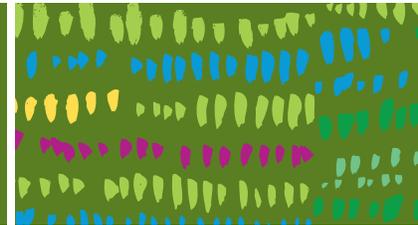




**Annual Report**  
**January 1 – December 31, 2025**



A program of:



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# Project Overview & Progress Summary

**It began in 2012 with an idea:** Why not rethink the under-utilized space beneath a hydro corridor and repurpose the turf grass into a thriving meadow?

## Implementing the Meadoway Vision

2025 has been a year of significant progress for Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) in advancing The Meadoway's key deliverables. Early in the year, construction commenced on a new 1.4 km active transportation multi-use trail, extending from west of Midland Avenue to Marcos Boulevard in Scarborough. This major initiative reflects TRCA's continued commitment to building sustainable, accessible, and connected green spaces across the city. By the end of 2025, substantial completion of this trail will be achieved, marking an important milestone in the broader vision for The Meadoway. In addition, signature public realm improvements have been completed for Section 5 at Highland Creek, with planning underway for future bespoke seating nodes to be implemented in additional sections of The Meadoway in 2026.

Throughout 2025, progress was made on advancing planning efforts for new trail linkages in Section 6, with work focused on the segments stretching from Neilson Road to Military Trail and from Pan Am Drive to Conlins Road. Developed in collaboration with the City of Toronto and the University of Toronto Scarborough, these initiatives will continue into the coming year. Once realized, the additional trail segments will broaden the network of routes, fostering stronger connections between neighbourhoods and providing direct access to nearby community destinations.

This fall, TRCA wrapped up work on The Meadoway Sponsorship Strategy, following the development of a suite of exciting sponsorable assets that align with The Meadoway vision and are designed to ensure the long-term financial sustainability of the project, attract investment, and deepen community involvement. Through 2025, this work has benefited from the collaborative review and meaningful feedback provided through community listening tours and reviews by Toronto and Region Conservation Foundation Board of Directors, TRCA Senior Leadership Team and High Line Network colleagues. To validate and inform the business case for implementation, interviews were conducted with key external stakeholders to ensure the tiered partnership model, ready-to-pitch assets, and financial targets were reflective of the current sponsorship landscape. Additionally, prospective partners were engaged at the executive level to discuss interest in sponsorship of The Meadoway, including receptiveness to the ready-to-pitch assets and discussion of budgets available. These efforts position TRCA well to begin implementation of the program in 2026.

As the 2025 season wraps up, TRCA's restoration team celebrates a year of strong progress across The Meadoway's 16-kilometre corridor. Following an active spring with new staff training and variable weather, the focus shifted to managing invasive species and supporting the long-term health of the now well-established meadow habitat. With adaptive management efforts in full swing, the team remained flexible and committed to maintaining ecological resilience throughout the corridor.



A major milestone this year was the expansion of our research efforts in collaboration with internal and external partners, offering deeper insight into meadow evolution and improving restoration outcomes. These insights informed the updated *Restoration Manual: A Blueprint for Naturalizing Infrastructure Corridors*, re-released in fall 2025, which documents key lessons learned in the field since the original 2022 edition. With a solid foundation in place, the restoration team is well-positioned to carry this momentum into the 2026 season.

The Community Outreach and Education team deepened its commitment to building and strengthening relationships with community groups, schools, and residents across Scarborough. These efforts expanded The Meadowway's reach to new audiences, while reinforcing existing connections to the greenspace. New partnerships were established with organizations such as Scarborough Cycles and Scarborough Environmental Alliance, while long-standing relationships with groups such as the Scarborough Historical Museum and Toronto Master Gardeners were strengthened through collaborative community outreach events. The Meadowway School Program also played a vital role in this engagement. New schools were welcomed to explore The Meadowway for the first time, while returning schools had the opportunity to reconnect with the environment, seeing evolution in the areas they had previously helped steward. The Meadowway Ambassador Program also saw significant growth in its second year as the volunteer base tripled in size. As The Meadowway continues to become an integral part of the community, opportunities to engage with and support the space have become increasingly meaningful and valued.

As a positive outcome of the 2025 communications strategy, The Meadowway's reach expanded across a variety of platforms, through both TRCA-generated content, and external publications. Regular updates and event announcements on The Meadowway's website and social media platforms ensured the public remained up to date on the project's progress and important milestones, while also promoting opportunities for community engagement. Analysis of website and social media user data demonstrated steady growth in The Meadowway's digital presence and demonstrated a strengthened connection to the community. Further, The Meadowway received steady media attention throughout the year as it was featured in local news publications, blogs, and public research journals, broadening the public's awareness of the project and its impact.

A key administrative item was also advanced in 2025 with the draft Master Service Agreement between TRCA and the City of Toronto refined throughout the year and targeted to be finalized in December. The agreement includes a commitment to establish a Meadowway Liaison Committee with key City and TRCA staff, the requirement for TRCA to be made aware of any activities contemplated in The Meadowway that have the potential to impact habitat, and a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities in the corridor for long term maintenance and management.

## 2025 Highlights by Section:



1

### Bermondsey-Western Gateway

East Don Trail to Pharmacy Avenue

#### Restoration

- 10 ha of established meadow

#### Active Transportation

- East Don Trail to Eglinton: City of Toronto delivering in 2026

2

### Massey Wilds

Pharmacy Avenue to Kennedy Road

#### Restoration

- 20 ha of established meadow

#### Active Transportation

- Trail complete

3

### Lawrence Avenue Community Hub

Kennedy Road to Thomson Memorial Park

#### Restoration

- 11 ha of newly established meadow

#### Active Transportation

- Trail construction underway

4

### Scarborough Butterfly Trail

Thomson Memorial Park to Scarborough Gateway

#### Restoration

- 25 ha of established meadow

#### Active Transportation

- Trail complete



**4**  
**Centre**  
 Memorial Park to  
 Golf Club Road

of established  
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**ortation**  
 mplete

**5**  
**The Ravines**  
 Scarborough Golf Club Road  
 to Neilson Road

- Restoration**
- 16 ha of newly established meadow

- Active Transportation**
- Trail complete
  - Public realm improvements complete

**6**  
**Eastern Entrance**  
 Neilson Road to Conlins Road

- Restoration**
- 8 ha of newly established meadow

- Active Transportation**
- Phase 1 :Trail complete
  - Phase 2: conceptual design and data collection underway
  - Phase 3: Design and Construction in City Capital Budget (2026-2028)

**7**  
**The Rouge Gateway**  
 Conlins Road to Rouge Park

- Restoration**
- 9 ha of established meadow

- Active Transportation**
- Trail complete





## The Meadoway

COMMUNITY POWERED GREEN SPACES

## ME RES

This area has been planted with native wildflowers and grasses. Patience is critical for the success of any meadow. You can expect to see beautiful wildflowers in the summer and fall each year. Meadows are a vital component of our natural landscape as they provide food and shelter particularly for birds and butterflies. Maintenance mowing will occur every 3-4 years.

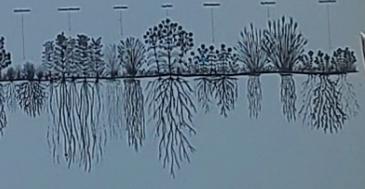


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# SHADOW STORAGE



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ENTION

# MEADOW REVITALIZATION

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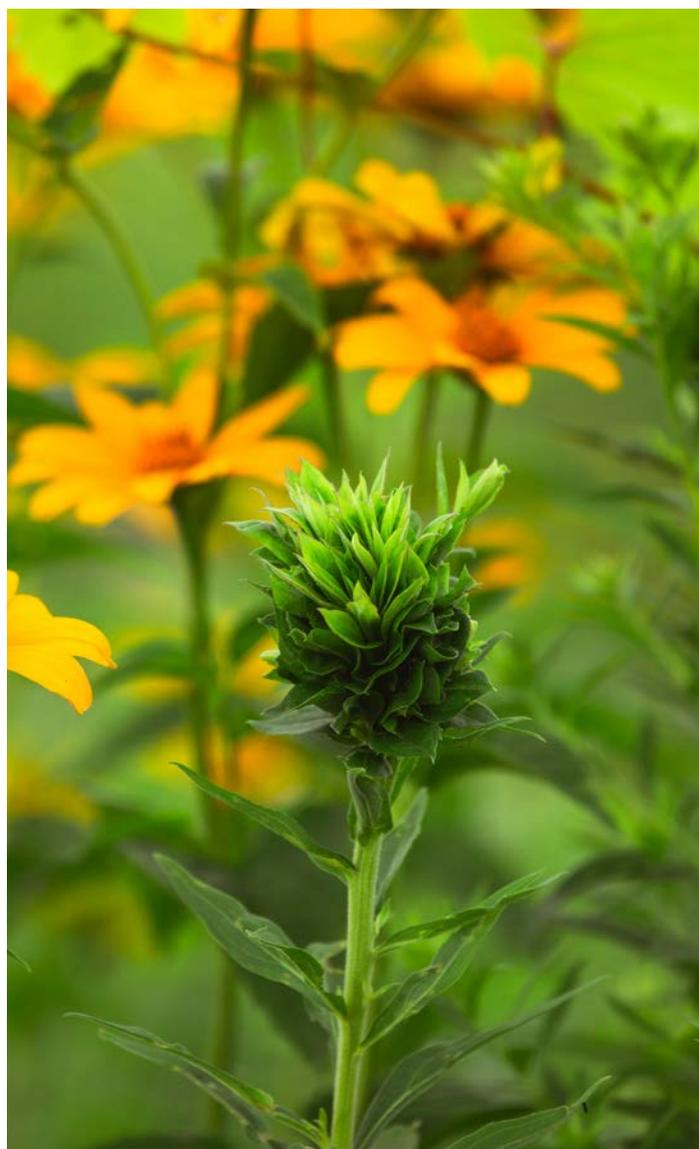
The Meadoway restoration team concluded the 2025 field season with strong momentum and a deep sense of accomplishment. Beginning in April, the team launched the year with critical garbage removal to clear winter debris and prepare key sites for ongoing adaptive management and restoration activities.

