

Junction Creek  
Stewardship Committee



Comité d'intendance  
du ruisseau Junction

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019



*“Creating hope through environmental restoration”*

## MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

2019 marked the Junction Creek Stewardship Committee's 20<sup>th</sup> year of operation. In 1999 the Junction Creek Stewardship Committee was formed by a small group of citizens concerned about the health of a degraded local waterway, commonly known as 'Junk' Creek. This eyesore was a catchall for grocery carts and garbage with limited flora and fauna. We began working with the community to restore Sudbury's landscape and waterways, and the creek grew into the valued natural asset it is today.



With the creative genius of the stewardship coordinators and guidance from dedicated Board Members, we raised funds, developed strategies, collected data and engaged citizens. Our guiding principles and our collaboration with the community helped us succeed, and the creek began a long journey towards restored life and health.

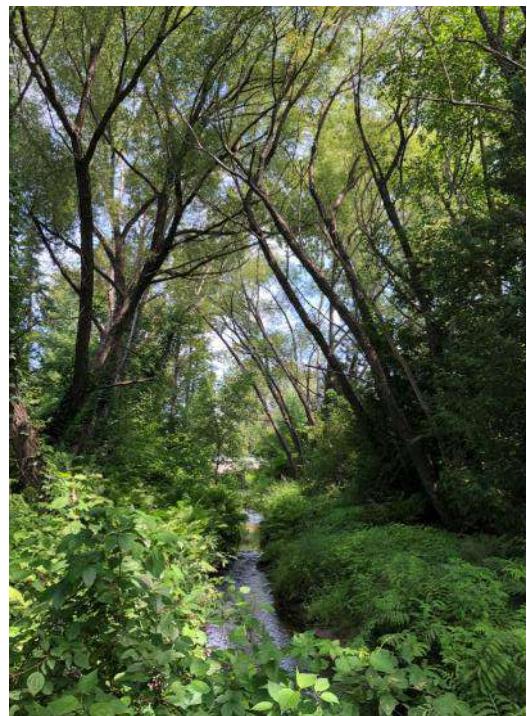
In 2019 we took the time to celebrate our collective accomplishments and awards for creek restoration and environmental stewardship. Our research has encompassed many aspects of discovery such as new sightings of fish, the return of species at risk, and the delineation of a Provincially Significant Wetland in our urban core. Our restoration efforts have transformed the creek to a waterway park with trails supporting year-round activities including eco-tourism, active transportation, nature hikes, student studies, and various opportunities for outdoor recreation. Our educational programs and efforts to connect the community to Junction Creek has led to an increased level of awareness and appreciation, building creek stewards for the long-term conservation of the watershed.

But our work is not done. We are excited to continue to develop programs that will help with climate change, and that will better the health of our community. Upcoming programs will include reducing plastic waste in our waterways, revitalizing shoreline habitat, and enhancing stream monitoring programs. We look forward to continuing to inspire positive change and support Greater Sudbury's commitment to environmental stewardship.

Sincerely,

Rachelle Niemela  
Paula Worton  
Erin Calder

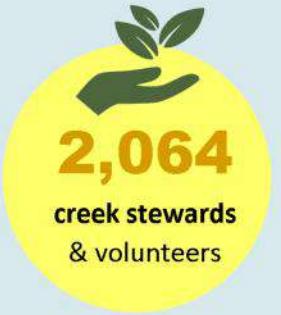
*Co-chairs, Junction Creek Stewardship Committee*



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# 2019 AT A GLANCE TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



# JUNCTION CREEK STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

## RESEARCH • RESTORATION • EDUCATION • CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY



The Junction Creek Stewardship Committee is a not-for-profit organization focused on the restoration of a large urban waterway in Greater Sudbury, known as Junction Creek. The Committee was formed by a group of concerned citizens in 1999, incorporated in 2008, and became a Canadian registered charity in 2019.

**Our Vision:** "A healthy and revitalized Junction Creek ecosystem"

### Our Mission

"To lead the way for improving and maintaining a healthy Junction Creek watershed by:

- conducting research and monitoring programs to create understanding and inform sound decisions
- organizing restoration activities to recover and protect the watershed
- providing educational opportunities to share knowledge and promote its ecological, economic, and health benefits
- connecting the community with Junction Creek to empower long-term stewardship"



## Board of Directors 2019

A dedicated group who volunteer their time to oversee the activities of the JCSC. Their mentoring, guidance, and support are gratefully recognized by staff.

