



A project of the Eden Mills Millpond Conservation Association Inc.

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS MAKE HISTORY BY PLANTING TREES TO HELP MAKE SCHOOL BUS CARBON NEUTRAL

ARKELL, ONTARIO: High School students in the Upper Grand District School Board's Headwaters and Community Environmental Leadership Programs (C.E.L.P.) will be planting enough trees to off-set the carbon emissions from their school bus on **Thursday May 15, 2008 at 10:00 am. (83 Carter Road, Arkell Ontario)**. Members of the Eden Mills, Going Carbon Neutral project will be on-hand to award the students with the 'Going Carbon Neutral' logo for their bus, recognizing their efforts to take responsibility for the carbon emitted by traveling to school each day.

Students in the Grade 10 C.E.L.P programme and Grade 12 Headwaters programme attend regular classes in a natural environment at Camp Edgewood located in Eden Mills, Ontario. Eden Mills was the first community in North America to declare its intention to take responsibility for the climate changing carbon dioxide emissions emitted by daily living when they launched the Going Carbon Neutral Project in November 2007.



It was school bus driver Daryl Nichol who understood that just driving to school, something we don't often think too much about, was also adding to the problem of climate change, and he wanted to do something about it. With the help of the students, trees donated by the County of Wellington's Green Legacy Tree Nursery and land made available by a local land owner, Daryl is able to breathe a little easier as he drives his regular route each morning.

C.E.L.P. teacher Katie Gad said, "It's been an eye-opener for all of us to see the enormous number of trees that we needed to plant just to compensate for a simple daily trip to school." Mike Elrick, who teaches the Headwaters program added, "As teachers, we encourage students to ask questions and to notice what's happening in the world around them. Planting trees will be a hands-on experience that helps us connect a couple of those dots."

While it will be years before the 1,000 trees planted today will reach their full carbon sequestering capacity, the efforts made will hopefully start more people thinking about the connection between our everyday activities and their effect on the environment. Beyond absorbing carbon dioxide, trees have other essential functions like helping to maintain a healthy water balance in our local environment. Rob Johnson, manager of the Wellington County Green Legacy Tree Nursery warns, "A community like ours needs a minimum tree cover of 30% to maintain water quality and quantity – at the moment we've got about half the trees we need."

www.goingcarbonneutral.ca

The Eden Mills Going Carbon Neutral Project is a grassroots initiative to encourage community involvement in projects that help to slow climate change. Libby Little, a representative of the Carbon Neutral Project said, “Tree planting is an important part of the solution, but it’s not the whole solution. Ultimately we must reduce the amount of fossil fuels that we’re burning. There’s no other way.”

The Green Legacy Tree Nursery provides more than 150,000 trees each year to be planted in Wellington County. Green Legacy relies on volunteers to help grow and plant the trees.

Upper Grand District School Board students apply for the Grade 10 C.E.L.P. program which is offered at three schools, Centennial CVI in Guelph, Norwell District Secondary School in Palmerston and Wellington Heights SS in Mount Forest. The Headwaters Program for Grade 12 students is offered at Centennial. Students attending other high schools in Guelph and Wellington County can also apply to attend the one semester C.E.L.P. program

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