

The View...

From Huron County Farmers, Drainage and Conservation Experts

April 2026

Positive Actions Protect Local Fish Species

Meet the Redside dace - a small, silvery minnow distinguished by a bright red stripe along the front half of its body. This unique fish inhabits slow - moving streams in southwestern Ontario, where overhanging grasses and shrubs provide essential habitat. The vegetation attracts insects, which Redside dace prey upon by leaping out of the water.

Listed as endangered, the species faces its greatest threats from habitat loss and degradation. While most remaining



populations are found within the urban drainage areas of Lake Ontario, two gullies along Lake Huron also support Redside dace.

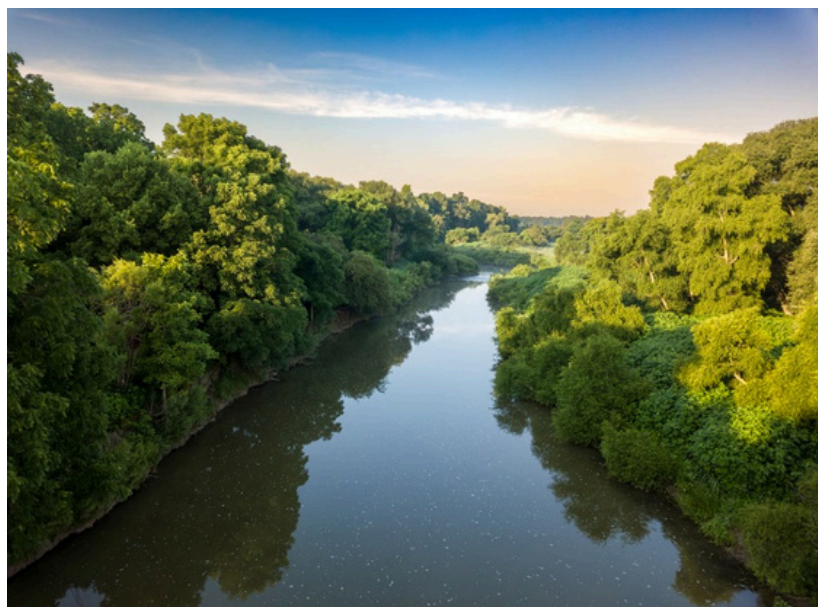
Recent surveys in these gullies have revealed that Redside dace are among the more abundant fish species present, indicating that these areas are sustaining healthy populations. This is an

encouraging sign for such an imperiled species.

Since 2010, landowners in these gully watersheds have been implementing best management practices, including berms and cover crops. These positive actions, combined with efforts to minimize habitat loss, are helping to protect and support the recovery of Redside dace.

Reflections on Water Management

Last month, the Province of Ontario announced that they would be amalgamating Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into nine organizations. The Province may choose to change the role of conservation authorities — but no government can eliminate water issues. Water remembers. It carries the record of every choice
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(continued from previous page) we make across our landscapes and communities. Water issues are seldom isolated. They accumulate. They flow together over time until they become problems too large to ignore.

Managing water isn't a solo effort – it's a team sport. Success depends on individuals, communities, and every level of government working together.

The playing field isn't defined by political boundaries – it's defined by the watershed.

Community-led watershed work is the most economical approach to dealing with downstream issues. That is why local municipalities came together 80 years ago to form conservation authorities. The real work of protecting our future happens with adoption of

proven, cost-effective measures, made possible through community-led initiatives.

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority will continue to assist you with your projects during this transition time. Thank you to everyone who continues to take positive actions.



Invest in Your Soil: Covered Costs for Cover Crops

For the 2026/2027 cropping year, producers in the Main Bayfield watershed (area southwest of Clinton and Vanastra - see map) will once again be eligible for an enhanced cost-share program offering \$40/acre or \$50/acre for new applicants, up to 100 acres. Existing applicants can refer a new applicant and also receive \$50/acre. Funding is limited and some restrictions apply. First-time adopters are encouraged to apply.

Please contact Brooklyn Rau (brau@abca.ca or 519-235-2610) at Ausable Bayfield Conservation for more information about the incentive program. Applying is simple, and we can help. Applications will be accepted beginning in June 2026. Forms can be found at abca.ca or scan QR code at right.

Funding Rates:

\$50/acre - new applicants or those referring new applicants

\$40/acre - previous applicants

Up to 100 acres funded

