



## Northumberland **Land Trust**

Preserving nature in Northumberland, forever.

Northumberland Land Trust (NLT) is committed to preserving the natural heritage of Northumberland County. The Northumberland Land Trust is a not for profit, charitable organization, which accepts donations of land and enters into conservation agreements for the permanent protection of natural landscapes, forests, farms and waterways and provides public education and information on land conservation tools. The Trust also raises funds to purchase land in Northumberland County, Ontario, Canada for the purposes of conservation. The Trust is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors representing a cross section of the community including landowners, farmers, business people and professionals. NLT's goal is to ensure residents and visitors have nature nearby in Northumberland.

#### **Our Mandate**

Establish, maintain, and manage protected areas in perpetuity.

### **Our Mission**

Preserving the natural heritage of Northumberland County by:

- establishing, sustaining, and protecting natural areas in perpetuity
- helping others protect the land through leadership, education, and research
- building partnerships with like-minded organizations and groups









# President's Message



Rob Kennedy, President

It was a busy 2024 for Northumberland Land Trust. In the spring, we celebrated the addition of our 14th Nature Reserve donated by Robert de Lint. A wonderful addition to our protected properties and home to a number of threatened and endangered species.

In August, we unveiled a new picnic shelter at the Lone Pine Marsh Braham Nature Reserve and those who attended enjoyed a picnic lunch and walk. A big thank you to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) for a \$48,000 grant to construct this much-needed facility.

In 2024, we were offered two new land donations, the Haddon and Willow Lane properties. In 2025 these became our 16th and 17th nature reserves. A federal government grant helped secure the \$76,000 needed to cover expenses related to these donations.

In October, we held a Gala at the Best Western in Cobourg. Our guest speaker was explorer and author Adam Shoalts who regaled us with his captivating adventures across Canada. This was our best attended Gala and you could feel the energy from our supporters.

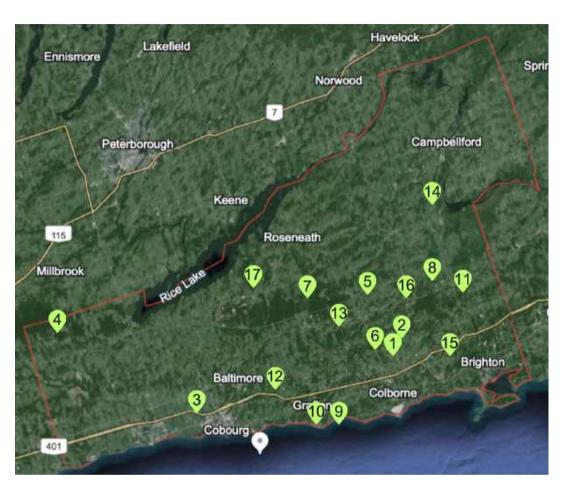
At the Gala, board member Doug McRae launched our Biddy Creek fundraising campaign to purchase a 305-acre wetland near Brighton in a 50/50 partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada. We had never acquired a property of this size and people responded with great enthusiasm. The goal was to raise \$190,000 for our share of the purchase plus a property stewardship fund. In nine weeks we raised \$215,000. The property became our 15th nature reserve on January 31, 2025. We were overwhelmed by your generosity and so thankful.

Sabrina Hasselfelt, our Stewardship and Operations Co-Ordinator, has been doing an excellent job, but both she and our volunteer board are stretched thin. As more people express interest in donating land for protection, we want to seize these opportunities without falling short. To meet growing demands, the NLT is hiring an Executive Director. This is a natural step for many Land Trusts, and the Board has been receiving valuable guidance from Mike Hendren (former Executive Director of Kawartha Land Trust) and John Lounds (former CEO of the Nature Conservancy of Canada).

This report details NLT's activities that protect the natural areas in our county for future generations to enjoy. It is our collective legacy, and we couldn't do it without you.