Focused meadow site preparation took place in priority areas, including zones along the Section 6.1 trail construction and the designated research trial plots in section 4.2. These efforts laid out the groundwork for future native seeding and long-term habitat restoration.

Throughout the 2025 season, the team carried out a broad range of adaptive management tasks vital to building a resilient and biodiverse meadow ecosystem. Key accomplishments included:

- Ongoing garbage collection to maintain site cleanliness and ecological integrity
- Invasive species removals across high-priority restoration zones
- Maintenance mowing to support healthy meadow habitat development
- Buffer mowing to limit edge encroachment from woody species and invasive plants
- Seed collection from thriving native plant populations
- Seeding of treated areas to encourage native plant establishment
- Harvesting from native seed nursery plots to support future restoration work

With these continued efforts, the restoration team is steadily advancing ecological health and biodiversity across The Meadoway. The groundwork laid this season sets the stage for further progress in 2026, as the team remains committed to long-term ecosystem recovery and resilience.



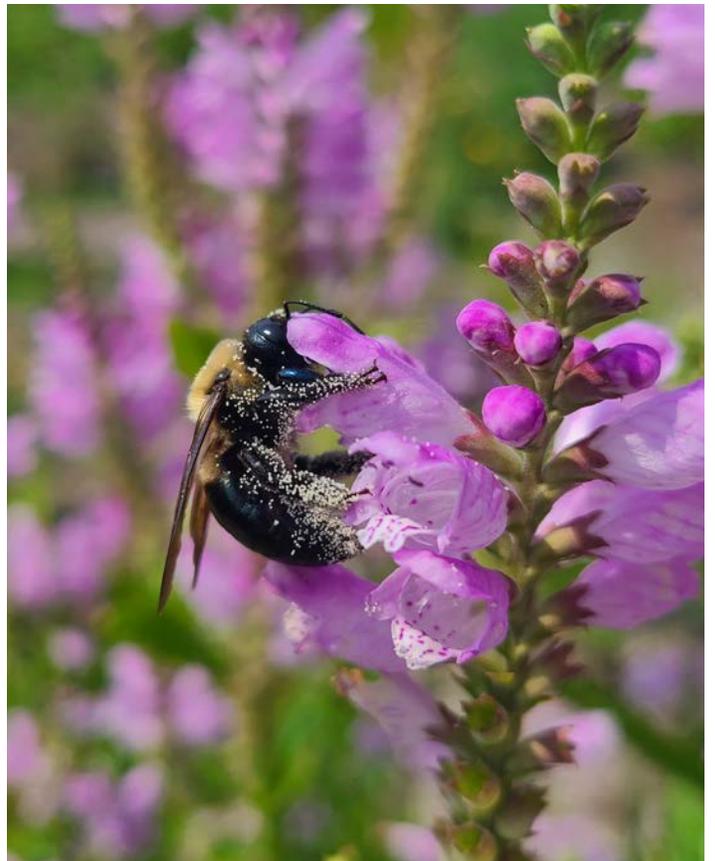
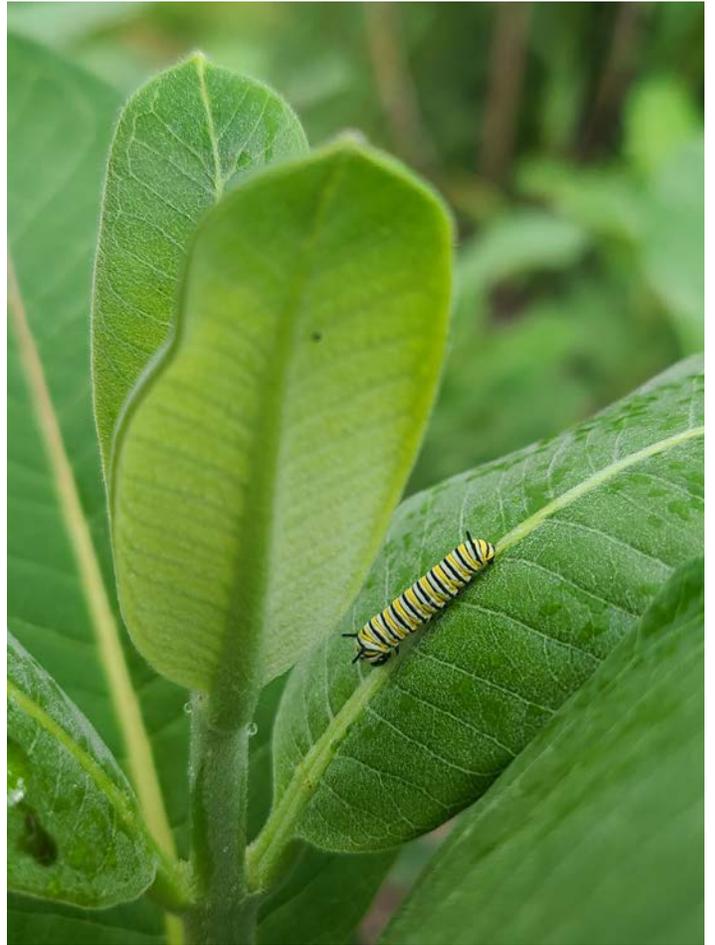


**TABLE 1: THE MEADOWAY RESTORATION DELIVERABLES - January to December 2025**

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 (150 ha)	Size/Quantity
Buffer Mowing - Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7	30 ha (reduced in size to due updated meadow footprint)
Invasive Species - Sections 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7	150 ha
Maintenance Mowing	12.5 ha
Section 6 Site Prep (for fall native meadow seeding)	0.5 ha (reduced in size due to slope of trail edge)
Native Meadow Seeding (Section 5, 6)	2 ha
Garbage Collection	3000 Kg
Seed Collection	10 Kg
Monitoring (Completed May to September)	
Monitoring Plots 1m x 1m (Section 5)	39 plots
Monitoring Plots 20m x 20m	31 plots
Butterfly Transects	29 Transects - 8118 m of transects surveyed.
Research	
University of Toronto	Data was collected and will be used to quantify structural variation in vegetation and surface temperature across sections in The Meadoway. This data will be used to connect heterogeneity and diversity to microclimate amelioration and relate this to vegetation health, pollinator activity, and human comfort.
Trent University and University of Waterloo	Continued research addressing key knowledge gaps that will help extend turfgrass-to-meadow restoration to under-utilized urban greenspaces across Canada.

