

Strategic Retreat Stimulates Board

Facilitator leads Board of Directors through the strategic elements of our mission

by Sue Russell

Last November your Board of Directors spent a full day examining the past, present and future potential of the Georgian Bay Land Trust. This strategic retreat, under the guidance of facilitator Kit Silcox, enabled us to recognize our key strengths, opportunities weaknesses and threats.

Strengths

At the end of the day we recognized that our key strengths included: an emotionally committed constituency; our joint venture with the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC); the environmental success in keeping land in its natural state; a strong board with an excellent track record.

Opportunities:

Opportunities open to the GBLT consist of: including the North Channel in our land acquisition; partnering with NCC; the well recognized philanthropy of American land owners in the Bay; partnerships with government departments and ministries; marketing our mission to the permanent residents of the Bay as it is in their interest too.

Weaknesses:

In order to realize the potential of GBLT we must identify the weaknesses inherent in our organization and overcome them. We suffer from: a shortage of time, money and volunteers to fulfil good intentions; lack of money; lack of operational support; and an image which appears self-interested and exclusive.

Threats:

Georgian Bay is faced with threats such as: pressure for increased development due to an influx of

population and demand for recreational property; an uncertainty of land use policy by government seeking more revenue; changing value systems due to lack of understanding by urban-focussed policy makers; difficulty in influencing government toward preservation.

Action Plan

The action plan entails reviewing the mission statement of the GBLT. Included in it will be reference to the science component of our work. As well it will include the concept that the ecological unit is the archipelago of the eastern shore of Georgian Bay.

We agreed to base our action plan on the benefits, services and products we can provide. These are the preservation and protection of land, including endangered wildlife and flora unique to the area. We can educate the residents as to why this is important. We can benefit land

donors with tax receipts and we can build up a recognition of merits of land conservation. The ultimate benefit is the legacy of conserved land in the archipelago of the Bay.

The Board recognizes that to accomplish the above we must increase revenue through marketing activities, fundraising, membership development and government relations. We need more donors and municipal partnerships. Improved communications are required for better public relations, factual and frequent newsletters, a strong updated web site and selected reports to donors, tax information for board members and involved supporters. Permanent facilities are required with an Executive Director supported by modern technology.

In conclusion our strategy is to become an influential, self-sustaining, trusted, effective, credible organization that conserves the best of Georgian Bay in partnership with others.

It was a most successful retreat and we came away instilled with enthusiasm and optimism and a brief-case full of work.



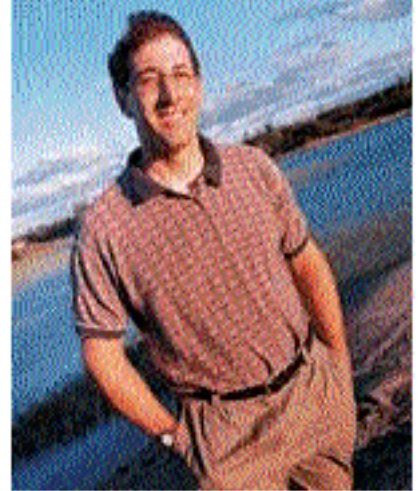
The Lizard, GBLT's newest property in Cognashene. Many grasses and a variety of berry bushes survive on this outer island along with the storm tossed pines.

GBLT web site manager honoured

Carl Spiess has been managing our web site for several years now. The Georgian Bay Land Trust site was originally linked to the Georgian Bay Association site which Carl also developed. His dedication to the Land Trust has been recognized by his firm, ScotiaMcLeod and the following item appeared on the ScotiaMcLeod web site:

Carl Spiess of the ScotiaMcLeod main branch in Toronto is devoted to land conservation. Many visits to his cottage in Georgian Bay prompted the Investment Executive to get involved in the Georgian Bay Land Trust (GBLT), an organization which attempts to buy and protect environmentally sensitive land in the area. As a former director of the GBLT for four years, he now devotes his time to managing its web site, www.gbtl.org. The Scotia Employee Volunteer Program recognized his efforts with a donation to the GBLT.

Thank you Carl for your long term and devoted service to the Land Trust. And also many thanks to ScotiaMcLeod for their generous donation.



Carl Spiess on his Georgian Bay Island

Another good news story about conservation

Generous donor's contribution saves parkland and endangered species

from the Toronto Star

Mark Fretwurst and his wife Jan Chaplin are leading the battle against a four-lane highway penetrating the largest known undeveloped swath of a typical Southern Ontario ecosystem left in the province.

They have donated the 370-hectare Cruickston Park, which Fretwurst bought from the University of Guelph in 2000, to the Cruickston Charitable Research Reserve, a charity dedicated to salvaging the ecological values of the unusual remnant of landscape.

Cruickston Park boasts 233 year old red oaks, a wavy-rayed lampmussel, the greater redhorse fish and queen snakes, all of which are very rare or endangered. Through this the municipality of Guelph would like to run one or two four-lane highways to relieve congestion in the fast growing city. The couple are rallying support to keep the Cruickston whole. "I couldn't live with myself if I gave up." Mr. Fretwurst says.

