

The Medway Valley Heritage Forest Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) is located in north London, roughly between Windermere, Fanshawe Park, Western and Wonderland Roads.

The publicly-owned lands cover 129 hectares, between the Elsie Perrin Williams Estate and Sunningdale Road.

The ESA includes floodplain forests, swamps, marshes and forested valley slopes. Medway Creek winds between steep banks up to 25 metres in height.

Trails

The map on the reverse side shows the access points and trail system on the public lands. The main access points are at the Museum of Ontario Archaeology and the Elsie Perrin Williams Estate.

The 10.6 km of trails follow both sides of the creek (see map on reverse). The terrain is rolling with several steep climbs.

The managed trails are marked with yellow blazes on the trees. Several small bridges and stairwells have been constructed over wet or steep terrain. Care must be taken when the water is high or the trail is wet.

Please stay on the marked trails and keep pets on leash, to protect the sensitive environment.



History

The wooded slopes and river have been used by Aboriginal peoples for thousands of years. Over 500 years ago, a Neutral (Attawandaron) village stood at the site of the Museum of Ontario Archaeology near Wonderland Road. European settlers logged and farmed the valley in

the 19th and 20th centuries. The remains of a mill dam can be seen about 500 m west of Western Road.

After 1945, the land was retired from farming and allowed to renaturalize. Residential development around the Medway began in 1960.

Over the last 40 years, the lands were donated to and acquired by the City of London and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority. The Elsie Perrin Williams Estate donated the first 24 ha.

Western University and affiliated colleges own wooded land to the east of the public ESA.

Shaping the Landscape

The Medway Valley was formed by glacial meltwater cutting through the Arva Moraine. The moraine was deposited by two glaciers, one moving north from Lake Erie, the other south from Lake Huron, that pushed against each other 10,000 to 20,000 years ago.

The geologic history of the area can be seen at steep, eroded river banks or slip faces, where horizontal layers of sediments are revealed. Several small tributary streams feed the river through steep-sided ravines.

Plant Communities

The valley slope and upland forests are home to Sugar Maple, American Beech, Black Cherry, Bitternut Hickory and Basswood. Familiar spring flowers include Red and White Trilliums, Mayapple, violets, and Yellow and White Trout Lilies. There are a few large patches of Twinleaf, a wildflower associated with mature woodlands.

In the damp floodplains, willow, Black Walnut, Hackberry and Sycamore grow. In summer, look for wildflowers such as Spotted Joe-Pye Weed, Blue Vervain, and Swamp Milkweed.

Hawthorn and Grey Dogwood abound in old orchards and abandoned pastures, along with Crab Apple, White Elm, Basswood and aspen. Wildflowers fill the grassy meadows in the summer. These meadows indicate the path of the sanitary sewer, which is located along the river valley.

In many parts of the valley, invasive non-native plants, including Common Buckthorn, Tartarian Honeysuckle, Goutweed and Garlic Mustard, threaten to crowd out the native plants.

Wildlife

The Medway Valley provides habitat and food for many species of wildlife, especially birds. Mallard ducks and Belted Kingfisher are common year round while Great Blue Heron and Wood Duck are regular summer visitors. Many birds, ranging in size from warblers to Osprey, use the valley as a migration route. Scarlet Tanagers are often seen. The high banks serve as nesting sites for colonies of Bank Swallows. Please do not disturb nests by climbing on the banks.

White-tailed Deer, Grey Squirrel, Eastern Chipmunk, Eastern Cottontail, Raccoon, shrews, mice and moles are common in the ESA. The rarely seen Southern Flying Squirrel has also been recorded. Near the creek, look for Muskrat, Mink and Beaver along with Green and Leopard Frogs, as well as Midland Painted and Snapping Turtles.

Although 43 species of fish have been found in the creek, minnows, shiners and carp are most commonly seen in the clear water. Species at risk in Medway Creek include the Wavy-rayed Lampmussel.



