

Manufacturing solutions



By Nate Smelle

LISTENING TO SPECIES-AT-RISK biologist Graham Cameron talk about the perilous state of turtles in Ontario, and to North Hastings Community Fish Hatchery volunteer and Nature Discovery Tour guide Denis Brown speak about the declining trout populations in North Hastings I started looking for connections that may exist between what is causing these species to disappear.

Both fortunately and unfortunately with turtles, Cameron says the majority of problems they face can be prevented. Habitat loss and fragmentation, pollution, road and boat mortality, illegal hunting and poaching for the pet trade are all man-made.

Likewise, with the resident trout populations in North Hastings the main causes of their decline are also manufactured by humans. In their case over-fishing has depleted their stock, pollution has poisoned their aquatic habitat and urban/industrial sprawl has destroyed or fragmented the streams and spawning beds they need to naturally perpetuate their species.

Going over my notes from both presentations I noticed those two words that like to rile up the fans of wanton resource consumption...climate change!

Although the science behind human-caused climate change has been in for a long time now, there are still a few stubborn pocket

fillers holding onto the false belief that the drastic shifts in weather patterns are part of a natural cycle.

While humans are naturally occurring products of evolution, our species' hostile takeover of life-sustaining habitat and resources that all of creation depends on is not.

An ever-changing climate is indeed a fact of our existence on this planet, however, when we put together the evidence of how rapidly the earth is changing within our lifetime inaction in manufacturing a solution is no longer acceptable.

As our population increases at an unprecedented rate we are witnessing ancient species such as turtles and lake trout vanish before our very eyes. Should we not look at the disappearance of species that have evolved over hundreds of millions of years as some sort of sign that we are heading down the wrong path?

Canary in a coalmine, turtle smashed by the roadside, a lake without fish, polar ice caps melting, all the same type of warning signs.

Whatever their motivation might be it is inspiring to see individuals like Cameron and Brown taking stewardship into their own hands.