

Northumberland Land Trust

Ontario, Canada

Preserving Northumberland County - one acre at a time

The Preserver, February 2015

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - R U up 4 a challenge?

John Geale

The world of 2015 presents all of us with significant challenges. Globally we have climate change to deal with; regionally there seems to be no end to the difficulties faced by people in the Middle East; nationally we wonder how our economy will fare with the prospect of falling oil prices and perhaps a fall in the value of our loonie; and provincially the issue of rising costs of health and education will challenge us - just to name a few!

There are serious environmental challenges everywhere, too, including in the business of protecting natural spaces. The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society has a vision of protecting half of our country's public land and water. They point out that under the International Convention on Biological Diversity, Canada has committed to protect at least 17% of the landscape by 2020. Currently, only 10% is protected. Your Northumberland Land Trust has been largely concerned with land protection, and we have definitely made some progress. You know what "they" say: Think globally, act locally. By acting locally, we are trying to improve the global situation bit by bit; we expect to add one more small but attractive "bit" in the coming weeks.

One of our challenges is that we can't protect more land or properly take care of our current properties without the support of our members. Our present membership of about 75 has accomplished a lot over the past several years: we have begun an ambitious burn program to preserve grassland habitats on the McEwen property, we have severely cut down on the amount of dog-strangling vine on all of our properties, and we have removed hundreds of Scots pines to allow native species to flourish. Now your Directors are challenging themselves to acquire additional suitable properties while continuing to take good care of all of them. The wider our public support, the better we can do at these tasks.

So I'm going to issue a challenge to each of our members: Can you find ONE new member? Amongst your family, friends, work colleagues, and acquaintances, is there ONE who feels, as you do, that protecting some of Northumberland's special places is truly worthwhile? If you receive this newsletter by mail, you will find with it our brochure which includes a membership form; if you receive it electronically, you will find another attachment, which is the membership form. Please try to persuade ONE person (or more if you're a good salesperson!) to fill it out and send it to us. The creatures in all the natural spaces we protect will thank you!

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

After a busy winter of planning, we have a whole year of activity planned. Many of the upcoming events are either open to the public or looking for volunteers to help out. If you would like to participate in any of them, you should always contact the event leader for detailed directions and to confirm the date and time. Your contacts are, depending on the event:

Mark Rupke [LLOEC Steward, 905-372-3923 or Mark_Rupke@kprdsb.ca]

Bill Newell [Stewardship Committee Chair and Leckey Steward, 905-352-3051 or stewardship@northumberlandlandtrust.ca]

Russ Lake [Pelton Steward, 905-372-3636 or russelllake@sympatico.ca]

John Geale [McEwen Steward, 905-342-3851 or president@northumberlandlandtrust.ca],

Here are the events that are scheduled relatively soon:

March 28: cleaning out nest boxes and checking on snow conditions in preparation for April's prescribed burn at the McEwen Property. [Contact: Bill Newell]

May 9: trail maintenance and Scots pine removal at the Leckey Property [Contact: Bill Newell]

May 13: - Scots pine removal at the McEwen Property. [Contact: John Geale]

May 23: tree and shrub planting at the LLOEC; about 700 trees have been ordered, and lots of help is needed! Rain date is May 24. [Contact: Mark Rupke]

May 30: a public hike at the McEwen Property to see the effects of last year's burn and this year's. See Page 3 for more information. [Contact: Bill Newell]

June 3: fence inspection and maintenance, and working to extend the trail at the McEwen Property. [Contact: Bill Newell until the end of May, then John Geale]

June 13: a public hike to the Pelton Property to generally view the property and specifically to check on our pine and spruce plantings. [Contact: Russ Lake]

June 15: our AGM, once again at Palisade Gardens in Cobourg, beginning with light refreshments at 7:00 p.m. More on this in the May issue of *The Preserver*, but you may want to put this date on your calendar now. [Contact: John Geale]

We should also let you know that we have budgeted \$3000 for dog-strangling vine control in June at Pelton, McEwen and the LLOEC, and we will be conducting bird surveys at the McEwen Property targeting Grasshopper Sparrows in particular.

A SECOND PRESCRIBED BURN AT THE McEWEN PROPERTY

After last spring's successful experience in burning the south field, we are



April 2014 burn, McEwen Property

planning to burn the north field this April. Those familiar with the property will recognize that this will be a very different affair. The topography is very different, for instance: last year's burn took place on an area that was mostly flat and wide open, while the north field has hardly any flat ground and has a healthy community of scattered oaks of varying sizes and ages; in general, these trees can be expected to survive the fire. There are also many Scots and white pines invading the area; these need to be eliminated, and we expect the fire to do this job for us.

Of the grassland areas on the property, this north meadow contains the highest percentage cover of native species. Of all communities on the property, it also contains the highest number of regionally or provincially significant species and many species adapted to prairie conditions. Some of the special plants found here include Poverty Oat Grass, Heath Aster, Arrow-leaved Aster, Gray-stemmed Goldenrod, Smaller Pussytoes, Thimbleweed, Prairie Buttercup, Arrow-leaved Violet, and Round-headed Bush-clover. We hope to obtain some seeds of these and other prairie species to spread in the field after the burn in order to increase the diversity and quantity of native species.

On Saturday, May 30 we are offering a public hike to this property in conjunction with the Rice Lake Plains Joint Initiative. Participants will be able to see what last year's burn area looks like a year later as well as this year's burn area after about a month. We hope you will be able to join us; the beneficial effects of fire on this habitat should be clearly apparent. You can also expect to see nesting Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds, and many other grassland and forest edge species will be present as well. We will be accompanied by Todd Farrell from the Nature Conservancy of Canada, who is a burn expert, and David Geale, a professional bird guide who is familiar with all the species to be found here.

If you wish to take part in this walk, be sure to get directions and confirm the date and time with Bill Newell, the Chair of our Stewardship Committee. His contact information is on Page 2.

We're on Facebook! See <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Northumberland-Land-Trust/236996673137316>

MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2015 MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE.

Our members make the conservation work of the Northumberland Land Trust possible. We hope we can count on your support in 2015. Members receive:

- A tax receipt (Charitable Registration #89257-5930 RR0001) for the full amount of your membership and any donation
- The right to vote at the Annual General Meeting
- Newsletters, and invitations to events such as our dinner, hikes and lectures
 - and if you have some time and/or expertise to offer, we would love to have you join us as a volunteer!

If you prefer, you may now submit your membership and make donations by using Canada Helps: please go to <http://www.northumberlandlandtrust.ca/index.htm> and click on the blue "Donate Now through Canada Helps" button; this will allow you to use your credit card. Otherwise:

Please fill out the form below. Make cheques payable to
"Northumberland Land Trust", and mail to:
Northumberland Land Trust, P. O. Box 1153, Cobourg, ON, K9A 5A4

✂ -----

Dr. Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other: _____

Last name _____ First name(s) _____

Address _____

Number and Street

City/town

Postal code

Telephone _____ e-mail _____

Individual: \$25 Family: \$40 Supporting: \$50 Corporate: \$100

Donation: \$100 \$250 Other _____

I wish to remain anonymous

Members of the Board or Stewardship Team can be contacted by phone at 905-342-3851 or by e-mail - see our website for their names and addresses.

The NLT recognizes its supporters in print and online. If you wish your membership or donation to remain anonymous, please indicate this at the time of your contribution by ticking the box above. To view the NLT privacy policy please visit our website.