Rachelle Niemela – President  
IT Specialist, Cambrian College (retired)

Paula Worton – Secretary  
Registered Nurse (retired)

Erin Calder – Treasurer  
Environmental Consultant, Klohn Crippen Berger

Allison Merla – Director  
Senior Environmental Analyst, Vale Canada Ltd.

Brigitte Angster-Beckett – Director  
Technologist, Biology Department Laurentian University (retired)

Peter Beckett – Director  
Wetland Ecologist, Biology Department Laurentian University

Franco Mariotti – Director  
Staff Scientist, Science North (retired)

Kayla Stewart – Director  
City of Greater Sudbury

Margaret Hoar – Director  
Professor of Michener/Laurentian Radiation Therapy (retired)

Gerard Courtin – Director  
Environmental Biologist and Forensic Botanist, Laurentian University (semi-retired)

Jorge Virchez – Director  
Professor School of Northern Community Studies (Geography)



## Staff 2019

Miranda Virtanen  
Executive Director

Brandon Holden  
Project Coordinator

Alexandra Stankiewicz  
Science Communication & Outreach Intern

Lianne Girard  
Environmental Restoration Intern

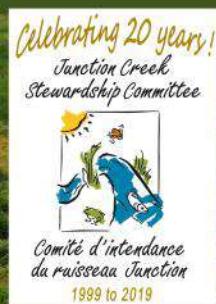
Kelsey Ettinger  
Environmental Stewardship Assistant

Karlee Gravelle  
Environmental Educator Assistant

Elijah Jeffery  
St. Benedict Catholic School Co-op Placement

Jyoti Pokharel, Aswini Shaji, Manpreet Kaus  
Cambrian College Placement Students (volunteer)





# Junction Creek

## The Urban Waterway of Greater Sudbury

### A valued natural asset:

- Flood management & drinking water
- Recreation & eco-tourism
- Historical significance
- Natural heritage
- Species at risk

10 Wards

52 km

Drains into the Vermillion River,  
then onwards to the Great Lakes.



28,565 students and volunteers



### MONITORING & RESEARCH



28,700 brook trout  
re-introduced

- Annual Brook Trout release
- Monthly water sampling
- Water quality monitoring: fish & benthos studies
- Wetland evaluations, biodiversity projects, and species at risk studies



38,533 trees & shrubs planted



80,225 kg of garbage removed

### RESTORATION ACTIVITIES & PROJECTS

- Litter monitoring, garbage clean-ups and inventory
- Native tree and shrub planting
- Shoreline stabilization and habitat restoration
- Construction of water retention ponds
- Invasive species management

### COMMUNITY EDUCATION, AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT

- Bilingual school programs, community workshops and educational material
- Connecting the community with nature (guided walks, citizen science events, etc.)
- Encourage active lifestyles and recreation through the exploration of the Junction Creek Waterway Park Trail
- Engage community partners and volunteers in restoration and research programs

*Creating hope through environmental restoration*



# A Valued Natural Asset

The Junction Creek watershed is a valued natural asset in Greater Sudbury. It serves as a wildlife corridor and accessible green space in an urban centre where past development has compromised its health. The watershed plays an important role in flood management, offers recreational and research opportunities, has historical and cultural significance, and supports diverse natural heritage. Restoring the watershed to a thriving ecosystem results in mutual benefits towards the health of the community and economic growth.

## Flood Management and Drinking Water

The Junction Creek watershed is over 32,900 hectares in size with five tributaries, connections to numerous lakes, rivers, and municipal drinking water sources. The watershed provides natural flood management through storage and filtration of excess water by wetlands and vegetation. The trees and shrubs along the creek stabilize the shorelines to prevent erosion and degradation of water quality. The creek is also utilized by storm water systems and sewage treatment facilities. Always remember to use creek friendly practices to help reduce pollutants from entering our waterways.

## Recreation and Eco-tourism

The creek is central in the community and features the Junction Creek Waterway Park trail along most of its urban reaches. Over 60,000 Sudburians live within a 10-minute walking distance from the Junction Creek Waterway Park trail. The Junction Creek parkway allows residents and visitors to connect with the ecosystems surrounding the creek, encouraging citizens to get active, explore the trails, and enjoy the natural beauty of Greater Sudbury while attaining healthier lifestyles.



## Habitat and Wildlife

The Junction Creek watershed is home to diverse vegetation communities and wetlands, creating habitat for a range of critters including 'at-risk' species. The Ponderosa Wetland is a natural gem in the centre of the city and due to its high value for both human utility and ecosystem function, has been classified in 2018 as a Provincially Significant Wetland following a stringent provincial evaluation we conducted in 2016-17.



