

Nith Valley EcoBoosters – History & Terms of Reference (version 2.4) – March 2020

Mandate	The Nith Valley EcoBoosters is a not-for-profit, politically non-partisan volunteer group committed to achieving and supporting a long-term healthy environment in Wilmot and Wellesley Townships through education, action and collaboration.
Contact Information	Website: nvecoboosters.com E-mail: nvecoboosters@gmail.com Facebook and Twitter accounts were initiated early in 2019.
Date Established	The group was first formed in 2013 as an ad hoc committee at Zion United Church in New Hamburg. The Nith Valley EcoBoosters became a community based group and adopted its current name on June 24, 2015.
Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Nith Valley EcoBoosters meet on the 4th Wednesday of most months. • Monthly meetings are open to all interested individuals. • Sub-committees and working groups may be established for various topics, issues or proposals as required. These groups may meet at any time and at any location and are in addition to the regular monthly meetings.
Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chairperson, Treasurer, Recording Secretary and Communications Officer positions provide leadership to the group ensuring that it functions properly and that effective decisions are made and carried out. Each position is normally for a 6 month period after which a review takes place and other members may volunteer to take over any role. • No membership fees are collected. Nith Valley EcoBoosters is funded by donations, fundraising efforts, and grants.
Liaison & Activities	<p>The Nith Valley EcoBoosters liaise with various groups and have completed or are currently involved in a variety of activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original Zion United Church EcoBoosters group worked with Divest Waterloo in April 2015 to show the film “Do The Math” followed by a discussion, led by a member of Divest Waterloo. That public event in New Hamburg led to the formation of our current group. • Worked with the Waterloo Region Blue Dot committee in the summers of both 2015 and 2016 to promote the David Suzuki Foundation’s Blue Dot Movement. This included a presentation to the Wilmot Township Council on August 31, 2015 to present the case for the township to sign on to a declaration recognizing the right to a healthy environment. We continue to maintain a connection with the Waterloo Region Blue Dot Team.

- Participated in a planning committee spearheaded by **Divest Waterloo** that organized a climate march in Waterloo in the fall of 2015.
- Assisted teachers and students to plant native plants in the outdoor garden area at **Forest Glen Public School** (Fall 2015). This was part of the school's "Greening the Glen" project.
- Participated in the 2016 **Living Well Festival** at the Wilmot Recreation Complex (April 2016).
- Initiated an idling reduction campaign with the "Eco Team" teachers and students at **Forest Glen Public School** (Fall 2016).
- Provided idling reduction materials from "Dads Against Dirty Air" to **Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School**. The school has confirmed that they are using some of the materials (Fall 2016).
- Participated in the **Waterloo Region Zero Waste Challenge** (October 2016).
- Supported the **Wilmot Healthy Communities Coalition** by having representation on that committee for 3 years.
- Partnered with **Climate Action Waterloo Region** to further the goals of both organizations. Our first joint event was participation in the 2017 **Living Well Festival**.
- Created an **Eco Water Board Game** in 2017 that was designed to help educate children and adults about water conservation/using water wisely. It has been used at Forest Glen School (April 2017), the 2017 Living Well Festival, at an event organized by the Waterloo Region Blue Dot Team (June 2017), and at Groh Public School (April 2019).
- Participated in **Community Cleanup Days** in Baden (2017) and New Hamburg (2018 & 2019).
- Began publishing "**Eco Nuggets**" (tips for helping the environment) in the monthly Baden Outlook newsletter starting in January 2018.
- Held our first environmental film night on March 21, 2018, in partnership with the Region of Waterloo library, which featured the film "**Beyond Crisis.**" Approximately 90 people gathered at the Wilmot Recreation Complex to see the film and be part of a follow up discussion with the film's creator, Kai Reimer-Watts. This event was funded by a Municipal grant from the **Township of Wilmot**.
- Collaborated with other groups to host an all candidates meeting in May 2018 prior to the provincial election and again in early 2019 to respond to proposed provincial legislation that posed threats to the environment.
- Responds to requests for speakers for church groups and other organizations (e.g. the **New Hamburg Board of Trade** and **Wilmot Rotary**) to increase awareness of environmental issues and ways to take positive actions in our homes and communities.
- Planned and executed a water conservation/preservation themed afternoon for the **Wilmot Family Resource Summer Nature Camp** for kids in August 2018 and 2019.
- Partnered with the Zion United Church UCW to host an event at the church on November 6, 2018 where Dr. Blair Feltmate from the Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation at the University of Waterloo did a presentation to about 100 people called "**Warmer, Wetter and Wilder: What Homeowners and Communities Can Expect under a Changing Climate, and How They Can Prepare.**" The focus of the presentation was on addressing practical and cost-effective

	<p>steps that homeowners can take to lower their home flood risk profile. We solicited funds from local businesses to help with the costs of this event.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began the process of identifying how home flood risk reduction ideas and strategies can be effectively converted into action in our townships in November 2018. This is an ongoing collaboration with Sheila Walker (owner, Home Hardware store, New Hamburg), Cheryl Evans (Director, Home Flood Protection Program, Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation, University of Waterloo), and Angie Hallman (Wilmot Township Councillor). • Organized a film night on March 20, 2019, where approximately 80 people gathered at Zion United Church for a food waste event which included the film “Just Eat It” followed by a panel discussion. Our panelists were Jennifer Pfenning, director of marketing and human resources for Pfenning's Organic Farms; Dr. Alison Blay-Palmer, Director of the Laurier Centre for Sustainable Food Systems at the Balsillie School for International Affairs, Wilfrid Laurier University; and Dr. Mike von Massow, Ontario Agriculture College Chair in Food System Leadership at the University of Guelph. This event was funded by a Municipal grant from the Township of Wilmot. • With support from GreenPAC and the “100 Debates on the Environment” project, hosted an environmental federal election debate on October 9th, 2019. Approximately 130 people attended this event at the New Dundee Community Centre. The purpose of the debate was to make the environment an election issue that no party and no candidate could ignore. • An initial meeting of interested individuals and groups took place on March 11, 2020 to kick off a treeplanting project that is being led by a partnership of the Nith Valley EcoBoosters, the Wilmot Horticultural Society and Wilmot Rotary.
<p>Future Events:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Let’s talk Plastics,” a family focused event featuring free pizza, a short documentary, “Plastic is Forever”, and four panellists including a 13 year old student was planned for April 22 but was postponed to the fall of 2020. Sponsors for this event include the Township of Wilmot, Kindred Credit Union and the Baden Outlook.