



Chair's Message

Autumn is a busy time for RWLT, especially this year. Leaf color was spectacular and ideal weekend weather generated more hiker traffic than ever before. Four possible land acquisition projects came to the Trust's attention. The new Alliance of Canadian Land Trusts held its first conference in Ottawa. The major trail improvement projects at the JH Fullard and Rock Dunder Nature Reserves wrapped up. The RWLT Annual General Meeting was held and I am pleased to welcome Scott Parker as a new member of the Board and John Grass as our new Board Chair. Our new Executive Director, Sara Warren-Roberts, is enthusiastically helping the RWLT Board in its mission to Preserve Special Places in our Community.

Reviewing an organization's By-laws once in a while is a good idea and recently, I stumbled across section 5.11 of RWLT's By-law #1. It says "The Board may from time to time appoint any committee or advisory body,..." At its last meeting the Board decided to establish a unique Advisory Committee to assist RWLT in its work.



*Juvenile Common Merganser,
Island 8 Nature Reserve*

This Committee doesn't meet, has no monthly obligations, no meeting minutes but the skills its members possess can benefit the Trust. Long time RWLT supporter, writer, explorer and outdoor enthusiast James Raffan from Seeley's Bay quickly volunteered when I encountered him at Rock Dunder several weeks ago. Several past Board members have also agreed to help with occasional tasks. If this might be of interest to you, please contact us. All we need is 2 or 3 paragraphs about you, your interests, skills and willingness to devote a few hours to a specific task. Skill sets could include biology, ecology, geography, land use planning, legal, financial,

engineering, natural and cultural heritage, indigenous relations, fundraising and more! Land trusts are multi-faceted organizations that can make use of all of these and other capabilities from time to time.

At the recent conference in Ottawa, a sometimes-forgotten topic caught the attention of the attendees. Canada's capital gains tax is 50 years old and owners of secondary residences or recreational properties usually know that this tax applies when these properties are sold. US citizens who own properties in Canada are surprised to learn that simply leaving the family cottage to the kids constitutes a "deemed disposition", requiring them to file a Canadian tax return and pay the tax. RWLT has received enquiries from some affected landowners who have decided instead to donate their property to a land trust, an action that can eliminate the tax and achieve long term conservation goals. A related topic is the potential for US residents to obtain a US tax receipt by donating Canadian land through an organization called the American Friends of Canadian Conservation. RWLT is a qualified recipient for such donations.

As 2022 wraps up, we wish you well and look forward to a happy, healthy 2023. Oh, I almost forgot. Donations are the basis for a successful charitable organization like RWLT. Even if all four of the previously mentioned potential acquisition projects are by donation, closing costs (appraisal, legal, survey, baseline studies, endowment against future costs) can easily add 20% to the total. We appreciate your continuing support.

Peter Hannah (former) Board Chair

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RWLT works with:

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Donor's Private Tour

On September 30th, staff and members of RWLT's board of directors took advantage of some fine fall weather to host a group of special donors for a tour of the recently completed trail upgrades at Rock Dunder. The tour was led by RWLT secretary, Jim MacLachlan, a retired professional engineer, who oversaw the project.



From left to right, Alan Ring; Peter Hannah, chairman; Mike Freeman, director; John Grass, vice-chair; Bill Gibbons; Janice Ley; Eric Usherwood; and Jim MacLachlan, secretary.

The trail upgrades were made possible by a federal program that contributed \$3 for every dollar raised by RWLT. Long time RWLT supporters Bill Gibbons, Janice Ley and Eric Usherwood, Beth Malcolm and Alan Ring collectively donated the funds that entitled RWLT to receive the maximum allowable federal contribution to the project.

The COVID pandemic led to a big increase in hiker traffic at Rock Dunder as significantly more Canadians sought outdoor pursuits as a respite from the restrictions and isolation of pandemic life. Consequently, visitor traffic at Rock Dunder reached record levels during the pandemic, with an all-time high of 20,000 visits in 2021. But, with increased visits, came greater degradation of the trail network at Rock Dunder, including soil erosion, exposure and damage to tree roots, drainage issues and accelerated wear of trail boardwalks and bridges.

The combined federal and local funds raised allowed RWLT to hire a crew of five area residents to start work on the trail upgrades in April. According to MacLachlan, whose personal connection with Rock Dunder dates to his days as a local cub scout, the trail improvement work had three main objectives: repair and protect areas of maximum erosion, rerouting of trails to allow hard hit areas to regenerate and to eliminate unnecessary sharp inclines and other impediments and, finally, to increase overall accessibility of appropriate parts of the trail network.

The goal of increasing accessibility was put to the test right away. While the main group climbed to the peak, two guests took advantage of a long section of newly restored trail to walk from the upper parking lot to Scout Cabin 2 and back. “No problem,” said 93-year-old, Ralph Barford of the approximately 2 km hike. “I walk 10,000 steps every day at home!” The staff and the board of directors of Rideau Waterway Land Trust, as well as all visitors to Rock Dunder, are grateful for the generous and timely support by this special group of donors and the federal government that has made possible a significant trail upgrade for this eastern Ontario natural treasure.