## **Our Nature Reserves**



- 1 Lone Pine Marsh Braham Nature Reserve
- 2 Wilkinson Nature Reserve
- 3 Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre
- 4 McEwen Nature Reserve
- 5 Leckey Nature Reserve (CEA)
- 6 Kennedy Nature Reserve
- 7 Pelton Nature Reserve
- 8 Munn Nature Reserve

- 10 Jack van Nostrand Nature Reserve
- 11 McColl Nature Reserve
- 12 Bonebakker Nature Reserve
- 13 de Kleer Nature Reserve
- 14 de Lint Nature Reserve
- Biddy Creek Wetland Nature Reserve (NEW as of January 2025)
- Haddon Nature Reserve (NEW as of March 2025)
- Willow Lane Nature Reserve (NEW as of March 2025)



## **Board of Directors & Staff**

NLT is governed by a dedicated volunteer Board of Directors, representing diverse communities and expertise from across the County. The Board currently comprises ten members who bring a wealth of experience, passion, and commitment to the organization. Under the leadership of President Rob Kennedy, the Board includes Leslie Abram, John Davidson, George Gordon, Graeme Harris, Richard Holland, Freda Kennedy, Virginia Maclean, Doug McRae, and Adam Yahn.

Throughout the year, the Organizational Capacity Building Committee has been actively engaged in strengthening the Trust's internal leadership structure. A key focus was the development and refinement of a comprehensive job description for the role of Executive Director—an important milestone in NLT's strategic growth. An Executive Director will be the second full-time employee together with our Stewardship and Operations Coordinator. Following an extensive review the position was publicly posted in early 2025. We were pleased to receive a high volume of strong applications from individuals with exceptional qualifications and a shared passion for land conservation.

We are excited to be moving forward with this important step and look forward to introducing a new Executive Director who will lead our fundraising initiatives and guide the future direction of the NLT with vision and expertise. To learn more about our Board members and staff, please visit the "About Us" section on our website at <u>nltrust.ca</u>.





# **Land Acquisition**

In 2024, interest in land donations grew, with many people eager to learn about the process. We toured beautiful, ecologically significant properties and now have a list of lands pledged for donation to NLT in the coming years. As of April 2025, we manage 17 properties totaling 1,753 acres of ecologically important reserves in Northumberland County. Last year, NLT simultaneously worked on three acquisitions, all of which successfully closed in early 2025.

Our first acquisition was a landmark achievement for NLT - the Biddy Creek Wetland Nature Reserve. This 305-acre property marks NLT's first 50/50 partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and first land purchase. Located just off Highway 401 in Brighton, the Biddy Creek Wetland is a regionally significant mixed wood forest and fen wetland that filters into Biddy Creek. Thanks to the generosity of individual donors and one foundation, NLT was able to raise the necessary funds to purchase and steward this vital wetland property.

The Haddon Nature Reserve, generously donated by Dari Haddon, officially closed on March 26th 2025. NLT first visited her beautiful forest and wetland property in late 2023. This reserve features the Little Cold Creek, a tributary of the Cold Creek watershed, which hosts various trout species, making it an essential coldwater stream in the region.

The Willow Lane Nature Reserve, generously donated by Cheryln Wilson and Robert (Bob) Leckie, also officially closed on March 26th 2025. This property features regionally significant mixed wood forest, rolling valleylands, and some open croplands. The property was named Willow Lane after the original farm that used to be present on the lands before the donors purchased the property. With the financial support of the Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund, we were able to secure these two properties for generations to enjoy.

We are excited about the growth and continued success of NLT in the coming years. We are deeply grateful to the passionate and generous individuals who have pledged to donate their land, ensuring that these special natural spaces will be preserved forever.









## **Partners in Conservation**

In early 2025, the land trust achieved a major milestone with the acquisition of the Biddy Creek Wetland Nature Reserve, the largest property NLT has acquired to date. Spanning 305 acres of mixed wood forests and fen wetlands, the reserve is a critical ecological area fed by Biddy Creek.

This acquisition was made possible through the launch of the Biddy Creek Fundraising Campaign at our Gala dinner. Recognizing the scale of this project, NLT sought external support, leading to a partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC). Together, we established NLT's first 50/50 partnership property. Thanks to the generosity of individual donors, we raised NLT's share of the funds in just nine weeks.

With additional support from the Ontario Conservation Accelerator, NLT completed the acquisition in early 2025. The Board also benefited from the valuable guidance of Mike Hendren (the former Executive Director of the Kawartha Land Trust, who is now with the Ontario Conservation Accelerator) and John Lounds (former CEO of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, who is now with the Centre for Land Conservation).

