

Island Lake Fishing Derby to return with more than \$7.500 in prizes

Written By Sam Odrowski

Anglers are invited to reel in a big catch and compete for prizes at the annual Island Lake Bass Derby, taking place July 11 and 12 from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The two-day catch-and-release event is hosted in partnership by Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), the Credit Valley Conservation Foundation (CVCF), and Friends of Island Lake (FOIL), a volunteer sub-committee of the foundation. Proceeds support conservation, recreation and enhancement projects at Island Lake Conservation Area.

“Island Lake's Annual Bass Derby is a highlight of the summer and a fantastic way to bring our community together outdoors,” said Gordo Slater, chair of FOIL. “Whether you're an experienced angler or trying fishing for the first time, the derby is a chance to get out on the lake for a day of fun and compete for great prizes. Most importantly, participants are making a real difference because everyone is supporting improvements at Island Lake.”

Up to 300 participants are expected to take part over the weekend. More than \$7,500 in prizes will be awarded, including top-catch prizes for the 10 largest bass, as well as categories for pike, perch and crappie. Youth divisions for anglers 15 and under will also be featured, with daily trophy presentations.

Registration includes daily park admission and access to the boat launch.

Participating anglers must have a valid Ontario fishing licence and a live well that is aerated. Paddle craft rentals and worms are available for an additional fee at the park rental shop.

Early-bird registration is open until July 2. Registration is available online until July 10, or in person at Island Lake Conservation Area up to the day of the event, space permitting.

The derby is part of a broader \$1-million fundraising campaign supporting long-term planning, infrastructure upgrades and visitor experience improvements at Island Lake Conservation Area.

Funds raised through the event directly support projects aimed at improving recreation, enhancing conservation assets and strengthening public access to nature. FOIL has contributed more than \$2.6 million in cash, in-kind labour, materials and fundraising support toward improvements at the park to date.

“The Island Lake Bass Derby is a wonderful example of how community investment can create lasting impact,” said Dayana Gomez, executive director of CVCF. “Every registration, sponsorship and volunteer contribution helps enhance Island Lake Conservation Area for current and future generations.”

“We are grateful to the Friends of Island Lake for their leadership and to Sunshine Landscaping, this year's presenting sponsor, for their commitment to conservation, recreation and community stewardship.”

For more information on registration, sponsorship and prizes, visit www.islandlakederby.ca.