

GM Canada Sets Wildlife Trail For the Blind

GM is working on continuing to put the early days of dingy and unfriendly facilities behind it.

What the company is doing in Canada is a perfect example of that idea put into action.

Among the features of a wildlife habitat behind the General Motors Canada Limited headquarters building is a 4½-mile trail designed to help the visually impaired better experience the preserve's natural beauty.

Designed in consultation with the Canadian Institute of the Blind, the trail is part of the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve, a 105-acre wildlife habitat managed by GM Canada and its community partners.

The trail features a paved wheelchair-accessible path lined with a guide rope. Visitors can listen to native woodland birds while learning the history of the habitat from large-text and braille panels alongside the trail.

The McLaughlin Bay habitat is just one example of GM's commitment to increase native biodiversity at its facilities and engage community partners to promote wildlife conservation and education, GM spokesperson Sharon Basel said.

GM now manages more than 4,200 acres of habitat throughout its operations - more than 26 percent of the certified sites' overall footprint. Basel said GM leads the auto industry with 26 certified wildlife habitat programs and is committed to certifying each of its manufacturing sites where feasible by 2020.

"We work with local schools, non-governmental organizations, non-profits and environmental preservation groups to enhance habitats in the communities in which we oper-



The McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve on the grounds of GM Canada.

ate," said Sue Kelsey, GM Biodiversity Program manager.

"We are making great strides to increase biodiversity today while helping to educate the next generation of environmental stewards on the importance of conservation."

The Wildlife Habitat Council's Wildlife at Work and Corporate Lands for Learning programs recognize outstanding wildlife habitat management and environmental education efforts at corporate sites, and offers third-party validation of the benefits of

such programs. Certification requirements require sites to apply for periodic renewal, Kelsey said.

GM's Spring Hill (Tenn.) Complex and Oshawa (Canada) Assembly were newly certified this year, while the McLaughlin Bay Wildlife Reserve and 15 other GM programs earned recertification by showing continuous growth of their habitat management programs, Basel said.

The Wildlife Habitat Council recently named the Spring Hill facility Corporate Lands for Learning Rookie of the Year.

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