MEDIA RELEASE

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Weston Family Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow Program Develops Next Generation of Eco Leaders with Program Expansion to Urban Communities in Northern Ontario

-4,500 students to get environmental education opportunity -

(Toronto, May 10) More students across Ontario are getting an outdoor experience unlike any other. Toronto and Region Conservation (TRCA) along with The Living City Foundation and Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority, are pleased to announce the expansion of the Weston Family Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow Program. The program will now launch in Windsor, Sarnia and London due to the generous support from The W. Garfield Weston Foundation. Over the next three years, more than 4,500 students from urban communities across Ontario will be provided the field trip of a lifetime, immersing them in a natural setting at one of Ontario’s five premier outdoor education centres and inspiring them to become the next generation of environmental leaders in their community.

“Thanks to The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, The Weston Family Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow Program is fostering the next generation of environmental leaders,” said Brian Denney, CAO, Toronto and Region Conservation. “The program’s hands-on learning model has been very successful in developing a student’s overall ecological literacy and we are excited that this program is expanding and giving more students the opportunity to connect to nature.”

The Weston Family Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow Program has three core guiding principles in environmental leadership, community action, and ecological literacy. The principles are taught through a unique model of student learning. Many typical environmental education experiences start and end at the field centre, where a student takes a field trip to an outdoor education centre.

“TRCA has been a leader in teaching children about ecosystems and encouraging them to care deeply about the natural environment,” said Camilla Dalglish, Director, The W. Garfield Weston Foundation. “The Foundation is very pleased to continue our support to TRCA as they take the Weston Family Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow program to other communities across Ontario.”

The Weston Family Environmental Leaders of Tomorrow Program, utilizes an integrated approach to environmental learning, where lessons and experiences for the students and the teacher are combined with in-school classroom learning. This maximizes the potential for student success both in the classroom and in the community. This model has also shown to inspire students to take action by applying lessons learned directly on local school or community projects.