SER ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

SERO 2025 Annual General Meeting & Workshop

RESTORATION PROGRESS IN ONTARIO:
Moving towards the UN Decade of Restoration

March 25-26, 2025

The Village at Black Creek, Toronto

SER ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

in association with:

Toronto and Region Conservation Authority

Registration: http://sero.eventbrite.com

A message from SERO

SER Ontario (SERO) is part of an international organization committed to the ecologically sensitive repair and management of ecosystems. While the focus of our efforts is the Ontario region, we strive to share ideas and initiatives across borders and around the globe. Our mission is to promote the practice of ecological restoration and provide educational opportunities and materials for members and for the community at large.

This event is focused on the progress of restoration practitioners in Southern Ontario. As we move towards the United Nations' Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), restoration practitioners, policy makers, non-governmental organizations and the public are encouraged to address the challenges posed by climate change, development, biodiversity loss and politics and also to reflect on decades of progress in the field of restoration.

SERO is excited to provide this opportunity for organizations and individuals to come together to learn and exchange experience. The workshop features field trips, presentations, and networking**.** This will provide an excellent opportunity for students, scientists and practitioners to interact with authorities on various types of restoration.

Kind regards,
Society for Ecological Restoration Ontario

chapter.ser.org/ontario

Certified Ecological Practitioner Program Continuing Education Credits

The **Society for Ecological Restoration's Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner Program**, launched in 2017, certifies practitioners and practitioners-in-training who meet the certification requirements based on knowledge base, experience, references, ethics, and understanding of the foundations of the profession and encourages a high professional standard for those who are designing, implementing, overseeing, and monitoring restoration projects throughout the world.

Both certification types are valid for five years after approval. In order to be recertified, CERPs and CERPITs must earn a minimum of 50 continuing education credits within the five-year period since they were last certified. Appropriate continuing education opportunities are those that keep practitioners abreast of rapidly evolving knowledge, approaches, strategies, techniques and requirements in the field of ecological restoration. Credits may be provided for approved short courses, webinars, symposia, workshops, technical publications, and other events that contribute to the field of ecological restoration

SERO is pleased to announce that conference attendees are eligible for CERP and CERPIT continuing education credits.

For details, see www.ser.org/page/Certification.

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WORKSHOP AGENDA: Tuesday March 25

Time	Title	Agency
9:00 – 9:30	Registration	
9:30 – 9:45	Opening Remarks	
9:45 – 10:00	**Introducing the New Invasive Exotic Plant Species Ranking for Ontario** – Stephen Smith	SERO
10:00 – 10:15	**Growing the Miyawaki forest movement in Canada** – Jenn McCallum	Green Communities Canada
10:15 – 10:30	**Break**	
10:30 – 10:45	**Wetland Restoration at Claireville Conservation Area** – Andrew Ramesbottom	TRCA
10:45 – 11:00	**Carolina fanwort - A case of invasive species naturalization and its potential implications for ecological restoration** – Nicholas (Nick) Weissflog	Trent University
11:00 – 11:15	**2024 Bur Oak Study: Monitoring growth and survival of trees to determine the effectiveness of various planting techniques** – Jessica Kroes	TRCA
11:15 – 11:30	**2023-24 SERO Field Trip Summary**	SERO
12:00 – 12:45	**Lunch** *(provided)*	
12:45 – 1:55	**Restoration Networking Roundtables** This session will allow participants to share and collaborate through open discussion. Table topics will be submitted at the registration desk and attendees will move to their table of interest for an open discussion.	
1:55 – 2:00	**Detecting Vegetative Stress: Remote Sensing in Wetland Restoration and Low Impact Development Sites** – Jenny Hill	Environmental Consultant
2:00 – 2:15	**Farmers and Conservation Authorities Working Together** – Fallon Hayes	TRCA
2:15 – 2:30	**Break**	
2:30 – 2:45	**Enhancing Coldwater Habitat of an East Credit Tributary** – Mark Hendry	Credit Valley Conservation
2:45 – 3:00	**Restoring One of Toronto's Rarest Trees: The Black Willow** - Eric Davies	University of Toronto Faculty of Forestry
3:00 – 3:15	**Field Trip Preview**	SERO
3:15 – 3:30	Open Forum	
3:30 – 3:45	Closing Remarks	

Registration: http://sero.eventbrite.com

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Field Trips Schedule: Wednesday March 26

