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DOFASCO HELPING NATURALISTS ACCESS FUNDING TO CLEAN UP LOCAL WATERSHED

Sponsored by: Coordinated by:
BY JOHN BEST
THE BAY OBSERVER

The ecological health of the marshes and creek's surrounding Hamilton Harbour received a major boost in July thanks to a partnership between ArcelorMittal Dofasco and the Bay Area Restoration Council. A grant of more than \$47,000 was awarded to BARC to fund its Adopt-a-Creek and Marsh Volunteer Planting programs. As part of the latter, groups of volunteers put on their rubber boots and headed for marshland along Spencer Creek to re-plant native species of vegetation that had been destroyed by carp in the area. With the carp population now under control, replanting could take place. Other volunteers working on the Adopt-a-Creek program were checking water quality and pulling garbage out of Lang's Creek, a tributary of Chedoke Creek, on Hamilton west mountain.

The BARC grant is part bi-national grants program, formerly known as the ArcelorMittal Great Lakes Watershed Restoration Program, is coordinated by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and currently funded by ArcelorMittal, the U.S. EPA, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service. The funds are leveraged by grantees to enable a total on-the ground benefit of \$10 million throughout the Great Lakes basin over three years.

"By partnering with heavy industry on problems like Great Lakes water quality, we get a more sustainable solution than with the old combative approach," commented BARC's Executive Director Jim Hudson. Hudson noted that he was away from Hamilton for 20 years and when he returned he was struck with the progress that had been made in improving water quality in Hamilton Harbour. "The water the steel industry uses (in steelmaking) is cleaner when they put it back in the bay than when they removed it," he added. "As harbour

water improves, it's important that we work on the streams and wetlands." Which is the reason Jim will be making a presentation at a ArcelorMittal Dofasco-sponsored

Workshop aimed at assisting other environmentally-conscious groups to learn how they can tap into this year's Save Our Great Lakes fund valued at more than \$1.5 Million. We want to ensure that the Hamilton area is well represented when the next round of grants is announced," said AMD General Manager of Government Relations, Andrew Sloan. "When we improve the environment in our part of the Great Lakes watershed, it benefits not only our employees, but the entire community."

Last year's \$47,000 BARC grant was one of 16 projects selected in 6 states and 2 provinces, and the only one from Ontario to receive funding.

To help local groups learn how to access funding, ArcelorMittal Dofasco will hold a workshop Sept. 16 at Dofasco headquarters 1330 Burlington Street East. The workshop will run from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Interested organizations can call 905-548-7200 ext. 2700 to register.