

Outdoor Education Task Force: Toronto Catholic District School Board

Darryl Gray
Director, Education and Training

May 27, 2021

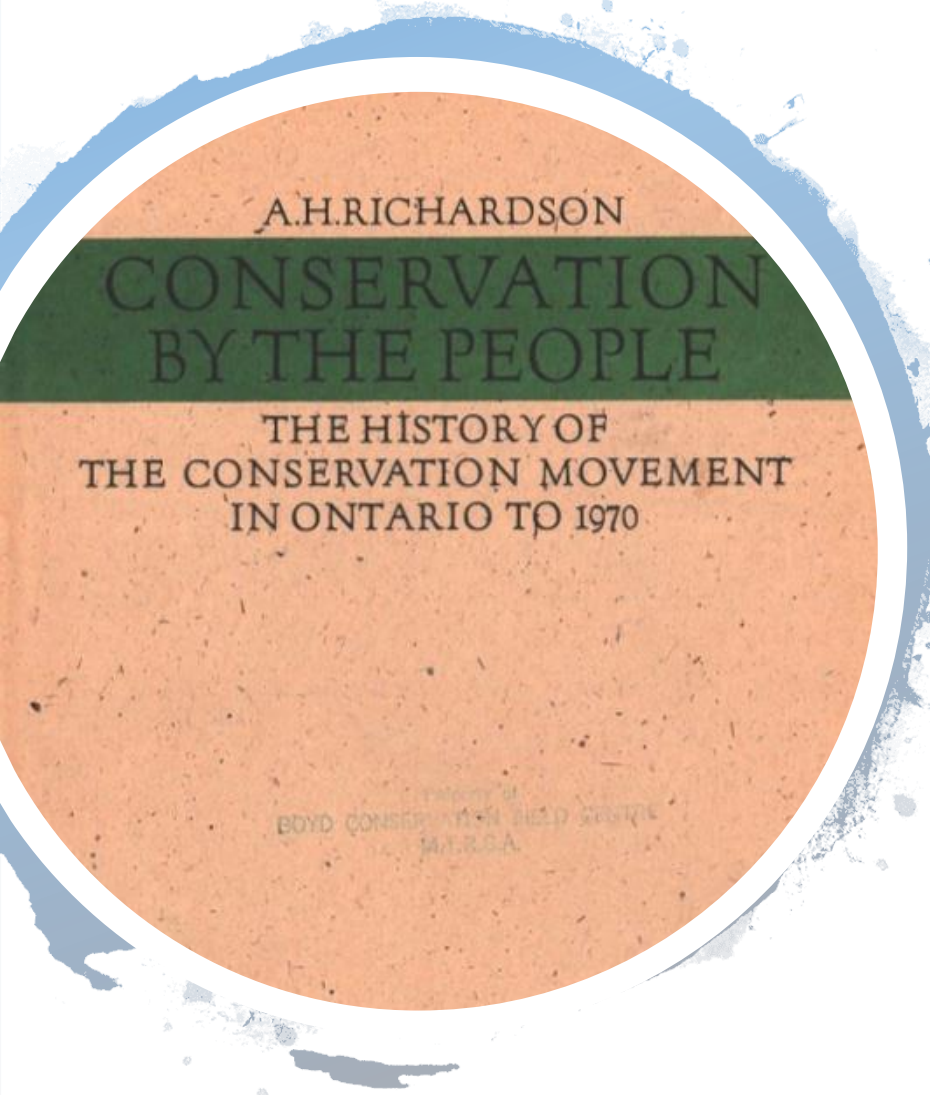
History of Out-of- Classroom Learning



Legislative Milestones

- 1954: Outdoor learning included in Ontario curriculum documents.
- 1960: School Administration Act changes allow School Boards to establish school facilities for the purpose of natural science learning.
- 1965: School Administration Act changes allow School Boards with enrollment greater than 10,000 students to purchase property in any municipality for the purposes of establishing a natural science school.
- 1965: School Boards enabled to conduct programs at natural science schools in co-operation with conservation authorities.
- 1974: School Boards can pay student board and lodging for natural science, conservation or other out-of-classroom learning.
- 1980: School Boards can enter into agreements with conservation authorities for the provision of lands, facilities and programs related to natural science, conservation or other out-of-classroom learning program.
- 2012: \$20M allocated to Outdoor Education in EPO grant.





