



Black Ash Creek is designated as an 'urban stream' ecosystem.

The photographs show the extent of Phase II and detail of the completed channelization.

Project Facts

Client: Town of Collingwood and NCVA

Scope of Work:

- Detailed and hydraulic design
- Tendering
- Contract management
- Construction supervision
 - Channelization
 - Fish habitat
 - Sanitary sewer and watermain relocation
 - Block wall construction
 - Landscaping

Project Cost: \$2,100,000 (2003)

Black Ash Creek Flood Control – Phase II Town of Collingwood and NCVA

In 1995, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NCVA) developed the 'Nottawasaga Valley Watershed Management Plan' to deal with water-management issues across the entire watershed. One of the recommendations of the plan was the preparation of sub-watershed studies for the Blue Mountain Watershed, which includes Black Ash Creek.

Historically, during major storm events and spring runoff, Black Ash Creek overtopped its banks and spilled in an eastward direction causing shallow flooding in the Town of Collingwood. Initial designs to mitigate the flooding consisted of a combination of channelization and dykes. Since Black Ash Creek is the largest watercourse entering Collingwood harbour, the potential impact on fish habitat from the proposed channelization project was recognized as a significant issue. In response, a 1995 Environmental Study Addendum report revised the approach to the project. The original flood control project was redesigned as a channel only, below original ground, to incorporate fisheries concerns and devise a plan to effectively manage Black Ash Creek as an 'urban stream' ecosystem.

The project was divided into three phases. Phase I, was the replacement of the Highway 26 Bridge over Black Ash Creek, a project undertaken by the Ainley Group in 1996. Phase II, completed in September 2003, includes the channelization and restoration of Black Ash Creek from a point near Collingwood Harbour, extending upstream under the Highway 26 Bridge for 1.4 kms. Phase III will continue the channelization of the creek for another 2.5 kms. The Black Ash Creek Flood Control project, while addressing the Town's storm water management and flood control issues, also has a direct impact on the redevelopment of adjacent commercial property.

The designation of Black Ash Creek as an 'urban stream' ecosystem meant a number of restoration guidelines for stream rehabilitation had an impact on the methodology of construction activities. These guidelines included:

- Limitation of in-stream works – annual fish migration
- Protection of fish – live catch and release
- Clearing and grubbing – no burning permitted on site
- Erosion control – minimizing sediment transportation
- Water handling – temporary dams and drainage.