Partnerships like the one with Ducks Unlimited Canada and support from other organizations are important in the growth of the land trust, sharing knowledge to help reach our goals.

Volunteers from NLT and WBFN form the Joint Working Group - Wesleyville with a mandate to preserve the biologically sensitive lands in the Wesleyville Rural Settlement Area. The Group is engaging with Ontario Power Generation as it commences the Environmental review for a proposed Nuclear Generating Station. To learn more, you can read the Wesleyville Annual Report at willowbeachfieldnaturalists.org.







# **Fundraising**

Members of the Committee: Freda Kennedy, George Gordon, Doug McRae, Graeme Harris, Sabrina Hasselfelt

NLT would like to thank all the many people who supported NLT in our fundraising endeavours. Your support was vital to the functioning of NLT in 2024 especially in providing the funds needed for the Biddy Creek purchase.

The Birding Marathon began the 2024 fundraising year and we are so grateful for the many birders who gave of their time and talents to count the birds in each of our Nature Reserves. A total of 149 different birds were documented, with 6 being new to the Birding Marathon.

A new fundraiser this year was the Calendar photo contest which brought in 100's of photos of Northumberland County and resulted in a lovely NLT Calendar that was available for sale online and at our dinner gala.

The Dinner Gala was a huge success with 160 attendees who enjoyed speaker Adam Shoalts sharing his canoe adventures and Doug McRae giving a wonderful description of the upcoming Biddy Creek purchase and its diverse ecological significance.

The Matching Gift Campaign ended the year with NLT supporters very generously donating \$215,000 for the Biddy Creek purchase in just 9 weeks! We are so grateful for such a supportive community.





# Communications and **Public Outreach**

This year, we hosted a variety of events and nature walks across our reserves, engaging the community and fostering a deeper connection to the natural world. Here are highlights of these activities,

Winter Walk at Wilkinson Nature Reserve (February): 30 participants enjoyed sunny weather while exploring animal tracks and birdlife, including chickadees feeding from hands and beaver activity. Five new volunteers joined our efforts.

Kennedy Forest Hike (May): Over 50 hikers explored the 300-acre Kennedy property, soon to be donated as an NLT reserve. The walk featured spring birds and frogs, and we're grateful for the Kennedy's generosity.

Birding Walk at Lone Pine Marsh (May): 30 birders discovered Trumpeter Swans, Bobolink courtship, and nesting Tree Swallows and Eastern Bluebirds.

Grassland Birds Walk at Bonebakker Nature Reserve (June): 25 participants enjoyed birdwatching, spotting Eastern Meadowlarks and Eastern Bluebirds.





# **Communications and Public Outreach Continued...**



Mothy Morning at Bonebakker Nature Reserve (July): Early risers discovered stunning moth species, including Polyphemous Silk Moths and Luna Moths, thanks to Tyne Bonebakker.

Arts in Nature Day at Lone Pine Marsh (July): Artists gathered to create nature-inspired works at the new picnic shelter, combining creativity and nature.

Tallgrass Prairie and Forest Walk at Pelton Nature Reserve (August): Participants observed the effects of a controlled burn and explored newly cleared trails.

Fall Walk at Doug McRae's Brighton Property (September): 20 walkers toured Doug's ecologically restored property, soon to be donated to NLT.

Fall Colours Walk at Haddon Property (October): 25 participants enjoyed vibrant fall colors and a Barred Owl greeting. This is one of our newest nature reserves, donated in March 2025!

Nature Walk at Lone Pine Marsh (November): 30 walkers explored signs of winter wildlife and beaver activity at the marsh.

We thank everyone who participated in these events, helping us highlight the incredible biodiversity across NLT's nature reserves.



# Stewardship

2024 was a busy year for the stewardship committee. A key change was restructuring the committee into a core group of four—Bill Newell, John Geale, Doug McRae, and Sabrina Hasselfelt—while the rest of the former committee now forms the property stewards team, meeting quarterly to discuss activities at the nature reserves. Both our volunteer pool and stewards team continue to grow. With more properties to manage, we launched a stewardship apprenticeship program, pairing new stewards with experienced ones to assist throughout the year. Amy Quinn (Chub Point) and Marc Studhalter (Kennedy) retired from their roles this year, and their dedication and commitment to the land trust will be greatly missed. Below is a list of current and new stewards and their apprentices.