## Section 1

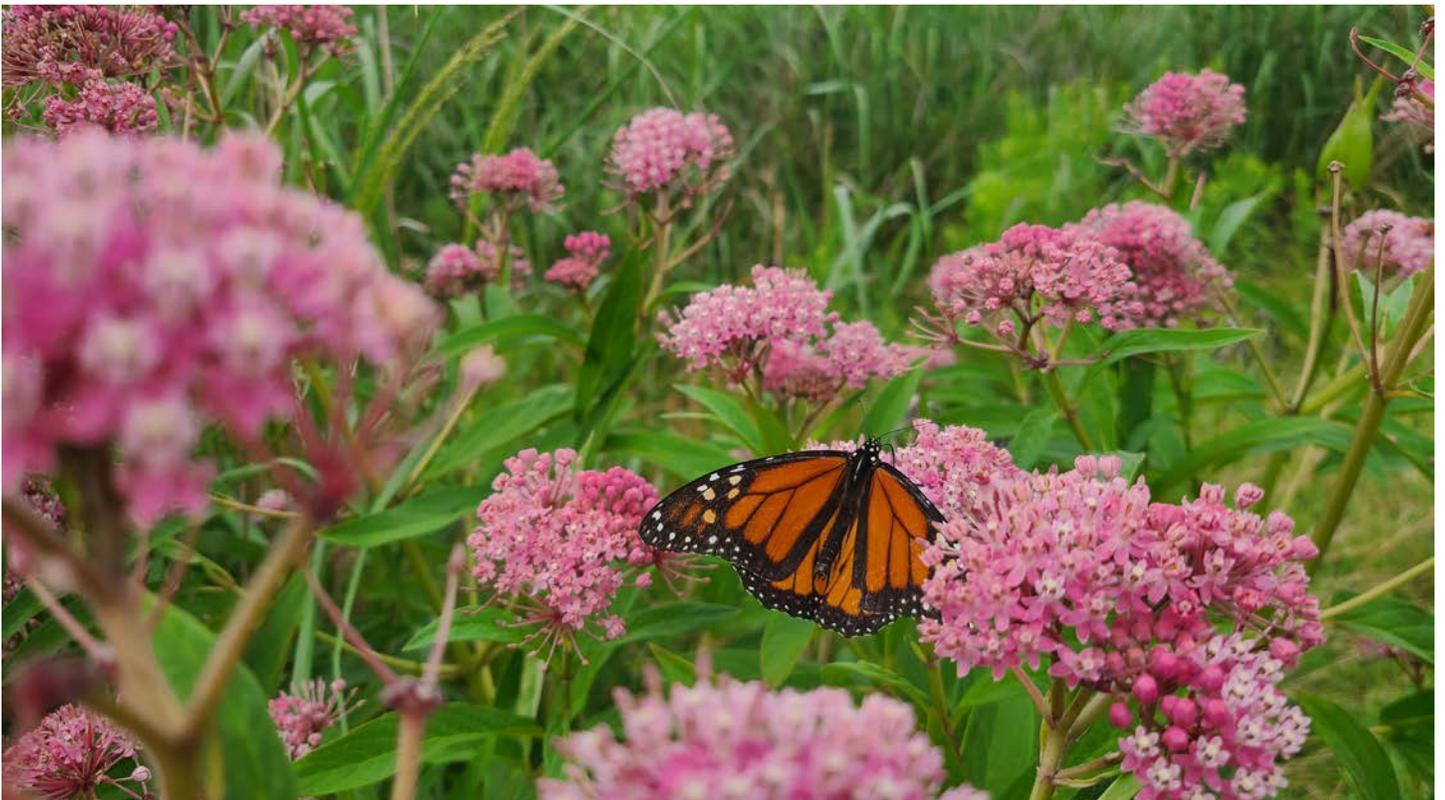
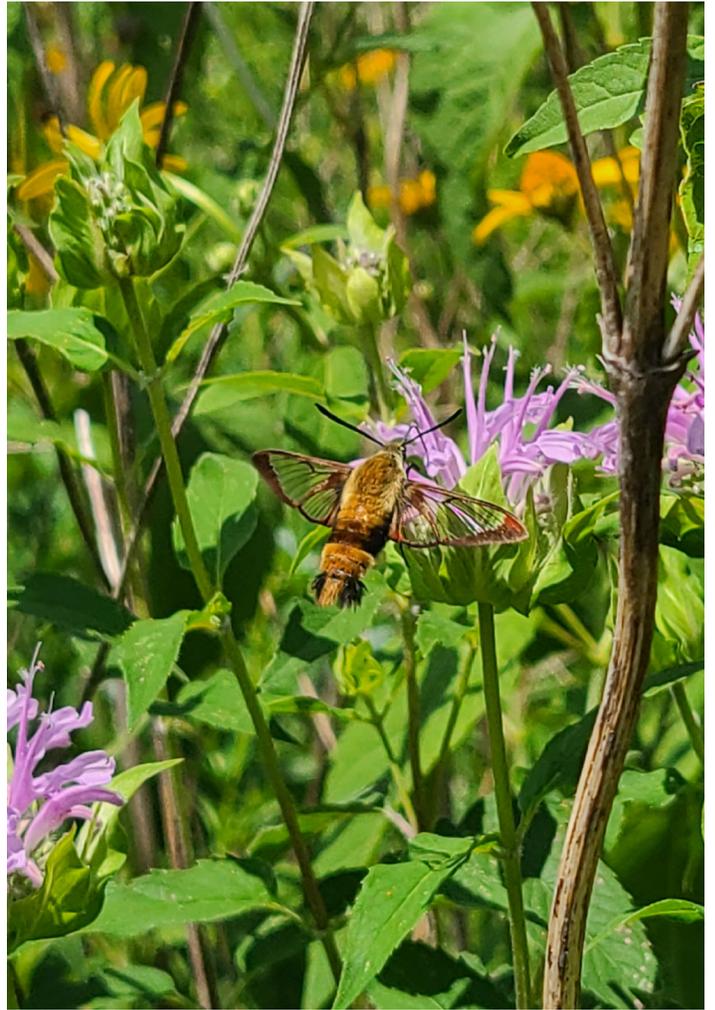
area - 15 ha, meadow footprint - 10 ha





## Section 2

area - 29 ha, meadow footprint - 20 ha





### Section 3

area - 18 ha, meadow footprint - 11 ha





## Section 4

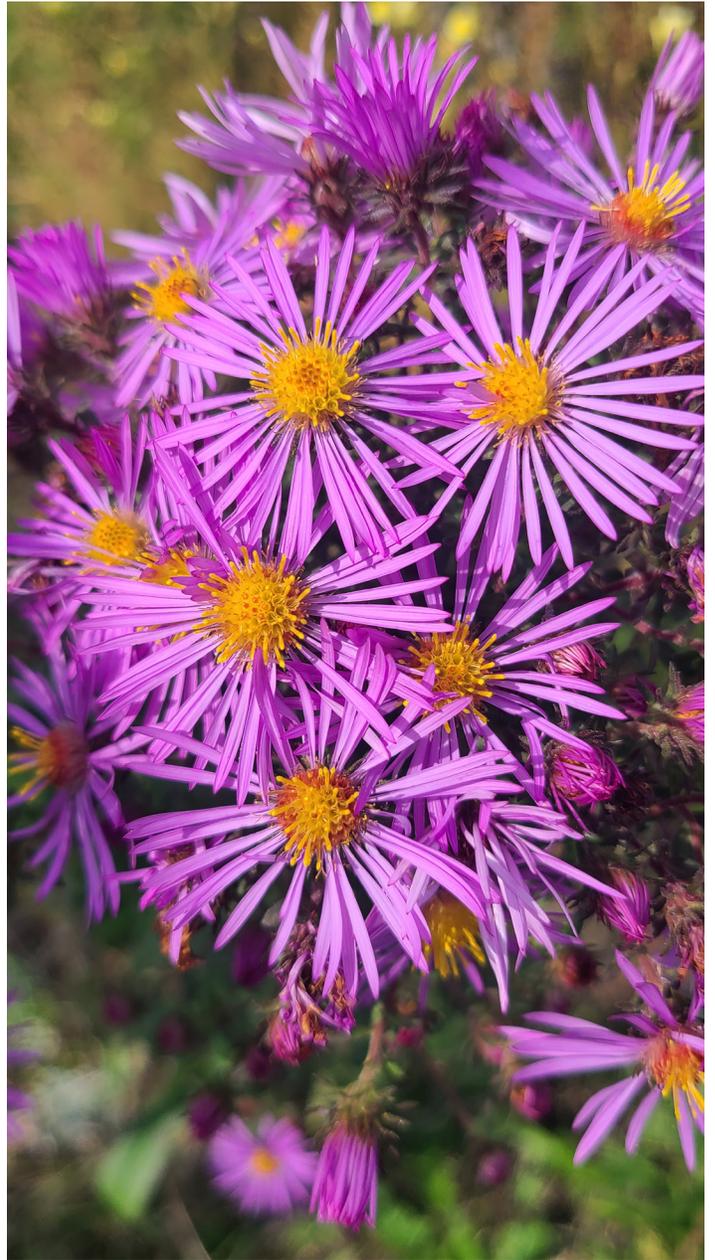
area - 41 ha, meadow footprint - 25 ha





## Section 5

area - 21 ha, meadow footprint - 16 ha

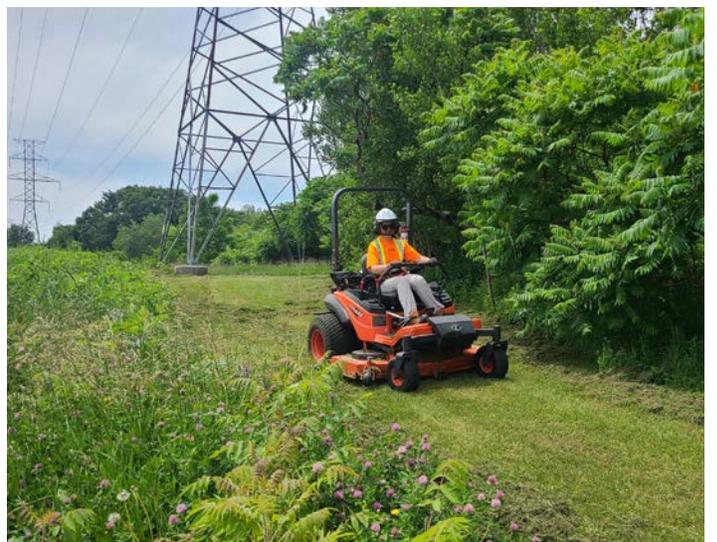




**Section 6**

area - 10 ha, meadow footprint - 8ha





**Section 7**

area - 17 ha, meadow footprint - 9 ha





## Lessons Learned

In 2025, vegetation was challenged by persistent drought and its heavy impact on both mature and new plants. Areas seeded in 2024 and in the spring of 2025 had lower germination rates than expected, while mature plants in established meadows had variable ability to tolerate the drought, affecting flowering timing, and reducing seed production. As a result, seed collection was limited by the reduced number of flowers and seedheads, and by plants producing non-viable seeds. In response to these conditions, the restoration team adjusted its expectations for seed collection and overall meadow vigor.

