

## **Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for the Canadian Side of the Detroit River**

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Environment Canada, in partnership with other government agencies, has developed "A Framework for Guiding Habitat Rehabilitation in Great Lakes Areas of Concern" which provides a methodology to establish habitat restoration guidelines and priorities for degraded ecosystems utilizing geographical information systems (GIS) technology. The purpose of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy is to produce a spatial database of all natural areas in the Essex region and, utilizing the Environment Canada framework, conduct an analysis of the terrestrial, wetland, and riparian habitats to identify the extent of existing natural vegetation and prioritize opportunities for habitat rehabilitation and enhancement. The objective is to increase the size, extent, and quality of key natural heritage features, natural corridors, and greenway linkages, thereby improving the ecosystem diversity and ecological functions of the Essex region. In addition, by applying the framework to the Detroit River and Wheatley Harbour Areas of Concern the Strategy will assist in addressing the delisting the impaired beneficial use - loss of fish and wildlife habitat, for these ongoing Remedial Action Plans.