

RATIONALE:

A long-standing target of the Don Watershed Regeneration Council (DWRC) has been to identify the Don River and its tributaries through the installation of river crossing signs along regional and local roads as it flows through each municipality (Step 28 in *Forty Steps to a New Don, 1994*). This is an important undertaking which will heighten people's recognition of the river within the community and encourage greater public awareness and stewardship of local water resources.

The concept of a 'watershed' is significant because it pertains to everyone in some way. At the practitioner level, relating to the watershed context is common practice; however, less than half of our citizens really know what a watershed is, how it affects them and more importantly, how they affect it. Through visible linkage provided by the signs, we should get greater buy-in and a more comprehensive understanding of major issues such as the City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Master - Plan and similar stormwater management initiatives in the '905' portion of the watershed.

BACKGROUND:

As early as 2001, members of the DWRC began advocating for watercourse identification signs in the Don watershed. At the same time, the Town of Richmond Hill Council directed their staff to investigate the idea of posting signs to identify watercourses as they cross under roads throughout the Town. To the delight of the DWRC, in 2003 the Town of Richmond Hill approved the installation of these signs. Ninety-two signs were installed along local and Regional roads across the Town identifying the Rouge, Don and Humber Rivers at a total cost of \$13,500 including installation. Thirty-nine of these signs were installed in the Don watershed. This was a unique initiative and the first of its kind in the Greater Toronto Area.

Shortly thereafter, the Rouge Park Alliance embarked on a similar campaign. Rouge Park commissioned a design firm to develop an agreed-upon sign. Rouge Park municipalities, including the Town of Markham and City of Toronto, cooperated in determining the design elements (font, corporate look, colour, etc.). A final design which met each of the municipalities' design protocols was approved in December 2004 and the signs were installed across the Rouge Park in late 2007 and early 2008.

The agreed upon 'wave' design harmonized a number of features that each municipality sought to be included on a watercourse crossing sign: tributary name, watershed logo and municipality logo. It was also an innovative design with a unique shape, like the meander of a stream, making it different and distinct from other information and directional signage. The Alliance agreed that the shape and design could be used in other watersheds and become the basis for common stream crossing signage across the GTA's watersheds. Given the extensive work undertaken in the Rouge to reach this common goal, with the consent of the Rouge Park Alliance, the DWRC adopted the design for use in the Don watershed shortly after it was approved by the Alliance.

In August 2008, the DWRC and TRCA began meeting with representatives from the Town of Markham and City of Toronto. Throughout the fall, meetings and discussions were held and the project has since become a reality in the Don watershed. The City of Toronto is the first municipality to implement the wave design in the Don watershed.

LOCATIONS & INSTALLATION:

Suitable locations for the watercourse signs were identified by the DWRC for the Don watershed within the City of Toronto. Well-traveled main roads that cross visible tributaries were included in the initial count. Smaller neighbourhood roads may be signed at a later date or as desired.

From Steeles Avenue south, signs have been installed at 64 locations within the Don watershed portion of the City. The signs were produced through the City of Toronto's Parks Forestry and Recreation Division's in-house sign shop and were installed by the City's Transportation Division.

FINANCIAL DETAILS:

Financial details will be cost shared between the City of Toronto and TRCA.

NEXT STEPS:

It is anticipated that signs will be installed with in the Town of Markham shortly. Once unveiled in Toronto and Markham, it is the Don Watershed Regeneration Council's hope that this pilot project will roll out watershed-wide in the remaining Don municipalities and further, to our neighbouring watersheds in the Greater Toronto Region. Other City Councillors have identified an interest in pursuing this project.

CITY OF TORONTO**WEST DON RIVER** 10

Steeles Avenue West (boundary)
 Steeles Avenue West (2nd crossing)
 Finch Avenue West
 Bathurst Street
 Sheppard Avenue West
 Wilson Avenue
 Yonge Street
 Bayview Avenue
 Eglinton Avenue East
 Overlea Boulevard

BURKE BROOK 5

Duplex Avenue
 Yonge Street
 Mt Pleasant Road
 Blythwood Road
 Bayview Avenue

WILKET CREEK 2

York Mills Road
 Lawrence Avenue East

MUD CREEK 4

Mt Pleasant Road
 Moore Avenue
 Governors Road
 Bayview Avenue Extension

EAST DON RIVER 13

Steeles Avenue East (boundary)
 Cummer Avenue
 Finch Avenue East
 Leslie Street
 Sheppard Avenue East
 Duncan Mill Road
 Don Mills Road
 York Mills Road
 Don Valley Parkway
 Lawrence Avenue East
 Eglinton Avenue East
 Don Valley Parkway
 Don Mills Road

DEERLICK CREEK 3

York Mills Road
 Brookbanks Drive
 Don Valley Parkway

GERMAN MILLS CREEK 2

Steeles Avenue East (boundary)
 Leslie Street

NEWTONBROOK CREEK 5

Willowdale Avenue
 Maxome Avenue
 Bayview Avenue
 Finch Avenue West
 Forest Grove Drive

TAYLOR MASSEY CREEK 13

Ellesmere Road
 Warden Avenue
 Bertrand Avenue
 Birchmount Road
 Eglinton Avenue East
 Birchmount Road
 Warden Avenue
 St.Clair Avenue East
 Pharmacy Avenue
 Victoria Park Avenue
 Dawes Road
 O'Connor Drive
 Don Valley Parkway

LOWER DON RIVER 7

Leaside Bridge
 Pottery Road
 Bloor Viaduct
 Gerrard Street East
 Dundas Street East
 Queen Street East
 Eastern Avenue

Total Number of locations 64

Don
Waterfront
Taylor Massey Creek
TORONTO

