

The LAND TRUST NEWS

PRESERVING SPECIAL PLACES IN OUR COMMUNITY

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

www.rwlt.org

2014 Beau's Walk a Success

The 2014 Annual Beau's Walk was held the morning of September 27th on the trails at Rock Dunder with \$6,100 raised to support the Community Lands Program. The day got underway at 8:30 am when the early walkers began to arrive. The volunteers served up refreshments, including home baked muffins, beginning at 10 am. The weather cooperated with a beautiful fall day.

The team that raised the most in pledges was the Vagabonds led by Little Clara who were walking in memory of Beau. They were followed closely by the team from the Catarauqui Canoe Club. The funds raised were used to complete the rebuild of the laneway to Rock Dunder. Hopefully the washouts are now a past memory. These fundraising events are important in that they enable the Trust to keep their Community Lands open for the enjoyment of all. Without successful events like these the Trust would have to close all of its lands for public access.

All the participants enjoyed the morning walk, the fall colours and the view from the lookout, and look forward to the 2015 Walk and everyone's continued support.



Community Lands and Conservation Lands

The RWLT has completed its reorganization of its growing portfolio of lands as either Community Lands or Conservation Lands (and soon to be announced Rental Properties). Community Lands are those lands where public access is encouraged and the infrastructure is built and maintained to ensure a safe and pleasant experience for visitors. Conservation Lands are lands that are preserved by the Trust but public access will not be encouraged. This has become necessary because of the increasing demand from the community to keep lands open for public access. This could be a result of fewer privately owned lands with water access that allow public access or the increasing costs of visiting public lands.

Our risk management policies require that any lands with public access must be kept in a safe condition which of course requires additional resources to maintain the necessary infrastructure. It must be remembered that the RWLT is a land conservation organization, not a recreational or tourism group. In the absence of government support for recreational and tourism programs and the implementation of increased user fees to access existing public lands, the community sometimes expects the Trust to take a leadership role in the recreational or tourism needs of the area. Over the years, the Trust has agreed to open some of their lands, but the conservation values must be protected and the resources have to be available to ensure the public can use the lands and be safe.

The Trust must also be cognizant of developments in the insurance industry. In order to safeguard the organization, the Trust carries both General Liability and Directors and Officers insurance. It is vital to the future sustainability of the organization that this insurance coverage is both available and affordable. The RWLT has an unblemished safety record and would like to maintain that. The recent actions of a few non-profits in other areas of Canada has led the insurance industry to begin to set safety standards in exchange for continuing insurance coverage and the RWLT wants to be a leader in this area.

The Trust is currently developing a process that will allow additional Conservation Lands to become Community Lands. This will involve identifying a group of people that agree to maintain the property



according to the management plan and a source of funds that resource the extra costs of maintaining public access to the lands for a multi-year period. If this form of support can be found then additional lands will become Community Lands where the public will be welcome.

A management plan is currently being drafted for the safe operation of our Community Lands and will be in place when the Community Lands open, May 15, for the 2015 season. In addition to best practices for the management of trails, this management plan will also include the authorized uses for each property. The properties will

be open dawn to dusk May 15th to November 15th each year for walking and hiking activities on the defined trails. There will be no open fires, no use of motorized vehicles, emergency or service vehicles excepted, and no discharge of fire arms on the properties.

At this point Rock Dunder, Sugarbush Island and Nicholson's Point Woods are considered Community Lands while other preserved lands will be Conservation Lands. Go to www.rwlt.org for more information as this program is implemented.



New Properties

The RWLT has three additional properties it hopes to accept title to before the end of 2014. These property donations, once they are complete, will join the list of properties that the community has asked the Trust to preserve. The required fundraising has been going well but additional donations towards the acquisition costs are always appreciated. The properties are all natural lands that site visits have shown have critical habitat for species important to our area. Two of the properties will become part of our Conservation Lands and the third will join our Community Land portfolio. Just to keep your Trust's volunteers on their toes these properties include a bequest, an Ecological Gift and a donation of land owned by an estate all of which require specialized treatment.

One of the Conservation Land properties has a cottage included which, at the donors' request, cannot be sold and



must remain part of the property. This cottage will be the first building in our new rental program. Hopefully we can find good tenants for the 2015 season and the proceeds can be used to further the programs of the Trust. Watch our website for further news.

If you would like to make a special contribution to ensure all of these properties are preserved in perpetuity contact Dave Walker at davew@rwlt.org

At the time of writing this newsletter the Trust has just received confirmation from a donor regarding a 4th parcel of land. It looks like 2015 will be a busy year as well.



RWLT Move Is Complete

The RWLT's move of its new administrative office at 54 Sand Lake Road has been completed. The staff and volunteers are now fully functioning from the new location. The address is Rideau Waterway Land Trust, 54 Sand Lake Road, Elgin ON, K0G 1E0

Its telephone number and email contact remain the same, 613-284-2010 and davew@rwlt.org

Please keep this address change in mind.

This new location is working well as it also provides storage space for our equipment and is centrally located close to our existing Community Lands. The Trust is hopeful it will lead to a further reduction in our operating costs.

RWLT Launches New Website

The RWLT's new website has been completed. It has our history and as well is full of new information about our lands, programs and updated maps. We now have the tools in place to accept and receipt donations on-line. The new website will be used to accept on line requests and support for our special events. There is also an area where you can email the Trust with your questions or suggestions.

The website will play an integral role as the Trust begins to embrace new technology which will reduce costs and create efficiencies for our communications and fundraising, generating even more revenues for our land programs and projects.

You can view the new website at our long time address www.rwlt.org

Annual Support

At this time of year we always give our supporters the opportunity to make a special gift to the Trust. Many of our supporters take this opportunity to make a special year end gift to enable even greater successes for their community based land trust.

Please take a minute to complete the enclosed donation form and return it to the Trust in the envelope provided, or take this opportunity to go on line to www.rwlt.org and make an on-line donation and get your receipt immediately.

Community support is becoming not only important but necessary in the new reality of government cutbacks in the area of land preservation. We do need your continued support to ensure the RWLT can continue *Preserving Special Places in Our Community*.

To those that have already donated we thank you very much.



54 Sand Lake Road, Elgin, ON K0G 1E0

Tel: 613-284-2010

Email: davew@rwlt.org Website: www.rwlt.org

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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.