



MINESING REEDS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF MINESING WETLANDS

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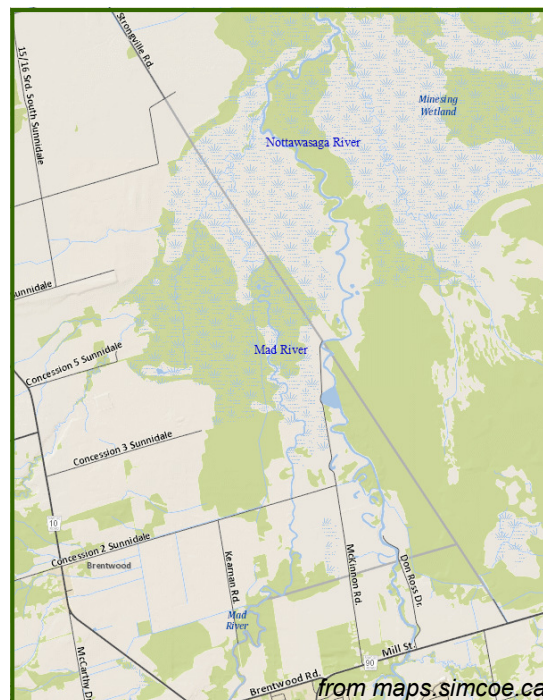
Reopening the Mad

The Mad River starts in the McIntyre Marsh south-west of Singhampton, and flows through Singhampton, Glen Huron, Creemore and Brentwood before joining the Nottawasaga River south of Edenvale. Some parts can be paddled if one wants to portage beaver dams or haul over fallen trees.

The Mad River section through the Minesing Wetlands has not been navigable for several years due to fallen trees, mainly willows. During the summer of 2013 clearing will begin with a target of finishing for spring of 2014. This will open another access to the Ramsar-recognized Minesing Wetlands.

These Boreal wetlands are a significant example of a fen bog in Ontario and home to the largest pure stand of Silver Maple in Ontario.

Stay tuned for progress reports on this ambitious venture and the grand re-opening. Meanwhile, find out more about the many ecological attributes that the Minesing (Ojibwe for island in Lake Edenvale) offers the visitor. Contact the Friends of Minesing Wetlands for information on what to see and do in the wetlands and the surrounding area.



KEEPING YOU INFORMED

☞ Friends of Minesing Wetlands is pleased to take part in Mountain Equipment Co-op's Paddlefest event in Barrie on June 22. This event celebrates the fun of floating, which is something any fan of the Minesing Wetlands can appreciate along the many canoe routes in the area.

☞ Plans are continuing for the acquisition of a 180 acre property at the southeast border of the Minesing Wetlands. For more information on contributing to the fundraising effort, please contact Kristyn Ferguson at 519-826-0068 x.222. It is hoped that this project—a partnership between NVCA and Nature Conservancy of Canada—will be completed by the end of this summer.

☞ Friends will continue to work on current projects over the summer, and look forward to their next formal meeting on Tuesday, September 17. All members or interested public are invited to attend and become more involved in working to promote and conserve the internationally recognized Minesing Wetlands.

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For more information on the Minesing Wetlands or for Friends of Minesing Wetlands membership information, please contact the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority
8195 Line 8, Utopia, ON,
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please visit minesingwetlands.ca



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Welcoming Spring in the Wetlands

Friends of Minesing Wetlands led two successful spring canoe tours through the wetlands. Each of the two weekends—March 30 and April 14—offered very different conditions. Paddlers did navigate a bit of ice in the first tour, and the second tour was actually more flooded than the first due to recent rain. The following article, submitted by Sean Rootham, details the experience on the second tour. FOMW looks forward to planning the fall tours, where we can witness the wetlands preparing for winter slumber.

