



MISSISSIPPI MADAWASKA LAND TRUST CONSERVANCY

Official Newsletter

November 2013

MARY VANDENHOFF RECEIVES OLTA VISION AWARD

Our own Mary Vandenhoff was recently honoured by the Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA) at their annual conference when she received their 2013 VISION AWARD for Volunteers in recognition of her tireless and innovative leadership in the Land Trust Movement.

The Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy (MMLTC) is very proud of Mary and delighted to see her receive this prestigious award. Ten years ago none of us would have believed how far we would come in such a short period of time nor that a small organization, located in a relatively remote and non-affluent part of the province, would have one of our own so recognized.

As Mary stated in her acceptance response, MMLTC is a working board where each volunteer Director is expected to carry the work forward. However Mary recognized from the beginning that the task is so great that even if each director could devote full time to the work, our goals would always remain beyond our grasp. She helped forge partnerships in the community with like-minded groups and rallied community members to join us. This is never an easy task but her own demonstration of a volunteer extraordinaire makes the path much easier. Volunteers are the life-blood of our organization.

Perhaps the key to Mary's success and what inspires so many to follow her example is her unshakable belief in the importance of helping land owners to protect their wonderful wilderness properties so that they will be forever there for the benefit of wildlife and to meet the needs of our children for eons of time. Each time she sees the happiness on the face of a child who visits one of the protected properties, or sees the power of Nature reach deep into our inner core, she comes away refreshed and reinvigorated to continue on.

Many of us are responding to her leadership and are discovering for ourselves that there are few things in life that we can devote our time to that will have such wonderful results on so many levels, lasting far beyond our own life-time - a legacy that only grows more important as the decades pass.

As Mary so elegantly stated, it is her dream that many will discover for themselves how personally satisfying it is to be part of such an important cause.

We are proud of her and of all our volunteers and will continue to take pleasure in seeing many others participate with their time, and yes with their financial support, to make this glorious dream a reality.



Mary Vandenhoff is presented the Vision Award for Volunteers by Chris Baines, OLTA Awards Committee



Like so many other charitable organizations, MMLTC is discovering that social media are an excellent way to

promote our cause, particularly to the younger generation. What better way to show off our nature reserves than with photo galleries and enthusiastic comments from visitors!

If you haven't yet visited our page, just click on this graphic and then give us your "thumbs up".

Natural Soundscapes in Nature Reserves

We've just received a TD Friends of the Environment grant for \$10,500 to launch an exciting new project. Using cutting-edge technology known as bioacoustics monitoring, we will begin to record the presence of wildlife on our properties. This will allow us to quantify the density of species and the presence of any new species, especially important for Species at Risk for which habitat exists but the species have not yet been documented.

The listening and recording equipment and software not only have important scientific applications but also can be used to educate and excite both children and adults. Just as binoculars enhance the birding experience, soundscapes provide more vivid detail than ears alone. Stay tuned for more details.

Your Vote Can Help Us Win \$50,000

No sooner had we learned that our TD application was successful when we found out that we had made the shortlist for Phase 2 of our Soundscapes project with Shell FuellingChange. Our project has been posted on its website and is now open for public voting until April 2014. If we get the most votes, we could win \$50,000 to embark on more comprehensive Soundscapes monitoring. All shortlisted projects will receive a runner-up prize of \$10,000.

To read all about Natural Soundscapes, go to FuellingChange.com, register for your free account and get 30 votes to begin. Then find our project, read all the details and enter your votes. You can vote as many times as you want by entering a special code found on any Shell gas receipts.



Canon Take Root Supports Woodland Restoration Project at High Lonesome Nature Reserve

Back in 1884, William and Mary McWatty and their 7 children settled on the property now known as High Lonesome Nature Reserve. They cleared 50 acres and bought their first livestock: 4 cattle, 4 sheep, 2 horses and 1 hog. Since then the property was farmed or logged right up until 1997 when it was purchased by the late Barry Spicer who used it only for recreation and nature enjoyment.

Today you will find a half dozen old fields and grassy meadows where crops were once grown and livestock pastured. In these meadows, almost all native trees and shrubs have completely disappeared and some harmful alien species, such as Buckthorn are invading. MMLTC intends to restore this ecologically diverse property to its more natural state over time.

MMLTC successfully applied to the Canon Take Root Program, to support this Woodland Restoration Project. With the \$5000 grant (and a Canon PowerShot camera) this fall we were able to begin the work. Take Root is a national community tree planting and greening initiative in recognition of National Tree Day, supported by Canon Canada and led by Evergreen.

On a splendid sunny October 20th, 90 enthusiastic volunteers showed up at High Lonesome for our *Go Nuts! Bike it, Hike it, Plant it* event. Thanks to Ted Mosquin who provided background on the importance and characteristics of oak and acorns, as well as planting instruction, the many participants, young and old, planted over 1000 native acorns. They were obviously delighted to be part of hands-on nature restoration work with an important goal in mind, while visualizing the consequences of their efforts by gazing at a half dozen gloriously reddish brown red oaks in the immediate skyline.



On November 5, a second group of volunteers focused on a complementary part of the restoration program, planting healthy seedlings of 450 Tamarack, 50 each of Sugar Maple, Red Oak, Nannyberry and High Bush Cranberry, all native to the region. Most of the seedlings also were provided with a coir mat to give extra protection in these critical first months of transplanting. Thus with the support of Canon and our volunteers, we have completed step one in our Woodland Restoration Project. Our deepest appreciation goes out to all who participated.