# RESEARCH & MONITORING

## HIGHLIGHTS 2019

- Fish community study completed
- NEW fish species sighting!
- Brook Trout habitat surveys
- Benthic monitoring program established
- Analysis of water chemistry data 2004-2018
- Implementation of thermal data loggers
- Marsh Monitoring Program revisited



We continue to maintain strong research programs and long-term monitoring initiatives to gain a better understanding of the Junction Creek watershed and for guidance in restoration and management. We collaborate with local experts and stakeholders to develop projects, collect data and produce reports on the current state of various ecological components of the upper reaches of Junction Creek.



## RESEARCH IN JUNCTION CREEK

'Stream indicators' are features of the aquatic environment that reveal whether the stream is healthy and when it is changing. The JCSC strives to maintain monitoring programs to collect data on stream indicators and conditions, including:

- **WATER CHEMISTRY:** Conduct monthly water sampling at 10 sites in Junction Creek between Garson and Kelly Lake, and implement ongoing water monitoring via data loggers when able to.
- **BENTHIC MONITORING:** Collect annual benthic samples using Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network protocols to determine the aquatic macroinvertebrates (bugs) present in the creek.
- **FISH COMMUNITY MONITORING:** Conduct fish community studies every 3 to 5 years to assess species presence and distribution in the upper reaches of Junction Creek.
- **MARSH MONITORING:** Conduct annual acoustic surveys of frog calls during the Spring to help track long-term trends in species diversity.



# RESEARCH IN JUNCTION CREEK

In 2019 the Junction Creek field crew collected data to enhance long-term stream monitoring programs and provided assistance to other research projects being carried out in the Junction Creek watershed.

## FISH STUDY

A fish community assessment was conducted over the summer as part of a 'Monitoring and Promoting Urban Stream Health' project supported by WWF-Canada's Loblaw Water Fund. The project integrated an undergraduate thesis project with Laurentian University student Stephanie Theriault and professor Dr. Mery Martinez. Fish were captured using minnow traps and electrofishing, they were then measured and photographed before being released. See page 10 for results.



## BENTHIC MONITORING PROGRAM

Benthic macroinvertebrates, more commonly described as aquatic bugs, play an important role in the assessment of aquatic ecosystems and stream health. Different species exhibit various tolerances to pollution and can therefore be used as indicators of water quality based on their presence/absence. This past September, the JCSC took part in a 2-day CABIN training session to obtain certification in benthic sampling. The course was kindly offered through a community based monitoring initiative known as 'STREAM DNA' by WWF-Canada, Living Lakes Canada, Environment and Climate Change Canada, Genome Canada and the University of Guelph. Samples are currently being analyzed at the University of Guelph, stay tuned for results.



## TURTLE RESEARCH

Junction Creek is home to 3 species of turtles, the Painted Turtle, Snapping Turtle, and Blanding's Turtle. Steph Delay, a 4th year biology student at Laurentian University, spent the summer studying turtle populations in the Ponderosa Wetland as part of her honours thesis. The JCSC was happy to support her research with resources and data from past JCSC studies.