The effects of the 2025 drought are exemplified in Section 5.1. For unclear reasons, an area of the site struggled when it was first seeded in 2023. Consequently, it was re-seeded in spring of 2025 following an herbicide treatment. The severe drought that followed reduced the number of seeds that germinated. Most of the species that were successful in germinating were those tolerant of dry conditions (e.g. butterfly milkweed and hoary vervain). Throughout the summer season, patches of soil within this section remained bare, indicating that the high temperatures and lack of moisture provided unfavourable growing conditions for even non-native weeds.

In September, rain and cooler temperatures enabled the planted seeds to germinate and begin growing in the fall, provoking a concern that the fragile seedlings may be unable to withstand the October frost, causing them to die off over the winter and consequently leave the site exposed once again. Moving forward, the restoration team will place additional seeds during the fall season in a rough nursery format. Given that the site topography includes several slopes, the team will aim to match individual species to their suitable soil conditions, by planting species that tolerate dry soils on the tops of slopes, and species that require more moisture at slope bases.

The unplanned burn in Section 4 during March of 2025 provided an opportunity to add seeds to a struggling section of The Meadoway and trial this method as a means of adaptive management. The area, which was first seeded in 2016, experienced a drought within its first year, resulting in low survival rates of planted seeds and strenuous conditions in subsequent years. Following the March fire, the team drilled seed into the ground; however, due to the extensive presence of non-native and invasive species, few seeds successfully germinated.

The early spring timing of the burn seemed to stimulate rapid growth of the cool season grasses, which emerged earlier and denser than usual, shading out the planted seeds. When coupled with the severe drought conditions, this led to minimal germination and establishment. As a result, the site currently faces high invasive pressures and predominantly consists of non-native species. Looking ahead to 2026, the restoration team aims to restart the area, beginning with site preparation. The goal will be to reduce the non-native seedbank that has been established over a nine-year period, and to reseed to improve diversity in this area.



The first summer of the native seed nursery provided valuable learning experiences, as its development incorporated insightful trials. The restoration team seeded a total of 18 plots, with 12 plots seeded in the fall of 2024, and an additional six plots seeded during the spring of 2025. A total of eight species were seeded across two to three plots per species. For most species, both fall and spring seedings were implemented, using both row and scatter seeding techniques. Of the 18 total single-species plots, 16 successfully germinated throughout the plot. As expected, the species with germination codes typically requiring cold moist stratification (e.g. cup plant) were observed to have lower germination in the spring seeding plots, due to the missing stratification process. However, the germination was not substantially lowered, and therefore, the plot was still considered to be successful. This information provides justification for spring seeding as a viable method for successful germination, though increasing the proportion of species requiring stratification may help improve outcomes.

Two seeding methods, row and scatter seeding, were trialed to determine the most effective approach based on ease of implementation, advantages during weeding, and plot maintenance during plant growth. Scatter seeding was proven to be faster and easier to implement. However, row seeding was also advantageous, as weed identification and removal were less challenging with defined rows. Ultimately, weeding was difficult in both plot types, as weed roots and their attached soil clumps often consisted of native seedlings which were removed with the weeds.



Overall, the most significant impact on the nursery was watering. Due to the high temperatures and the drought, the germination of the seeds was low. To mitigate this, the restoration team adapted the watering schedule to one to two times per week, which substantially increased germination and enabled successful plant production. As anticipated based on their slower growth rates, many of the plant species established basal rosettes of a satisfactory size, and it is expected that many will begin flowering in 2026.

One of the plots contained a trial seed mix, given to TRCA by a seed vendor, consisting of a blend of coated and non-coated seeds. The organic seed coating was composed of a variety of natural fertilizers to assist in providing seedlings with nutrients as they grow. The purpose of this trial was to determine whether the coating was worth procuring. While the seeds from the trial mix were successful in germinating and some flowering occurred, it was difficult to determine whether the coating provided a net benefit. Given the nutrient-dense soil at The Meadoway, further trials under varying conditions should be undertaken.

On Monday August 11th, 2025, the restoration team was devastated to be informed by a local resident that mowing had occurred in mature meadow habitat near Dean Park Road and Sheppard Avenue East (Section 7). Staff went to site and were informed that the Mega Blast 2025 concert took place on August 9/10th near The Meadoway and the corridor was used for parking. Approximately 5.2 hectares of The Meadoway containing native plants established since 2016, and currently in full bloom supporting large numbers of pollinators was mown to the ground during drought conditions. Although there has not been a clear explanation of how the incident occurred, HONI has committed to contributing to compensation and the City of Toronto is looking into the opportunity to have damages covered by their insurance.

Fall monitoring of the mown/compacted meadow from the event indicates that some native species are beginning to re-establish between Dean Park Road and Sheppard Avenue East. However, few native species have emerged east of Dean Park Road along the right-of-way. With the fall growing season wrapping up, TRCA staff will conduct follow-up monitoring in spring 2026 (May–June) to assess site recovery. Based on those findings, a range of meadow restoration techniques may be considered, restarting the meadow fully, overseeding, or targeted infill seeding. At this stage, it remains too early to determine how the mowed and compacted areas will respond over winter and into spring.





## Monitoring and Research

### Vegetation

In 2025, TRCA staff continued vegetation monitoring across all sections of The Meadowway. A total of 31 monitoring plots, each measuring 20m x 20m, were visited twice—once in June and again in September.

In addition to these plots, the team conducted monitoring in 39 smaller plots measuring 1m x 1m in Sections 4 and 5. These plots support experiments initiated by The Meadowway restoration team, aimed at informing best practices for native meadow creation in highly urbanized environments. The data will help assess the success of various treatment methods. 25 plots were set up and monitored at the end of August, while 15 plots were set up in 2023. In 2025, a third round of data collection was done in September.





## Butterflies

The Meadoway currently incorporates a total of 32 distinct transect sections, amounting to almost 9.1 km of meadow habitat undergoing butterfly monitoring. In 2025, all but 3 transect sections were walked once a month from June to September. The 3 transect sections that were not covered were due to ongoing construction operations in Section 3. The size of the transect sections ranges from 67 m (Section 4.1 B) to 553 m (Section 2K). Over this four-month period, the restoration team spent approximately 20 hours surveying butterflies along the hydro corridor.

A total of 1726 butterflies across 23 species were documented within the monitoring protocol, with the highest abundance recorded in July (578 individuals), and the highest diversity reported in June (15 species). The most frequently encountered species over the four-month period was European common blue (1100 individuals) and cabbage white (182 individuals). Monarchs appeared to have been scarce over the period, with only 112 individuals counted. However, it is important to note that the survey dates may not have coincided with peak migration dates, therefore this figure should not be used as an indication of the overall Monarch population.

Thus, the two most frequently encountered species were non-native butterflies. European common blue first arrived in Toronto in 2017, and the species was identified in higher abundance during late summer. One of the main larval foodplants for European common blue (and for the much less abundant Eastern tailed-blue) is *Lotus corniculatus* (Birds-foot trefoil), a commonly introduced species which proliferates in short turf conditions. Within the Meadoway, *Lotus corniculatus* grows in abundance in open verges along the paved trails, and in areas with diminished lush herbaceous growth, such as routes used by Hydro One Networks Inc. (HONI) staff to access hydro towers. In The Meadoway during July of 2025, the trailside (buffer) verges were intensely mowed, and seemingly as a result, the number of European common blues was reduced, presumably due to the associated high mortality of larvae during mowing operations. This is evident when compared to un-mowed sites elsewhere in the region, primarily in rural areas. Given the non-native origin of European common blue, this may not be concerning. However, native resident butterfly species such as Eastern tailed-blue also use *Lotus corniculatus* (and similar introduced Legume species) as larval foodplant.

Currently, apart from the continuing good fortune of European common blue, there were no positive population trends for resident butterflies despite many diverse species. This may be due in large part to the necessarily ongoing dynamic nature of vegetation management within the Meadoway, which includes tilling, cutting, mowing, and spraying. However, as these management activities are progressively reduced, it is anticipated that native resident butterfly species will have an improved ability to establish breeding populations within the corridor.





## Research

TRCA has partnered with the University of Waterloo and Trent University through a successful NSERC Alliance grant to further research at The Meadoway. This research capitalizes on the \$4 million already invested in The Meadoway to address key knowledge gaps, such as optimizing seeding and site preparation methods to support the creation of biodiverse meadow habitat. This collaboration currently provides state-of-the-art technical and professional training for three undergraduate thesis students, three graduate students, one doctoral student, and one post-doctoral fellow.

Students have started to quantify the benefits of this ecological restoration for butterflies and their plant hosts, as well as the net benefits of meadow restoration for local temperature and the carbon budget. Activities in 2025 have included flowering plant surveys related to butterfly communities; installing carbon dioxide gas collars to monitor carbon flux; growth chamber experiments examining competition among species (including invasives); herbicide effectiveness studies; leaf collection to better understand carbon and nitrogen allocation; and seed bank germination studies.

Students will continue to work closely with TRCA to develop their research skills, as well as the collaboration and communication skills needed to tackle the climate change and biodiversity crises.



