



Possibility grows here.

Greenbelt Foundation

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Greenbelt Foundation Backgrounder

EcoSchools Canada: Grant Announcement

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Overview

A new Greenbelt Foundation grant for \$70,000 awarded to EcoSchools Canada will educate K-12 students in the Greater Golden Horseshoe about biodiversity and native plants in Ontario's Greenbelt. The program will connect with over 150 schools and 75,000 students in the Greenbelt. Students will be able to create a baseline inventory of their school or neighbourhood's existing natural cover, learn to identify and record species in the areas, develop and execute tree-planting initiatives, and measure increases in natural cover that result from student-executed tree planting.

Grant Background

As the climate continues to change, extreme heat days will become more frequent in southern Ontario. Research undertaken by the Greenbelt Foundation and other organizations has indicated that increasing natural tree cover can decrease the number of expected extreme heat days and improve air quality. Healthy natural areas are one of our greatest solutions to climate change. They provide resilience to extreme weather, important outdoor space for communities, and habitat for plants and animals. With this new grant, the Greenbelt Foundation and EcoSchools Canada will allow students the opportunity to make their schools more climate resilient and improve natural areas in their communities.

As part of this grant, EcoSchools Canada will be developing a "Greenbelt Action Card" for K-12 students that will allow them to inventory plants, measure completed work, and examine potential climate change impacts on their school and community. The program will also include Greenbelt educational resources for students, downloadable resources, webinars, and tools to track participation data.

Outcomes and Targets

- The project will connect with 34 school boards in the Greenbelt and over 700 schools and directly engage 150 schools and 75,000 students.
- Students will develop a baseline inventory of native plantings on their school grounds or community area, develop planting targets and measure increases in natural cover.
- The program will generate Greenbelt and Ontario-wide reports related to this action through EcoSchools' certification assessment platform.
- Greenbelt-focused programming will remain a climate action within EcoSchools programming.



About EcoSchools

Since 2005, EcoSchools Canada's award-winning certification framework has provided independent reporting and recognition for schools and outdoor and environmental education centres. Reaching about 1 million students annually, we are the largest bilingual, voluntary environmental certification program for K-12 schools in Canada. We support engagement across all levels of the education sector – from students and teachers to trustees and parents – through training workshops and webinars, annual conferences, educational resources, and national campaigns.

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