

McNab Park – Norval

Dispersal of Cremated Remains
& River Offerings

Hindu Federation
Forum

July 21, 2021



Presentation Outline

- McNab Park
- Town's Approach
- Designated vs. Permitted



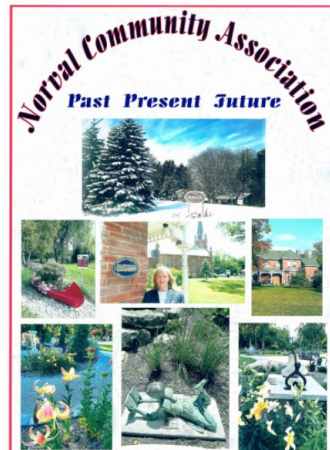
Park Context



Park Information



Site Photos/History



Dispersal of Cremated Remains / River Offerings



The Concern



Arrange a funeral, burial, cremation, alkaline hydrolysis or scattering



What you need to know before you arrange a funeral, burial, cremation, alkaline hydrolysis or scattering service.



- scatter the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis on **Crown land**, including land covered by water, if it is unoccupied (for example provincial park, conservation reserve, Great Lakes) and there are no signs or postings that prohibit scattering
- scatter the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis on municipally-owned lands (contact the municipality to check if there are by-laws that prohibit scattering in certain areas such as municipal parks)

Handling remains (cremation or alkaline hydrolysis)

In Ontario, you may:

- buy rights to bury or scatter the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis in a registered cemetery
- buy rights to place the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis in a niche within a columbarium in a registered cemetery.
- columbarium is an above-ground structure that contains a number of niches. Placing the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis in a niche is an interment, meaning a burial
- scatter the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis on private property with the consent of the land owner
- if a land owner wants to allow repeated scatterings to take place on a specific piece of property, the landowner must establish that land as a cemetery and have a licensed cemetery operator for the cemetery
- sign a contract with the licensed operator of a cemetery, crematorium, funeral home, alternative disposition facility or transfer service to scatter the remains of cremation or alkaline hydrolysis on your behalf
- scatter the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis on **Crown land**, including land covered by water, if it is unoccupied (for example provincial park, conservation reserve, Great Lakes) and there are no signs or postings that prohibit scattering
- scatter the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis on municipally-owned lands (contact the municipality to check if there are by-laws that prohibit scattering in certain areas such as municipal parks)
- transport the remains from cremation or alkaline hydrolysis out of Ontario

Agency Review



MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry



MGCS
/MSGSC



**Credit Valley
Conservation**
inspired by nature



Ontario

TED ARNOTT, MPP, WELLINGTON-HALTON HILLS



BAO | Bereavement
Authority of
Ontario



Initial Response

Religious Offerings and WATER QUALITY

*We are birds of the same nest,
We may wear different skins,
We may speak different languages,
We may believe in different religions,
We may belong to different cultures,
Yet we share the same home,
our Earth.
~Atharva Veda*

Religious offerings in our RIVERS

Hindus believe that water is sacred because it is the foundation for the growth of plant, animal and human life. The act of placing organic offerings in water after pooja represents a return to origins. Hindu religious offerings are being found in local rivers in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

The religious offerings include:

- **flowers and leaves**
- **coconuts, lemons, and other fruits**
- **jewellery or coins**
- **cloth or clothing**

Credit Valley Conservation (CVC) and Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) know that religious offerings are important to many cultures. CVC and TRCA are working closely with the Hindu community to find other means to placing offerings in the river, while also exploring similar cultural and religious offering practices.



What causes impaired water quality?

Water pollution comes in many forms and from many sources including:

- rain and snowmelt runoff from urban and rural areas
- spills of chemicals and other hazardous materials
- garbage dumping and littering

These and other pollutants enter rivers and streams, which flow into Lake Ontario, the source of drinking water for much of the Greater Toronto Area.

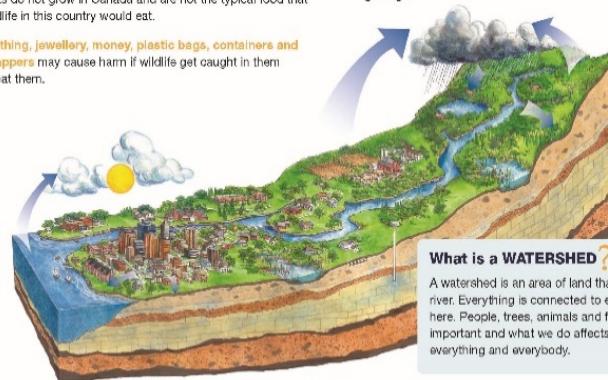
What does this mean to the ENVIRONMENT?

While religious offerings are not the largest source of water pollution, anything not found naturally in the river can harm water quality and the homes of wildlife.

When **flowers, leaves, lemons, coconuts and other plant materials** are put into the water, they immediately begin to break down and use up oxygen. Some plants and animals are very sensitive to the amount of oxygen in the water and cannot survive when there is not enough.

