

A young girl with long brown hair is smiling and looking to the left, partially submerged in a lake. Water is splashing around her head and shoulders. The background shows a line of green trees under a clear blue sky.

Greatness Is In Our Nature Water

Beautiful Water

Water is one of the most important elements for our survival. We are, in fact, mostly water, being made up of around 80% of the wet stuff. So it's refreshing to know that we have an abundance of clean, fresh water all around us.

The Great Lakes, including our own Lake Ontario, are one brilliant, flowing system, storing about 95% of North America's, or one fifth of the world's, fresh water.

As Ontarians, our incredible quality of life is greatly supported by the more than 250,000 lakes and countless rivers and streams in the province.

We drink it, grow our food with it, cook with it and swim in it. And more than 98% of Ontario residents – 11 million of us – live near it.

“*The entire world depends on clean water. Any major city, in any country, should follow the Greenbelt's model. It shows that Ontario's got it right.*

Dr. Gail Krantzberg
Water Scientist, McMaster University

Muddy Water

Our use and enjoyment of our water systems are also their greatest pressure. Lake Ontario is downstream from the other Great Lakes, so it receives contaminants and waste from all the industry, farming and living throughout the entire area.

And the pressure's on. Our industrial and urban centres are concentrated in the Golden Horseshoe, one of the fastest growing areas in the country. In twenty years it will be home to over 13 million of us.

We're building to keep up with this growth, but without careful planning these developments have been wasting space and resources, polluting our water along with them.

But Ontario can grow successfully and keep our waterways safe and healthy at the same time.

Clear Thinking

Ontario's Greenbelt is a world-leading, award-winning legislation that protects the things that matter most, like our water.

The Greenbelt safeguards around 533,000 acres of lakes, wetlands, river valleys and forests that remove harmful pollutants. This is great, since the water you brushed your teeth with this morning was almost certainly filtered through the Greenbelt.

And if that wasn't enough, the Greenbelt saves us around \$2.6 billion a year in essential services like fresh drinking water and clean air; taxes that we didn't have to pay, because the Greenbelt cleaned our water for us – for free. Now it also protects those same watercourses.

Lose the Greenbelt and we lose these benefits and savings.

The risk is real. The water that sustains us and supports our commerce and industry is under constant threat from inefficient and unbalanced development.

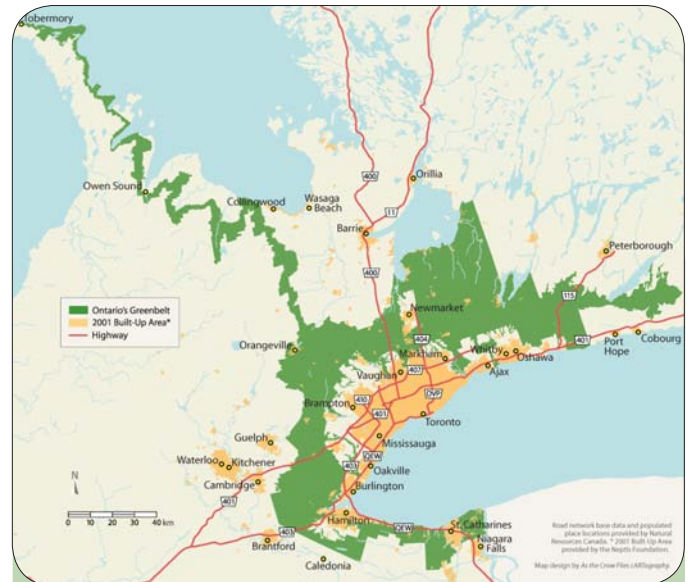
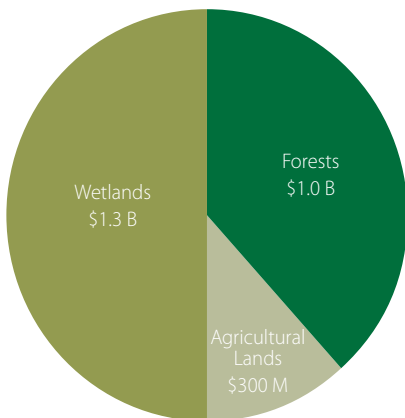
And we're doing something about it.

The Glass Half Full

The Greenbelt provides the most good for the most of us. It is a plan for our shared health and prosperity and collaboration is the key to its success.

The Friends of the Greenbelt Foundation works with dedicated people and organizations all over the province to make the Greenbelt bigger, better and permanent, so that it can continue to provide life-supporting, economy-building and fun-having water.

The Greenbelt's wetlands and forests are of the greatest value to our water safety, worth over \$2.3 billion a year in avoided costs for water filtration, drinking water treatment, flood control and recreation.



98% of Ontarians agree that protecting the natural water system is a very important benefit of Ontario's Greenbelt. Environics poll, 2009.

Every Drop Counts

You can help keep the Greenbelt healthy and permanent, just by doing the things you do everyday.

- Whenever you turn on the tap, know that the fresh, clean water you're drinking and cooking with and brushing your teeth with has been filtered in Ontario's Greenbelt.
- Save gallons of water (and save dollars on your water bills) by turning off the tap while brushing your teeth or shaving and running the dishwasher only when it is completely full.
- Tell your MPP and local government that you care about the Greenbelt and clean water, that what is important to you should be important to them. And if you want an area of land or water included under its protection, ask your MPP to have it added.
- Stay in touch with Greenbelt newsletters at www.greenbelt.ca and join us on Facebook and Twitter to share your photos and thoughts.



Possibility grows here.

The water is good here. The Greenbelt will keep it that way.