

Conservation Matters

A publication of the
Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust

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Treasurer - Joy Strachan
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*Thousand Islands Watershed
Land Trust*

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The Executive and Board are assisted by an Advisory Committee,
who have a broad range of knowledge and experience: Joan Collins, Andy Graham, Jeff Leggo,
Angus McLeod and Tim Truesdell,

Summer / Fall 2011

As might be noticed in the masthead above, there have been a number of changes in the TIWLT Board over the summer. Ed Lowans and Sandy Gray have joined the Board and Ken Robinson has decided to leave, as the result of a recent move to Kingston. We welcome Ed and Sandy and thank Ken for his service over the years.

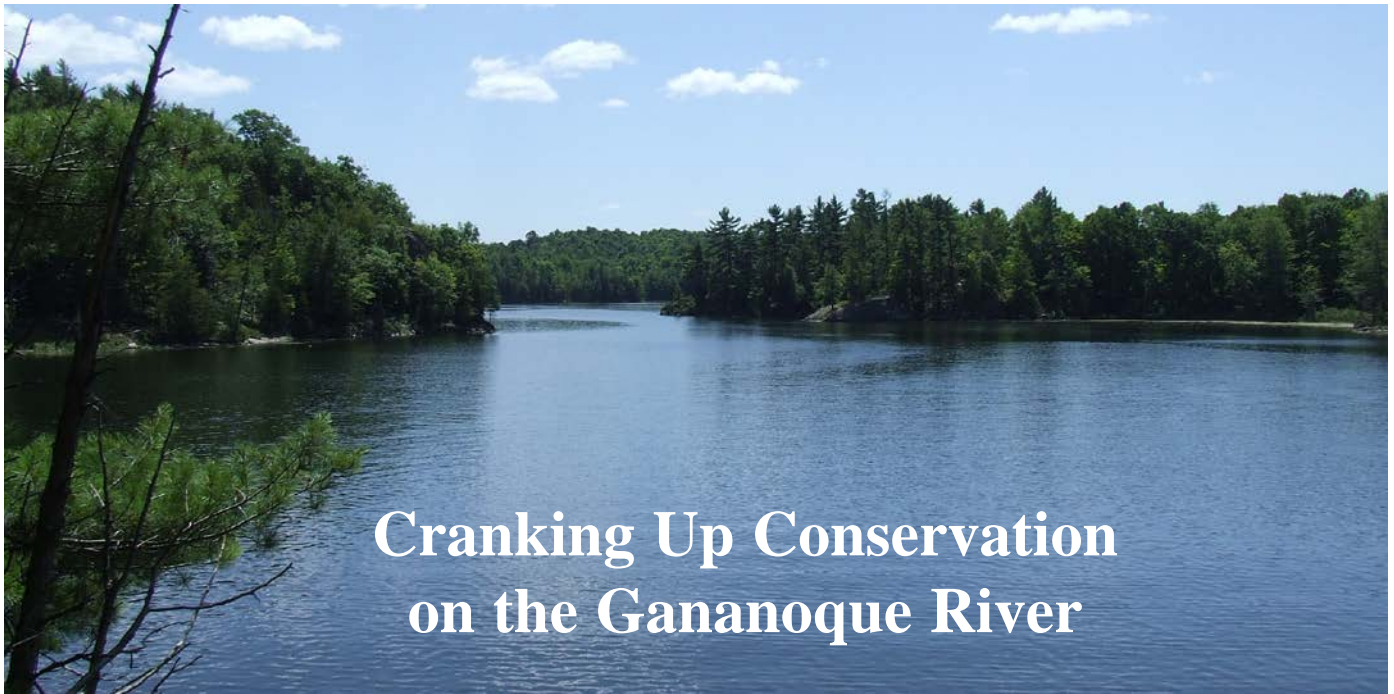
Another significant change is that Dave Warner has decided to resign his executive responsibilities after many years as President and Vice President of the Land Trust. Dave's contribution to the establishment of the Conservancy some 18 years ago and to the direction of the Conservancy and its successor, the Land Trust, are unequalled. He will continue to sit on the Board. Sandy Gray has agreed to try and fill some very large shoes. Thank you, Sandy.

On July 16th, members of the Sheffield family were part of a presentation at Charleston Lake Provincial Park to celebrate the addition of more than 600 acres of lakefront family property to the Park, facilitated by the NCC and local partners.

(front l-r) Brian Martin, Julia Scotland, Margaret Martin, George Sheffield, Nancy Sheffield

(rear l-r) Gary Bell, NCC; Tim Truesdell, Ontario Parks; Dann Michols, Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust





Cranking Up Conservation on the Gananoque River

For the past four years, the Nature Conservancy of Canada has been actively acquiring large parcels of land on the Frontenac Arch to improve ecological connectivity and protect habitat for species at risk. This past year NCC partnered with the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (TIWLT), Ontario Parks, and several other organizations to acquire the 605-acre Sheffield property on Red Horse Lake, lands which will be added to Charleston Lake Provincial Park. Towards the same objectives, this summer, landowner Jeff Olajos agreed to sell approximately 150 acres of his spectacular property on Gananoque Lake. The property, which includes acreage on both sides of the Gananoque River, and a long stretch of pristine shoreline on the stretch of the river known as "The Crank".