Coconuts, lemons and other fruits may cause health and disease problems if eaten by wildlife. This is because these fruits do not grow in Canada and are not the typical food that wildlife in this country would eat.

Clothing, jewellery, money, plastic bags, containers and wrappers may cause harm if wildlife get caught in them or eat them.



What can I do?

Flowers and leaves may be placed in local rivers, however only a small handful should be released at one time. Extra flowers can be composted.

Fruits such as coconuts may be eaten, composted or buried with the permission of the landowner.

Offerings such as **clothing, jewellery or money** should not be placed in or near rivers. These offerings may be donated to your local temple.

Plastic bags or wrappers must be recycled or placed in the garbage.

Who do I contact for more information?

Toronto and Region Conservation
Phone: 416-661-6500 ext. 5394
E-mail: multiculturalconnections@trca.on.ca
www.trca.on.ca

Credit Valley Conservation
Phone: 905-870-1515
E-mail: info@creditvalleyca.ca
www.creditvalleyca.ca

Hindu Federation
Contact person: Pandit Roopnath Sharma
Phone: 905-670-8439
Fax: 905-996-0384
E-mail: ptroopsharma@gmail.com
www.federationofhindutemples.ca

Supported by:



Healthy rivers are needed to provide homes and clean water for both humans and wildlife.

Option 1: Prohibitive Approach



Option 2: Educational/ Stewardship Approach

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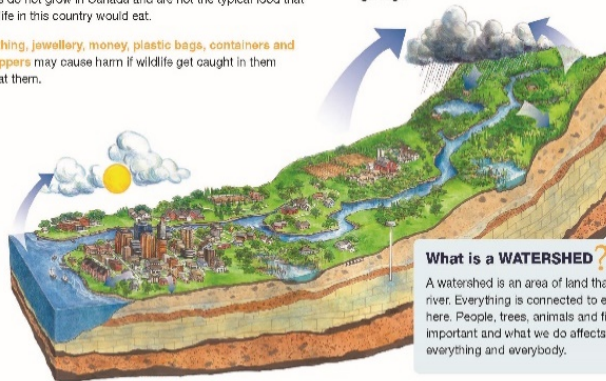
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What is a WATERSHED?

A watershed is an area of land that drains into a river. Everything is connected to everything else here. People, trees, animals and fish are all very important and what we do affects the health of everything and everybody.

Healthy rivers are needed to provide homes and clean water for both humans and wildlife.

Families and individuals who wish to scatter cremated remains of a loved one can do so in Forks of the Credit Provincial Park on both land and in water.

To minimize your environmental impact, please:

- Do not leave plastic flowers, written notes or physical structures at the site.
- Do not leave offerings such as coins, clothing or jewellery in waterways or at the site.
- Stay on designated trails and roadways.
- Do not cut or remove natural vegetation (i.e. plants, trees).

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Supported by:

Toronto and Region Conservation
for The Living City



Outcomes

- Council Approved Option 2: Educational/Stewardship approach March 2021
- Signage to be installed Summer of 2021
- Continue monitoring surveillance cameras Spring 2021-Fall 2021
- Ongoing work with Hindu Federation
- Continue working with community / municipal partners



NOTICE:

Per Parks Bylaw 2013-0062

People wishing to scatter cremated remains in waterways from Town parkland are **PERMITTED** to do so.

Placement of any other materials or offerings in the water or shore is **PROHIBITED**.

- NO plastic flowers, written notes, physical structures
- NO coins, clothing, jewellery or other mementos
- NO flowers, fruit or other organic materials

Stay on designated trails and pathways, do not cut or remove any natural vegetation (plants or trees) to access the river.

For more information please call Service Halton Hills 905-873-2600 x0

To report unauthorized activities contact
Halton Regional Police 905-825-4777



Thank you for your cooperation



Designated vs. Permitted

Key Criteria for Designated Sites:

- Adequate Parking
- Formal steps/pathways to edge of river
- Seating
- Shade/Shelter
- Privacy
- Compatible with other park uses
- Community Support
- Washrooms (optional)



Ontario Khalsa Darbar - Mississauga



Sarnia – Point Lands

Designated vs. Permitted

McNab Park Site Constraints:

- **Limited Parking**
- **No formal Steps/Pathways to edge of river**
- **Limited Seating**
- **No Shade/Shelter structure**
- **No Washrooms**
- **Busy park**
- **Challenge to accommodate larger groups**
- **“Permitted” – but not “Designated”**
- **Applies to all Town Parks**



McNab Park - Norval

We Need Your Help

- Understanding needs of users
- Encouraging the use of “Designated” sites where appropriate
- Encouraging the appropriate dispersal of cremated remains in the water without leaving river offerings
- Ensuring river offerings are taken away from site, or managed prior to arriving in the park
- Respecting posted signage
- Respecting other park users and features

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