Key System Milestones

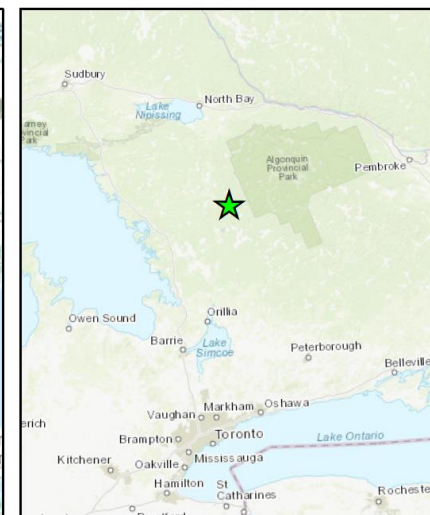
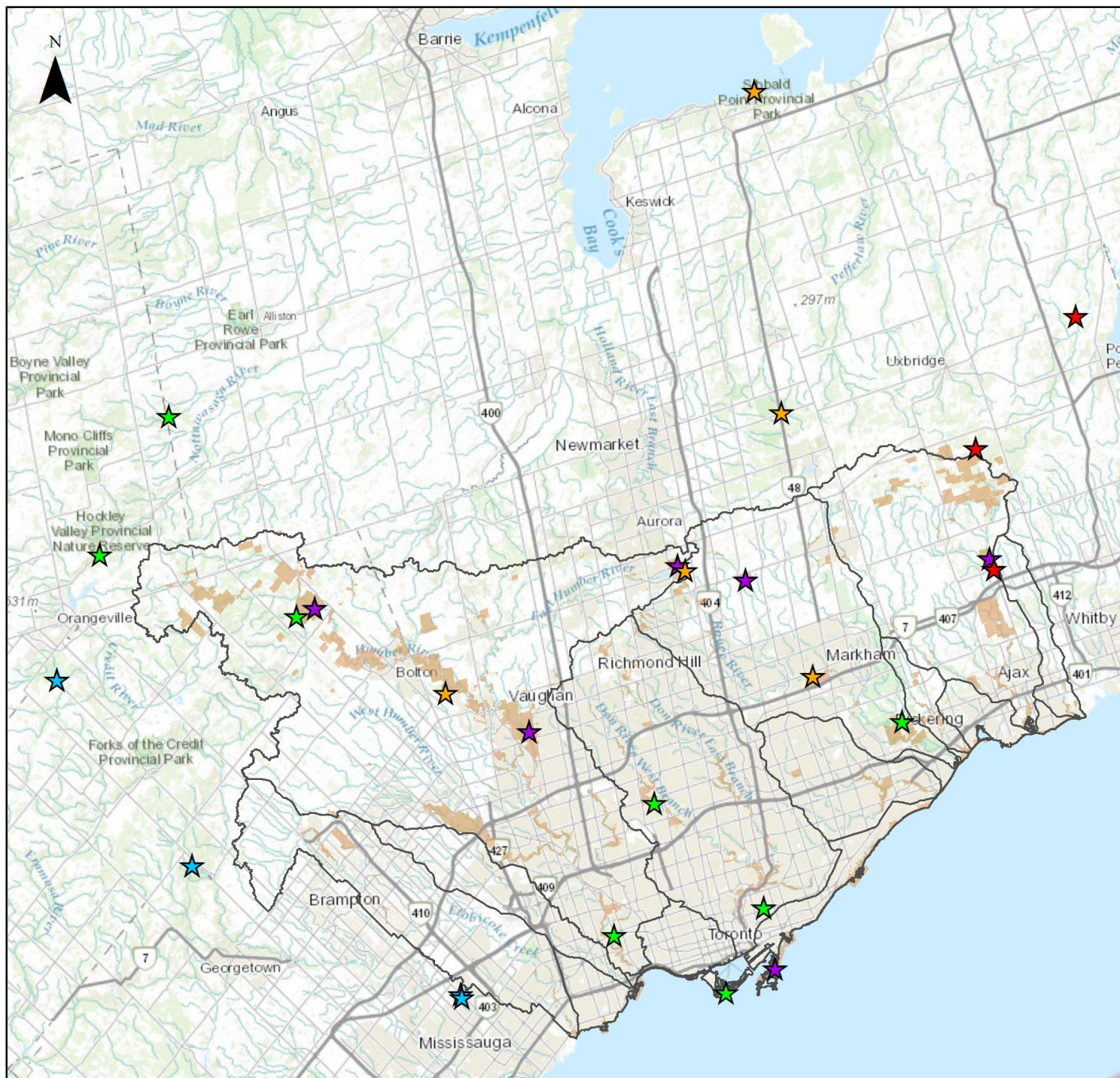
- 1944: London Conference on Conservation includes resolution related to education.
- 1953: York Memorial Collegiate and Humber Valley Conservation Authority deliver first Camp School.
- 1960: Island Natural Science School opens.
- 1963: Albion Hills Field School opens.
- 1967: TDSB purchases property that will become the Boyne River Natural Science School.
- 1967 – 1969: Forest Valley (TDSB), Jack Smythe (PDSB) and Burlington (YRDSB) Outdoor Education Centres open.
- 1974: Boyd Field Centre opens under a multi-stakeholder partnership: TRCA, TDSB, TCDSB and YRDSB.
- 1982: Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre opens at Albion Hills Conservation Area.
- 2016: Swan Lake Outdoor Education Centre opens.