## Looking Ahead

As The Meadoway transitions to the adaptive management phase, the restoration team will focus on the most effective success measuring tool, and to develop and enhance methods for managing the meadows as they mature. In the coming years, the team will measure success in different meadows based on site goals, abiotic conditions, and overall site-specific context. Because each meadow is unique, with localized conditions that interact differently, applying a one-size-fits-all model to determine success across the corridor will not capture the nuances of each site. Developing specific measures of key performance indicators will help determine management needs and can also inform on-site preparation practices to ensure that future challenges are controlled.

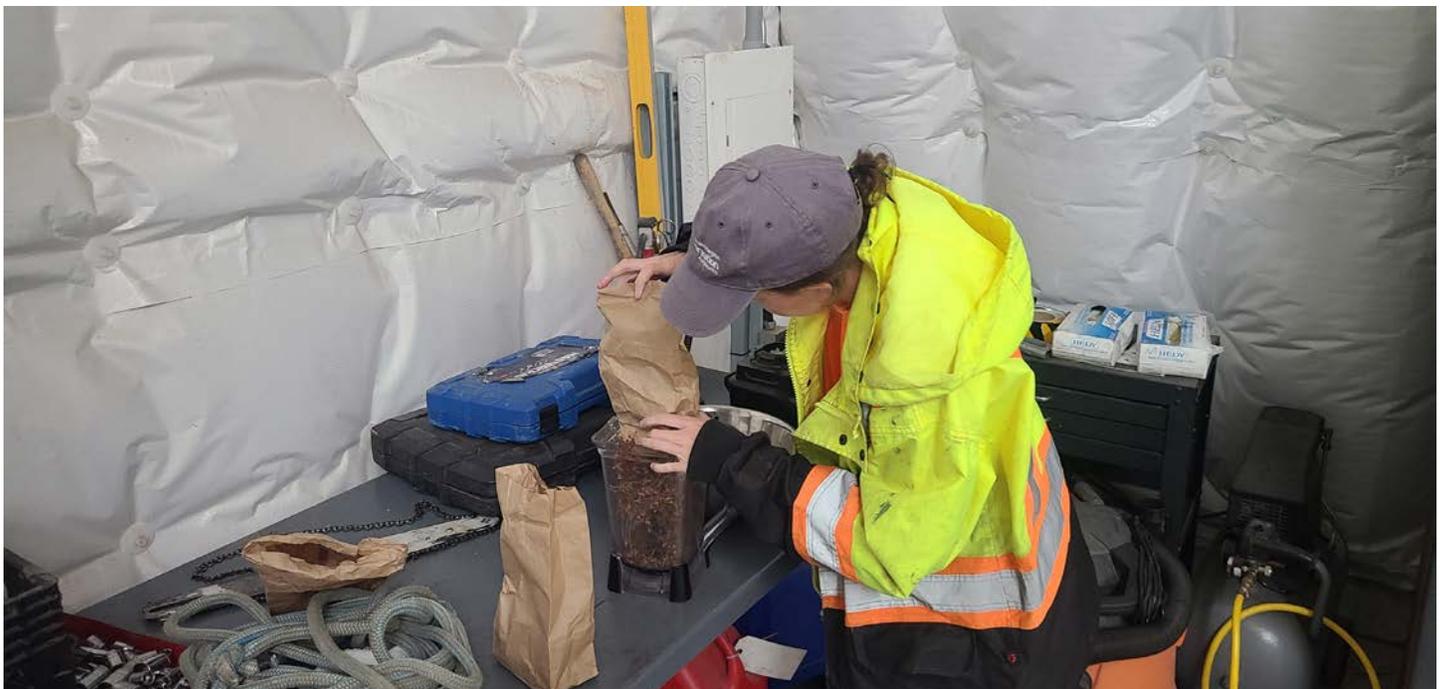
While the meadows continue to mature, the restoration team's activities will largely consist of adaptive management practices. The older meadows are struggling to transition, as short-lived species fade and are replaced primarily by tall goldenrod, which is now the most dominant plant in the mature meadows. To mitigate the negative impacts on biodiversity, the restoration team will develop trials to manage the tall goldenrod's dominance.

A goat and sheep grazing trial as a means of adaptive management has been planned for 2026. The grazing project will be conducted through a series of trial plots with grazing occurring at varying intensities, which will be compared to plots with different types of mowing equipment, to understand the impact on thatch breakdown and goldenrod management.



As the results from external research partners and monitoring teams become available, the restoration team will work to adapt and update best practices and procedures. Practices such as site preparation and invasive species management will be informed by ongoing research and may be altered depending on the results of the studies. For example, current research on site preparation techniques is pointing to a combination of chemical and mechanical methods as the best overall site preparation method. Each method effectively targets invasive and non-native species differently.

Native seed production is an important goal for The Meadoway as the meadows reach maturity. The restoration team will continue to learn and develop seed harvesting and cleaning methods to sustainably use seed grown in the meadows. Expansion of the seed nursery will be vital to increasing seed collection ability and efficiency.







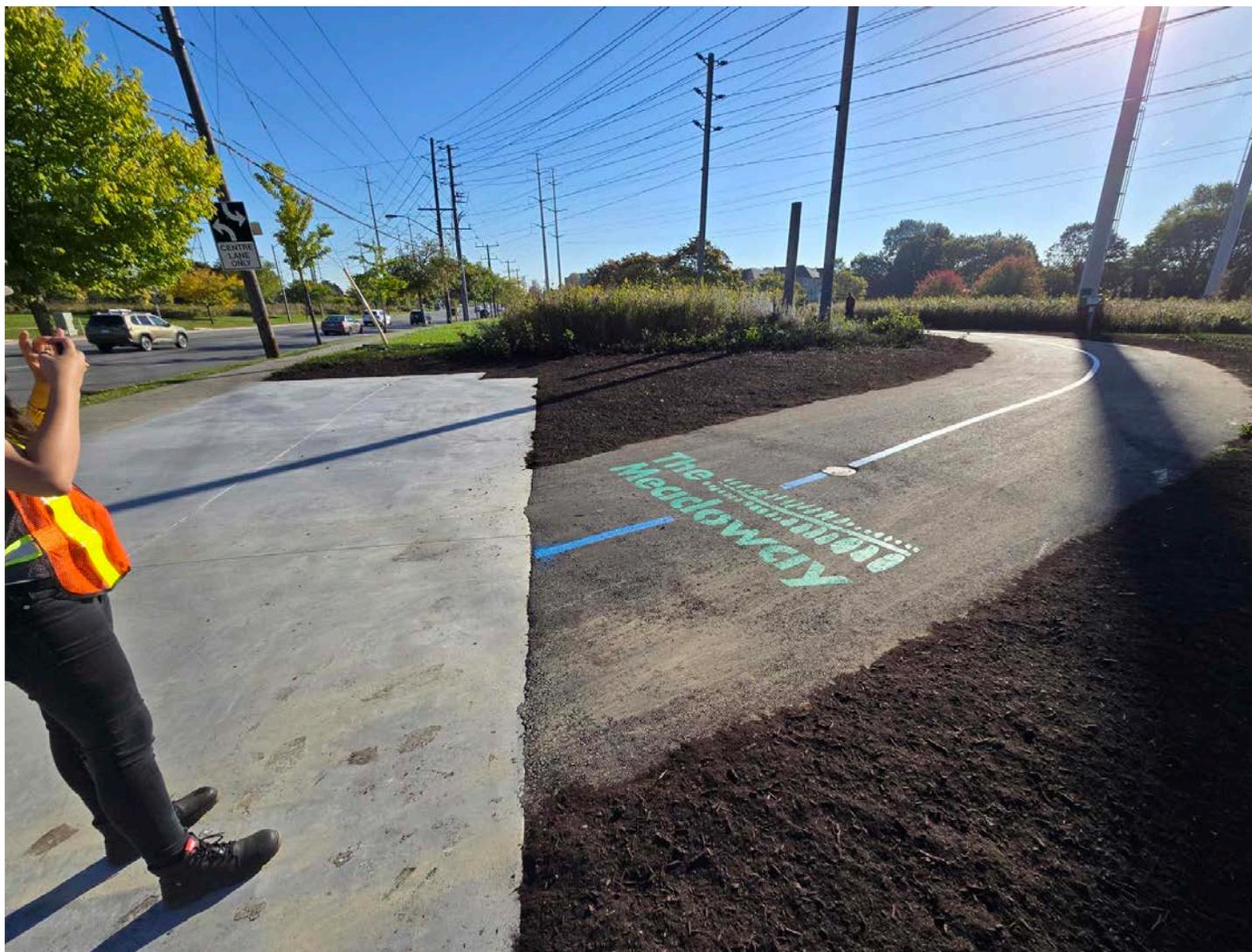


# ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION AND CONNECTIONS

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The Meadowway remains on-track in its commitment to advancing active transportation infrastructure and fostering community connectivity. Through investments in trail construction, pedestrian crossings, public realm improvements, and trail amenities, TRCA continues to advance a connected and sustainable transportation network that serves residents and visitors alike.

Funding to advance active transportation objectives has been secured from the City of Toronto (through the Federal Natural Infrastructure Fund and TRCA's capital budgets) and Parks Canada to leverage the Weston Family Foundation investment.