Swamp Milkweed



Wavy-rayed Lampmussel

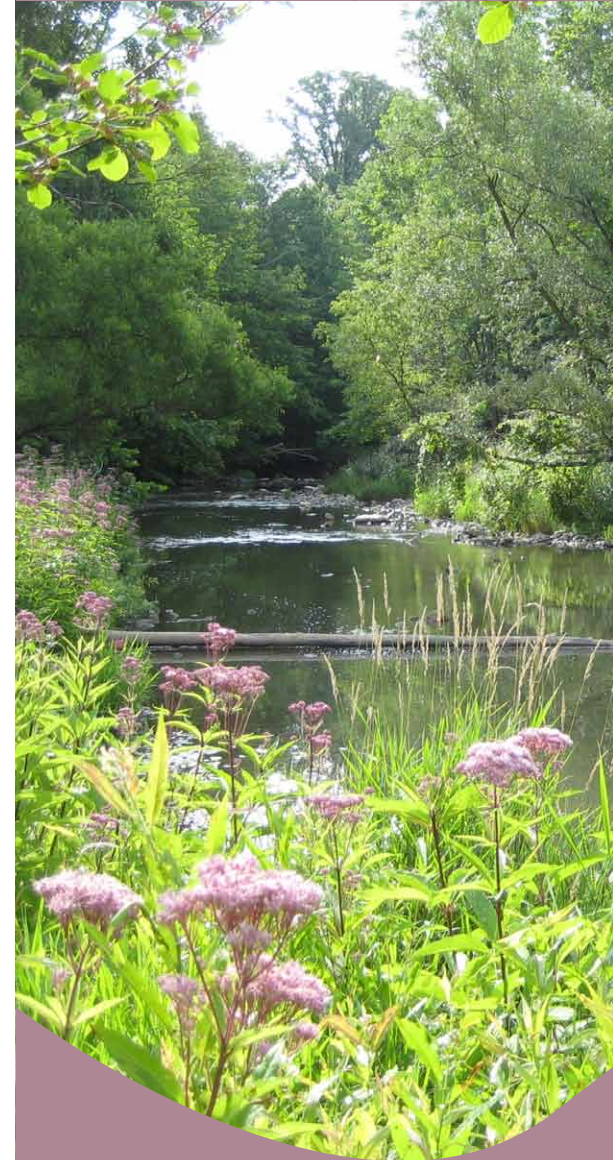
For More Information

For more information on London's ESAs, please contact:

- Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (519-451-2800 ext 281, www.thamesriver.on.ca)
- City of London Planning Services (519-661-4980) (www.london.ca)

