



On-line pond

What You Should Know About On-line Ponds

There are many reasons why people create ponds on their properties. Ponds can provide recreational opportunities like fishing, swimming and boating. They are also a reliable water sources for livestock, irrigation and firefighting.

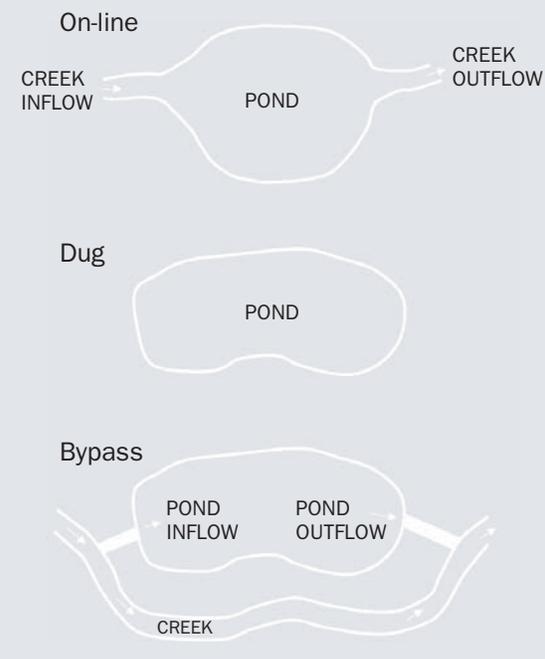
In the right conditions, ponds can provide excellent fish and wildlife habitat, but if you have an on-line pond, it could be having a negative impact on fish habitat and creek water quality — not only on your property, but also on your upstream and downstream neighbour's properties, by:

- disrupting the natural flow of water and sediment, which can disrupt the natural balance in the stream ecosystem, impacting fish and fish habitat both upstream and downstream of the pond;
- causing changes to the water quality. Large volumes of standing or slow moving water in the on-line pond can result in low oxygen levels and intolerable environments for some fish species;
- increasing water temperatures to levels which some species cannot tolerate;
- accumulating and storing nutrients which may cause excessive algae growth and make the creek or pond uninhabitable. Excessive algae often prevents other native plants from growing in the pond by blocking out light that is critical to their growth; and
- blocking migration of fish, preventing them from reaching spawning or nursery habitat, which can lead to population fragmentation.

Because of these negative environmental effects, the construction of on-line ponds is rarely approved by the Ministry of Natural Resources or Conservation Authorities.

What is an online pond?

There are three basic types of ponds — on-line, dug and bypass. On-line ponds are located directly within the creek or stream channel. They may be dugout or controlled by a dam, weir or culvert.





Bypass pond



Dug pond

I Have an On-line Pond! What Can I Do?

Environmental agencies recommend that on-line ponds be taken off-line or decommissioned. On-line ponds can be retrofitted to become off-line ponds, which have less impact on the aquatic environment. Contact our stewardship technician to discuss taking your pond off-line and to learn about what permits and approvals may be needed and if you are eligible for financial assistance.

Here are some easy and inexpensive enhancements you can make to help your on-line pond become a healthier and more productive part of your property and local environment.

Plant native trees and shrubs and allow the vegetation to naturally grow up around the pond and adjacent to the creek banks. This will help:

- shade the surface water from the sun's warming rays and keep water temperatures cool, which is important for many fish species that are highly sensitive to fluctuating or warmer temperatures;
- stabilize the creek banks which is beneficial not only to the environment but is also a preventative cost savings measure to you due to the costs associated with creek bank repairs;
- provide habitat for birds and other animals;

- provide overhanging cover and protection for fish species; and
- filter, store and breakdown nutrients and sediment carried in surface water run-off before it enters the pond and creek.

The introduction of items such as woody stumps and logs into your pond and along its edge can add habitat and offer protection for fish spawning and rearing areas. Native emergent and submergent aquatic plants in and around your pond will also help add diversity while providing fish habitat.

Contact

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