

LAKE HURON CENTRE FOR COASTAL CONSERVATION



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation

Annual Newsletter 2020



Coastal Conservation Youth Corps (CCYC) participants

2020, A YEAR LIKE NO OTHER...

This year has been one like no other. Some of us were able to spend even more time on the shores of Lake Huron, and others were left missing those fresh waves and awe-inspiring sunsets. 2020 has been a time of incredible uncertainty and change for us all. We have seen changes in our Great Lake too, with extremely high water levels, increased erosion, record numbers of waterspouts, and continuing challenges like invasive species, plastic pollution and threats to water quality. We had important work planned before any of us knew what the extent of the pandemic would be, and we

knew that

work had to continue. The health of Lake Huron and the millions of people who rely on it as our drinking water source remains a priority for us, and we have been coming up with new and innovative ways to deliver programming to protect this national treasure. Despite the best efforts of the coronavirus to disrupt our work this year, we have navigated the related challenges to successfully launch a new youth program, shift our educational programming online, and continue to grow our citizen science and restoration programs. Your donations are still hard at work, protecting this precious resource for all of the people who live, work and play along our coast!

Erinn Lawrie, Executive Director



COASTAL CONSERVATION YOUTH CORPS



Coastal Conservation Youth Corps (CCYC): a year in pictures.

This summer we launched the brand-new Coastal Conservation Youth Corps and provided opportunities for 29 local teens to participate in a hands-on, immersive learning experience. Currently in grades 9-12, these future decision makers earned a total of 838 high school volunteer hours, while learning and working together. Participants had the opportunity to put their knowledge to work in the form of a dune restoration project at Goderich Main Beach, microplastic sampling in the water, conducting beach cleanups, and monitoring a coastal wetland and forest. Reflective and receptive, participants engaged in discussions on a range of conservation issues. By considering creative ways to communicate science, these coastal ambassadors can move forward to share their new learning within their personal circles and broader communities.

These young people come from your community. As young leaders considering career options, the skills and knowledge gained from this program provide an undercurrent of awareness to support potential solutions for the many challenges our lake is facing. They have the chance to learn about the environment, gain valuable skills, and experience the satisfaction of making a difference in our shoreline communities. With the support of people like you we hope to be able to continue this program long into the future, reaching even more youth and growing this base of enthusiastic program graduates.

“I feel much more motivated and educated enough to use the knowledge I have learned to take action now and in the future.” ~Liz

VIRTUAL EDUCATION SERIES



We have been holding a biennial conference on Lake Huron for over 20 years, and this year we went virtual!

We heard from 29 coastal experts as they talked about important issues affecting Lake Huron in online sessions this fall. Topics included plastic pollution, climate change, extreme water level fluctuations, and invasive species. Over 200 people were able to attend the conference this year, making it our most well-attended conference to date!

THE VOICE FOR LAKE HURON

“I learned how to change my community and make a better environment.”

~Savanna

CCYC Youth Participant

COAST WATCHERS

The Coast Watchers Citizen Science program has been running for 16 years now! Coast Watchers act as our “eyes and ears” for the coast. This year 63 dedicated volunteers monitored coastal conditions, all along the shoreline from Sarnia to Midland. They collected important data like water temperature and windspeed, and monitored wildlife, algae blooms, and plastic pollution.

Your donations helped us equip these hard-working volunteers, and will allow us to expand our microplastic monitoring program!



GREEN RIBBON CHAMPION



Great Lakes beach-dune ecosystems are very fragile and rare, making up only a tiny percentage of the shoreline. Vegetation on dunes helps keep sand in place, preventing sand from being lost from the beach through wind erosion. Healthy dunes can also help improve water quality, and protect properties from damage and flooding during times of high water levels.

Green Ribbon Champions are coastal stewards committed to the protection of the Great Lakes, and are recognized for their efforts to protect and restore our coastal ecosystems. This year we expanded the program, and worked with shoreline residents and dozens of volunteers to restore our beaches, helping to protect the wildlife that rely on healthy dune environments to survive.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Did you know that the Coastal Centre is a registered charitable organization and 97% of our work is funded through donations and grants? Your gift today will help ensure we pass on a positive environmental legacy to our future generations!

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THANK YOU 2020 PARTNERS!

We are so grateful for the support of our corporate partners, local businesses, and community organizations. Their generous contributions allow us to carry out effective programs to improve our coastal environment. Thank you!



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