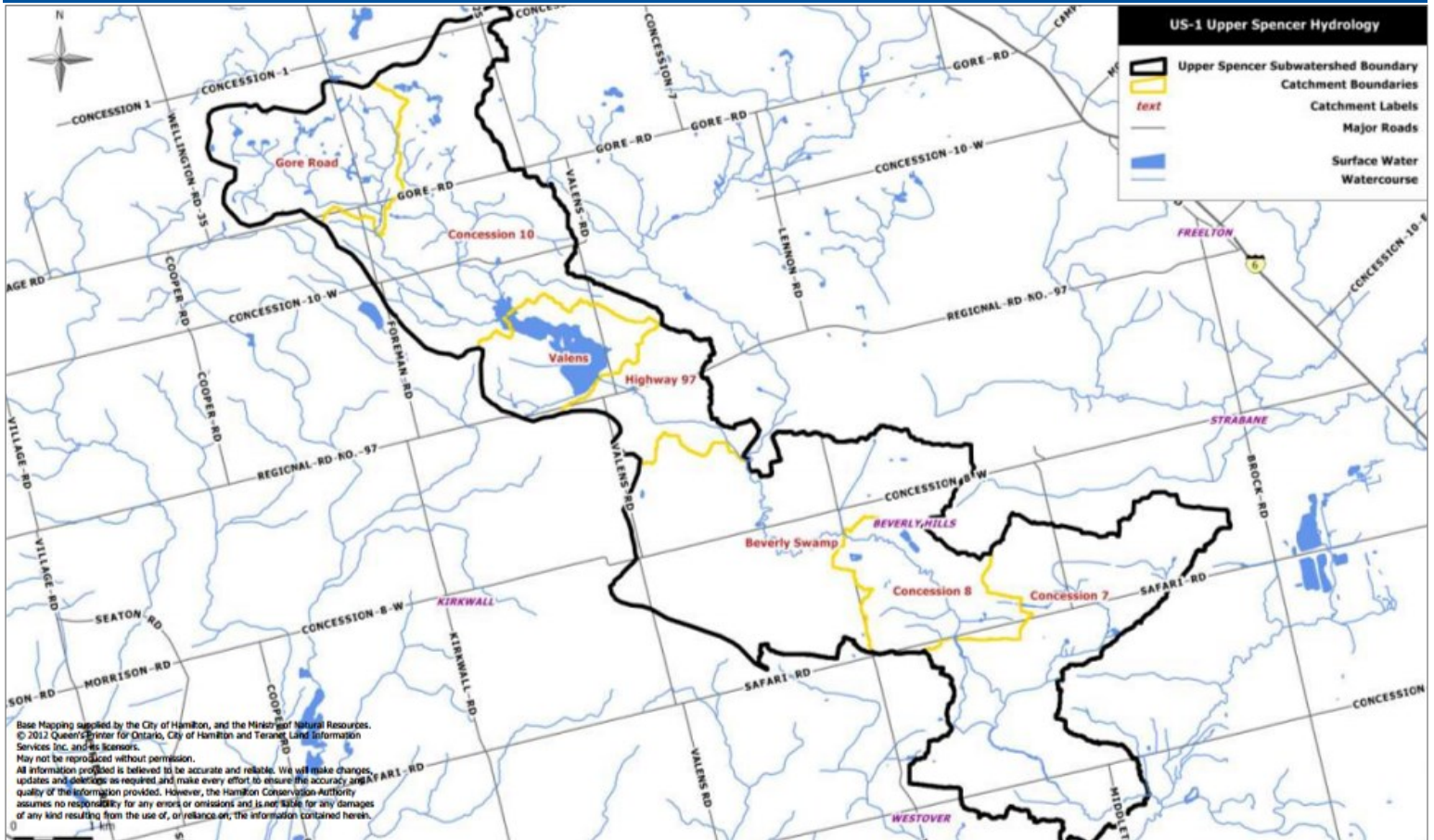


UPPER SPENCER CREEK SUBWATERSHED



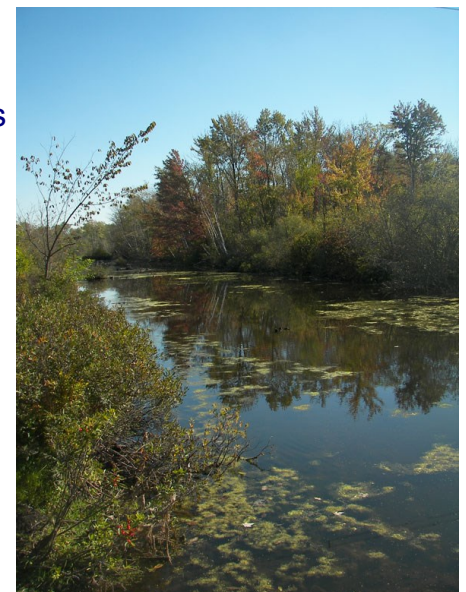
The Upper Spencer Creek subwatershed, part of the Spencer Creek watershed, falls within the former municipal boundary of the Town of Flamborough in the City of Hamilton and in the Township of Puslinch of the greater County of Wellington. The majority of the subwatershed is within Beverly Township, with smaller portions in Puslinch and West Flamborough townships.

This subwatershed reaches into the Beverly Swamp, Valens Conservation Area and Strabane Southwest Drumlin Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA's). The subwatershed also contains portions of the Westover Lowland Forest, Westover Drumlin Field and Hayesland Swamp ESA's. Beverly Swamp has been designated as Life Science Area of Natural or Scientific Interest (ANSI) by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR).

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

Landscape Feature	Guideline	Subwatershed Status
Wetland	6%	28.1%
Streambanks Naturally Vegetated	75%	41.2%
Forest	30%	38.1%
Impervious Surface	<10%	0.01%

The Beverly Swamp (pictured at right) is one of the largest remaining tracts of intact, lowland swamp forest in Southern Ontario, and is the best example of swamp forest within the Ontario Carolinian Zone. Because of its size and uniqueness, the Beverly Swamp serves many important functions for the City of Hamilton.



The top two environmental stresses in the Upper Spencer 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, and
- On-line Ponds (ponds in creeks which limit fish movement throughout the creek)

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

In the Upper Spencer Creek subwatershed the Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) Aquatic Resource Monitoring Program has one station that is monitored annually and three stations that are monitored in year one 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. There is one Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network well within the Upper Spencer Creek subwatershed.

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 habitat and health of Upper Spencer Creek?

1. Re-establish riparian buffers where there are none.
2. Increase the width of existing riparian buffers.
3. Retire marginal farm land.
4. Implement soil best management practices to reduce water erosion, wind erosion, sheet or tillage erosion, rill or gully erosion.
5. Consult with a Stewardship Technician for ways to reduce the negative impacts on creeks caused by on-line ponds.



Stewardship Technicians can assist property owners in enhancing natural areas on their properties.

Sources: Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) 2012. Upper Spencer Creek Subwatershed Stewardship Action Plan.



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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!