## Section 3

### Part 1 – Marcos Boulevard to Arsandco Park

Construction on this significant trail connection within the Gatineau Hydro Corridor is progressing well, with substantial completion anticipated by the end of 2025.

This latest segment of multi-use trail incorporates several key features to enhance safety and accessibility for both pedestrians and cyclists. These include a mid-block signalized pedestrian crossing at Midland Avenue and a pedestrian/cyclist bridge spanning a tributary of Highland Creek, south of Arsandco Park. Together, these elements will provide a safe and continuous multi-use pathway for the community.

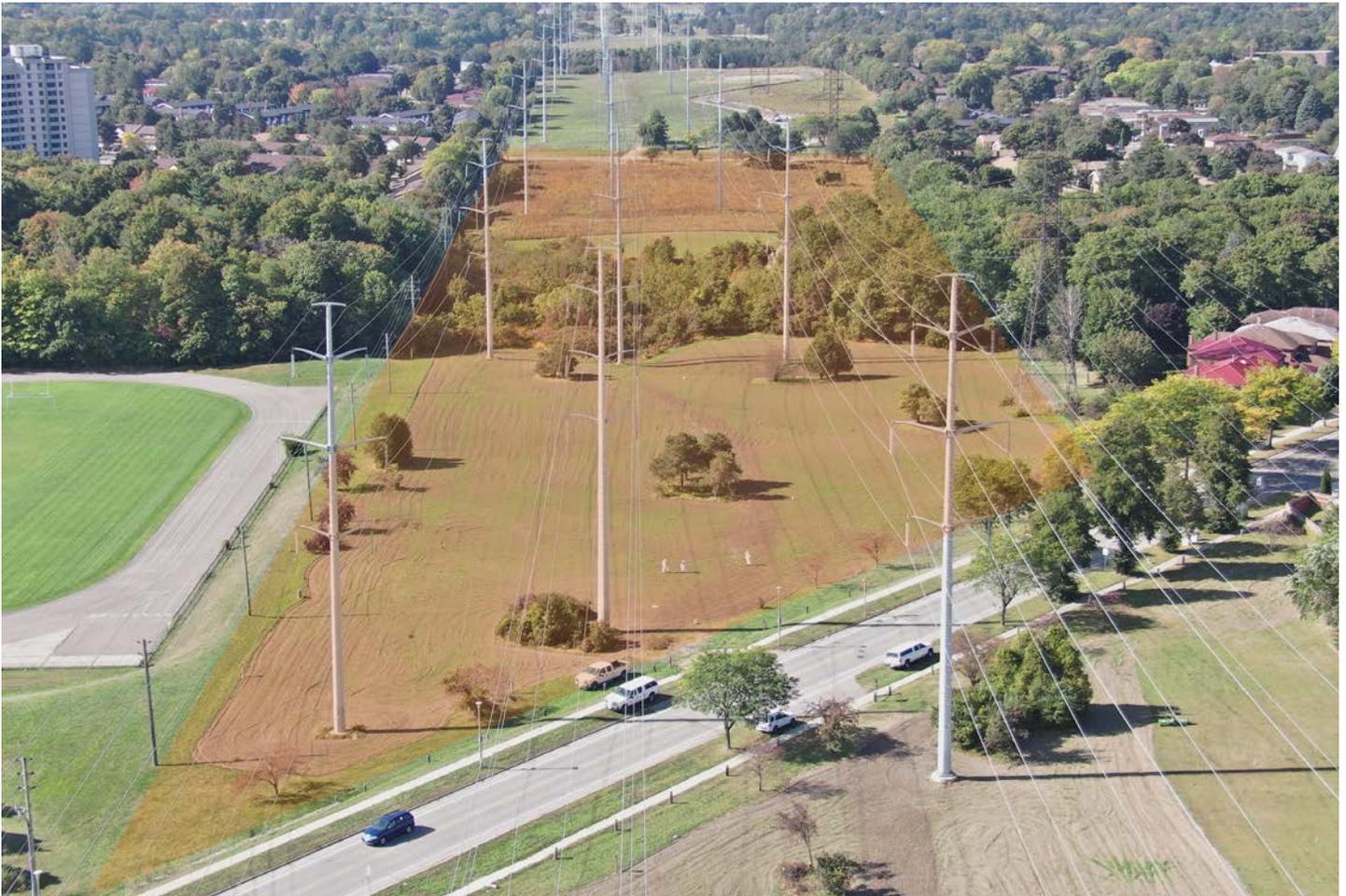


## Section 6

### Part 1 – Military Trail to Morningside Avenue

Following confirmation of City of Toronto capital funding, planning for this section of multi-use trail began earlier this year with a number of proposed alignments that built on the Environmental Assessment framework. TRCA continues to meet regularly with University of Toronto Scarborough and City of Toronto staff to refine a preferred alignment that meets stakeholder requirements and mitigates risks.

In addition, baseline data collection is underway to inform detailed design of the connection between Neilson Road and Military Trail, including a proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge crossing over the Ellesmere Ravine. TRCA has onboarded a professional engineering firm to complete a geotechnical investigation and slope stability analysis to inform bridge design and placement. Given the complexity of the site conditions and opportunity for innovation in solving site constraints, this pedestrian crossing is earmarked for a potential design competition in 2026.



## Meadoway Trail Improvements

### Undertaken with Financial Support from Parks Canada

With the generous financial support of Parks Canada, TRCA has implemented several Meadoway trail improvements over the last 3 years (2023-2025), providing enhancements to the corridor and improved connections and amenities to and near Rouge National Urban Park.

Through 2024-2025, a significant focus of this grant was the development of custom furnishings and rest nodes that reflect the special character of The Meadoway project as the intersection of nature in the city. Designed for quality and durability, these distinct spaces will provide trail users with a comfortable place to rest and enjoy the natural surroundings, while also providing opportunities for animation, programming and gathering.

Implementation of these first features in Section 5, between Military Trail and Neilson Road, will serve as a pilot for future installation of seating throughout the corridor. While the original scope of work was completed in 2025, TRCA continues to collaborate with the design consultant and contractor to install additional furnishings in other sections of The Meadoway in 2026 through funding City of Toronto Section 37 funding secured as community benefits.





## Meadoway TO362 Wayfinding Program **Looking Ahead**

### **In Coordination with City of Toronto**

The TO360 wayfinding program for The Meadoway will provide enhanced accessibility and safety to the trail system, with a pilot implementation planned for Section 5. The wayfinding program has been fully planned, and technical approval has been received from Hydro One Inc. TRCA continues to work with the City of Toronto to finalize interpretive content. Implementation has been delayed until spring of 2026 due to City scheduling conflicts.

Future implementation in the remaining sections will take place over the next few years as the City of Toronto's funding and schedule permits.

The project team will continue to work with WFF on recognition opportunities as the signage typologies are finalized for implementation.

Looking ahead to 2026, advancing the design of remaining sections between Military Trail and Morningside Avenue in Section 6 will be a key focus, alongside implementation of additional public realm furnishings and wayfinding. This will further close the gaps in connectivity and enhance user experience.





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MEADOWAY  
COMMUNITY POWERED GREEN SPACE

**ATTENTION**  
**YOU MAY BE PHOTOGRAPHED**  
To celebrate today's launch, a photographer will be capturing photos of attendees.  
Notice Regarding the Collection of Personal Information  
PLEASE DO NOT THINK THAT ANYONE WHO IS SUBJECT TO THIS NOTICE IS BEING PHOTOGRAPHED.  
Thank you for your cooperation.





# COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

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## Community Powered Greenspace

This year, The Meadowway continued to evolve as a hub for environmental education and community engagement. 2025 marked a period of meaningful growth in the developments of TRCA's relationships with community members, which is vital to the success of community outreach and education initiatives. Through expanded engagement and deepened collaboration with schools, organizations, and community groups across Scarborough, The Meadowway has strengthened its role as a space where people connect with nature, each other, and the broader vision of a sustainable urban future.

Educational experiences in The Meadowway have empowered students and residents to engage directly with local ecosystems, fostering hands-on learning and environmental stewardship. These interactions have helped cultivate a shared sense of responsibility and belonging, as participants continue to observe the transformation of the greenspace and contribute to its care.

TRCA is grateful for the growing network of teachers, volunteers, community leaders, and organizations, whose dedication and collaboration have made this year's achievements possible. These synergistic efforts are building a resilient, inclusive, and thriving corridor that continues to inspire lasting change.



## Curriculum-Linked Education in The Meadoway

The Meadoway School Program has delivered meaningful impact across local communities in Scarborough. By engaging 1,064 students and teachers in hands-on, curriculum-linked activities, the program has provided participants with insight into the natural world while fostering a powerful sense of environmental stewardship.

Through a combination of classroom learning, immersive field trips, and direct involvement in conservation efforts, students from more than 40 classes have built lasting connections to The Meadoway. These experiences have not only enriched their education but have also inspired a lifelong appreciation for nature and empowered students to take an active role in caring for their local environment.