Biddy Creek Wetland NR - Doug McRae Bonebakker NR - Jay Sherwin Chub Point NR - Mark Rupke de Kleer NR - Paulette Hebert, Laurie Hill de Lint NR - Robert de Lint, Leslie Abram Haddon NR - Dari Haddon Jack Van Nostrand NR - David Geale Kennedy NR - Christa El-Ayari Leckey NR - Andrew Buntin Lone Pine Marsh Braham NR - Leslie Abram, Gerry Carr

Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre - May Haslam, Haig Baronikian McColl NR - Doug McRae McEwen NR - John Geale, Paula Torti Munn NR - Andrea Kingsley, James Stokman Pelton NR - Bill Newell Wilkinson NR - Stewart Britton, Evan Britton Willow Lane NR - Bob Leckie and Cheryln Wilson

In 2024, we held 25 stewardship work parties, with over 200 volunteer hours from 60+ volunteers. They helped manage trails, install bird nest boxes, control invasive species, thin pine plantations, set up gates/signs, and collect tallgrass prairie seeds across our reserves. Our stewardship team is strong and enthusiastic, and we are all looking forward to a productive year in 2025. Here are some more highlights from 2024...





We were able to tackle more dog-strangling vine (DSV) than ever with the help of a \$9,657 Invasive Species Action Fund Grant through the Invasive Species Centre. Through this grant, we were able to purchase more herbicide, more PPE, and manage more area impacted by DSV on 13 of NLTs nature reserve.

We conducted two prescribed burns in April of 2024, starting with 10 acres at the Leckey Nature Reserve and then 2.5 acres at the Pelton Nature Reserve. Prescribed burns help control invasive species and return nutrients back to the soil to allow for more native grasses to thrive. In the fall, we collected these grass seeds to sow back onto the landscape next year.





Four bird nest boxes were installed at Bonebakker Nature Reserve to support at-risk grassland birds, as part of NLT's three-year Conserving Species at Risk Grant. With support from the Ontario Land Trust Alliance, we also monitored species like Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, and Grasshopper Sparrow, and installed acoustic devices to track birds and bats on two properties.

Unfortunately, due to the impacts of the invasive emerald ash borer on the woodlands of the Laurie Lawson Outdoor Education Centre, the trails have been closed to the public until further notice while falling trees pose hazards to visitors. We have installed signs to alert the public, and are currently applying for grants to help fund the remediation of this property for public use again.





Finally, with the help of a \$48,700 Ontario Trillium Foundation Capital Grant, we were able to build a new picnic shelter at the Lone Pine Marsh Braham Nature Reserve! This picnic shelter features beautiful pine wood construction with six picnic tables that provide the perfect place for the public to sit with family and friends while overlooking the marsh.



## **Finance and Investment**

Do you remember "The Little Engine that Could"? It was reported that the Canadian Land Trust Alliance considers the Northumberland Land Trust one of the fastest growing land trusts in Canada. This was due to counting the 2021 merger as growth. Fake news or simply premature?

Since the merger, at our current rate, we will be doubling our protected lands by mid-2026, which is well on our way to meeting our goal of tripling by 2030. How do we make this happen in a financially prudent way? We need to meet the competing needs of long-term stewardship, funding acquisitions (costly even with donated land) and growing our human resources.

In 2024, the Finance & Investment Committee was created with the mandate to: "ensure the long-term financial viability of Northumberland Land Trust, to advise the Board on Policy, to provide oversight of cash and investments and to act as an Audit Committee." Its current members are Richard Holland, Graeme Harris, John Davidson and Rob Kennedy.

Last year we adopted Fund Accounting, a method of allocating resources to designated purposes. In 2023, we designated Stewardship Funds to provide for the care of our lands in perpetuity. In 2024 we added \$100,000 to this Fund and determined that it should be allowed to grow, with current costs largely covered by current revenues. Based on our current properties, we have a solid level of Stewardship reserves.

This means, however, that our growth, both in protected lands and human resources, must be financed with increased revenues. To better manage this process, we have established the Land Acquisition Fund to report separately on acquisition costs and revenues.

Other work of the Finance & Investment Committee includes: the development of a long-term stewardship funding policy, meeting with our external auditor, preliminary work on a long-term investment strategy, and ongoing support to the Fundraising Committee and the important process of procuring grants from government sources.





