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For immediate release

Technology helps area Ospreys

The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan is looking for volunteer citizen scientists to help locate and monitor Osprey's nests around the Bay of Quinte. The goal is to establish a long-term monitoring program to ensure the Osprey population remains healthy and abundant.

This pilot project utilizes 21st Century Social Media and Geo-Location technologies to help preserve our cherished habitat. Citizen scientists are being challenged to use their smart phones to capture details about Ospreys that include: nest locations, whether the nest is active or not, the number of fledglings and departure dates for the fall migration. It's a simple process. First ensure that "location settings" are activated on the smart phone, then using Twitter, and the hashtags #bqrap and #osprey post your photos or comments. Make sure that you complete your post from the nest site, otherwise the post will not be accurately located. Now, you are a citizen scientist!

"Social media and geo-location technologies have tremendous potential to do great things for our community and this project is one shining example. As a father with young children I find it to be a great way to spend time enjoying the outdoors with my family, while promoting a love for conservation and science in my children, and all while making a real difference in local conservation efforts." - Matt Richardson, Volunteer Project Data Analyst.

Why monitor ospreys? Because Ospreys eat fish almost exclusively, they are considered a sentinel species, serving as indicators of water quality health. Changes in the number of nesting pairs and number of chicks produced and fledged can reflect changes in aquatic ecosystem health.

Once, the widespread use of DDT brought these great raptors to the brink of extinction. But with a ban, in the 1970s, on this toxic pesticide and the efforts of federal and provincial governments, conservation authorities and groups, and individuals the Ospreys have made a dramatic comeback.

The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan is in the process of changing the status of several of the fish and wildlife environmental challenges identified for the Bay to unimpaired. One way the public can help maintain healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations and habitats is by participating as citizen scientists.

"The return of this top predator to the Bay of Quinte and their successful nesting is a sign of a healthy ecosystem. By collecting data on how the Ospreys are doing, we can ensure the Bay doesn't return to the conditions that required a Remedial Action Plan in the first place". - Sarah Midlane-Jones, BQRAP Communications.

Visit the nest sites throughout the season and post comments and photos of the birds for everyone to enjoy. Visit the Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan web site for details www.bqrap.ca
Or contact: Sarah Midlane-Jones, Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan, 613-394-3915 ext. 214, smidlanejones@bqrap.ca

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The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan is in partnership locally with Lower Trent Conservation and Quinte Conservation