**TABLE 5: 2025 Curriculum Linked Education in The Meadoway Program Overview (January 1 – December 31, 2025)**

Time Period	# of Students	# of Teachers	# of classes
April to June 2025	567	28	28
July to August 2025	0	0	0
September 2025	90	3	4
Anticipated October to December 2025	364	12	12
Totals by Category	1021	43	44
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1064</b>		<b>44</b>

## Program Development and Delivery

The Meadowway School Program continues to foster student connections to the hydro corridor through hands-on experiential learning. By actively engaging with the environment, students develop a deeper sense of place and a stronger connection to the natural world around them, nurturing a lasting interest in environmental stewardship.

In early spring, teachers received classroom growing kits designed to introduce students to native plant cultivation and the plant life cycle. Each kit included soil, pots, spray bottles, optional grow lights, detailed instructions, and seeds of black-eyed susan and wild bergamot – species that are readily found in The Meadowway, which were selected by TRCA Educators for their growing success rate. Teachers were encouraged to connect with TRCA for support throughout the growing process, creating a collaborative learning environment for both students and teachers.

Following the classroom cultivation phase, students visited The Meadowway to reflect on their seed growth experience and take part in curriculum-linked activities focused on meadow habitat restoration and the importance of native plant species. These visits provided a tangible connection between classroom learning and real-world conservation efforts.

As the program transitioned into the fall, the focus shifted toward stewardship and deeper ecological engagement. Students participated in activities such as invasive species management, native seed collection, and seed distribution, reinforcing key environmental concepts while cultivating a sense of responsibility and care for the land.



Throughout 2025, The Meadowway School Program has continued to offer unique, immersive learning experiences that connect students to nature both in the classroom and on-site. TRCA remains committed to providing opportunities that inspire young people to grow their understanding of the natural world and take pride in their contributions to the community. These experiences aim to empower the next generation of environmental stewards and advocates for local greenspaces like The Meadowway.

### **Program Impact**

In 2025, The Meadowway Education Team proudly continued to strengthen relationships with local schools while also building new connections. A standout example was our collaboration with St. John Paul II Catholic Secondary School, located adjacent to a newly extended section of The Meadowway multi-use trail completed in fall of 2024. Thanks to growing community interest in the trail, the team welcomed four classrooms from the school into The Meadowway, introducing many students to the vibrant greenspace right in their backyard.



TRCA also remained committed to supporting equity in education by prioritizing engagement with high-priority schools identified through the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) Learning Opportunities Index (LOI). This index ranks schools based on external challenges that may impact student success, with those facing the most significant barriers ranked highest. In 2025, ten of our school programs were delivered to classes from schools ranked in the top 100 on the LOI, underscoring TRCA's dedication to serving equity-deserving students and educators.

The Meadoway continues to be an ideal setting for land-based learning, a core component of Indigenous education. This approach allows students to form meaningful, experiential connections to Indigenous knowledge and teachings, in alignment with Ontario's First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Studies curriculum. TRCA was especially pleased to once again welcome educators and students from Wexford Collegiate School for the Arts, who integrated Traditional Indigenous Knowledge from their classroom learning into hands-on stewardship activities in The Meadoway.

These experiences not only enriched student learning but also deepened their connection to the natural world and the land they live on. Looking ahead, TRCA remains committed to expanding access to The Meadoway's educational opportunities, ensuring that all students can benefit from this unique outdoor classroom.





## Supporting English as Second Language (ESL) Learners and The Meadoway

The Meadoway continues to expand its reach by offering inclusive programming tailored to English as a Second Language (ESL) learners and Newcomers. TRCA's Newcomer Programs team works closely with ESL educators, resource staff, and coordinators from the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) centres to design experiences that are accessible and relevant to learners at various language ability levels.

By creating programs specifically for ESL and Newcomer audiences, The Meadoway fosters a welcoming environment that bridges language and cultural gaps. These tailored experiences help connect participants to their new surroundings and empower them to engage meaningfully with nature and their communities. In addition to environmental education, these programs promote leadership and volunteerism by offering New Canadians opportunities to take

active roles in stewardship and community initiatives. Participants gain valuable skills and confidence while contributing to a diverse, inclusive, and environmentally engaged community.

Over the past 3 years, the Newcomer Programs team has aimed to introduce and inspire newcomer communities to The Meadoway's innovative ecological restoration success story. Throughout this time, there have been well over 320 newcomers to Canada engaged in a variety of delivery modes, ranging from plantings to classroom lessons and guided interpretive walks. Each program and its delivery is designed to meet the community, language, and physical needs of each group. The programs invite each participant to expand their knowledge and understanding of the project, while encouraging them to find a place, and make a space for themselves in The Meadoway.





## Program Development and Delivery

In 2025, TRCA's Multicultural Connections Program (MCP) team worked in partnership with the Islamic Foundation of Toronto (IFT) to engage over 110 seniors from the area in a July 17 field trip to The Meadoway. Headquartered approximately 4 kilometers from The Meadoway, the foundation and its members are local to the corridor, which supports the 2024 strategic objective of engaging residents adjacent to the corridor.

In an exciting collaboration between Meadoway community projects and Newcomer and ESL engagement efforts, The Meadoway Ambassador Program activated volunteers for the day to help link newcomers to the work happening across the corridor. Seniors were bussed to Thomson Memorial Park and led to The Meadoway. At the corridor, Meadoway Ambassadors led guided, interpretive walks for the seniors and enabled volunteers and newcomers to connect and share in the beauty of The Meadoway.

The feedback from the participants centered on the innovation of The Meadoway, its ecological impact, and public awareness of its value as an active transportation trail. While exploring the native species present in the meadow, participants were taught about applications such as Seek and iNaturalist. The opportunity to integrate technology and citizen science into daily life was appreciated by participants. Participants expressed inspiration to share this new knowledge with their community and inquired about ways to support The Meadoway's ecological efforts by planting native species in their backyards and balconies. The event concluded with a community potluck at Thomson Memorial Park. IFT extended sincere thanks to The Meadoway Team for the continued engagement.

## Program Impact

Since 2023, newcomers and ESL participants have taken an interest in the transformed greenspace that is The Meadoway. As engagement opportunities at The Meadoway continue to be offered, individuals and organizations have returned, with many engaged since the corridor's evolution from The Scarborough Butterfly Trail. Through programming efforts year after year, The Meadoway has connected individuals to their environment, promoted active living, and encouraged community engagement. Further, re-engagement during throughout each funding period with newcomer organizations and ESL programs provides their staff with tools and opportunities to connect with the space and develop a rich understanding of its value. By strengthening their connections to The Meadoway, community leaders are made ambassadors to the project between programming engagements.

The funding that supported these efforts from 2023 to 2025 is expected to have a multi-generational impact on the local community through a natural space that is appreciated, cared for, and supported for years to come.





## Community Outreach Events

In 2025, The Meadowway’s Community Outreach team deepened its commitment to fostering meaningful connections across Scarborough by partnering with local organizations that reflect the diversity and vibrancy of the region. Through a series of seasonal events designed to mirror the natural transformations of The Meadowway, the team ensured year-round engagement with residents and community groups. Each event featured at least one collaborative partner, amplifying the project’s reach and welcoming new audiences already rooted in Scarborough’s cultural and ecological landscape. These partnerships not only strengthened community ties, but also highlighted The Meadowway as a dynamic, community-powered greenspace that evolves with the seasons and thrives through collective stewardship.

### Program Development and Delivery

To celebrate Earth Day 2025, The Meadowway hosted its fourth annual spring cleanup event, drawing 43 dedicated community members to care for the areas surrounding the newly developed Meadowway Entrance Garden. Together, participants collected 250 lbs of litter, helping restore the area’s natural beauty and reinforcing the community’s commitment to environmental stewardship.

This year, the event featured a special collaboration with EcoSpark, who introduced participants to community science through the City Nature Challenge, a global initiative encouraging individuals to document local biodiversity using the iNaturalist app. After the cleanup, EcoSpark educators led an engaging session on the importance of citizen science and how its observations help build vital ecological datasets.

**Table 6: Community Outreach Events in The Meadowway Overview (January 1 – December 31, 2025)**

#	Date	Location	Event	Collaborators
1	April 26, 2025	Section 2; Meadowway Entrance Garden, Pharmacy Ave	Let’s Clean Up The Meadowway: Earth Day	EcoSpark
2	May 31, 2025	Section 2; Meadowway Entrance Garden, Pharmacy Ave	Meadowway Entrance Garden Community Planting	University of Toronto Scarborough Graduate Students Association
3	July 19, 2025	Section 4; Thomson Memorial Park	Ride The Meadowway!	Scarborough Cycles, Bike Share Toronto, Scarborough Environmental Association
4	September 27, 2025	Section 4; Thomson Memorial Park	Saving Seeds in The Meadowway	Toronto Master Gardeners, Scarborough Historical Museum

The community expressed appreciation for the event in meaningful ways. Pedestrians stopped to thank volunteers, passing cars honked in support, and one generous resident surprised the group with hot tea and coffee, warming spirits and hands alike. These moments of connection and gratitude highlighted the powerful role The Meadoway plays in connecting the community around shared values of care, conservation, and community.

In May of 2025, The Meadoway's Community Outreach team welcomed members of the University of Toronto – Scarborough Campus community to a hands-on spring planting event at the newly established Meadoway Entrance Garden. Designed to highlight the connection between nature and well-being, the event emphasized how engaging with greenspaces can positively impact both mental and physical health.