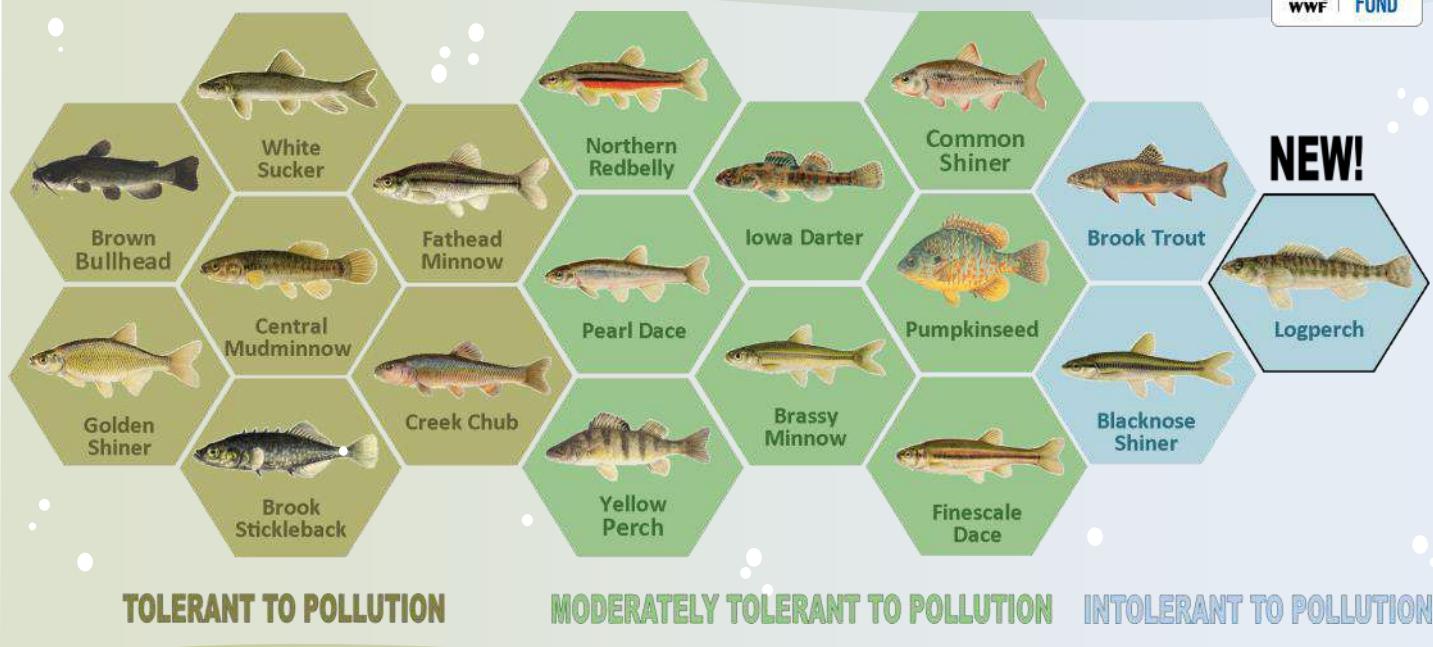


## METAL MOBILITY RESEARCH

CanmetMINING Natural Resources Canada is researching the effects of drought on metal mobility in sediments to better adapt mining to climate change. The JCSC provided local knowledge for biosensor placement, conducted site monitoring, and collected water samples for the project.

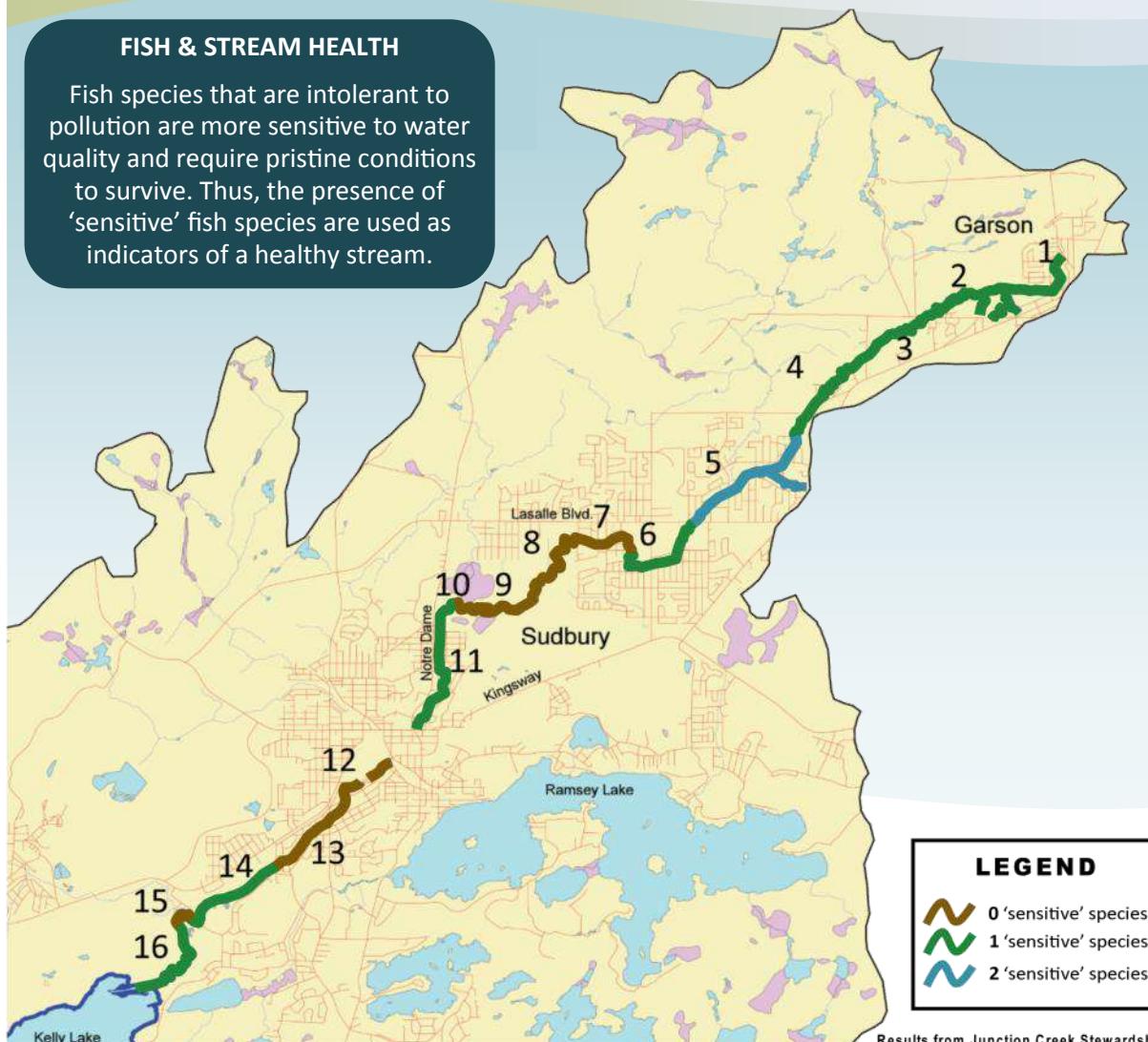
# 2019 FISH STUDY: AN INDICATION OF STREAM HEALTH

