



**ONTARIO  
RIVERS  
ALLIANCE**

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Environment and Climate Change Canada  
EcoAction Community Funding Grant  
4905 Dufferin Street  
Toronto, Ontario  
M3H 5T4

Re: East Branch Weir Removal Project – Eramosa River  
EcoAction Community Funding Grant Application

To Whom It May Concern,

The Ontario Rivers Alliance (ORA) is a Not-for-Profit grassroots organization with a mission to protect, conserve and restore Ontario riverine ecosystems, and to ensure that development affecting Ontario rivers is environmentally and socially sustainable and responsible.

The ORA is pleased to support the Eden Mills Eramosa River Conservation Association (EMERCA) application for an EcoAction Community Funding Grant for the East Branch Weir Removal Project on the Eramosa River in Eden Mills, Ontario. This Project includes the removal of an existing steel control structure at the top of the East Channel of the Eramosa River, and the naturalization and remediation of this section of the River. Removing the weir would expand the coldwater fishery, increase flows and build resilience to the effects of a warming climate.

Weirs change the basic hydrological characteristics of streams by reducing flow velocity and subsequent changes in temperature, turbidity, and water quality. These changes can negatively affect native species of fish and other aquatic life. Climate change is expected to amplify these negative effects (e.g. protracted low-flow regimes, elevated water temperature).

This Project will mitigate these effects by removing the weir and naturalizing this section of the river with riverstone and rock features, thereby increasing base flows during low-flow regimes (summer months). It would also remove an obstacle to fish migration and reconnect upstream and downstream habitat for native coldwater fish species:

*This project will improve fish habitat, by removing the upper dam control structure, which is a barrier to fish movements, which will give fish and other aquatic species better access upstream and downstream to new spawning, feeding and overwintering areas. It is noted that the next upstream barrier occurs in the Rockwood Conservation Area, approximately 3.7 km upstream. <sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Draft Environmental Screening Report for Dam Modification, Eden Mills Upper Dam”, MNR, August 15, 2018.



The ORA understands that for the last 30 years EMERCA has cared for 15 acres of the environmentally sensitive and ecologically rich Eramosa River and wetlands in Eden Mills. Under a long-term stewardship agreement with the landowners, EMERCA has undertaken projects to stabilize riverbanks, restore aquatic and wetland habitats, rehabilitate water control structures, provide youth outdoor education and public access. The overall goal for the area is to become a recognized Ontario Land Trust for protection in perpetuity.

The ORA strongly supports EMERCA in this project that will improve and expand aquatic habitat and water quality for the organisms that rely on these freshwater resources.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions regarding the ORA's support.

Respectfully,

Linda Heron  
Chair, Ontario Rivers Alliance  
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