

Glossary

Aquatic – Pertaining to the water and the life that grows or relies upon a water habitat. Aquatic habitats include drains, rivers, ponds and lakes.

Benthic Organism – Insects and animals that live, for part or all of their life cycle, on or in the sediments at the bottom of a river, watercourse or lake.

Buffer – see Vegetated Riparian Buffer

Competition – The process whereby plants contend for limited space, light, nutrients and water. Some species are more successful at competing for these resources than others. Less successful species eventually disappear from a site.

Cool Season – Describes a plant that achieves most of its growth early in the growing season, and then later in the cool fall season.

Drainage System – A network of open or buried (tiled) waterways that carry off surplus water.

Groundwater – Water that occurs between soil spaces underground. Groundwater can be a source of drinking water when pumped to the surface or where it seeps out of the ground naturally as in an artesian well.

Habitat – The place where a plant or animal lives.

Herbaceous – Describes an annual, biennial or perennial plant that is not woody and dies back at the end of the growing season.

Inclusion – An unforested area that is neither a prairie nor a wetland and that is located within or immediately adjacent to a contiguous polygon. Inclusions that are either less than 20m in width or are greater than 20 meters in width but comprise less than 25% of the polygon area are considered part of the polygon. Inclusions greater than 20 meters in width and comprising greater than 25% of the polygon area are identified as unforested polygon types.

Invasive plant – A plant that reproduces so aggressively that it displaces other plant species in the area.

Meadow – An open, mostly treeless ecosystem dominated by wildflowers such as goldenrods and Queen Anne's lace and field grasses. A successional or transitional community formed as a result of disturbance that will eventually succeed or mature into scrubland and forest.

Naturalization – Any effort to convert managed landscapes such as lawns or farm fields to more natural and naturally evolving landscapes. The effort can entail active planting of native species and/or simply ceasing the management practices (e.g. stop lawn mowing and allow plants to move in on their own).

Non-Native Species – Species that do not naturally occur in an area, but have arrived directly or indirectly as a result of human efforts. Also known as alien species.

Old Fields – Former agricultural lands that are no longer pastured or cultivated and that are dominated by early successional, sun-loving plants such as asters and goldenrod species (e.g. meadow species)

Patch – A block of woodland or natural area separate from other blocks of natural area. It can be a mosaic of one to many contiguous vegetation polygon types. A patch can be owned by one or more landowners as in the case of a ‘back 40’ woodlot that stretches between several properties, but is one continuous habitat. The outside boundary of the patch is the outside boundary of all contiguous vegetation community polygons considered to be part of the patch.

Polygon – A vegetation community that is greater than 0.5 ha in size. Polygons are considered unique if they are more than 20m apart from any other polygon or if they are separated by permanent structures and / or permanent land use (e.g. roads, buildings, railroads, and active agricultural fields). The designation of a discrete polygon had nothing to do with ownership boundaries as a polygon could be under the jurisdiction of many owners. Refer to Appendix ? for definitions of polygon vegetation types.

Point source Pollution – Pollution coming from a fixed and identifiable source such as a pipe outletting from a factory.

Prairies – Open, mostly treeless ecosystems dominated by native grasses and wildflowers on deep or arid soils. A mature, climax community maintained by disturbance (e.g. fire, grazing).

Prescribed Burn – A carefully planned and authorized controlled fire.

Remnant Prairie or Savanna – A small patch of native grassland in an area dominated by non-native vegetation, cropland or urban development.

Restoration – The human process of rebuilding or reviving a native plant community where it has been degraded, altered or destroyed.

Riparian – Pertaining to rivers and watercourses or the lands immediately adjacent to them.

Salmonids – Fish of the family Salmonidae including salmon and trout.

Savanna – Natural area dominated by prairie grasses and forbs (flowers) with scattered trees, mostly oak species.

Sedge – A grass-like herbaceous plant having stems that are triangular in cross-section; found mainly in damp and marshy habitats.

Significant as defined in the Provincial Policy Statement:

- a) In the case of wetlands, means an area identified as provincially significant by the MNR using evaluation procedures established by the Province as amended from time to time.
- b) In the case of endangered species and threatened species, means the habitat as approved by the MNR that is necessary for the maintenance, survival, and/or recovery of naturally occurring or reintroduced populations of endangered species or threatened species, and where those areas of occurrence are occupied or habitually occupied by the species during all or any part(s) of its life cycle.
- c) In the case of woodlands, means an area which is ecologically important in terms of features such as species composition, age of trees and stand history; functionally important due to its contribution to the broader landscape because of its location, size or due to the amount of forest cover in the planning area; or economically important due to site quality, species composition, or past management history.

- d) In the case of other features and areas including valleylands and wildlife habitat, it means ecologically important in terms of features and linkages, function representations or amount, and contributing to the quality and diversity of an identifiable geographic area or natural heritage system.

Stewardship – The process and attitude of taking responsibility for fostering a healthy environment and for passing such an environment on to future generations. Stewardship is an especially important aspect of landownership.

Succession – The natural process of change that occurs in an area over time as one community of living organisms replaces another. For example, a piece of bare ground succeeds into a meadow, then shrubland and eventually a climax or mature forest.

Terrestrial – Pertaining to the land and things growing on the land.

Vegetation – Collective term for plants (flowers, grasses, shrubs, trees, mosses, etc.)

Vegetation Community – A specific assemblage or grouping of plants that characterize a specific habitat. Woodlands often contain a mixture of vegetation communities, described best by the trees and shrubs that dominate. For example, a maple-beech vegetation community is different from a silver maple-willow vegetation community.

Vegetated Riparian Buffer – The land immediately adjacent to an open watercourse that is covered with permanent vegetation such as grasses, shrubs or trees. These buffers provide many benefits to the watercourse and the life within it by providing shade, cover, pollution filtering, etc.

Watershed – An area of land where all the water drains towards one particular river system.

Weed – A plant out of place or where it is not wanted.

Wetland – Wetlands are land types that are commonly referred to as swamps, fens, mires, marshes, bogs, sloughs and peatlands. They occur intermittently across the landscape along lakes, rivers and streams, and in other areas where the water table is close to the surface.

Wildlife – Term for all wild living animals including birds, animals, insects, reptiles, etc.

Woodland – A plant community dominated by trees with over 35% canopy cover.

Woody Plant – Includes shrubs, vines and trees that go dormant in the winter and regrow in the spring.