## Fish Species Found in the Upper Reaches of Junction Creek



### FISH & STREAM HEALTH

Fish species that are intolerant to pollution are more sensitive to water quality and require pristine conditions to survive. Thus, the presence of 'sensitive' fish species are used as indicators of a healthy stream.



Stream Health by Reach		
Reach #	# of Fish Species	# Sensitive Fish Species
1	12	1
2	9	1
3	9	1
4	14	1
5	14	2
6	12	1
7	10	0
8	5	0
9	10	0
10	9	0
11	11	1
12	4	0
13	7	0
14	9	1
15	7	0
16	11	1

1 – 5 species present  
6 – 10 Species Present  
11 – 15 Species Present  
>15 Species Present

# STREAM HEALTH IN JUNCTION CREEK

The collection, management, and analysis of data is a collaborative effort with local experts and academic institutions including the City of Greater Sudbury, Vale Canada Ltd., Cooperative Freshwater Ecology Unit, Living with Lakes Centre, Laurentian University, and Cambrian College.

Based on initial analysis of recent data, the upper reaches of Junction Creek are showing signs of improvement in stream health. Stay tuned for a more detailed stream health report this Fall.

## FISH COMMUNITIES



### INCREASING DIVERSITY



### INCREASING DISTRIBUTION



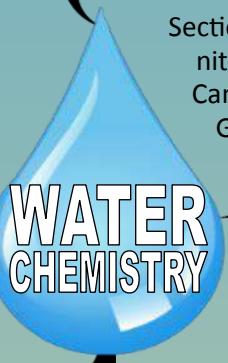
### INCREASING PRESENCE OF FISH SPECIES THAT REQUIRE CLEANER WATER QUALITY

## DECLINING LEVELS OF COPPER

Average concentration of copper has declined but is still above the Provincial Water Quality Objectives Standard of 0.005mg/L

## DECLINING LEVELS OF NITRATES

Sections of the creek with nitrate levels above the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines of 13 mg/L have improved



## DECLINING LEVELS OF PHOSPHORUS

Average phosphorus levels have declined and are closer to Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for 'meso-eutrophic' range of 0.020-0.035 mg/L

## STABLE pH LEVELS

Average pH levels are within the 'healthy stream' range of 6.5-8.5

### NUMBER OF SPECIES 1993 FISH STUDY

10



### NUMBER OF SPECIES 2004 FISH STUDY

14



### NUMBER OF SPECIES 2008 FISH STUDY

16



### NUMBER OF SPECIES 2019 FISH STUDY

17



Tolerant to pollution

Moderately tolerant

Intolerant to pollution

Fish study conducted in the main stem of Junction Creek, Garson to Kelly Lake

# ENVIRONMENTAL RESTORATION



## HIGHLIGHTS 2019

- **2,516 kg** of garbage removed from the creek and its shorelines
- **150** native trees & shrubs planted
- **150** seedlings planted
- **5** invasive species removal events

We develop data-based restoration and conservation programs, identifying areas that require improvement and prioritizing efforts to recover and protect the shoreline habitat and biodiversity of Junction Creek. We use ecological approaches to restore impaired habitat and invite citizens to participation in creek projects.

