

WHAT ABOUT POND DREDGING?

The pond supports a vibrant ecosystem and diverse wildlife. Dredging it could lead to unintended harm, including the following impacts:

Environmental Damage

Dredging necessitates entry of heavy machinery, causing damage and loss of vegetation around the pond's perimeter.

Both terrestrial and pond edge vegetation will be significantly affected.

Long-Term Recovery

If dredging occurs, the pond will take years to decades to recover.

Returning to a diverse, functioning aquatic ecosystem will be a lengthy process.

Impact on Wildlife

Pond inhabitants such as fish, turtles, and frogs will be killed or need temporary relocation when dredging.

Relocation causes significant stress and poses survival risks.

Regulatory Approvals

To dredge a naturally healthy ecosystem, regulatory approvals would be required from agencies such as the GRCA (Grand River Conservation Authority) and MNRF (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry).

Natural Area Designation

Westheights Pond is a designated natural area.

Dredging contradicts the purpose of this designation unless the area is in significant decline, which is not currently the case.

High Costs

Dredging is an expensive process, requiring substantial financial resources.

Additional costs will also incur as a result of relocating affected wildlife.

Ecosystem Disruption

Draining water and removing soils disrupts the entire food chain.

The functioning aquatic ecosystem will be negatively impacted.

In contrast, approvals for stormwater management (SWM) engineered ponds are less stringent since these systems are designed for regular maintenance and interventions.

HERE'S HOW YOU CAN HELP!

Keep Westheights Park Natural Area Clean and Beautiful!

- Join our efforts to maintain this cherished space.
- Please dispose of trash responsibly—let's keep the pond litter-free!
- If you see littering or dumping, report it to help protect our natural environment.

Your support makes a difference!

View the project website for updates and explore more ways to get involved!



engagewr.ca/westheightspark



WESTHEIGHTS PARK NATURAL AREA MANAGEMENT OPTIONS

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT



Turtle Nesting Habitat

Identify a location suitable for creating a sand nesting area to try and steer turtle nesting away from active paths where turtle nests may be destroyed. Nests could be screened for protection from predators.



Protect Chimney Crayfish Area

Protect Terrestrial Chimney Crayfish areas by avoiding use of heavy equipment and soil compaction in areas where they are present. Potential plantings may be introduced around the crayfish habitat to create a natural barrier and prevent disturbance.



Wood Duck Habitat

Install 1-2 wood duck nest boxes in the naturalized treed wetland area to the south of the main open water pond and monitor success.



Create Pollinator Areas

Identify specific locations and planting areas and plant a variety of native species tailored to site conditions to ensure optimal growth.



Signage at Key Areas

Create signage at the key areas where management actions are being taken.

- Information about turtle nesting area, pollinator plantings etc.
- Explain purposes of restoration or improvement



Spring and Fall Cleanup

Organize cleanup days during spring and fall at the park to remove litter, debris, and invasive plants.

Collect garbage throughout the park and work with City to have park waste picked up shortly after cleanup day.



Phragmites (Common Reed) Management

Reduce or eliminate the population of this invasive plant species since significant area of the ponds edge has been taken over by this invasive species.



Woodland Restoration

Identify native herbs, shrubs, and trees for plantings to improve biodiversity, benefit the wildlife and prevent erosion.

Remove non-native, invasive plants such as Garlic Mustard, Periwinkle and Common Buckthorn.

Remove BMX bicycle ramps, jumps, side trails; restore soils and vegetation.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

PLANT MANAGEMENT