The couple turned down the chance to mine 28 mil-

lion tonnes of gravel which would have earned them about \$28 million. "It was really a short-term gain," says Ms Chaplin. "Anyone could see the long-term benefits to the community of not doing that. At the end of the day you have to soul-search and say, 'What's important to us?'"

The property started out as an aboriginal campsite perhaps 6,000 years ago. Over the last 150 years it was a farm and the land was lightly used for breeding horses and cattle. The old wood forest was sparingly cut.

When the couple decided to transfer the property to the charitable trust \$4.5 million poured in from the local community. Most of the Cambridge council are against putting roads through the park, Mayor Doug Craig said, Instead, councillors are looking at extending the GO train service or a light rail system through the region.

Cambridge is greatly indebted to Mark Fretwurst and his wife Jan Chaplin for their farsightedness and generosity. Land conservation contributes to the health of our environment and to ourselves.

Costly development

The world loses up to \$250 million (U.S.) every year from the destruction and conversion of natural ecosystems for human uses, according to an analysis by an international group of scientists published in the August issue of the journal Science. The scientists write that untouched areas provide economic benefits, such as flood protection or tourism, that are lost when these areas are cleared for economic development.

The benefit-to-cost ratio is more than 100 to 1 in favour of conservation, they contend.

Georgian Bay Land Trust extends grateful thanks to our generous donors in 2002

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Fish Communities of Georgian Bay

Historical Changes and Future Uncertainties

by *Arunas Liskauskas*

The Georgian Bay aquatic ecosystem is distinguished by its diversity of habitat features and sheer size. These properties in turn have played a major role in structuring historical and present fish communities. Although aquatic habitats in much of Georgian Bay have not experienced profound structural change as in some of the lower Great Lakes, fish communities in the area have experienced significant changes in composition and relative abundance.

Healthy functioning ecosystems provide a diversity of recreational, cultural, and economic opportunities. Recent and ongoing changes to the aquatic ecosystem of Georgian Bay such as habitat loss and alteration, exotic species proliferation, over-exploitation and declining water quantity and quality, are jeopardizing the stability and sustainability of fish communities in the area. A number of recent government and non-government initiatives have been undertaken to address these concerns .

Will these initiatives improve life for our indigenous fish population? Arunas Liskauskas will address this question and elaborate on the problems inherent in the fluctuating ecosystem in the Georgian Bay at Winterlude, March 24th.



Walleye caught in Cognashene area, 2002

GEORGIAN BAY
LAND TRUST

presents

Winterlude '03

- * *Monday March 24, 7 pm*
- * *North Toronto Memorial Centre*
- * *200 Eglinton Ave West, Toronto*
- * *suggested donation \$5.00*

Guest speaker is Arunas Liskauskas,

*Management Biologist, Upper
Great Lakes Management Unit,
Ministry of Natural Resources*

- * *food, refreshements*
- * *socializing*
- * *information*
- * *education*

Come and bring a friend

Another Georgian Bay nature reserve

Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother M'Nidoo M'Nissing Protected Area

In 2000-2001, the nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) and the Loyal Societies of Canada embarked on a joint fundraising campaign to protect a significant natural area in Ontario. The campaign was in support of the naming of a provincial park reserve on Manitoulin Island in honour of Her Majesty's 100th birthday in 2000. The 17,000 acre acquisition by the NCC protects globally rare plant habitat along 12 miles of Manitoulin's south coast at Belanger Bay and is one of the largest nature reserves in Ontario.

Her Majesty the Queen Mother wrote to the Nature Conservancy in 2000 that she would be honoured and delighted if this project were to bear her name for she was deeply conscious that acquisition of this area

would preserve it for wildlife and it would be enjoyed by present and future generations. Her majesty's name is shared with the Ojibwe "M'Nidoo M'Nissing", meaning "Island of the Spirit".

In 2002 the Georgian Bay Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy of Canada formed a Joint Venture in order to continue to acquire and conserve valuable and natural habitat around the shores of the Bay.

This Joint Venture is still raising money for long term management of the site's biodiversity and to expand the protected areas of Manitoulin.

For more information on this Joint Venture contact any GBLT Director

Your Tribute Gift Today Creates a Legacy for Tomorrow

Few people own natural areas such as rare habitats or scenic watersheds – places critical for the Georgian Bay Land Trust to preserve. Those natural areas that do remain face many threats from commercial and residential development and are daily becoming more precious.

If you think you may own naturally significant land contact one of the GBLT directors. We can advise you on the most advantageous way of preserving the land and at the same time allowing you to continue enjoying it.

In memoriam

Donations may be made to the Georgian Bay Land Trust in memory of;

Adrienne Boone Tait of Pointe au Baril who died on December 28, 2002 .

Sally Miller Fraser of Go Home Bay who died in January 2002,

Donations have been received in memory of David S. (Tim) Beatty o.c. who died on Feb 13 2003

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*Tax receipts will be issued for amounts over \$25.00

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