



## INDICATOR: VOLUNTEER EFFORTS TO CONSERVE BIODIVERSITY

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION:** Engage People

**TARGET:** 3. By 2015, the number of Ontarians who participate in biodiversity conservation activities is increased by 25%.

**THEME:** Conservation Response – Biodiversity Stewardship

### **Background Information:**

In recent years, volunteers have played an increasingly important role in the conservation of biodiversity. Many factors have influenced this trend, including limited government budgets for biodiversity conservation, as well as increased awareness about the importance of biodiversity and its conservation. Each year, the conservation of biodiversity in Ontario benefits greatly from the help of thousands of volunteers. These volunteers range from Aboriginal individuals and communities who promote a responsibility for nature, to school children who plant trees to rehabilitate and restore the landscape, to groups who devote their time to organizing and carrying out habitat enhancement activities or fundraising campaigns, to private land owners who donate their time and act as good stewards of their land.

This indicator presents an index of the number of people volunteering to conserve Ontario's biodiversity and provides a means of assessing trends in the level of public participation in biodiversity conservation in the province.

### **Data Analysis:**

This indicator presents an index of the number people volunteering to conserve biodiversity in Ontario based on four conservation organizations (Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Ontario Nature, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters) and various public bodies (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, Ontario Stewardship Program and the 36 conservation authorities in Ontario). As such, this indicator does not reflect all people volunteering to conserve biodiversity across Ontario, but provides a means of assessing trends in the level of public participation in biodiversity conservation in the province.

For the purposes of this indicator, volunteering for biodiversity conservation included any activity undertaken by an organization, community or individual to further the understanding, protection or enjoyment of the natural environment; enhance, restore or rehabilitate native habitat or species; or support the organization or administration of biodiversity conservation activities between the years 2006 and 2012. It does not include membership in the select conservation organizations.

### **Results:**

**Trend:** No Change

**Data:** Confidence: Medium

**Geographic Extent:** Provincial

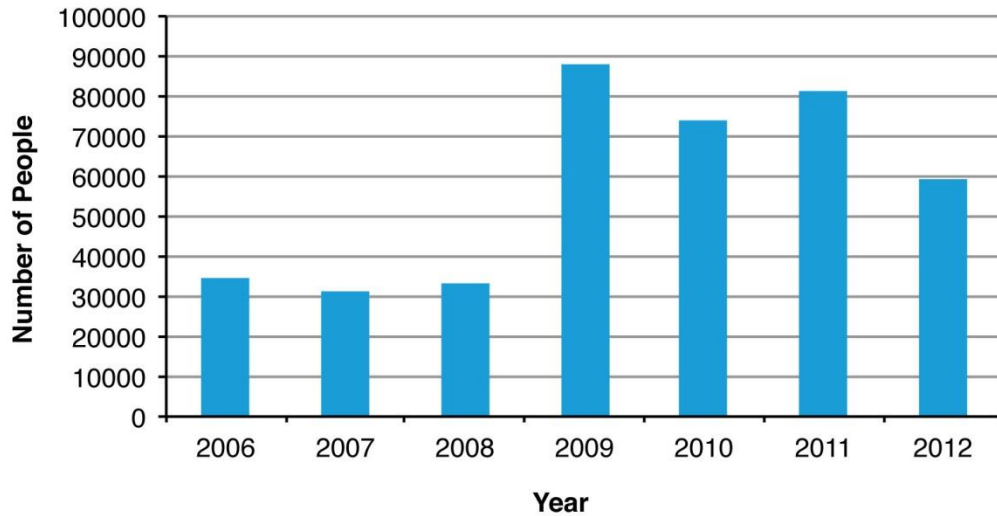


Figure 1: Number of people volunteering to conserve biodiversity in Ontario, 2006-2012. (Source: Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Conservation Ontario, Ontario Nature, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and Ontario Stewardship) (Note: Data for Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters was only available for the years 2010-2012. Data for Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Stewardship Program were based on financial years rather than calendar years. Financial year data was assigned to the first calendar year).

**Status:**

- Between 2006 and 2012, the number of people who volunteered with select conservation organizations to conserve Ontario’s biodiversity increased from 34,697 to 59,477. Although this represents an increase of 42%, it can largely be attributed a refinement in reporting activities.

**Links:**

**Related Targets:** 11. By 2015, the proportion of private lands in Ontario that are managed for biodiversity is increased.

**Related Themes:** N/A

**Web Links:**

Conservation Ontario <http://www.conservation-ontario.on.ca/>

Ducks Unlimited Canada <http://www.ducks.ca/>

Nature Conservancy of Canada <http://www.natureconservancy.ca/en/>

Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters <http://www.ofah.org/>

Ontario Nature <http://www.ontarionature.org/>

**Citation**

Ontario Biodiversity Council. 2015. State of Ontario's Biodiversity [web application]. Ontario Biodiversity Council, Peterborough, Ontario. [Available at: <http://ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca/sobr> (Date Accessed: May 19, 2015)].