

BOWNESS RESPONSIBLE FLOOD MITIGATION SOCIETY COMPLETES A TREE CENSUS

To objectively assess the potential environmental impact of the City's proposed flood barrier in Bowness, Bowness Responsible Flood Mitigation Society (BRFM) conducted a tree census. From May to November 2018, BRFM volunteers walked the conceptual alignment of the Bowness flood barrier to record the number of trees that occupy a 30-foot wide footprint (this is the stated average from the City) from Shouldice Bridge in the east to the CP tracks in the west (3-4 km in length). The results were staggering!



There were 5,713 individual trees, shrubs, and groupings of shrubs that were identified, counted, measured and mapped. We counted over 3,500 individual trees. Even though the alignment for the proposed flood barrier is not exactly known at this time, one might project an even greater loss as a result of disturbed roots of nearby vegetation during construction.

The proposed barrier requires removal of the trees and vegetation that naturally provides flood protection.

It is our understanding that the City will not allow replacement of lost trees on or near the barrier because the roots may jeopardize the integrity of the structure.

Almost 3500 trees – that's a lot of trees and represents important habitat for birds and other wildlife.

We understand that some of the benefits of trees and other vegetation along our river, include:

- Trees help to slow the flow of the river during high water events, thereby reducing the effects of flooding both for people and buildings;
- A buffer area of woods, shrubs and grasses intercept contaminated runoff before it reaches the river;
- Vegetation provides organic debris for the river's food chain;
- Our urban forest sustains important wildlife by providing opportunities for food and shelter; trees are a terrestrial source of food (i.e. bugs) for fish; and



- Trees provide shade for fish and people while absorbing CO₂.

City Parks and Recreation acknowledges the importance of trees for river health, as demonstrated by the interpretative signs they have posted in Bowmont park: "The roots of a healthy river: Balsam Poplar forests along the river help support wildlife and maintain water quality. Think of the river, forest and wildlife as part of a triangle. If one side disappears then the whole thing collapses."



You can add to our voice by joining BRFM. Membership is free and your voice is priceless.

Please visit our website and register as a member: <http://www.bownessrfm.ca/membership-join/>

For more information email us at info@bownessrfm.ca.