

Terra Cotta toured by global conservation expert

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Page: 01

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On June 4, international wetland and conservation expert Tony Sharley joined Atlantic Salmon Programme Co-ordinator Chris Robinson from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters to lead a tour of the Credit River where the Bring Back the Salmon programme is helping to re-introduce a native species to Lake Ontario and the surrounding watershed.

The tour included stops at four different sites along the Credit River, from Port Credit in the south, to Caledon's Terra Cotta in the north.

"I'm thrilled with the way the project has progressed," said Sharley. "It is remarkable that we will soon have a sustainable, healthy native species like the Atlantic salmon back as part of the natural ecosystem here in southern Ontario. It says a lot about the quality of work and the constant effort being put into making the watersheds around the GTA and Lake Ontario cleaner."

Banrock Station Wetlands Foundation Canada (Banrock Station Wines of Australia) is the leading supporter of the Bring Back the Salmon programme and is contributing \$1.25 million towards programme development and implementation.

Other key funding partners include the LCBO, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters and the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The project, one of the largest in North America, is expected to restore self-sustaining populations of Atlantic salmon to Lake Ontario and its tributaries over the span of 10 to 15 years. The funding will include a number of important aspects of the programme, such as the stocking of a combination of fry (baby fish), fall fingerlings and yearlings in three tributaries and the establishment of a target number of adult fish to create the spawning populations needed.

Chris Robinson of the OFAH believes the programme bridges the interests of environmentalist and outdoor enthusiasts. "A sustainable Atlantic salmon population in and around the GTA will not only provide individuals with an opportunity to get out and enjoy their natural spaces, but also act as an indicator of habitat health and how the pressures of pollution are affecting the area."