



Torstar file photo

Rattray Marsh has lost nearly 3,000 trees thanks to the emerald ash borer.

IS THE MARSH LOOKING SPARSE? BLAME THE EMERALD ASH BORER

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Mississauga's shoreline in the Rattray Marsh Conservation Area may start to look a little sparse.

According to Credit Valley Conservation (CVC), 2,800 trees have been removed in the last six years.

In a sad but necessary make-over, the trees were felled because they were either sick or dead after an invasion of emerald ash borer (EAB) beetles.

"The majority of ash trees in the marsh are dead or will be soon as their health declines from the emerald ash borer infestation," said Rod Krick, manager of terrestrial restoration and management.

"The purpose of removing ash trees is to clear dead trees and create safe conditions to replant the area," he said.

According to Ontario's Invasive Species Awareness Program, trees have nearly a 100 per

cent chance of dying if infected by the insect.

Since there are no known natural enemies to the EAB, a native Asian species, it is hard to control their spread.

The EAB was first spotted in Ontario forests in 2002 and has since killed millions of trees across the country.

What remains in Rattray Marsh is a smorgasbord of "invasive trees and shrubs creating a degraded non-native habitat."

The CVC is now working to replant native species in the place of removed trees and protect the few healthy trees that remain.

The new plants will eventually help to reduce flooding in the marsh as they are able to "absorb, hold and slow the movement of water," said Krick.

"CVC is committed to restoring and enhancing biodiversity to this forest area of Rattray Marsh. We're taking responsible steps to undo the damage from this invasive pest," said a release.