#	Timing	Title	Location	Host
1	8:30 – 9:30 am	Tour of TRCA's New Head Office	5 Shoreham Drive, North York	TBD – TRCA
	9:30 – 10:30 am	Morning break and travel time		
2	10:30 – 12:00 pm	Boyd Conservation Park Stream Restoration	Boyd Conservation Area, Vaughan	Kelly Jamieson – TRCA
	12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch (BYO) and travel time		
3	1:30 – 3:00 pm	Goreway Wetland and Bur Oak Study Complex	Claireville Conservation Area, Brampton	Jessica Kroes – TRCA
4	3:00 – 4:00 pm	Claireville North Wetland Restoration	Brampton	Andrew Ramesbottom – TRCA

Most field trips involve walking and will proceed rain or shine so please wear appropriate clothing and footwear. Food and beverages will not be provided; bring your own or plan to find a restaurant after or in between field trips. Participants are responsible for their own transportation and are encouraged to carpool.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS

Title	Abstract	Bio
Introducing the New Invasive Exotic Plant Species Ranking for Ontario	SER Ontario is pleased to announce that the latest update to the Invasive Exotic Plant Species Ranking for Ontario is now available. You can download a copy at serontario.org.	**Stephen Smith** is the treasurer of SER Ontario and a member of the chapter since it began. He is the principal author of the new Invasive Exotic Plant Species Ranking for Ontario, and was also the principal author of the previous Ontario invasive plant lists. Stephen operates Urban Forest Associates in Toronto, a small consulting and contracting company in the field of urban forestry and ecological restoration.
Growing the Miyawaki forest movement in Canada	The Miyawaki method, an afforestation method developed by botanist Dr. Akira Miyawaki, has been gained popularity across the globe. The methods involve: 1) robust soil amendments, and 2) dense tree and shrub planting of locally native, climax species, with the goal being to rapidly afforest the site. Green Communities Canada recently initiated the National Mini Forest Pilot, and has supported 32 Miyawaki forests between Vancouver Island and St. John, NB. This presentation will provide an overview of the Miyawaki method and its ecological restoration principles, will identify some preliminary findings	**Jenn McCallum** is the Green Infrastructure Implementation Lead at Green Communities Canada, where she oversees green infrastructure projects across Canada, including 32 mini forests between 2023-2024. She has a background in biology, science communication, and sustainability studies. Her previous work experience includes as a science demonstrator at Science North, as a heritage interpreter with Parks Canada, environmental monitoring and education with two conservation authorities, and conducting public engagement and installing green infrastructure features with GreenUP in Peterborough, Ontario.

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Wetland Restoration at Claireville Conservation Area	Wetland Restoration has taken place over multiple years at Clareville Conservation Area. This presentation summarizes the planning and implementation strategies of the works within the Northern section of Claireville. It relates the wetland works to adjacent TRCA meadow restoration, trail development, and the oak seedling study.	**Andrew Ramesbottom** has been working with TRCA Restoration Projects since 2008 and is currently a Senior Project Manager where he is responsible for managing a team that delivers restoration projects in Peel Region and the City of Toronto. Andrew has managed the development and collection of data for the TRCA Restoration Opportunities Planning database and worked with a team to create the Integrated Restoration Prioritization framework and Waterfront Integrated Prioritization framework.
Carolina fanwort - A case of invasive species naturalization and its potential implications for ecological restoration	I conducted a study to assess the extent to which the impact of the invasive aquatic plant carolina fanwort (*Cabomba caroliniana*) had changed within the last 14 years in Kasshabog lake. I found that, in the absence of management, its biomass had been reduced by 66% and the plant community in which it was present had recovered to pre-invasion levels of diversity. This indicates that this plant is likely largely unproblematic and I suggest it should be considered significantly naturalized and is unlikely worth managing. These results have implication for resource allocation in restoration projects where invasive species management is a component of that restoration.	**Nicholas (Nick) Weissflog** recently finished an M.Sc. at Trent University in Environmental and Life Science with a thesis on the topic of invasive species naturalization. He also grows native wildflowers and collects native plant seeds for restoration projects in the Peterborough and Northumberland region.

