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Upcoming tree-planting initiatives benefitting local ecosystem

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The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA) is looking for volunteers to help with two upcoming tree-planting initiatives.

On Oct. 15 from 9 a.m. until noon, NVCA staff will be hosting community tree-planting events in both Shelburne and Mulmur. Volunteers will be given an orientation and tutorial on tree planting before helping plant around 635 native trees and shrubs, 200 of which will be in Shelburne and 435 in Mulmur.

?These tree plantings are really important because we're trying to increase the amount of trees and shrubs that are beside the rivers,? said Laura Wensink, river restoration technician for NVCA. ?We really have a wonderful opportunity as a community to come together and to really benefit the local ecosystem.?

In Shelburne, the NVCA will be planting 15 different species of trees and shrubs including oak, birch, willow, mountain ash and elderberry, along the banks of Walter's Creek.

?Walter's Creek is one of the most important cold-water tributaries of the Boyne River, and it really does help the health of the Boyne River further downstream,? explained Wensink. ?One of the ways that we are thinking about the resiliency of this creek in the face of climate change, is how we can keep it cold. We're going to keep it cold by planting trees and shrubs along the banks of the creek in order to shade the river and keep it cool.?

In Mulmur, the tree planting initiative is part of the final steps of a larger river restoration project by the Nottawasaga Valley Conversation Authority.

For the last five years, the Nottawasaga Valley Conversation Authority has been running a project known as the Nottawasaga River Restoration Program, which looks to improve water quality, native fish habitats, and stabilize stream banks from erosion. A key component of the NVCA's large river restoration project has been its tree-planting initiatives.

Wensink said the NVCA has stabilized 150 metres of the Pine River through the project, and that they're now planting trees along to stabilized banks in order to shade the river and keep it cold.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conversation Authority has held a number of tree-planting initiatives throughout the years including in Mansfield and Hockley Valley. The Oct. 15 events will be the final tree plantings of the year.

?As the leaves are starting to change and drop off of our plants, it's actually a less stressful time to transplant. We're hoping that all of these trees and shrubs will be dormant when we transplant them so less shock to the plants,? said Wensink.

The event will take place rain or shine. Volunteers are encouraged to bring closed-toed shoes or rubber boots as well as weather appropriate clothes, sunscreen, bug spray, water, a lunch, and work gloves. It is recommended to wear long and light-coloured clothing for tick safety.

Registration is required before the events and can be done by visiting the NVCA website at www.nvca.on.ca. Students are reminded to bring their community service volunteer forms.

?Planting trees is one of the best and most fun ways to get involved, to benefit your local biodiversity, and to take tangible action

against climate change,? said Wensink. ?It's a really beautiful thing when we can all come together to plant trees.?

For more information on the tree planting initiatives in Shelburne and Mulmur visit www.nvca.on.ca.