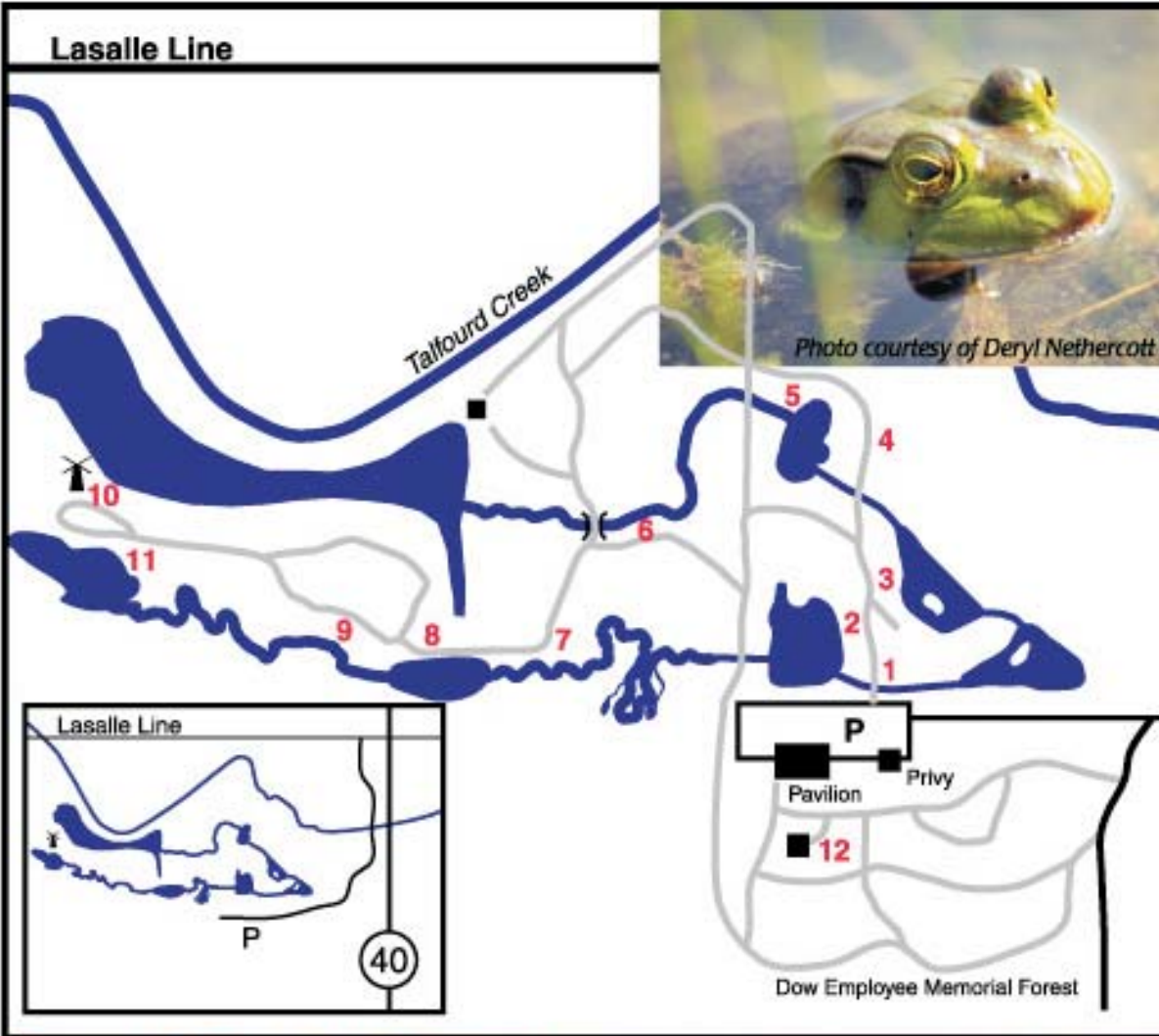


## Lasalle Line



## Trail User's Code

- hike only on marked routes
- do not take short cuts
- do not climb fences/open gates
- leave flowers and plants for others to enjoy
- no hunting
- do not approach or disturb wildlife
- clean up after your pet
- leave the wetland and trails cleaner than when you came
- place all litter in receptacles
- camping and fires are not permitted
- leave only footprints take only memories

Use trails at your own risk



# Dow Wetlands



## A Helping Hand

A number of nesting structures have been installed throughout the Dow Wetlands to help attract wildlife. In addition to the bird and bat boxes, a hibernaculum was constructed to provide a warm place for hibernating snakes.

