

THE TAYLOR MASSEY PROJECT

Celebrating and Protecting Taylor Massey Creek

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Aaron Todd
Surface Water Specialist
Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network
Ontario Ministry of the Environment
PDF via email

Dear Mr Todd,

It was a pleasure to chat with you this morning about the Canadian Environmental Sustainability Indicators report and the Excel spreadsheet on the ratings of 395 Canadian rivers.

As a result of our conversation, we understand that the reporting station for the Don River is just downstream of the Forks of the Don, that data for Ontario's rivers was provided by the Ontario Water Quality Monitoring Network, and that Environment Canada crunched the numbers to arrive at the Water Quality Index (WQI) of 34.8 for the Don River.

From our perspective, we welcome the new WQI, and hope that it matures into a valuable and standardized tool both to access local water quality and potentially to establish remediation priorities.

As we discussed, however, the WQI for the Don, taken downstream of the Forks, does not help distinguish water quality differences between the West Don, East Don, and Taylor Massey Creek.

As you may know, Taylor Massey Creek is the smallest of the three main tributaries to the Don, and as such provides a small percentage of the total flow to the Don system. Unfortunately, the Creek is also, as reported in Forty Steps to a New Don (1992), the source of up to 80% of the pollutants to the Don "under some flow conditions".

Clearly, pollution levels have changed since 1992, and we have seen significant progress on local water quality issues, such having the City of Toronto identify Taylor Massey Creek as a high priority for both its Wet Weather Flow Master Plan and for the storm outfall water quality monitoring program.

Nonetheless, we wonder if the East and West tributaries might have excellent WQIs, perhaps in the 80s or 90s, while Taylor Massey Creek might be in the teens or low 20s. As a result, we request that the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network arrange for the calculation of WQIs for each of the three main tributaries to the Don, at a minimum of one location on each tributary upstream of Pottery Road.

We are sure that this information would be very helpful to our members and partner organizations, as well as to the City of Toronto, the TRCA, the local Remedial Action Plan, and the Toronto public.

Thank you again for the conversation this morning. Please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss our request at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Andrew McCammon
Founding Chair
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cc MPPs Duguid, Berardinetti, Prue, Tabuns
Councillors Kelly, Thompson, Heaps, and Davis
Adele Freeman, TRCA
Don Watershed Regeneration Council
Rimi Kalinauskas, Environment Canada
Task Force to Bring Back the Don