Inventory of GTA OE Centres

Inventory of Conservation Authority and School Board-Operated Outdoor Education Centres

The following is an inventory education centres operated by TRCA and local school boards. Centres in *italics* are either located on, or adjacent to, TRCA-owned greenspace.

Outdoor Education Centre	Operated By	Location	Type	Opened
School Board Operated Centres				
<i>Duffins Creek Environmental Education Centre</i>	DDSB	Claremont	Day	1989
Nonquon Environmental Education Centre	DDSB	Greenbank	Day	1977
Durham Forest Environmental Education Centre	DDSB	Goodwood	Overnight	1978
Old Britannia School House	PDSB	Mississauga	Day (Seasonal)	1982
Brittania Farm Field Centre	PDSB	Mississauga	Day (Seasonal)	1988
GW Finlayson Field Centre	PDSB	Orangeville	Day	1975
Jack Smythe Field Centre	PDSB	Terra Cotta	Day	1969
<i>Forest Valley Outdoor Education Centre</i>	TDSB	Toronto	Day	1967
<i>Hillside Outdoor Education School</i>	TDSB	Toronto	Day	1975
Toronto Urban Studies Centre	TDSB	Toronto	Day	1978
Warren Park Outdoor Education Centre	TDSB	Toronto	Day	1972
<i>Etobicoke Outdoor Education Centre</i>	TDSB	Caledon	Overnight	1982
Island Natural Science Centre	TDSB	Toronto	Overnight	1960
Mono Cliffs Outdoor Education Centre	TDSB	Orangeville	Overnight	1986
Scarborough Outdoor Education School	TDSB	Kearny	Overnight	1978
Sheldon Centre for Outdoor Education	TDSB	Alliston	Overnight	1982
<i>Swan Lake Outdoor Education Centre</i>	YRDSB	Richmond Hill	Day	2016
<i>Milne Outdoor Education Centre</i>	YRDSB	Markham	Day	1990
Sibbald Point Outdoor Education Centre	YRDSB	Sutton	Day	2004
<i>Burlington Outdoor Education Centre</i>	YRDSB	Kleinburg	Day	1968
Vivian Outdoor Education Centre	YRDSB	Ballantrae	Day	1972
Conservation Authority Operated Centres				
<i>Kortright Centre for Conservation</i>	TRCA	Vaughan	Day	1979
<i>Tommy Thompson Park Education Programs</i>	TRCA	Toronto	Day (Seasonal)	2004
<i>Bruce's Mill Maple Syrup Programs</i>	TRCA	Whitchurch-Stouffville	Day (Seasonal)	1968
<i>Claremont Nature Centre</i>	TRCA	Claremont	Overnight	1970
<i>Albion Hills Field Centre</i>	TRCA	Caledon	Overnight	1963
<i>Lake St. George Field Centre</i>	TRCA	Richmond Hill	Day	1979



