

## VIDEO: Some motorists simply refuse to toad the line

By Cornelia Naylor, The Times August 9, 2011

- [Story](#)
- [Photos \( 1 \)](#)



**Carter Horvath, 6,  
gets a close look at  
one many toads  
migrating across  
two roads in Ryder  
Lake.**

**Photograph by: Cornelia  
Naylor, TIMES**

The Western Toad migration across Ryder Lake and Elk View roads was in full swing this weekend as the first of hundreds of thousands of toadlets made their way from the wetlands where they were born to the forest that will be their adult home.

For the fourth year in a row volunteers from the Fraser Valley Conservancy are on hand to prevent as many as possible from being squished by motorists, but a few drivers still ignore the detours, drive around the roadblocks and plow through the tide of toadlets.

"The majority of the residents are very onboard," said Conservancy executive director Lisa Fox, "but there's a few families that continually bust through."

This year the flaggers hired by the environmental group to man the roadblocks are using video cameras to record the licence plate numbers and sometimes heated reactions of those who continue to ignore the barricades.

Their information will be passed on to police.

Even with the occasional driver who ignores the roadblock, however, protection for the toads has come a long way since the days when Elk View and Ryder Lake roads were slick with squished toads every summer.

But temporary roadblocks are only a shortterm solution, according to Conservancy officials.

This summer, the group is testing what it hopes will be a long-term solution for both the toads and frustrated Ryder Lake drivers.

In a field next to the road they built a prootype of a "toad guard," a ditch that would divert the toads safely under the road.

The project is designed to test whether plastic sheeting can be used to funnel the toads toward a ditch that would eventually run under the road, covered by steel grating.

It seems to be working.

"We have been able to demonstrate they do use the fencing," said Steven Clegg, environmental stewardship co-ordinator for the Fraser Valley Conservancy.

Armed with video evidence of the toad guard's effectiveness, the organization now hopes to generate support for the next step, which would be to install a real ditch in one of the four main migration corridors.

The steel grating to cover each crossing would cost about \$8,000, and city officials estimate installation would push the price of each toad guard over \$10,000.

The best case scenario for the Conservancy would be to have one of the ditches installed under Ryder Lake Road by February in time for the adult migration back to the wetlands.

To help fund the project, the Conservancy has created the Toonie for a Toad fundraiser, and on Aug. 19 they are holding a fundraiser at the Jolly Miller Pub (5865 Vedder Rd.) from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.fraservalleyconservancy.ca](http://www.fraservalleyconservancy.ca).

? Watch video of the toad crossing at [www.chilliwacktimes.com](http://www.chilliwacktimes.com).

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