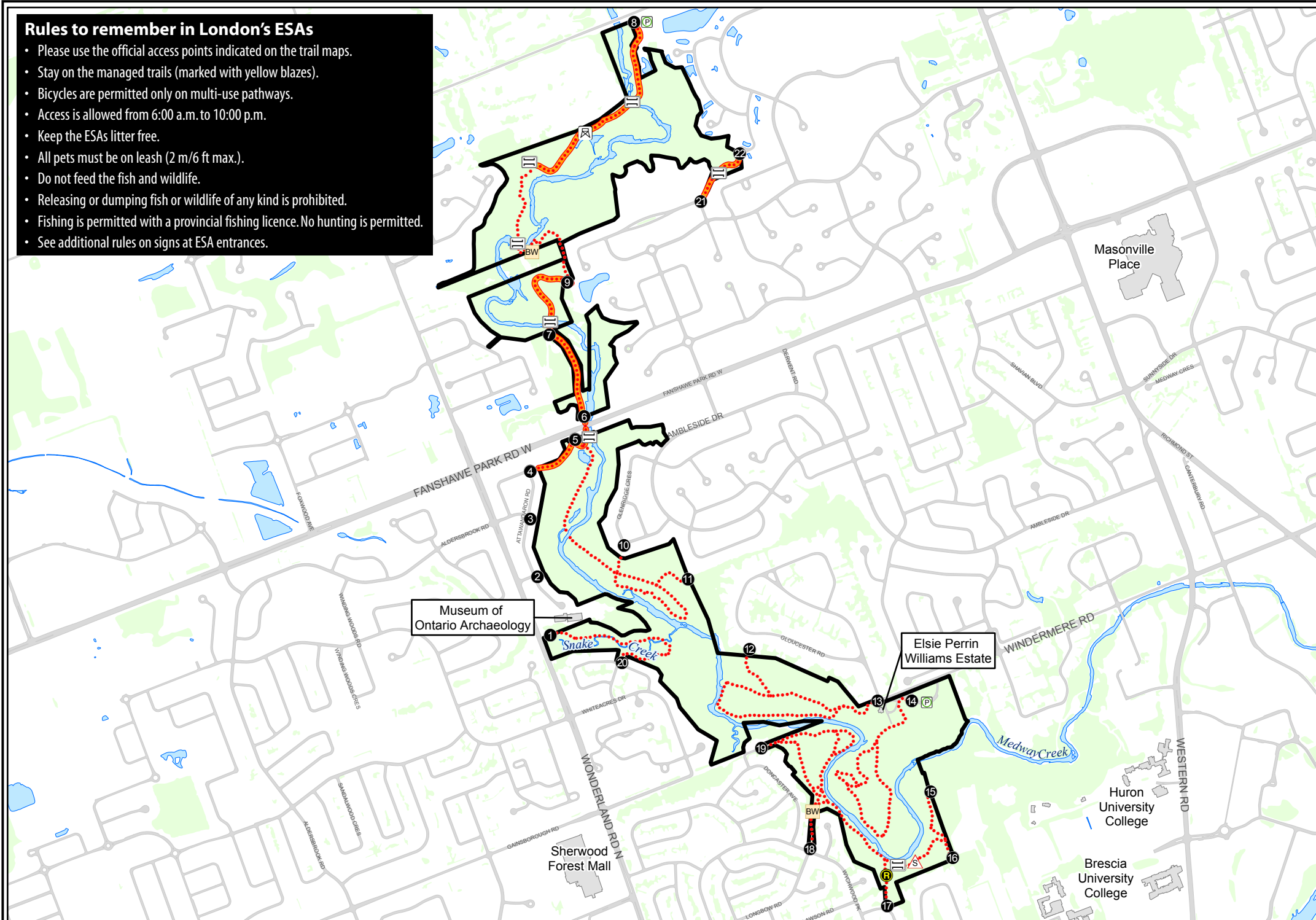
Medway Valley Heritage Forest

Environmentally Significant Area



Rules to remember in London's ESAs

- Please use the official access points indicated on the trail maps.
- Stay on the managed trails (marked with yellow blazes).
- Bicycles are permitted only on multi-use pathways.
- Access is allowed from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.
- Keep the ESAs litter free.
- All pets must be on leash (2 m/6 ft max.).
- Do not feed the fish and wildlife.
- Releasing or dumping fish or wildlife of any kind is prohibited.
- Fishing is permitted with a provincial fishing licence. No hunting is permitted.
- See additional rules on signs at ESA entrances.

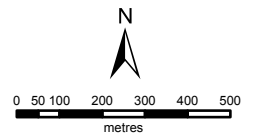
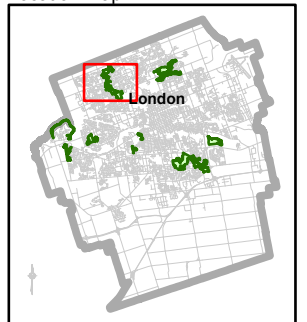


Medway Valley Heritage Forest Environmentally Significant Area

Legend

- ##### Access Points
- 1 Wonderland Road North
 - 2 Attawandaron Gate
 - 3 Attawandaron Road (Central)
 - 4 Attawandaron Road (North)
 - 5 Fanshawe Park Road West (West)
 - 6 Fanshawe Park Road West (South)
 - 7 Fanshawe Park Road West (Central)
 - 8 Sunningdale Road West
 - 9 Valleyrun Boulevard (West)
 - 10 Glenridge Crescent
 - 11 Ambleside Park
 - 12 Gloucester Road
 - 13 Windermere Road (West)
 - 14 Elsie Perrin Williams Estate
 - 15 Ramsey Road (North - Huron College)
 - 16 Ramsey Road (South - Brescia College)
 - 17 Metamora Crescent
 - 18 Wychwood Park
 - 19 Doncaster Gate (East)
 - 20 Pitcarrie Crescent
 - 21 Valleyrun Boulevard (East)
 - 22 Creekridge Bend
- Parking
 - Boardwalk
 - Bridge
 - Staircase
 - Railing
 - Viewing Platform
 - Managed Trail (10.6 km)
 - Multi-use Pathway
 - Public ESA Boundary (129 ha)
 - Water
 - Vegetation

Location Map



UPPER THAMES RIVER
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Map produced by UTRCA with data provided by the City of London.
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