

# Working With Partners to Protect and Restore Great Lakes Habitats



Photo: Doug Hamilton

Newly-created wetlands attract birds like the great blue heron.

With a variety of natural ecosystems ranging from alvars to coastal wetlands, the Great Lakes region enjoys an abundance of plants and plant communities, at least 50 of which are rarely found anywhere else in the world.

The Ministry of Natural Resources works with many people and organizations to help protect and restore the rich biological diversity of the Great Lakes Basin ecosystem. One of the ways the ministry accomplishes this is by participating in the 2007 *Canada-Ontario*

## Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA).

Under COA, the ministry works with more than 240 partners on 200 projects across the Great Lakes Basin. More than 60 of these projects focus on helping to protect and restore Great Lakes habitats.

### Projects include:

- Acquiring, protecting and enhancing 4,000 hectares of Great Lakes coastal wetland and riverine habitats in partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada, the Nature Conservancy of Canada

The Great Lakes Basin is a unique ecosystem that is home to an incredible diversity of plant, fish and wildlife species.



Photo: Jason Mortlock

Building shade and cover for coldwater fish species.

and other Ontario Eastern Habitat Joint Venture partners.

- Bringing together international conservation partners to develop strategies to conserve species, habitat and ecosystem biodiversity in Lakes Ontario and Huron.
- Evaluating more than 230 coastal wetlands in Lake Ontario, Lake Erie and in eastern Georgian Bay, and making these evaluations available to municipalities to help protect significant habitats for provincially or regionally significant species of native plants, fish and wildlife.



Photo: Jason Mortlock

*A coastal wetland on Lake Ontario's north shore.*

- Planting more than 500,000 trees, creating over 1,000 hectares of fish and wildlife habitat along streams, and improving 133,000 metres of in-stream and shoreline habitat in order to reduce soil erosion, improve local water quality and enhance fish and wildlife habitat along streams and rivers in the Lake Ontario, Erie and Huron basins.
- Teaming up with international partners to build a 150-metre-long artificial spawning shoal off the shoreline of Fighting Island near Windsor to help lake sturgeon return to the Detroit River.
- Creating 1,500 square metres of new spawning habitat for walleye and lake sturgeon by placing 1,100 tonnes of rock in the Moon River near Parry Sound.

#### Other fact sheets in this series:

- Working with Partners to Rehabilitate Native Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Species
- Working with Partners to Prevent the Spread of Aquatic Invasive Species
- Working with Partners to Research and Monitor Changes to Great Lakes Ecosystems and Species
- Working with Partners to Improve the Health of Great Lakes Areas of Concern

#### Learn More

Visit [ontario.ca/greatlakes](http://ontario.ca/greatlakes) for more information about the ministry's partnerships and its efforts to protect and restore the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem through COA.

[ontario.ca/mnr](http://ontario.ca/mnr)

*Disponible en français*

March 2011