# 2024 Financial Highlights

PROTECTED NATURE RESERVES (restricted)				2024	2023
Land donation					\$500,000
Net assets, end of year				\$2,418,606	\$2,418,606
OTHER FUNDS	General	Land Acquisition	Steward- ship	2024	2023
Revenues	Unrestricted	Restricted	Restricted		
Donations	\$44,989	\$174,742	\$20,000	\$239,731	\$99,466
Grants	88,749			88,749	68,264
Fundraising and other	40,063		16,592	56,655	43,281
	173,801	174,742	36,592	385,135	211,011
Expenses					
Salaries and benefits	67,709			67,709	65,065
Acquisition, stewardship, fundraising	36,136	38,766	2,937	77,839	75,906
General and administration	27,398			27,398	24,027
	131,243	38,766	2,937	172,946	164,998
Excess of revenues over expenses*	42,558	135,976	33,655	212,189	46,013
Net assets, beginning of year	180,403		283,032	463,435	357,885
Adjustment to deferred revenues					59,537
Transfer to stewardship	(100,000)		100,000		<u> </u>
Net Assets, end of year	\$122,961	\$135,976	\$416,687	\$675,624	\$463,435
Consisting of:	·				*
Cash	\$174,611			\$174,611	\$42,692
Interfund balances	(127,229)	135,976	(8,738)		
Investments	40,140	98	425,444	465,584	427,329
Other, net of liabilities	35,439			35,439	(6,586)
	\$122,961	\$135,976	\$416,706	\$675,634	\$463,435

Notes: 1. The 2024 audited financial statements are available to members on request. On January 30, 2025, Land Acquisition Funds, \$163,116, were used to purchase a 50% interest in the Biddy Creek property



## **Thank You Donors!**

In 2024, individual donations to the Northumberland Land Trust more than doubled compared to the previous year—a testament to the incredible support of our community. We're proud to recognize the donors who make our work possible. To honour their contributions, we've introduced a recognition matrix, inspired by the branches of a tree, shown on the next page. As donations accumulate throughout the calendar year, donors will progress from one branch to the next.

All contributions are tracked by the NLT Treasurer, and donors will be acknowledged on our website and in our newsletter—unless they choose to remain anonymous, which we fully respect. We're deeply grateful to all our members for their generosity. Special thanks also go to those who give their time, services, and expertise. Their contributions are equally valued to the land trust community as a whole.





## 2024 Donors

#### Mighty Oak Branch (\$5000 and over)

Anonymous Anonymous Anonymous Brenda Beck Charles Frederick Fell Charitable Fund Community Power Northumberland **Dalglish Family Foundation** John Davidson & Irena Orlowski

Dorothy De Lisle Robert Fishlock & Urszula Kaczmarczyk John & Dorothy Geale Barbara Heidenreich Robert & Freda Kennedy Brian Maxwell Glen Parsneau & Marg Fleming Beverly Kathleen Post



#### **Sturdy Maple Branch (\$2500-\$4999)**

Joan Chalovich

Enbridge Inc.

Edward (Ted) & Hilda Van Netten

#### Enduring Pine Branch (\$500 -\$2499)

Leslie & Brendon Abram John & Ann Ambler

Anonymous

Don Baxter

Deborah Black

Ruth & Ronald Buchanan

Jackie Cevey

Andrew James Crowell

Anita De Jong

Christa El-Ayari

Frank & Patricia Godfrey

Margaret & George Gordon

Graeme Harris

May Haslam & Haig

Baronikian

David Hatch & Dawn

McMaster

Richard Cameron & Laurie Hill

Richard & Sarah Holland

Jordan Hoogendam

Thomas & Jennifer Jackman

Tony & Linda Jeronimus

Denis Juhal

Helen Kennedy

Russell & Janet Lake

Johnathan Lebon

Gary Markotich

Mandy Martin

Barbara McCuaig

Douglas McRae (Shrew

Solutions Inc)

Cynthia Montgomery

MT Engineering & Design

James & Margaret Munn

Roger Nainby & Virginia

Maclean

Bill Newell

Northumberland Christian School

Society

Frank Prest & Jeff Devine

Jennifer Rogers

Ben Samann

Jenna Stephens-Wells

Ross & Judy Stephens-Wells

Sue Stickley & Ted Hunt

Anne Tesluk

Richard Tyssen

Anthony Walker

Evelyn & Rick Wannamaker

Wayne Watson

Wells Family Trust (DL&K)

