

Intro to ONES by Mike Puddister, Credit Valley Conservation

I also want to thank everyone for coming to this Pre-Latornell Session, the Steering Committee has been very encouraged by this demonstrated interest in the subject matter and hopefully this is also a reflection of your interest in the establishment of a network.

The idea for ONES, or something like it, actually got its inspiration from a workshop hosted by Professor Shashi Kant at the University of Toronto in August of 2009.

For that event, Professor Kant assembled a wide range of speakers and participants to discuss the current state and understanding of incentives for the provision of ecosystem services in Ontario and elsewhere and to help scope a research proposal that he was developing at the time.

The two day workshop was attended by a 100 or so representatives from provincial and federal agencies, conservation authorities, municipalities, a wide range of non-governmental organizations and academia...similar in many respects to the group assembled here this morning.

The interest in the subject was clearly evident; given the discussion and energy in the room...the need to keep the conversations going (whether or not the research proposal was funded) was clear. (Unfortunately the proposal was not approved by SSHRC)

With a little encouragement, Professor Kant hosted a follow up meeting of interested parties in June of 2010 to discuss the possibility of establishing an EG&S Network in Ontario.

The 30 or so in attendance agreed on the value of a network and that a smaller working group should be established to develop a Terms of Reference, which would then be circulated to all interested parties for review and input.

In November of last year 10 organizations (representing a good cross-section of previous participants) were invited to a working group meeting where a draft of the Terms of Reference was prepared.

Those invited were:

1. MNR
2. Peel Region
3. Ontario Forestry Association
4. Eastern Ontario Model Forest
5. Ontario Federation of Agriculture
6. Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation
7. ALUS
8. Conservation Ontario
9. Credit Valley Conservation and
10. University of Toronto

Beyond drafting a Terms of Reference, the working group also discussed the need to plan a forum which could be used to re-energize the discussions and sharing of information related to EG&S in Ontario and to officially launch the network and also to establish a web site presence as a vehicle for encouraging ongoing dialogue.

Several follow up meetings or conference calls were held to get us to where we are today.

On the screen is the final version of the Terms of Reference for ONES, the Ontario Network on Ecosystem Services

1. **Mission** – To help **advance research and the exchange of knowledge and information** related to ecosystem services with the goals of: (i) **influencing policies and programs**; and (ii) encouraging the increased **awareness and provision** of these services for the benefit of society.
2. **Purposes:** The network's purposes will be:
 - a. To provide **a platform** for people and organizations interested in ecosystem services **to work collectively** towards achieving the mission;
 - b. **facilitate** the exchange of knowledge and information related to ecosystem services;
 - c. **raise awareness** about ecosystem services and their benefits to society; and

d. **identify and act on needs and opportunities** related to the mission of the network.

(> the network is not intended to participate in advocacy, be used to formally petition governments or to oppose development applications...the focus is information sharing, awareness building and partnerships)

3. Membership: open to interested **individuals or organizations***.

4. Steering Committee: The working group will work as a Steering Committee for a period of two years.

** This is intended to include formal membership by an organization and/or membership by an individual (e.g. staff person) associated with an organization (i.e. agency, group, etc)*

Thanks to Eric Miller, there is a web site is up and running at: **onecosystemservices.ca** which contains a blog, background on ONES, EG&S related news and links to research.

But this is just the beginning...it really must be further developed or populated by you...those that are members of ONES and those who will be.

Now I would like to turn it over to Jo-Anne Rzadki who will lead us in a social mixer.