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2024 Bur Oak Study: Monitoring growth and survival of trees to determine the effectiveness of various planting techniques	In 2024 the TRCA Ecosystem Management team set out to evaluate the effectiveness of various root stock type (bare root, containerized, reforestation seedling, and seed) that are utilized in restoration planting. We also looked at 3 variations of herbivory protection, mycorrhizae application, and Bobex. The goal is two parted: how does each variable effect plant survival and growth and what is the most successful combination of practices to achieve canopy closure.	**Jessica Kroes** is an Environmental Technologist with the Ecosystem Management team at Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. As a restoration practitioner Jessica has 8 years of experience planning and coordinating terrestrial and aquatic planting programs. In 2024 alone she has collaborated with federal agencies, municipalities, and other stakeholders to successfully implement 40 restoration planting projects in the Toronto area. Jessica has a special focus on post restoration assessments and is passionate about advancing in field ecosystem restoration practices with evidence-based research.
Detecting Vegetative Stress: Remote Sensing in Wetland Restoration and Low Impact Development Sites	This short presentation introduces my upcoming project on using drone-based remote sensing to detect early signs of vegetative stress in landscape restoration and low-impact development (LID) sites. The project focuses on leveraging multispectral imagery and indices like NDVI and MSAVI to identify stressors—such as drought, nutrient imbalances, or invasive species—before they cause significant damage. My aim is to develop a scalable toolkit, to support adaptive management and enhance climate resilience in urban green spaces.	**Jenny Hill** is an educator and researcher with over a decade of experience in green infrastructure and landscape performance evaluation. She holds a PhD in Ecological Engineering from the University of Toronto and is licensed by the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects. Jenny's current research focuses on integrating innovative technologies, such as remote sensing into landscape restoration monitoring. Jenny is passionate about bridging research and practice to support the development of sustainable designed environments and has collaborated extensively with public agencies, NGOs, and academic institutions across Canada.

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SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS

Title	Abstract	Bio
Farmers and Conservation Authorities Working Together	TRCA started their Rural Clean Water Program (RCWP) in 1997 to improve the health of local watersheds. Over the next 20+ years, TRCA worked with farmers and rural landowners, providing technical assistance and financial incentives, to complete over 300 best management practice (BMP) projects. Together, these projects endeavor everyday to enhance water quality, biodiversity, climate resilience, ecosystem health, and reduce erosion. This presentation will highlight some of the BMP categories that TRCA's RCWP focuses on, the benefits they have on the landscape and a detailed example of a recent wetland creation project.	**Fallon Hayes** is the Project Coordinator for the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's Rural Clean Water Program. Since joining TRCA in the summer of 2023, she has been working with farmers and rural landowners across local watersheds to better understand the unique agricultural landscape of the GTA and aid in the on-farm adoption of best management practices. She holds a Master of Environmental Science from the University of Toronto and is particularly interested in the often overlooked intersection of agriculture and the natural environment. Prior working at TRCA Fallon conducted research projects in Vietnam, created a Municipal Pollinator Policy document for the Canadian Wildlife Federation and delved into entrepreneurship.
Enhancing Coldwater Habitat of an East Credit Tributary	Historic and current land use practices in southern Ontario have caused significant coldwater habitat fragmentation. This has caused a steady decline in the quality and quantity of these important habitats. CVC is continuously developing projects that help reconnect this habitat by using nature based solutions. This project in an East Credit tributary, focused on removing a weir on private property that has allowed for improved fish passage, sediment transport, thermal improvements and hazard mitigation.	**Mark Hendry**, Senior Coordinator, Aquatic Restoration (CVC) With over 13 years in aquatic and wetland restoration and monitoring, he has experience completing a wide array of both small and large-scale aquatic and wetland projects on private and public lands. His expertise lies in the construction and implementation of these projects and has experience in supporting all aspects restoration projects.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES & ABSTRACTS

Title	Abstract	Bio
Restoring One of Toronto's Rarest Trees: The Black Willow	Black Willow (*Salix nigra*) is the largest native willow in North America, and one of the rarest native trees in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Currently, there are less than 30 known individuals (excluding plantings), across less than 10 known populations in the GTA. These small remnant populations are susceptible to local extirpation, and are currently uncharacterised in terms of their sex ratio, size, health, and genetic provenance. This presentation provides a brief review of the population status of the Black Willow in the GTA, as well as historical and current efforts to restore it.	**Eric Davies** is a forest ecologist and Managed Forest Plan Approver, specializing in the inventory, restoration, and stewardship of forest ecosystems. Since the mid-90's, Eric has been exploring Ontario's old-growth trees and forests, and collecting their seeds for restoration projects. This continues to be Eric's broad focus, with most of his work aimed at helping local communities restore native trees back to the landscape.

