



Celebrating
60
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News Release

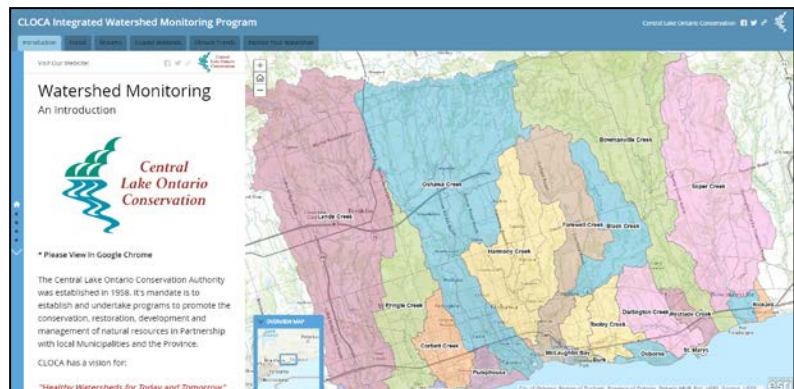
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Central Lake Ontario Conservation's New Integrated Watershed Monitoring Program

Have you ever wondered about the health of the watershed in which you live? Watershed health can be measured by looking at the condition of local natural resources like our wetlands, forests and streams. Central Lake Ontario Conservation (CLOCA) has been collecting data on watershed health for the past 25 years to understand how healthy our watersheds are and how they are changing over time. In 2016, staff initiated a re-evaluation of our current monitoring programs in an effort to coordinate our science and provide meaningful interpretation to you, our watershed community. The result is the new Integrated Watershed Monitoring Program (IWMP).

The new IWMP involves collecting data on 16 indicators for forest, wetland and stream ecosystems to understand current conditions that contribute to overall watershed health. "An example of an indicator for the forest ecosystem is breeding birds, while an indicator for the stream ecosystem is water quality," says Dan Moore, Aquatic Biologist for CLOCA. "These indicators, collectively, provide us with the science to better understand overall watershed health. In order to better connect to our watershed community, we have developed an online website with an interactive tool called a Storymap. This is designed to take the IWMP to a user friendly platform to share data, interactive maps, photos and videos," he adds. The goal for the Storymap is to help the public, students, consultants, stakeholders and our municipal partners explore our new IWMP and the science behind monitoring overall watershed health. The Storymap is online at www.cloca.com.



A screenshot of the IWMP Storymap.

The Storymap currently highlights 2017 data and provides a summary of each indicator. Under the Climate Trends page, we compare current to historical data for temperature and precipitation. Our intention is to continue building the Storymap with the data we collect annually for each of the ecosystem indicators. The Storymap provides a better understanding of watershed health so we can work together to make improvements and positive change. Through projects like this, Central Lake Ontario Conservation continues to inspire the community toward our vision of *healthy watersheds for today and tomorrow*.

Healthy watersheds for today and tomorrow.