

Conservation Youth Corps is a natural fit for youth volunteers

Registration for Credit Valley Conservation's (CVC) popular Conservation Youth Corps (CYC) program is now open. High school students can earn up to 35 volunteer hours in one week this summer by participating in environmental stewardship activities. Space is limited, so students are encouraged to sign up early.

"The program is a great way for students to earn valuable experience and develop important skills, such as communication, leadership and team work," said CVC's Keren Bromberg. "For many, the program is a chance to spend more time outside and develop a new appreciation for nature."

The CYC summer program is open to high school students in the Credit River watershed, from Orangeville to Mississauga. Participants volunteer in groups of seven with CVC staff for one week of the summer. The first volunteer day consists of an orientation session at Terra Cotta Conservation Area. Remaining days are spent completing restoration and ecological projects. The program runs for nine weeks during summer break.

Each year, approximately 250 students work on a range of activities that benefit nature, while earning up to 35 of the 40 volunteer hours needed to graduate high school. Activities include tree planting, managing invasive species, aquatic and terrestrial monitoring, fish and wildlife habitat construction, community gardening, trail maintenance and more.

The program celebrated its 10th year last summer. Nearly 2,200 students have joined the week-long summer program since 2006 and have contributed 65,000 hours of service. Through partnerships with landowners and supporters, these students planted more than 24,000 trees to help fight climate change. Students have also removed more than 1,000 bags of invasive species, like garlic mustard, honeysuckle and buckthorn. All this work has taken place on 149 different properties.

Volunteers have an opportunity to learn about the environment through meaningful experiences, explore different areas of the Credit River watershed and meet new people. The CYC summer program also looks impressive on a resume, as well as on college and university applications.

All training and tools are provided.

For more information and to register, visit www.creditvalleyca.ca/cyc or call CVC at 906-670-1615 or toll free at 1-800-668-5557. Applications will be accepted through CYC's online process.