



INDICATOR: Observed change in land area with stewardship activities

Strategic Direction: Enhance Resilience

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

Theme: Conservation Response – Stewardship

Previous version: [Observed change in land area with stewardship activities 2015](#)

Background Information

Ontarians place huge demands on the Province's natural resources, with serious consequences not only for biodiversity but also for quality of life and economic prosperity. Environmental stewardship has long been a focus of efforts to mitigate these impacts, particularly in those areas where human development continues to increase. The majority of the land in southern Ontario is in private ownership. Stewardship is an important mechanism to conserve Ontario's biodiversity and ensure the future health of the communities.

Stewardship activities in Ontario are increasingly coordinated by non-profit conservation organizations with limited financial support from provincial, federal and international governments. These activities are often undertaken in partnership with private landowners who actively work to steward their lands. A wide variety of stewardship activities are undertaken each year in Ontario. Examples include habitat creation, planting trees, establishing buffers next to wetlands and riparian areas, removing invasive species, building fences to keep livestock away from waterways, and restoring degraded wetland hydrology using water control structures, among others.

This indicator presents an index of the amount of land that is being actively stewarded in Ontario. It is a means of assessing the proportion of private lands that are managed for biodiversity in the province.

Data Analysis

This indicator presents an index of the amount of land area that is being actively stewarded in Ontario based on data maintained by 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 Nature Resources — Ontario Stewardship Program, Ontario Power Generation and the 36 conservation authorities in Ontario). As such, this indicator does not reflect all stewardship activities occurring across Ontario, for the purposes of this indicator, stewardship activities included a variety of habitat restoration, rehabilitation and enhancement activities between the years 2002 and 2018.



Results

Trend: Improvement Data Confidence: Medium Geographic Extent: Provincial

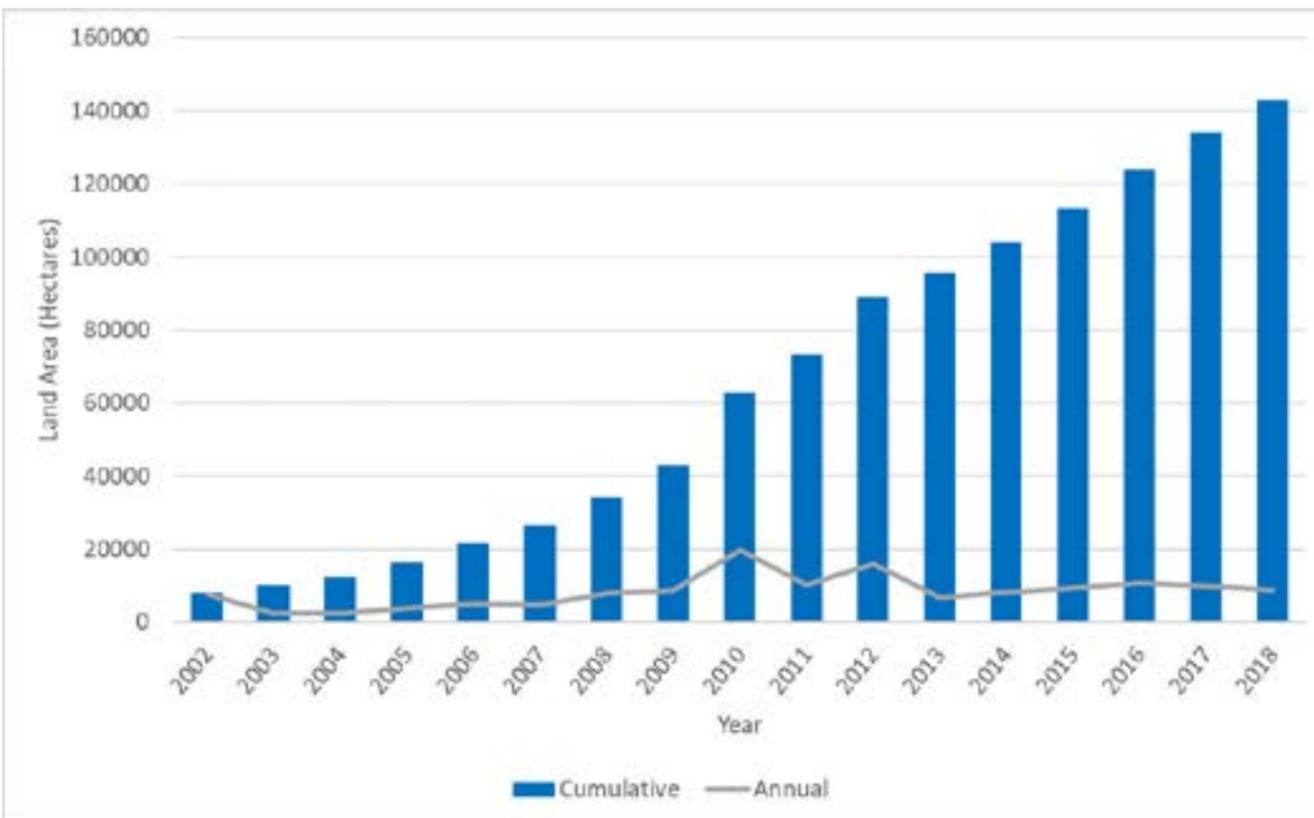


Figure 1. Annual and cumulative land area with stewardship activities in Ontario, 2002–2018 (Source: Ducks Unlimited Canada, Conservation Ontario, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Ontario Power Generation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Stewardship Program).

Note: Data for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Stewardship Program was only available for the years 2004–2018. Data for the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters was only available for the years 2010–2018.

Status

- Between 2002 and 2018, the annual amount of land stewarded in Ontario increased from 7,395 hectares to 8,869 hectares, representing an overall increase of 19% or an average annual increase of 1.2%. This increase is, in part, related to refinement in data collection efforts.
- Over time there has been some annual variability in the amount of land stewarded in Ontario, however since 2002 there has been a significant increase in the cumulative amount of land stewarded, from just under 8,000 ha in 2002 to over 140,000 hectares in 2018. Annual land stewardship activities are influenced by many different factors including (e.g. information, resources, incentives, etc.).

Links

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

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 Biodiversity Council. 2015. State of Ontario’s Biodiversity [web application]. Ontario Biodiversity Council, Peterborough, Ontario. [Available at: www.sobr.ca]

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

Ontario Power Generation <http://www.opg.com/about/environment/Pages/environment.aspx>

Citation

Ontario Biodiversity Council. 2021. State of Ontario’s Biodiversity [web application]. Ontario Biodiversity Council, Peterborough, Ontario. [Available at: <http://ontariobiodiversitycouncil.ca/sobr> (Updated: August 16, 2021