Jeff & Andrea Wheeldon



## 2024 Donors Continued...

#### Graceful Willow Branch (\$100-\$499)

Alexandra Abram

Barb Alvey

John Apostolides

Paul & Margaret Appleman

Jennifer Atkinson & Thomas

Becker

Kenneth Bagshaw

Petra Becker

Leslie Benson

Best Western Plus Cobourg

Harriet & Greg Binkley

Donald Blyth

Tvne & Joanne Bonebakker

Charles Buchanan

Mathew Buntin

Geraldine & Roger Carr

Stephen Cohrs

Diana & Edward Cunnington

Jennifer Darrell

Pat Deacon

Marcella de Graaf

Harold de Kleer

Gale & Frank de Lint

Suzanne de Lint

Lillianne Denis

Lorna Doubt

Karin Fawthrop

Larry Fawthrop

Douglas & Cathy Galt

Richard Girardin

Marie Gordon

Dari Haddon

Linda & Bryan Hallatt

Michael Harding

Frederick Helleiner

Dennis & Brigitte Hogarth

Dave Impey

Jean Iron

Kelly Isfan

Gil & Denise Johnson

Alf Johnston

Arlene Kennedy

Laura Kennedy

Sarah Kennedy

Anil Khera

Margaret Kropf

Helen Kusey

Whitney Lake

Sandra Lane

Tim Lawley

Jane Leckey James LeNoury

Nancy Lester

Shannon & Pat Linton

Leah Collins Lipsett

Catherine Littlejohn

John Lounds

Eric MacBurnie

Sue MacVicar

Charlie & Hayley Martin

James & Jane McGrath

Virginia & Peter McLaughlin

Joanne McMaster Heather Meacock

Carolyn Merey

Simone & Tom Merey

Beverly Meyers

Barbara & Kit Moore

Audrey Morgan & Jeff Devine

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Robert & Barbara Newman

Jim & Mary Catherine O'Neill

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Maria Reilly

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Terry Self

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**Richard Shears** 

Shawn Sheppard & Mary

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Keith Simpson

Stirling & District Horticultural

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Nancy & Terry Stopps

Nina Szpakowski

Ken Tully

Mark Vander Vennen

Rick & Yvonne Vandertoorn

Tony Walker

Marilyn & Rae Waring

Cheryln Wilson & Robert Leckie

Adam Yahn

Bill & Rita Zeran

#### **HEARTY ACORN (LIVING BEQUEST)**

Elizabeth (Liz) Chatten John Davidson & Irena Orlowski Robert Fishlock

George & Margaret Gordon

Doug McRae



# Leave a Legacy

## Give a Gift for Nature: Tell us about your Legacy

Just as you can donate land during your lifetime, you also have the option to bequeath your property to Northumberland Land Trust through your will. By naming NLT as a beneficiary, you ensure your land's legacy endures—preserved and protected for generations to come. This thoughtful gesture also provides a tax credit to your estate, helping to reduce capital gains taxes and benefiting the other beneficiaries of your will.

A planned or legacy gift is a meaningful way to leave a lasting mark, reflecting your commitment to protecting the natural beauty of Northumberland County. It sends a powerful message to your loved ones—that you valued the land and wanted to ensure its preservation for them and for future generations.

Why consider a donation? Take a look at Durham Region—it was once much like Northumberland County. But, as Joni Mitchell famously sang, urban sprawl has "paved paradise." Today, Northumberland is at a similar crossroads, facing increasing development pressure. Through the work of NLT, we can safeguard critical natural habitats so they remain untouched and thriving far into the future.

Your legacy gift can speak volumes. It can honour a spouse or loved one. It can reflect a family tradition of conservation. It can serve as a living monument to your passion for the environment—forever tied to the landscape you love.



Want to Leave a Legacy?

Reach out to us at info@nltrust.ca to discuss your planned giving options.



# **Our Supporters**

## The Blidner Family Foundation





#### THE DALGLISH FAMILY FOUNDATION







**Pace Family Foundation** 

An agency of the Government of Ontario Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario

### Charles Frederick Fell Charitable Fund