Acquiring "The Crank" presents another opportunity to add to the core of protected properties along the Gananoque River waterway. Ontario Nature recently doubled the size of its Lost Bay Nature Reserve at the east end of the lake, just 3 km upstream from "The Crank". There is tremendous strength in partnership and NCC is happy to once again seek the support of the TIWLT in taking on this acquisition. NCC must raise funds from private sources to match government grants to complete this purchase

Gary Bell
Regional Coordinator, Eastern Ontario
Nature Conservancy of Canada

Post Script from the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust

The TIWLT has agreed once again to coordinate the public campaign to raise the local funds needed to purchase "the Crank". An announcement will be made soon on the details of the campaign. In the meantime, the TIWLT invites all those who cannot wait and wish to contribute immediately to the protection of the Gananoque River waterway and of the forests and wetlands of the Frontenac Arch to make a donation to the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust's "Frontenac Arch Natural Area Fund".

Please make your cheques payable to the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust. U.S. citizens can make their cheques payable to the "American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts". Tax receipts will be issued for all donations.



On July 16th, in a sun-dappled Charleston Lake Provincial Park amphitheatre, not too infested with mosquitoes, a small ceremony took place to celebrate the transfer to the Park of a large parcel of beautiful, pristine land purchased from George and Nancy Sheffield and family through the combined action of several conservation organizations. The transfer of the land to the Park increased the size of the 5,800 acre Park by over 10%.

On hand to speak at the ceremony were Hugh Segal, Senator for Kingston/Frontenac/Leeds; John Lounds, President and CEO of the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC); Sandy White, Zone Manager for Ontario Parks; and Dann Michols, President of the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust (TIWLT). George and Nancy Sheffield and several members of their family were present for the occasion.

The 600 acre parcel of land is located on the north shore of Red Horse Lake just south of Lyndhurst. It contains over 7 kilometres of shoreline on Red Horse Lake and is adjacent to the current Park portage between Charleston Lake and Red Horse Lake. It is a perfect representation of the land contained within the Frontenac Arch Biosphere, designated by UNESCO in 2003 as a unique example of one of the most bio-diverse geographies in the world. It contains a wide variety of habitats including exposed rocky shores, wetlands, bare granite ridges, and mature mixed uplands and lowlands forests. There are no roads currently on the property and the Park has no plans change the current boat-only access.

The parcel was purchased from the Sheffield family by the NCC following a unique collaboration of seven organizations engaged in land conservation activities. The purchase price of \$1.5M was raised through a combination of funds from the federal government's Natural Areas Conservation Programme (NACP), the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, matching funds raised by the NCC and five local organizations, and the generosity of the Sheffields themselves. The TIWLT coordinated a campaign to raise \$70,000 locally. Its partners in the effort were the Charleston Lake Environmental Association, the Friends of Charleston Lake Provincial Park, the Leeds/Grenville Stewardship Council, and the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Network.

One of the legacies of the collaboration was the creation of the Frontenac Arch Natural Area (FANA) Conservation Fund. The local conservation partners raised over \$20,000 more than the \$70,000 target. These funds have been put into the FANA Fund, to be coordinated by the TIWLT and to be used towards the further acquisition of priority properties. The vision is to work together with the NCC and others such as the Ontario Government and Ontario Nature, to create a connective corridor of protective areas between the Charleston Lake Provincial Park and the Frontenac Provincial Park, including the Queen's Biological Station and the St. Lawrence Islands National Park.



Cottage Touring

On July 16th the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust had a great tour on Tidds (also known as Tremont Park) Island. It was an opportunity to offer the tour to more people, because this is a 24 acre island, with about 30 cottages. A well-used path runs around the perimeter and connects each cottage to the others. Fifteen cottages were opened to us—and we enjoyed every one.

Back in the summer of 2010, we approached Peter Murray about doing a tour on Tidds because we had seen the wonderful history book he and the islanders published the year before. (Copies are still available at the Arthur Child Museum, in Gananoque.) Peter contacted many of the other cottagers and found there was a positive feeling towards doing a tour. Especially important to the cause were Marisa and Mark Trottier who were new to the island and the river. They bought the property that was the site of the former Tremont Park Hotel. They were more than generous with their large dock and park-like expanse of lawn where we staged the Local Flavours tapas-style lunch.

