

Media Release

Horizon Utilities plants roots for a greener community

Donation to The Bruce Trail Conservancy brings 350 trees to life

(HAMILTON/ST. CATHARINES, ON) May 14 , 2010 – In keeping with its commitment to help build sustainable communities, in 2009 Horizon Utilities reduced its carbon footprint by replacing paper holiday cards with an electronic card and making a donation of trees to the Bruce Trail Conservancy. On Saturday, May 15, Horizon's donation will spark new life into the community in the form of 350 indigenous trees and shrubs.

Horizon Utilities employees and their families will be joined by staff and volunteers from The Bruce Trail Conservancy at the planting, which will take place in Waterdown at a property on Mountain Brow Road. By planting 350 indigenous trees and shrubs, some as vegetative borders and some to enhance biodiversity in conifer plantations, Horizon Utilities is offsetting 350 tonnes of CO₂, the equivalent to taking approximately 110 cars off the road for one year.

“Horizon Utilities is very passionate about protecting the environment and giving back to the community. This family tree planting event is a great example of how our employees are playing an active role in improving the quality of life in the community,” said Max Cananzi, President & CEO, Horizon Utilities Corporation. “We are very pleased to work with The Bruce Trail Conservancy, an organization that shares our commitment to sustainability.”

The Bruce Trail Conservancy (formerly Association) is a charitable organization committed to establishing a conservation corridor containing a public footpath along the Niagara Escarpment. The site chosen for the tree planting is located within the Carolinian Life Zone, which comprises only one percent of Canada's land area, but contains more rare and endangered species of plants and animals than anywhere else in the country. The property was a very generous donation to The Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) by the current resident Patrick J. McNally. His hope was to ensure that his property was protected and maintained as a natural area for years to come.

“Forest cover in this area has been reduced from 80% to just 11% due to the pressures of human settlement and increased urbanization. It is ecologically important to re-establish the forest cover that was initially removed and restore the unique ecological health and diversity of the area,” said Beth Kümmling, Executive Director of The Bruce Trail Conservancy.

Currently existing on the property, and in the neighbouring Sassafras-Waterdown Woods, are prime examples of mature Sugar Maple and Oak deciduous forest types. Re-establishing these forests in the open areas of the McNally property will help to increase the biodiversity of the area and provide needed habitat for many native species of local flora and fauna.

“The Bruce Trail Conservancy is very grateful for Horizon Utilities’ donation and is thrilled that the company chose to involve their employees and their families in the tree planting ceremony,” Kümmling added.

More information about Horizon Utilities’ commitment to sustainability, visit www.horizonutilities.com.

About Horizon Utilities

Horizon Utilities Corporation, named Company of the Year by the Ontario Energy Association, is one of the largest municipally owned electricity distribution companies in Ontario providing electricity and related utility services to more than 230,000 residential and commercial customers in Hamilton and St. Catharines. Horizon's employees are committed to delivering a safe and reliable supply of electricity, providing unparalleled customer value and helping to create a culture of energy conservation in Ontario.

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