FIELD TRIPS

Tour of TRCA's New Head Office

In 2025, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) is unveiling a brand-new Head Office building that brings cutting-edge sustainability design and practice into one unique structure. The building's mass timber construction, Open Loop Geothermal heating/cooling system, and minimal use of concrete combine to create a building with low greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; the estimated CO2 reduction is roughly equivalent to taking more than 240 cars off the road for a year! Highlights of the building design include cascading water walls and a large, naturally lit atrium, which provides stunning views of the adjacent Black Creek ravine.

Join TRCA Educators on an interactive tour and discover how innovative green technologies and creative design are incorporated into one of the most sustainable buildings in North America!

Location:
TRCA's New Head Office is located at 5 Shoreham Drive, which is across the street from The Village at Black Creek. AGM attendees interested in taking a tour of the building can travel across the parking lot and meet tour leaders at the main entrance of the building. Tour length can be adjusted based on scheduling needs and will be designed to accommodate as many as 30 people at a time.

Timing: 8:30 – 9:30 am

Field Trip Leader:
TBD – Split into two groups

FIELD TRIPS

Boyd Conservation Park Stream Restoration

In 2021, TRCA began undertaking streambank stabilization and riparian plantings in Boyd Conservation Park in Woodbridge, Ontario, wrapping up with an old weir removal in 2024. Boyd Conservation Park has a varied and interesting past as well as ample parking making it a wonderful location for a field trip to explore and discuss restoration within and along this reach of the Humber River identified as critical habitat for SARA fish species.

Location:
Boyd Conservation Area, 8739 Islington Ave Vaughan, ON

Timing: 10:30 – 12:00 pm

Field Trip Leader:
Kelly Jamieson has worked with multiple conservation authorities across southern Ontario since 2001 and is recognized as a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner with SER. Currently, Kelly holds the position of Senior Project Manager with the Restoration & Resource Management Group (RRM) at Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA). Kelly has experience with data collection, planning, designing, and implementing various restoration projects across TRCA's jurisdiction. Kelly is part of the interdisciplinary team at TRCA that manages TRCA's Ecosystem Compensation Program and leads the implementation, tracking, and reporting on compensation restoration.

FIELD TRIPS

Goreway Wetland and Bur Oak Study Complex

The main visit will be to the 2024 Oak Study - Goreway location - referencing presentation from Day 1. We will discuss plot set-up, design, implementation logistics, and monitoring. Additional TRCA projects that will be featured during this site visit are the Goreway wetland (buckthorn thicket transitioned to wetland) and the Goreway meadow restoration project.

Location:
Goreway Parking Lot (Claireville Conservation Area) - Small parking lot off of Goreway drive - 100m on paved trail walking +100m off trail walking.

Timing: 1:30 – 3:00 pm

Fild Trip Leader:
Jessica Kroes is an Environmental Technologist with the Ecosystem Management team at Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. As a restoration practitioner Jessica has 8 years of experience planning and coordinating terrestrial and aquatic planting programs. In 2024 alone she has collaborated with federal agencies, municipalities, and other stakeholders to successfully implement 40 restoration planting projects in the Toronto area. Jessica has a special focus on post restoration assessments and is passionate about advancing in field ecosystem restoration practices with evidence-based research.

FIELD TRIPS

Claireville North Wetland Restoration

Visit the Claireville North Wetland restoration sites to observe various wetland restoration projects in different successional states post restoration. Three sites are easily accessible from the Goreway parking lot and can be combined with TRCA meadow restoration and oak seedling study site visit.

Location:
Goreway Drive North of Queen St E (Brampton Ontario). Parking for 23 cars is available at the Goreway Parking Lot. Two tableland wetland restoration projects are within 5 minutes walk from the parking lot and one floodplain wetland is located about 10 min walk from the parking lot.

Timing: 3:00 – 4:30 pm

Fild Trip Leader:
Andrew Ramesbottom has been working with TRCA Restoration Projects since 2008 and is currently a Senior Project Manager where he is responsible for managing a team that delivers restoration projects in Peel Region and the City of Toronto. Andrew has managed the development and collection of data for the TRCA Restoration Opportunities Planning database and worked with a team to create the Integrated Restoration Prioritization framework and Waterfront Integrated Prioritization framework.

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Special thanks to our generous sponsors and partners:

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Society for Ecological Restoration, Ontario Chapter
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