Over the winter our crew of four (Joy Strachan, Sandy Gray, Ken Robinson and Marnie Ross) with Peter Murray's help worked on writing to cottagers, getting the book reprinted, finding chefs, and trying to think of all the other things we would need when we were on one island for the entire day. It was a challenge. We are grateful to the Gananoque Accommodation Partners who paid for the book printing.

The day was, thankfully, lovely. The shade was deep under the trees and kept us from baking in the July heat. Two hundred and forty-nine people enjoyed the tour at their own pace. Some stayed most of the day.

We were grateful to Robert Henderson of Wolfe Island who made food for us: molten chocolate cakes, crustini and preserves. The stylings of chef Thomas Riding and Janet Campbell of Mrs. McGarrigles in Merrickville were wonderful. Can't you still taste those potato latkes with smoked trout? Panaché of Gananoque, Louise Richards and Kingston's Pan Chancho bakery provided food for us to serve.



Bruce & Eileen Chick

It was a wonderful relaxed day enjoyed by everyone.



Bill & Cathy Gardian



Two weeks following the Cottage Tour, the TIWLT was privileged to provide treats for the Tidde Island AGM. It was wonderful to see everyone again. An amusing incident happened at that meeting. The Tidde islanders displayed the new stretcher they had acquired. Someone had just finished saying it would probably rot in a boathouse before it was used, when a cottager slipped getting out of the river and fell. The stretcher came in handy and

everyone is OK. It's an island where neighbours help neighbours.

So we'd like to thank the people to whom we are so grateful: Peter and Nancy Murray, Mark and Marisa Trottier, Bruce and Eileen Chick (he's been on the island longer than anyone else.), Bruce and Anastasia Cliffe (what a lovely large family), Ed and Kim Dahm (thanks for making the path so safe Ed), Paul and Joyce Tierney, Bill and Cathy Gardian (thanks for the work on the history, Bill), Peter and Lois Hansen, Darryle and Judy Maybee, Peter Meyer, Jim & Helen Taylor, John & Jane Taylor, David & Charlene McClement, George & Marlene Vrana, Dan & Michelle, Zack and Issy Stevens and Bruce Grier.



Kingsmere

You were awesome. And thanks to every Tidde Islander for sharing your island with us.

WE HAVE TO BE VIGILANT

A quiet corner of our area of interest, the Thousand Islands Watershed, came into the spotlight recently when the provincial Ministry of the Environment issued a permit for the disposal of liquid waste (sewage) on a farm off the Dixie Road south of Athens. According to MOE, the property met the several criteria set for sewage disposal, including soil depth and set back from wells. The plan was cancelled by the land owner and the sewage hauler after local residents and neighbours heard of the plan and voiced their concerns. A planned public meeting to enable all concerned to discuss the issue was also cancelled. One of the concerns of the nearby residents was that the permit could be granted without consultation. A challenge we all face is to stay informed of such issues when public consultation is absent.

This particular site falls within the watershed that drains into wetlands that in turn feed into Charleston Lake. The environmental importance of this watershed has been recognized by government agencies, and includes at least one ANSI (Area of Natural and Scientific Interest) and a Managed Forest Agreement between a nearby property owner and the Ministry of Natural Resources. Many landowners in the neighbourhood Thousand Islands Watershed take an active interest in the stewardship of their properties, hence their concerns about sewage disposal. Regardless of whether it is by a government agency or another private land owner, when land use changes are proposed that may impact you directly, they should be questioned, to ensure that all affected parties have been consulted and that all issues have been addressed.

Campaign to Thank Our Supporters and Donors

This year the Annual Conferences of the Canadian Land Trust Alliance and the Ontario Land Trust Alliance are being held jointly in Kingston in September. In conjunction with this event, Sarah Harmer, well-known singer/songwriter and conservation activist, will hold a concert on September 21st in the Sydenham United Church in Kingston. This concert is a benefit to the land trust movement in Ontario and will not be open to the general public.

While there are many organizations in the Frontenac Arch Biosphere who are engaged in land conservation activities, there are three local organizations organized as land trusts - The Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust, the Rideau Waterway Land Trust, and the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox, and Addington Land Conservancy. These organizations decided to use the Sarah Harmer concert as an opportunity to thank their many supporters and donors.

For its part, the TIWLT organized the Past, Present, & Future Thank You Campaign. It received 50 tickets to the concert that it will be giving to past and current supporters through three lotteries. The first lottery will honour past donors to such projects as the Sheffield purchase and will consist of a draw amongst the names of donors in 2010. The second is to honour present supporters and will be draw from amongst the names of all 2011 TIWLT members. And the third lottery will honour contributors to future acquisitions through a draw amongst the names of all donors who have given more than \$100 towards the TIWLT's Conservation Fund in 2011.

The draw for tickets in all three lotteries will be made in early September and the winners will be contacted shortly thereafter.

Dann M. Michols,
President