## RIPARIAN HABITAT RESTORATION

The land surrounding waterways is known as the riparian zone and plays an important role in water quality and stream health. Historic logging and ongoing development have impaired this area, resulting in bank erosion, lost plant communities, and contaminated runoff throughout the urban reaches of Junction Creek. To rehabilitate the riparian habitat, restoration activities such as tree planting, shoreline stabilization, invasive species management, and creek clean-ups are conducted and monitored.



### TREE PLANTING 2019

150 native trees and shrubs were planted along Junction Creek between Barrydowne Road and Fielding Street during a TD Tree Day Event. Local ecologist and Board Member Dr. Peter Beckett provided expert guidance and training to the 50 community volunteers that came out to help. In addition, 150 seedlings were planted by families at Twin Forks Park.



### SHORELINE STABILIZATION 2019

Bundles of willow and dogwood branches, known as fascines, were constructed by participants during the Junction Creek Amazing Race event and installed by staff along sections of eroding shoreline in the New Sudbury area. Cuttings of willow branches were also planted to aid bank stabilization, repairing a total  $210\text{m}^2$  of riparian habitat. The willow and dogwood branches will grow and secure the shorelines of Junction Creek.

## INVASIVE SPECIES

We continue to monitor and work with community groups to remove invasive species in the Junction Creek watershed. In 2019, we focused on surveying aquatic invasive species and discovered Eurasian Water Milfoil in the creek. In addition, we partnered with Ontario Invading Species and Friends of Roxborough Greenbelt to remove invasive plants in the Junction Creek watershed, and improved approximately  $24,699\text{ m}^2$  of habitat.

## GARBAGE CLEAN-UPS

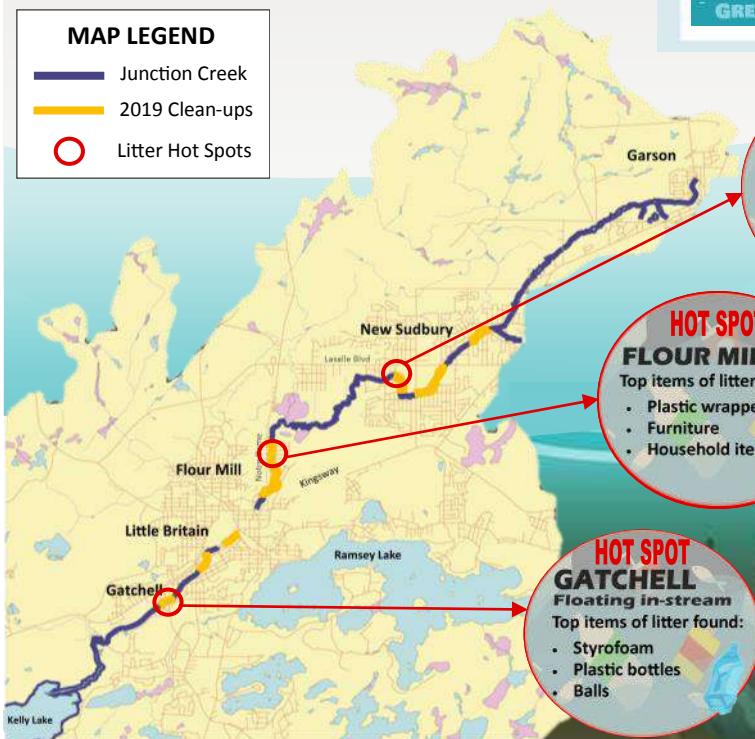
Litter and plastic waste are harmful to water quality, wildlife and the community. We coordinate creek and shoreline clean-ups with community volunteers through the City of Greater Sudbury's Adopt-a-Spot program. Since 1999, we have removed over 82 tonnes of garbage from Junction Creek!

As part of our 'Reducing Plastic Waste in Urban Waterways' project 2019-2021 supported by the EcoAction Community Funding Program, we partnered with Plastic-Free Greater Sudbury to conduct inventories of waste removed during clean-ups, and monitor litter accumulation along the urban reaches of Junction Creek.