Bat Nesting Boxes

Wood Duck Nesting Box



ONTARIO  
Great Lakes  
Renewal FOUNDATION





## Dow Wetlands

The idea for The Dow Wetlands was born when a large quantity of clean soil was required to cap a former Dow landfill. Dow worked with local community groups and an environmental firm to design the wetland complex. In 2002, the original seven acre Dow Wetland grew to twenty acres and is home to 8,000 trees and shrubs. The five ponds, pools and streams are host to "emergents" – plant life such as cattails and bulrushes which provide food and shelter for wildlife. The wetlands perform many beneficial environmental functions including absorbing and filtering water and providing food and shelter for ducks and other wildlife in the area. The water to feed the wetlands comes from rain runoff from adjacent land. The wetlands help to reduce the need to release water to the adjacent creek by providing more opportunities for evaporation and transpiration.



Construction of the Dow Wetlands.

## Why Wetlands

- Wetlands act as nature's water filtration system
- Wetlands help reduce flooding, acting like giant sponges to absorb excess water and releasing it slowly supplying our streams with fresh clean water
- Wetlands help to replenish groundwater
- Wetlands are one of the earth's most diverse and productive ecosystems
- Wetlands are home to over 600 species of birds, mammals, fish and plant life, many of which are rare or endangered
- Wetlands are great places to canoe, fish, birdwatch and explore

## 1. Dinner Anyone?

In water that does not have a large flow, algae often grows. It looks like "icky green goop". Algae uses sunlight to create food energy. The algae then becomes food for a whole host of animals from tadpoles to deer.

## 2. Muskrats

Muskrats are really large voles that have adapted to an aquatic existence. Since their feet and tail are hairless, the muskrat loses a lot of heat in its pursuit of food. To counteract the problem, the muskrat creates a feeding platform by heaping together a quantity of cattail plants in the form of a raft.



Several muskrat lodges have been established in the wetlands.

## 3. Backbone of the Marsh

Cattail plants have many jobs to perform at the marsh. They provide food for birds, building material for animals and birds and nesting sites for red-winged blackbirds and the marsh wren. Cattails also slow the flow of water in the spring trapping particles and filtering the water.

## 4. High Bush Cranberry

This beautiful bush is a source of food for many creatures. The bottom berries are eaten by rabbits, the middle berries eaten by deer, and the top berries by many birds. Cranberries are very high in Vitamin C and the berry stays on the tree all winter. This bush loves to grow near water.

## 5. The Wetland Nursery

Wetlands are nurseries in the spring to many creatures. After a long migration, ducks and

geese settle at the marsh to establish nesting sites. They will return every year to the same wetland to nest and rear their young. The calm waters and the abundance of food makes a wetland a great nursery.

## 6. Those Sneaky Turtles

Open sunny patches along this channel make great places for female snapping turtles to lay their eggs. Females will leave their ponds in June and search for nesting sites. She will dig several nests before finally depositing her eggs. These "false nests" are dug to confuse potential egg predators in their search for the actual nest.

## 7. Sentinel of the Marsh

The red-winged blackbird is one of the most common birds you will see here at the Dow Wetlands. Their song is heard from atop cattail perches early in the spring. Some birds are great at hide and seek as they are coloured so that they blend in with their surroundings. This "camouflage" helps them avoid predators. The female Red-Winged is very good at hiding. She is a dull brown so she can sit on her nest in the cattail plants and not be found. Can you find her? In a threat display to intimidate intruders, the male red-winged fans his tail and spreads his wings to reveal brilliant red shoulder badges which are a sign of his age and experience.



## 8. What's an Ecotone?

An ecotone is an area where two habitats meet. For instance, the edge of a pond where the field surrounds it is a miniature ecotone. Many herptiles (such as snakes) live in ecotones. The Ribbon snake frequents the edges of ponds, marshes and streams, but it can also swim. This gives the snake an advantage since it can hunt in different habitats for its food.

## 9. The Bug Condo

Find fresh water and you'll find insects, millions in fact! Aquatic insects not only live in water but on

top of water, in the air and on plants around the water. Take a closer look and you might see a whirligig beetle on the surface. Whirligig eyes are situated so that half of their eye sees below the water and half sees above. When they spot a bug they quickly whirl toward their prey. One of the favorites of the whirligig is mosquito larvae. So go ahead whirligig, eat all you want.

## 10. The Trick is Recirculation

The big pond captures water from the surrounding area. This windmill pumps water from there to the upper wetlands which protects the habitat in dry spells and helps control the amount of water discharged to Talfourd Creek.



## 11. Ontario Great Lakes Renewal Foundation

The Ontario Great Lakes Renewal Foundation provided funding to enhance the surrounding habitat here at Dow. The Foundation is dedicated to supporting initiatives such as the Dow Wetlands that help to clean up the Great Lakes.



Over 120,000 trees have been planted at the Dow Wetlands and surrounding Dow property.

## 12. Dow Employee Memorial Forest

From bur oak to sugar maple, these trees are providing us with many gifts. Trees are the earth's air conditioner, releasing moisture through the leaves into the atmosphere. This helps to regulate the climate on our planet. Every year trees are planted in memory of Dow employees that have passed away.