RWLT is a charity that has been conserving important natural lands and habitat in the Cataraqui and Rideau watersheds since 1996 to support our community into the future.

A Heartfelt Thank You!

We would like to extend the Board and staff appreciation to Peter Hannah and Steve Knechtel whose current terms are coming to an end with RWLT.

Peter is stepping down as Chair but will remain a director. Steve will be leaving the Board but hopefully we can call on him with a special project. Peter and Steve have been instrumental in getting RWLT to where it is today and their dedication and hard work is to be commended, thank you!



A tree frog from Edwards Wetland Nature Reserve

UN Biodiversity Conference



Mallard eggs on Jack's Island Nature Reserve

December 7-19th delegates will be in Montreal for the 15th annual UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 15). Delegates from around the world will work to finalize and agree to the post-2020 Biodiversity Framework, a plan for protecting biodiversity with a target to stop loss by 2030 and put us on a path to recovery by 2050. A big issue to be discussed is the goal of protecting 30 percent of land and sea by 2030 (30x30). Many countries, including Canada, have already joined a "high ambition coalition" that supports this important goal. In order to get there, society as a whole must embrace the importance of conserving ecologically significant natural lands around them.

Currently RWLT has 21 properties and conservation easements along the Rideau and Cataraqui Watersheds. To find out more about these properties and how you can help us continue to protect important lands in your community visit our website www.rwlt.org.

Together, with your donations and support, we can continue to preserve important lands and habitats in our area!

Calling All Citizen Scientists, We Need Your Help!



Eastern Kingbird, Islands in the Bog Nature Reserve

As part of a monitoring initiative using new equipment acquired in August, our staff conservation biologist is now overwhelmed by audio files and needs your ears!

Over two weeks in August, over 180 hours of audio recordings were collected at our newest Nature Reserve, the Warren Property. Using new equipment acquired with the assistance of OLTA and the Frontenac Arch Biosphere, ultrasonic recordings were triggered by bats during the night, and constant acoustic monitoring was undertaken during the day.

Lend us your ears and help us pinpoint what animals might be heard in each of our 1 hour recordings. Even if you can't identify what species of bird it might be, or what that strange squeak is, it will help us narrow down what sections we should be listening to!

If you're interested in being a part of our project, contact us at info@rwlt.org



Yellow Warbler, MacDonald's Wetland Nature Reserve

The RWLT Team

Honourary Chair
Hon. Bob Rae

Chair
John Grass

Secretary
Jim MacLachlan

A special thank you to Abyssa Fiedler for the pictures taken at our Nature Reserves.

Treasurer
Erica Kendrick

Members
Peter Hannah
Mike Freeman
Scott Parker

Staff
Caroline Spang
Sara Warren-Roberts

We Welcome the Next Generation!

When autumn arrives and the leaves begin to change colour, Rock Dunder Nature Reserve becomes a very popular place to be! We've had visitors of all ages from places all over Canada and around the world. This season we welcomed a large number of school groups and families with children. Ranging in age from early infancy to young-adulthood, these visitors are often our most excited guests, ready and eager to explore! Providing children, youth, and young adults with an opportunity to be together in nature while highlighting the importance of preservation has been a very rewarding part of our work. RWLT wants to help share a vision with the youth of this generation that includes respect, stewardship and enjoyment of the natural world around them.



Kate's Island Osprey

With a consistent presence of staff and a diverse and well cataloged ecological profile, Rock Dunder hosts a safe environment for hands-on, experience based learning to take place. Whether it's through family visits, field trips, volunteer opportunities, or seasonal employment it provides children, youth and students of all ages, with an opportunity to learn about and become a part of Rideau Waterway Land Trust's commitment to preserve land for the benefit of the community and for future generations!

Interested in having your school or family group volunteer or visit Rock Dunder or one of our other Nature Reserves in the Spring? Contact us at info@rwlt.org. We would love to connect your group to an environmental project or help you plan an educational visit to one of our community use Nature Reserves.



Rideau District High School's Eco-Club visiting Rock Dunder this fall.



Enseignante 3e année, École publique Madeleine-de-Roybon



TAKE 5 **5 tips on how to take a 5-minute break with nature**

- 1 Sketch a nature-inspired image. Drawing can help you slow down and focus on the present moment.
- 2 Open your window and try to identify the nature sounds you hear.*
- 3 Go for a quick stroll through your neighbourhood or at the nearest park.
- 4 Play classic games with a nature twist, like a nature-themed scavenger hunt or nature bingo.
- 5 Observe the plants and animals you see around you and record them on the iNaturalist app.

*Tip: The best time to listen for birds is at daybreak when they are most active.