

# The LAND TRUST NEWS

PRESERVING SPECIAL PLACES IN OUR COMMUNITY

[www.rwlt.org](http://www.rwlt.org)

Rideau Waterway Land Trust – Est. 1996

July 2017

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Dear friends,

I'm happy to see the Rideau Waterway Land Trust is actively encouraging your support for this important cause. Local land trusts play such an important role in the conservation effort - protecting land and water for future generations. Arlene and I have been happy to support the trust, and to donate land to the RWLT.

This is an organization that needs good volunteers. Anything you can do to help will be most appreciated.

- Bob Rae, Honorary Chair, RWLT

Below: RWLT's Honorary Chair, Bob Rae, Sends Summer Greetings

## Chair's Remarks and Welcome

Hello. It has been two years since the last RWLT newsletter and we apologize for this delay. RWLT has faced some challenges since the unexpected passing of our long-standing colleague and operations officer David Walker in 2015. It has unfortunately taken some time for the RWLT to get back to normal since Dave's passing. The Board and other volunteers are working hard to catch up with a range of matters and challenges, but there is still a backlog. We appreciate your understanding and patience. If you – our supporters, partners, neighbours and clients – are aware of outstanding or emerging issues, please let us know and we'll do our best to follow up. One of these challenges is managing the dramatically increased visitation to the Rock Dunder property. On one autumn afternoon in 2016, a volunteer counted 142 cars parked along Highway 15. The care of over 500 hectares at RWLT's 18 ecological properties located in the Ottawa to Kingston corridor is on-going. The contribution of your skills and financial support will spread the work and ensure the long-term health of the organization, allowing it to achieve the RWLT mission to preserve important natural lands in the Rideau corridor. Read on to see what's new at RWLT, including our contact information, our rejuvenated Board of Directors and important changes at Rock Dunder.

- Peter Hannah



The Land Trust News is published by the Rideau Waterway Land Trust, a charitable organization.

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## Dave Walker

We were shocked at the sudden passing of Dave Walker in August 2015 at the age of 62. Dave was the driving force behind the Rideau Waterway Land Trust for almost 20 years. He was always highly focussed on the task at hand, whether it was building a trail, starting a fundraising campaign to purchase a property or dealing with government bureaucracy. It was difficult to keep up with him! At various times, Dave served RWLT as a volunteer and, more recently, as the Trust's part-time staff. Dave was dedicated to the broader land trust movement and worked at various times for the Ontario Land Trust Alliance and, later, the Canadian Land Trust Alliance. RWLT benefitted greatly from the provincial and federal contacts that he made. Dave would be very glad to know that RWLT is moving ahead, with new volunteers stepping forward to help.



Above: Dave Walker

## Board of Directors

As with any organization, the volunteer Board that guides the RWLT has evolved. Remaining active are Doug Lewis, Vice-Chair, and Hunter McGill, Secretary. Our thanks are extended to two recently retired directors: Krystyna Chelminska and Neal Ritchie. Joining the Board are Kayla Clinton, Peter Hannah (Chair), Steve Knechtel, Jim MacLachlan and Peter Walker, who has agreed to serve as Treasurer. We now have representation from the entire length of the Rideau corridor. More information about our Board members will be provided in future newsletters.

## Volunteers Needed

Not-for-profit organizations like the RWLT can succeed only if they are supported by volunteers – not only the members of the Board, but supporters who donate their time. Whether for one day or two, or regularly throughout the year, volunteers help with monitoring and maintenance of our properties, and with less-visible but essential tasks such as communications (social media and website) newsletters, financial recording and reporting and special fundraising activities, to name but a few. You don't have to be a biologist, lawyer, communications specialist or accountant, though those credentials would certainly be welcome. Just share our enthusiasm and engagement for preserving special places in our community. Please contact us in any of the ways noted on the front page of this newsletter. Among the tasks to be done:

labourers with shovels and wheelbarrows;	property managers to assist with land-related issues, including future acquisitions;
greeters at the Rock Dunder gate;	persons with desktop publishing skills to help with our newsletter and website; and,
biologists to help with property evaluations, management plans and monitoring;	other professional skills that are frequently required by charitable organizations like RWLT.



Left:  
A view from the  
Lookout on the  
Summit Loop at  
Rock Dunder

## Rock Dunder

RWLT's signature property has been under siege. Overuse and abuse has resulted in significant erosion on portions of the trail system. Some vandalism has occurred. The heavy steel donation box and its contents were stolen. In spite of clear signage at the entrance stating that the property is closed from November 15 to May 15, a constant stream of trespassers used the property all winter. This spring, the Board decided that significant action was needed.

Beginning on the Easter weekend, after heavy rain had made the trails particularly prone to damage, Board members took turns greeting people at the entrance to remind them that the property was not yet open and the reasons why (trail damage, species at risk habitat interference, potentially dangerous conditions). Six hundred people were turned away on Good Friday. About 99% of visitors understood completely and simply didn't realize they would have been trespassing.

On opening day, a new policy was implemented. The property is now open only to supporters of RWLT. It is \$10 to support RWLT for one day and \$50 for the season. This covers all of the persons arriving in one vehicle. When volunteers are available, they are collecting money at the entrance. Several local businesses are also helping out by collecting at their business establishments including Wendy's Country Market east of Morton, Hotel Kenney in Jones Falls, Green Gecko in Lyndhurst and Main Street Hardware in Seeleys Bay. RWLT thanks these Supporters.

The immediate effects of this policy change are encouraging. Overuse has diminished, hikers better understand the need to reduce pressures on the land, some new volunteers have stepped forward to help with trail maintenance and funds are being raised to help care for the Trust's land holdings and to sustain the organization.

## Financial Support

Every good newsletter reminds readers of the need for ongoing financial support. So here it is.

A land trust needs more than volunteers. Expenses involved in running a charity like RWLT are much more than a few loads of crushed stone for trail maintenance. They include property taxes (no, a land trust is not exempt), audit fees, liability insurance and legal fees, to name just a few.

When a new property acquisition opportunity presents itself, additional project specific funds are required. Even if a property is to be donated to RWLT the Trust incurs costs for an appraisal, planning applications, survey, legal fees and the fundraising process itself. The Trust also allocates a portion to be placed in the endowment fund (held at the Kingston Community Foundation) to help fund the long-term expenses.

Protecting important ecologically significant lands in the Rideau corridor is not cheap. RWLT's ability to succeed in this mission is directly proportional to the resources directed to it. Thank you for considering a donation to RWLT. Your donations, whether one-time or monthly, are critical and will make a difference.



Above: Entrance to Rock Dunder's recreational trails



Above: Turtles resting on rock near Sugarbush Island

## Updated RWLT Contact Information

Please note the following updated contact addresses for the RWLT:

Mail – PO Box 91, Seeley's Bay, ON, K0H 2N0

Email - [rwlt.email@gmail.com](mailto:rwlt.email@gmail.com)

Facebook – Rideau Waterway Land Trust

Phone (613) 284 – 2010 and Website (<http://www.rwlt.org>) remain unchanged. (The website will be re-vamped later this year.)



**The mission of the RWLT is to preserve important natural lands and habitat in the Rideau Corridor and foster a healthy future for our communities.**