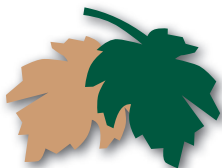


City's re-greening efforts still verdant



ASK AN EarthCare Expert

Question: Sudbury is famous for its re-greening efforts, is the program still underway in Sudbury?

Yes, and in a big way. The re-greening program celebrates its 35th anniversary in 2013. The lime and seed spreading that took place in the early days has led to young tree stands in places once barren.

Almost 10 million trees have been planted and more than 3,000 hectares of land has been limed, seeded and fertilized. These activities continue yearly, but the program has evolved to include broader biodiversity enhancement efforts.

Living landscape—Biodiversity Action Plan for Greater Sudbury is the document that guides and drives the modern re-greening process. Created as a result of an extensive soils study released in 2009, the plan defines a vision of ecological recovery and lists goals for making the vision reality.

Created with public input, the plan is meant to be a “living” document that adapts to changing needs and conditions in the environment and the community.

Natural forests are highly complex ecosystems with many different plants, animals and micro-organisms. This web of interacting and interdependent living organisms is more than just a simple group of trees.

In an effort to recreate the diversity of natural forests, staff and volunteers are transplanting forest floor “mats” salvaged from areas to be cleared for construction purposes. These transplanted mats introduce native plants, grasses and microorganisms to the young, re-planted forests.

Other new efforts include the assisted migration of native trees

RE-GREENING BY THE NUMBERS

3,400+

Hectares covered

9.3 M

Trees planted

10,000+

Volunteer tree planters

14

National and international awards

that normally grow slightly south of Sudbury. Planting these trees north of their current growing range will help with climate change adaptation.

It's important to evaluate the level of biodiversity in the area. This is partly done through programs like FrogFind, in which participants share information about frog sightings. Another similar program is the whip-poor-will survey. Details about these programs and the biodiversity plan in general can be found at greatersudbury.ca/biodiversity.

While these new and exciting programs are underway, the standard practice of liming, seeding and tree planting continues every year. The award-winning re-greening efforts made Sudbury world-renowned for showing serious environmental damage can be remediated.

Thanks to our EarthCare Sudbury Partners Sudbury Horticultural Society, VETAC, Junction Creek Stewardship Committee and the City of Greater Sudbury for their assistance in responding to this question.

Do you have a question about an environmental issue? Submit your questions at greatersudbury.ca/earthcare, then watch for this column published in the Northern Life for an “expert” response.