Together, 15 enthusiastic participants planted 300 native wildflowers and grasses, learning about the critical role these species play in supporting local biodiversity. TRCA educators shared insights into how native plants provide essential habitat and food sources for pollinators like bees and butterflies, as well as birds and other wildlife. This intimate, educational event fostered a deeper appreciation for ecological restoration and community stewardship, reinforcing The Meadoway's mission to create a thriving, inclusive greenspace that supports both people and nature.

In the summer, The Meadoway partnered with Scarborough Cycles, Bike Share Toronto, and the Scarborough Environmental Alliance to host a guided bike ride along the multi-use trails of The Meadoway. This event showcased the linear park's potential as an active transportation corridor, connecting communities while promoting sustainable mobility.



With 60 participants in attendance, the ride offered a scenic and educational experience through blooming summer meadows teeming with wildlife. Two planned stops along the route featured TRCA Educators, who shared insights into The Meadoway’s ecological restoration efforts and its role in supporting active transportation across Scarborough.

The event not only encouraged healthy outdoor activity but also highlighted how infrastructure such as The Meadoway can support both environmental goals and community well-being.

In the fall, The Meadoway’s Community Outreach team was proud to once again collaborate with the Toronto Master Gardeners to host a Seed Saving Workshop. This hands-on event welcomed 14 community members to learn how to ethically collect and save seeds from native plants growing in The Meadoway, aimed at encouraging participants to “create your own Meadoway” at home.



The event began with an introduction to ethical seed collection practices and a showcase of popular native wildflower species. Participants then embarked on a guided walk through The Meadoway, collecting seeds while learning about the ecological importance of meadow habitats and the history of The Meadoway project. Educators emphasized the importance of native seeds for pollinators and for local biodiversity.

To wrap up, attendees received a demonstration on how to separate seeds from chaff and learned the basics of germination, equipping them with the knowledge to begin their own native plant gardens. A special highlight of the day was a visit from City of Toronto Mayor Olivia Chow, who joined the group to express enthusiasm for native gardening and share her personal experience with planting native flowers.

The educational event centered on stewardship and empowered participants to apply the principles of The Meadoway into their community life.





## Additional Programs

In addition to The Meadowway's core funded programming, the Community Outreach and Education team facilitated a variety of engagement opportunities throughout 2025. The opportunities included custom school visits, private community events, and festival booths, each designed to expand public awareness and foster meaningful connections with The Meadowway.

Community and school groups interested in learning about The Meadowway were introduced to the project through on-site stewardship activities, presentations, or workshops, offered upon request. By exploring the project's impact on local wildlife, communities, and its broader global significance, participants gained a deeper appreciation for the conservation work led by TRCA and our partners. Overall, these engagement opportunities connected nearly 100 Toronto residents, fostering awareness and support for ongoing restoration efforts in the city.



By participating in TRCA's signature events, The Meadowway reached over 2,000 festival attendees, effectively linking the project to relevant environmental themes. At the Butterfly Festival, the team highlighted the importance of creating pollinator habitats, while the Adventures of the Salmon event at Morningside Park promoted access to The Meadowway and its role in supporting aquatic ecosystems and nature-based recreation.

The Ravine Youth Team, a City of Toronto-funded, skills-based employment program operated by TRCA, also contributed to The Meadowway's stewardship efforts over the summer. From June 17 to 20, eight seasonally hired youth supported site maintenance by removing litter and manually removing invasive plants across various sections of the corridor. On July 21 and 22, the team received hands-on training in pesticide applications for invasive species management, honing their skills in environmental restoration and stewardship.

### Community Events and Presentations:

- April 26 – Ravine Litter Clean-up in The Meadowway – Section 5
- April 26 – Customized Meadowway presentation for Rouge Butterflyway Earth Day event
- September 29 – Get Into The Meadowway presentation for the Toronto and Parkdale Horticultural Society
- October 25 – Park in the Dark with Autism Ontario
- October 29 – Gardening for Birds, Butterflies, and Beyond workshop with Curran Hall Community Association
- October 29 – Seed collection activity with University of Toronto Scarborough Campus

### Educational Booths:

- August 23 – TRCA Butterfly Festival at Tommy Thompson Park
- October 5 – TRCA Adventures of Salmon at Morningside Park

### School Events:

- May 6 – Taking Climate Action presentation for Loretto Abbey Catholic Secondary School



## The Meadoway Ambassador Program

The Meadoway Ambassador Program is a community-powered volunteer initiative led by TRCA's Community Outreach and Education team. The program engages local residents in animating The Meadoway by fostering environmental stewardship, promoting ecological literacy, and strengthening community connections to nature.

Launched in 2023 with an inaugural cohort of 11 volunteers, the program has demonstrated sustained growth and community interest. In 2025, the Ambassador network expanded to 33 active volunteers, reflecting the diversity of the surrounding communities. Participants include long-time Meadoway enthusiasts, newcomers to Canada, nature lovers, and individuals passionate about biodiversity, community engagement, and TRCA's broader conservation vision.

Meadoway Ambassadors support the delivery of all Meadoway engagement activities, such as litter cleanups, educational booths, and guided walks. Beyond on-the-ground support, Ambassadors contribute meaningfully to program development through regular team meetings and event planning subcommittees. Their input helps shape community engagement priorities and ensures programming remains responsive to local needs and interests. Truly, nearly all the events listed in the Community Outreach and Education section of this report would not have been possible without the support of the Meadoway Ambassadors.

To recognize their contributions, TRCA hosted a Meadoway Ambassador Celebration on October 26, 2025. The event featured remarks from TRCA's Director of Education and Training who personally thanked the Ambassadors for their dedication and passion for supporting community outreach in The Meadoway. As part of the celebration, 54 native wildflowers were planted, symbolizing the growth of the program and reinforcing the spirit of stewardship that defines the Meadoway Ambassador experience.

By cultivating local leadership and fostering a sense of ownership, the Meadoway Ambassador Program continues to play a vital role in advancing the goals of The Meadoway project and building a vibrant, ecologically rich, and inclusive community-powered greenspace.

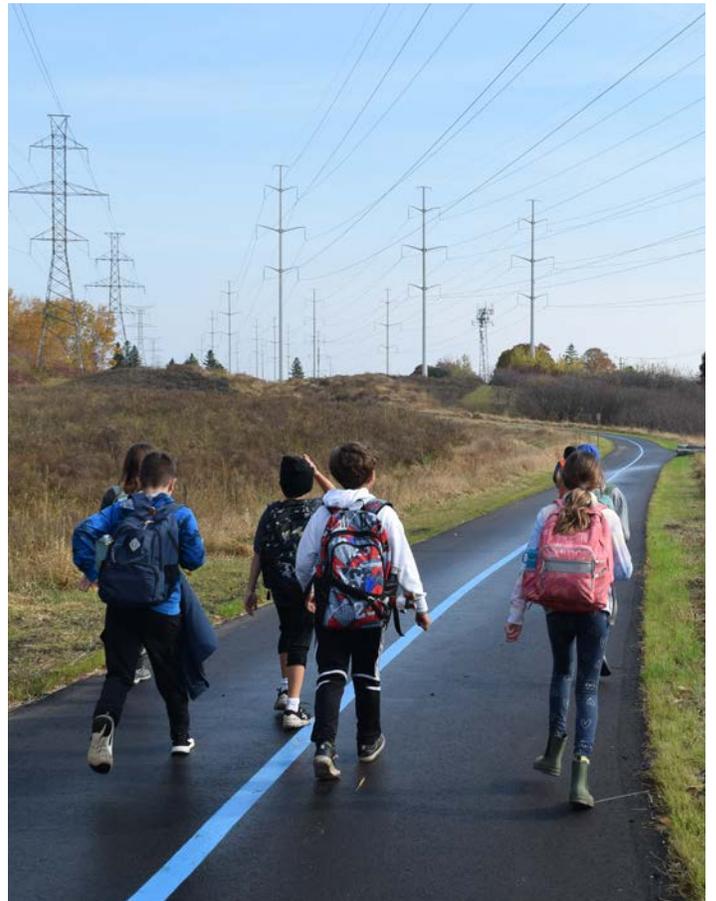


## Looking Ahead

Over the past three years, The Meadoway has become a vibrant hub for community engagement, education, and environmental stewardship. Through school programs and seasonal community events, thousands of residents have connected with the greenspace, learning about native ecology, contributing to restoration efforts, and experiencing firsthand the benefits of nature for mental and physical well-being.

These initiatives have not only deepened public understanding of The Meadoway's ecological importance but have also fostered a strong sense of community ownership. Looking ahead, the emerging Meadoway Ambassador Program offers exciting potential to build a dedicated network of volunteers who care deeply about the space. Empowering local residents to take on leadership roles in stewardship and outreach will cultivate long-term investment in the health and vitality of The Meadoway.

TRCA remains committed to strengthening the relationships built over the past three years and will continue to collaborate with community partners, educators, and volunteers to grow momentum around this transformative greenspace. These efforts aim to shape a future where The Meadoway is not only a corridor of ecological restoration, but a living example of community-powered conservation.





For more information visit  
[www.themeadoway.ca](http://www.themeadoway.ca)

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