### MAP LEGEND

- Junction Creek
- 2019 Clean-ups
- Litter Hot Spots



## GARBAGE REMOVED FROM JUNCTION CREEK



*Litter and plastic waste removed from the shores and waterway of Junction Creek between Garson and Kelly Lake  
In Greater Sudbury 2019*



This project was undertaken with the financial support of:  
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de:



Environment and  
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et  
Changement climatique Canada

### HELP THE ENVIRONMENT by filling out a QUICK QUESTIONNAIRE

WHY? It will help us understand concerns, and guide future strategies to improve the health of our watershed.

SCAN HERE



OR VISIT  
[junctioncreek.com](http://junctioncreek.com)

# EDUCATION & OUTREACH

## HIGHLIGHTS 2019

- 2,572 students reached
- 41 school programs
- Guest speaker at 9 presentations
- NEW outreach resources



We continue to develop and deliver interactive bilingual educational programs, displays, presentations, and resources to schools and the community at large. Our programs provide opportunities to share knowledge and promote the ecological, economic, and health benefits of the Junction Creek watershed.



In 2019 we were able to reach out to 2,572 students. In addition to our popular 'Bug Search' and 'Frog Find' programs, we offered targeted programs to raise awareness and reduce plastic in our watershed. We converted our 'Watershed' program to a 'Polluted Waters' program, featuring a 3-D watershed model of Junction Creek created at Laurentian University's Fielding Innovation and Commercialization Centre with help from faculty Daryl Dominique and student André Sokolow.

We also reached out to over 840 community members through outreach displays at events, and provided 9 educational presentations for guest lectures and gatherings.



# CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY



## HIGHLIGHTS 2019

- Over **2,800** hours provided by community volunteers
- **1,680** attendees in creek events
- Outreach at **19** community events

We connect the community with Junction Creek to develop an increased appreciation for the value of Junction Creek, and promote long-term stewardship. Our programs enhance the Junction Creek Waterway Park trail, encourage citizen participation in activities and events promoting the creek, and foster relationships within the community. Citizen stewardship is a great way to help the long-term restoration of the watershed while engaging the community in fun outdoor activities.



## BLUE CREEK CRITTERS & YELLOW FISH ROAD

Many people are unaware that Junction Creek flows underneath downtown Sudbury. As part of a past activity funded by a former Project Impact grant, we brought attention to the hidden reaches of the creek using art. Blue 'creek critters' were designed by local artist Katie Fenerty and painted on the sidewalks of downtown Sudbury with assistance provided by students from École St-Denis. The paintings feature animals found in our watershed and mark the path of Junction Creek flowing under the city.

Trout Unlimited Canada's Yellow Fish Road project has also returned to Junction Creek. Stormwater runoff carries pollutants from paved surfaces into Junction Creek. Over the summer, 55 students took to the streets of downtown Sudbury to paint yellow fish and "rainwater only" stencils above 57 stormwater drains, while handing out educational material to raise awareness about the impacts of stormwater pollutants on water quality.



# JUNCTION CREEK COMMUNITY EVENTS 2019



The Junction Creek Festival & Trout Release is an annual tradition for many families. The free public event attracts close to 400 people of all ages to Twin Forks Park, where games, live animals, and educational resources engage the community in creek stewardship and conservation.

In 2019, participants released 3,000 stock Brook Trout into the creek, planted 150 seedlings, and celebrated the reviving biodiversity found in Junction Creek.



# JUNCTION CREEK COMMUNITY EVENTS 2019



In commemoration of our 20th anniversary, Enactus Laurentian organized a special evening of recognition. We took the opportunity to thank key supporters for their contribution in restoring Junction Creek and celebrate the accomplishments we have achieved together.

Organizations that have provided ongoing monetary and/or in-kind support received a white spruce tree and recognition plaque. These groups included: the City of Greater Sudbury, Vale Canada Ltd., Conservation Sudbury, earthdancers, and Topper's Pizza.

At the event, a \$10,000 donation was presented to the Junction Creek Stewardship Committee by Design de Plume, a local Indigenous-owned communication studio celebrating their 10th anniversary.

*"What we do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of a difference to make"* - Jane Goodall



# JUNCTION CREEK COMMUNITY EVENTS 2019



2019 marked the second **Junction Creek Amazing Race fundraiser**. Challenges were setup at Twin Forks Park by various community groups including: the Junction Creek Stewardship Committee, Apex Warrior, Plastic-Free Greater Sudbury, Bike Sudbury, and Rainbow Routes Association.

