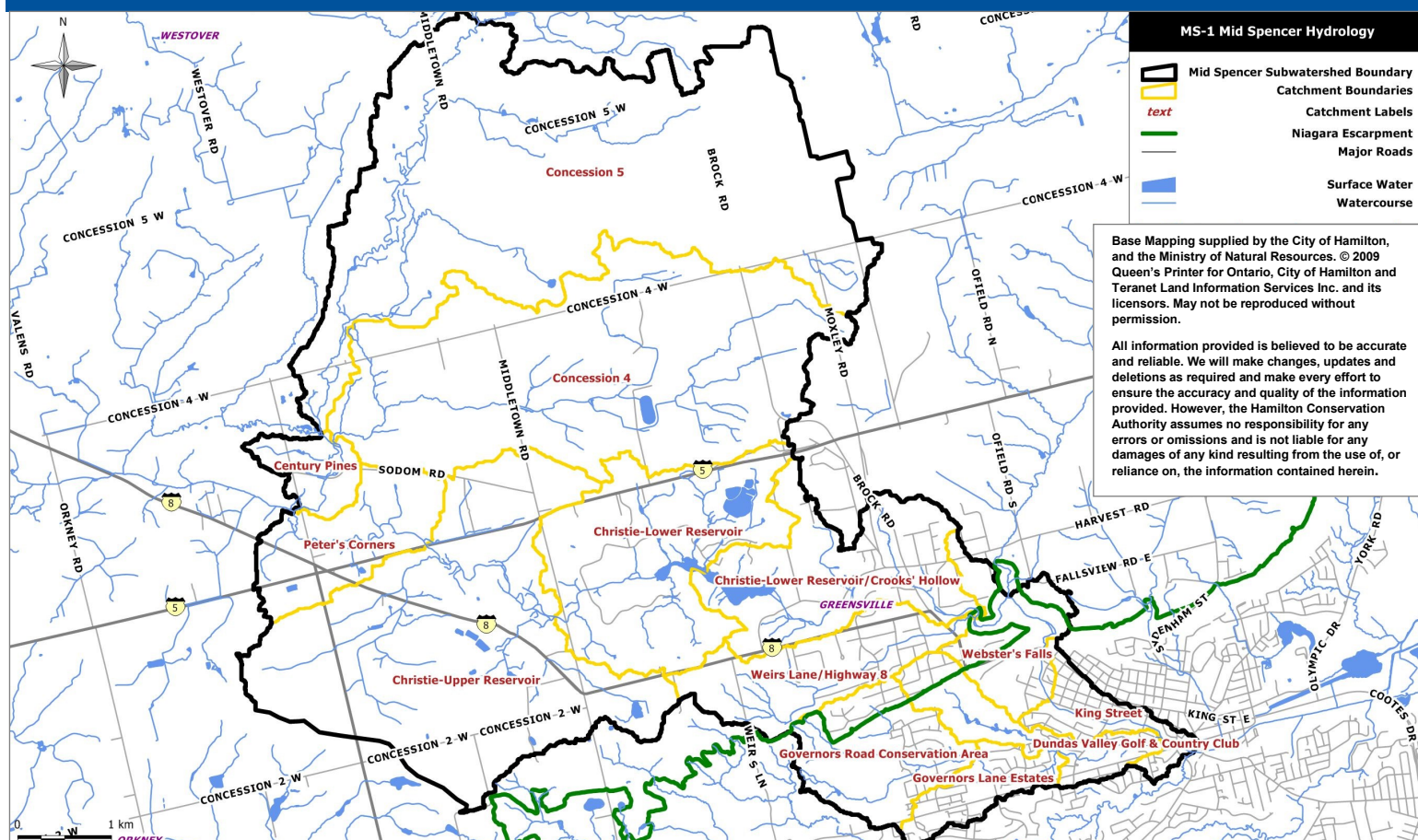


MIDDLE SPENCER CREEK SUBWATERSHED



The Middle Spencer Creek subwatershed is the largest subwatershed in the Spencer Creek watershed. This subwatershed includes the historic settlement areas of Greenville, Crooks' Hollow, Peter's Corners and a portion of Dundas. The Hayesland-Christie Wetland Complex Provincially Significant Wetland and three Environmentally Sensitive Areas; Donald Farm Complex, Hayesland Swamp and Christie Stream Valley moderate stream flow and maintain water quality in the headwaters.

In 1971 the Christie Dam and Reservoir was constructed on the main



channel of the Middle Spencer Creek to reduce flooding in the former town of Dundas. The lower reaches of Middle Spencer Creek feature five waterfalls, the most notable being Webster's Falls (above right) where the creek flows over the escarpment and descend 22m into Spencer Gorge.

A short reach of Middle Spencer Creek is classified as coolwater habitat, but most of the main channel is warmwater habitat.

Some of the rare species that have been observed in this watershed are Green Dragon, Chimney Swift, Jefferson Salamander, Red Mulberry, American Ginseng and Bobolink.

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

| Landscape Feature | Guideline | Subwatershed Status |
|---------------------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| Wetland | 6% | 6.3% |
| Streambanks Naturally Vegetated | 75% | 38.8% |
| Forest | 30% | 12.6% |
| Impervious Surface | <10% | 3.5% |

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

- **Insufficient Riparian Buffers,**
- **Water Takings,**
- **Stormsewer Outfalls,**
- **On-line Ponds,**
- **and Abandoned Groundwater Wells**

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

In the Middle Spencer Creek subwatershed the Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) Aquatic Resource Monitoring Program has four stations that are monitored in year 1 of a 3 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 Middle Spencer Creek watershed?

1. Re-establish riparian buffers where there are none.
2. Increase the width of existing riparian buffers (below right).
3. Consult with a Stewardship Technician for ways to reduce the negative impacts on creeks caused by on-line ponds.
4. Consult with a Stewardship Technician about decommissioning abandoned or unused wells (at left) on your property who will advise if financial assistance may be available.
5. Implement soil best management practices to reduce water erosion, wind erosion, sheet or tillage erosion, rill or gully erosion.



Sources: Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA). 2011. Middle 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!**