On April 24 several canoes set off to enjoy the spring floods of the Minesing Wetlands. The water was high and despite the overcast skies so were our spirits. We paddled through the tight turns of the meandering Willow Creek that led us into the middle of the Minesing Wetlands and all its glory. A local natural heritage ecologist informed the group about the importance of the wetlands and how the attenuation of the spring melt prevents flooding further downstream in Wasaga Beach.

The Minesing Wetlands is a special area for migrating

and breeding birds. Species such as the Sandhill Crane, American Bittern and Sora make nests in the reeds of the wetland, and thousands of waterfowl make the Minesing a stopover on their journey further north. On this trip we spotted several species of birds including a juvenile Red-Tailed Hawk, a pair of Sandhill Cranes, Buffleheads, a pair of bald eagles, and a multitude of Tree Swallows skimming the water's surface in search of insects.

At this time of year the colours are quite different than what you will see in the summer months. The Willows, Maples and other tree species have not yet bloomed, and so there are more vibrant reds of the Dogwood and yellow and silver shades of the other shrubs and trees. The water level is so high at this time of year that we were able to paddle through swamp areas of trees, which would typically be unnavigable.

It was a great day that was enjoyed by all. The Minesing Wetlands is an important ecological part of the landscape and early in the season is a truly spectacular time of year to observe it.



Hey Kids!

On a wet weather day when you don't feel like exploring your local wetland, you can create your own! Ducks Unlimited's website has templates and instructions to colour, cut and paste models of several wetland species including Mallard, Great blue heron, Great horned owl, Beaver, Red fox, Yellow-spotted salamander, Leopard frog, Painted turtle, Largemouth bass, and Dragonfly. Please visit www.ducks.ca and follow the links through "education" and "activities," Have fun!



Creature Feature: Phragmites

The Eurasian strain of Phragmites (common reed—pronounced “frag-mahy-teez”) is a highly invasive, tall grass that is invading the edges of wetland habitats in Minesing Wetlands and throughout the watershed. It is commonly found in roadside ditches. The Eurasian strain forms monocultures – crowding out native wetland plants and degrading associated wildlife functions. The invasive strain appears to be making inroads into the northeast portion of Minesing to the north and east of Willow Creek.

To add confusion to this problem, there is also a native strain of Phragmites which is quite rare in the watershed but common in the Minesing fen. The native strain is part of the fen vegetation community and does not form pure monocultures. Some botanists have expressed concern that the Eurasian strain could



hybridize with the native fen Phragmites, resulting in a more aggressive “fen” Phragmites which could impact eastern prairie-fringed orchid (an endangered species) and other rare plants and wildlife in the sensitive fen area. Continued monitoring of Phragmites and consideration of control measures will be a long-term management need for the Minesing Wetlands.

The Phragmites project, while ongoing, has come to a bit of a stand still due to high water levels in the wetland. Once it dries up a little staff can access the stands and re-evaluate the situation. The sites were visited in early May, when the following was noted:

Site #1 looked completely dead. It still stands tall and may be ready for a burn in due time; spot spraying may be an alternative. Site #2 is completely gone. We had a hard time finding where it once was. It will definitely not need any burning.

For more information on the management of Phragmites and other invasive species in the Minesing Wetlands and the Nottawasaga River watershed, please contact the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.

Are you interested in becoming a “Friend of Minesing Wetlands?” Do you frequently visit the Minesing Wetlands, or would someone you know appreciate the gift of a membership and annual pass? Funds raised are directed to the Conservation Lands Reserve. Members receive an annual pass for all Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority lands, and receive “Minesing Reeds” (by post or by email). Memberships are valid for the current calendar year.

Please check the appropriate box for your pass and membership category:

☐ \$20 for an individual ☐ \$50 for a family ☐ \$200 for a Club ☐ \$400 for a corporation

*Please return this form, with a cheque payable to Friends of Minesing Wetlands,
to the N.V.C.A., 8195 Line 8, Utopia, ON, L0M 1T0.*

Name _____

Address/Phone/email _____