A total of 46 participants competed, racing through a variety of physical, mental, and teamwork challenges that integrated creek stewardship and raised awareness about the Junction Creek watershed. The community-oriented event **raised over \$2,500** towards the restoration of Junction Creek thanks to the generous support of local organizations and businesses, and help from over 25 volunteers.



# THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT!

## 2019 Funding

Government of Ontario	\$63,701
Government of Canada	\$43,573
City of Greater Sudbury	\$40,000
WWF-Canada	\$20,238
Vale Canada Ltd.	\$15,000
Design de Plume donation	\$10,000
RBC Foundation (NDCF)	\$7,750
Earthdancers donation	\$4,162
TD Friends of the Environment	\$3,410
Fundraising, sponsors & others	\$4,611



Junction Creek has a new van generously provided by,



## JUNCTION CREEK PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS 2019

Apex Warriors	Food Basics	Real Canadian Superstore
Arc Climbing & Yoga	Friends of Roxborough Greenbelt	reThink Green
Barrydowne Paint	Greater Sudbury Watershed Alliance	Roxborough Greenbelt
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Sudbury	It's Not A Party Without Us!	Science North
Bike Sudbury	Katimavik	SER Laurentian
Blackout Tattoo Removal	Katie Fenerty	Sessions Ride Company
Cambrian College	King Sportswear	Southview Greenhouse Growers
City of Greater Sudbury	Laking Toyota	Space Craft Brewery
CISV Sudbury	Laurentian University	Sudbury Horticultural Society
Coalition for a Liveable Sudbury	Marymount Academy	Sudbury Naturalist Club
Collège Boréal	Medicor Research Inc.	TD Bank
Conservation Sudbury	Melbrook Martial Arts Academy	Testmark
Cooperative Freshwater Ecology Unit	Monarch Recovery Services	Topper's Pizza
Design de Plume	Nickel Refillery	Twin Forks Neighbourhood Association
DIY Craftery and Lounge	Northern Axpers	TSC Store Sudbury
Duplicators	Ontario's Invading Species	Urban Air Trampoline & Adventure Park
Earth Care Sudbury	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry	Vale Canada Ltd.
École St-Denis	Pinchin Ltd.	Vale Living with Lakes Centre
Enactus Laurentian	Plastic-Free Greater Sudbury	Ward 8 CAN
Enviroclub Chelmsford	Queenbee Wraps (aka The Enchanted Hive)	YMCA
EverGreen Soap Co.	Rainbow Routes Association	<i>And countless community volunteers!</i>
Face It! Face Painting		

# BE PART OF JUNCTION CREEK'S RESTORATION STORY



- Like and follow us on social media @JunctionCreek
- Join the Junction Creek mailing list to receive email updates and newsletters (you can unsubscribe at any time)

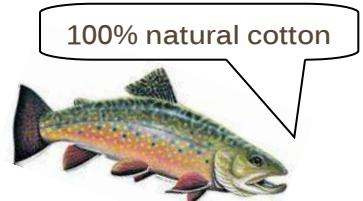
- Attend Junction Creek events
- Volunteer 2hrs at a clean-up, tree planting
- Become a member
- Donate or become a sponsor

Charitable Number: 801685611RR0001

## JUNCTION CREEK REUSABLE BAGS FUNDRAISER

For a healthier waterway and community! Get yours today at:

- Nickel Refillery (227 Regent St.)
- reThink Green (176 Larch St.)
- Junction Creek Stewardship Committee (B4-30 Ste Anne Rd.)



Processed AZO-free with no hazardous chemicals



### Bag Sponsors:



**Peter Beckett Ph.D**  
Associate Professor  
Department of Biology  
Laurentian University

**Jorge Virchez Ph.D**  
Full Professor  
School of Northern Community Studies (Geography)

**Robert Jussila**  
1124997 Ontario Inc.  
**Dr. Austin Andrews**  
Dentist

**WOOD.**

Everyone lives in a watershed and has an impact on local water quality. By preventing pollutants from entering Junction Creek, you are helping to create a healthier waterway and community.

Please consider these creek-friendly practices:

- Rainwater only down storm drains
- Avoid using pesticides and chemical fertilizers
- Choose non-toxic household products
- Pick up after your pets
- Fix leaks that drip from your vehicle
- Do not litter and secure loose garbage from blowing away



Junction Creek  
Stewardship Committee

Comité d'intendance  
du ruisseau Junction



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## THANK YOU FOR BEING CREEK-FRIENDLY!