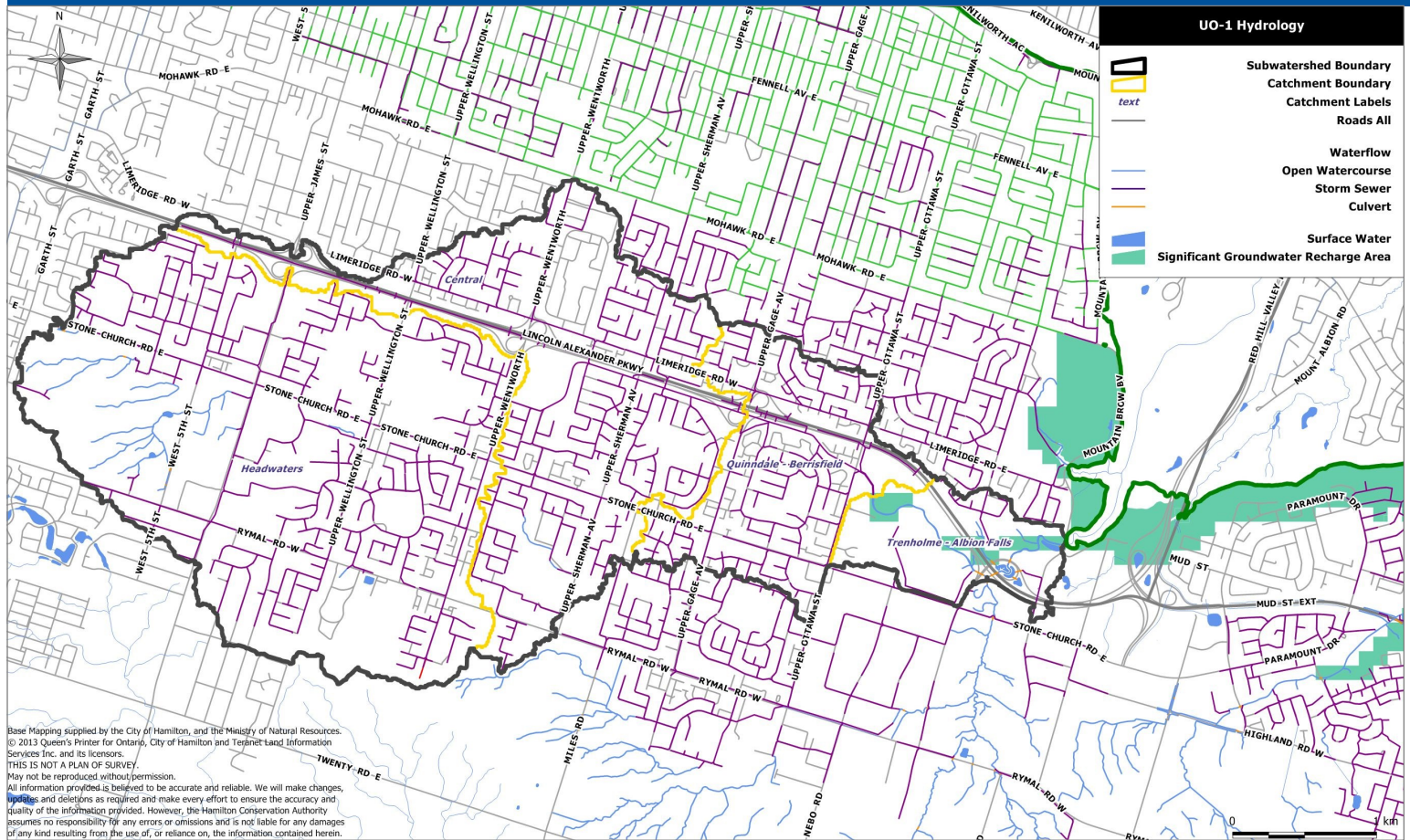


# UPPER OTTAWA CREEK WATERSHED



The Upper Ottawa Creek subwatershed, part of the Red Hill Creek watershed, is 14.44 km<sup>2</sup> in area and is comprised of four catchment basins. In descending order from the headwaters to the outlet these are: Headwaters, Central, Quindale – Berrisfield and Trenholme – Albion Falls. The majority of the subwatershed is within City of Hamilton Ward 7, with a smaller portion of the subwatershed in Wards 8 and 6.

The boundaries of the Upper Ottawa Creek subwatershed and its associated catchments have recently been updated to include the sewer system into the overall drainage system for the subwatershed. No significant changes to the subwatershed boundaries have occurred as a result.

**The Upper Ottawa Creek is a warmwater system.** A portion of one municipally designated environmentally significant area (ESA) falls within the Upper Ottawa Creek subwatershed. The Red Hill Escarpment Valley ESA reaches into the eastern areas of the subwatershed.

## Upper Ottawa Creek watershed in comparison to Environment Canada's 'How much Habitat is Enough' Guidelines

Landscape Feature	Guideline	Subwatershed Status
<b>Wetland</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>0.06%</b>
<b>Forest</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>3.32%</b>
<b>Impervious Surface</b>	<b>&lt;10%</b>	<b>66%</b>

Significant species that have been noted in this ESA include: Common Nighthawk, Chimney Swift (at right) Barn Swallow, Butternut, Barn Swallow, Western Chorus Frog, Short-eared Owl and Snapping turtle.



The Upper Ottawa Creek subwatershed does not meet Environment Canada's How Much Habitat is Enough Guidelines for forest, stream naturally vegetated or wetland cover. Efforts should be made to work with landowners and public agencies to preserve existing and create additional forest, riparian and wetland cover, with an emphasis being placed to establish and enhance riparian buffers along the watercourse to meet this habitat guideline and prevent sedimentation and runoff contamination within the system. The percentage of impervious surfacing within this subwatershed exceeds the standards recommended by Environment Canada for healthy stream systems. Efforts should be made to implement source control lot level stormwater management practices such as installing pervious pavement, rain gardens, rain barrels, etc. Efforts should also be made to de-pave unused impervious surfaces where possible.

**The most prevalent stresses, or potential stresses, identified in the Upper Ottawa Creek Subwatershed Stewardship Action Plans are stormsewer outfalls, development, habitat fragmentation and stormwater.**

## **What are we doing to protect habitat and improve the health of the Upper Ottawa Creek subwatershed?**

The Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) Aquatic Resource Monitoring Program has one ecological monitoring station in the Upper Ottawa Creek subwatershed. The monitoring station is in the Trenholme – Albion Falls catchment. The station is monitored in Year 3 of a three year cycle.

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 habitats and health of Upper Ottawa 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 implement LIDs on your property.



Disconnected downspout at left, Riparian Buffer along Both Sides of the Creek at right.

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



**Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program**  
c/o Hamilton Conservation Authority  
P.O. Box 81067, 838 Mineral Springs Road  
Ancaster, Ontario L9G 4X1  
[www.hamiltonhamiltonstewardship.ca](http://www.hamiltonhamiltonstewardship.ca)  
Office: (905) 525-2181, Ext. 181, 196

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information about how you  
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Call to arrange a free on-site  
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