

Federal government announces investments in Caledon

The federal government is making money available in the Caledon area, and Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson has been happily making announcements.

Tilson was in Caledon several times over the last week or so, announcing federal allocations for various projects.

He was recently in Dick's Dam Park in Bolton, announcing a new environmental clean-up project aimed at improving water quality and restoring local ecosystems along the Great Lakes

The Great Lakes Sustainability Fund is contributing more than \$2.8 million for more than 30 new projects in areas of concern. That includes \$20,000 to Ontario Streams for its Caledon Headwater Rehabilitation Initiative project.

Tilson stated this initiative's goals are to protect and rehabilitate fish habitats in many headwater tributaries in Caledon through in-stream habitat enhancement; mitigating barriers to fish passage; regeneration of riparian areas; reintroduction of Atlantic salmon; and fisheries monitoring.

The aims of Ontario Streams include rehabilitating degraded aquatic habitats, increasing communication between individuals and organization that are involved in conserving aquatic environments and acting as a catalyst to empower communities when it comes to conserving local environments.

"To protect the Great lakes today and for future generations, our government has taken several actions to improve water quality and safeguard the health of Canadians," Tilson commented.

"This year's projects support the goals of our National Conservation Plan by facilitating collaborative efforts among local residents, businesses, conservation authorities and other levels of government to restore and sustain important local ecosystems within the Great Lakes basin."

"The rivers of Toronto have sufficient value to economical and cultural growth of the city and its surrounding communities," Pete Davis, project biologist for Ontario Streams, said. "Actions to preserve or rehabilitate our waterways will not only enhance our natural environment, but will also strengthen our communities, as grass-root organizations and local volunteers work alongside conservation authorities and non-profit groups to tackle environmental issues at the community level."

Tilson was at Town Hall in Caledon East a couple of days later to announce improvements to five local roads, with funding from the federal Gas Tax Fund. The affected roads will be Walton Drive, Cedar Mills Crescent and Palmer Circle in Cedar Mills, as well as Mountainview Road and Kennedy Road. He said the idea is to improve traffic flows, increase safety and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Caledon's Public Works Director David Loveridge observed there are some 150 kilometers of road in Caledon, and some of them still don't have hard surfaces. With Caledon's population maintaining all these roads involves a major financial commitment.

The contribution from the feds for these five roads is going to amount to a little more than \$1 million.

"Our government is pleased to provide municipalities like Caledon with flexible infrastructure funding that allows them to support projects that address the needs of their communities," Tilson said. "These local road improvements, made possible through the federal Gas Tax Fund, will provide a safer and smoother ride for drivers and cyclists, as well as help protect the environment through reduced greenhouse gas emissions."

Mayor Allan Thompson called it "great news for Caledon."

"We're a rural community and we have a lot of infrastructure," he remarked. "We have a huge infrastructure responsibility."

As well, Tilson was out on the Caledon Trailway last Thursday, with a number of other local dignitaries, to announce that \$172,500 will be going to trail improvements from the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program.

This funding amounts to half the project cost, and it will help the Town work on connecting and enhancing the existing trail networks, and making more connections to the north and south of Caledon.

He also explained the program is aimed at creating lasting legacies as the 150th anniversary of Confederation approaches in 2017.



Mayor Allan Thompson and Dufferin-Caledon MP David Tilson were celebrating the funding announcement for the Caledon Trailway, accompanied by Parks and Recreation Director Laura Johnston; Landscape Project Coordinator Tina Fernandes; Councillors Jennifer Innis, Johanna Downey and Rob Mezzapelli; Wayen Noble, representing Caledon Hills Cycling; and Manager of Parks and Landscape Architect Brian Baird. Photo by Bill Rea