Centres Operated By

- ★ DDSB
- ★ PDSB
- ★ TDSB
- ★ YRDSB
- ★ TRCA

□ TRCA Jurisdiction

■ TRCA Property

Day Centres: 19

Overnight Centres: 9



Outdoor Education Task Force

Task Force Members

- Durham Catholic District School Board: Trustee Morgan Ste. Marie
- York Region District School Board: Trustee Cynthia Cordova
- York Catholic District School Board: Trustee Jennifer Wigston
- Peel District School Board: Trustee Will Davies
- Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board: Trustee Frank Di Cosola
- Toronto District School Board: Trustee Anu Sriskandarajah
- Toronto Catholic District School Board: Trustee Garry Tanuan
- Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir: Chair Melinda Chartrand
- TRCA (City of Brampton): Regional Councillor Rowena Santos
- TRCA (City of Toronto): Basu Mukherjee



A group of students, mostly wearing yellow and blue life jackets, are participating in a field activity. They are standing on a grassy bank next to a calm lake, pulling a long, white fishing net. The background shows a line of trees and a clear sky. The students are smiling and looking towards the camera.

Mandate

- Develop a framework for the long-term provision out-of-classroom natural science, conservation and environmental learning to the year 2040.
- Provide recommendations to strengthen and enable partnerships that maximize the value of public assets and learning infrastructure.
- Provide expertise and recommendations that strengthen student learning connections between urban and natural environments.
- Provide recommendations related to long-term sustainable financial models and mechanisms.



Vision Statement and Recommendations

Outdoor Education Task Force Vision Statement

We envision a future where...

The students of Ontario have consistent access to quality outdoor education. Educators have the confidence and self-efficacy to make environmental stewardship a pillar of their classroom pedagogy.

Trustees, in partnership with parents and guardians, and in cooperation with TRCA, advocate for system change in how funds are allocated for outdoor education. Advocacy is targeted towards an ecosystem of funders, like the Ontario Ministry of Education, School Boards, and organizations like the OPSBA, OSTA-AECO, OCSTA, AFOCSC, and industry, with the goal of consistent funding to support long-term planning and a breadth of actions that will ensure flexibility for classrooms and whole school boards in their delivery of outdoor education.

Community comes together to create a system of support ensuring impactful out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment. Environmental stewardship is rooted in a global, interconnected understanding that is introspective: building an appreciation for Indigenous knowledge and communities, and understanding the role of colonialism on our understanding, behaviours and relationship with the land, and nurturing the global competencies to develop solutions to local, global, and intercultural issues related to environmental sustainability.

Generations of environmental stewards are fostered, sparked, nourished and sustained with outdoor education experiences; contributing to a citizenry with a life-long appreciation for nature and land, and the agencies required to take actions that ensure a viable future for ourselves and the environment.



AT HOME WITH NATURE

Nature in Your Classroom:
KINDER

For Kindergarten Classes
Wednesday, March 24
YouTube Live at 2 p.m.



AT HOME WITH NATURE

Nature in Your Classroom:
BIODIVERSITY

For Grade 6 Classes
Wednesday, November 4
YouTube Live at 10 a.m.



AT HOME WITH NATURE

Nature in Your Classroom:
BECOME A NATURE CHAMPION

For Grades 4-8
Wednesday, March 10
YouTube Live at 2 p.m.





Where TRCA, working with our partners, is the...

Catalyst that brings stakeholders together to foster environmental stewardship that is rooted in equity and anti-oppression and makes access to out-of-classroom learning related to natural science, conservation and the environment a reality for all students living in TRCA and school board communities.

Convener of important conversations and facilitator of taking actions that will link school boards to school boards, organizations with school boards and school boards to organizations and to TRCA - based on valuable input from council members, community liaisons and educators. This work shifts the culture of the education community - with students, parents, guardians, classroom educators, administrators and central staff - to one that champions the importance of outdoor education.

Recommendations

Recommendation #1: Establish Shared Governance Model – Natural Science and Education Committee as a Subcommittee of Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's Board of Directors

Recommendation #2: Establish Consistent Access and Curricular Standards Across TRCA and School Boards

Recommendation #3: Establish a Unified Performance Measurement System

Recommendation #4: Advance Shared-Ownership and Access Models That Enhance and Sustain an Overall Out-Of-Classroom Learning System

Recommendation #5: Develop a Long-Term Equitable Access Financial Plan





www.trca.ca