

## Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative

*“Connecting with respect”*

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## Algonquin to Adirondacks (A2A) Collaborative Intervenes in Pipeline Hearings

**Could there be a spill of bitumen oil in a creek or river in the Algonquin to Adirondacks region similar to the one in Kalamazoo Michigan?** That concern galvanized the A2A Collaborative Board to seek intervener status with the National Energy Board (NEB), a federal Canadian agency, in order to press for better licensing protections if an application from Enbridge is approved. Enbridge wants to reverse the flow and “repurpose” the 38 year old Line 9B that runs across the entire A2A region, a few kilometers north of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario, so that it can carry more products, including diluted bitumen (Tar Sands oil). That is the product that fouled a creek and the Kalamazoo River in Michigan for at least 50 km, and has already cost over \$1 billion in clean-up costs.

In recent years, Line 9B has carried primarily light crude in a westerly direction. Enbridge wants permission to change the direction of the pipeline’s flow and carry a wider variety of products, including bitumen from Alberta, and increase the capacity of the line to five times what the pipeline has been carrying recently (from around 64 000 barrels average per day to up to 300 000).

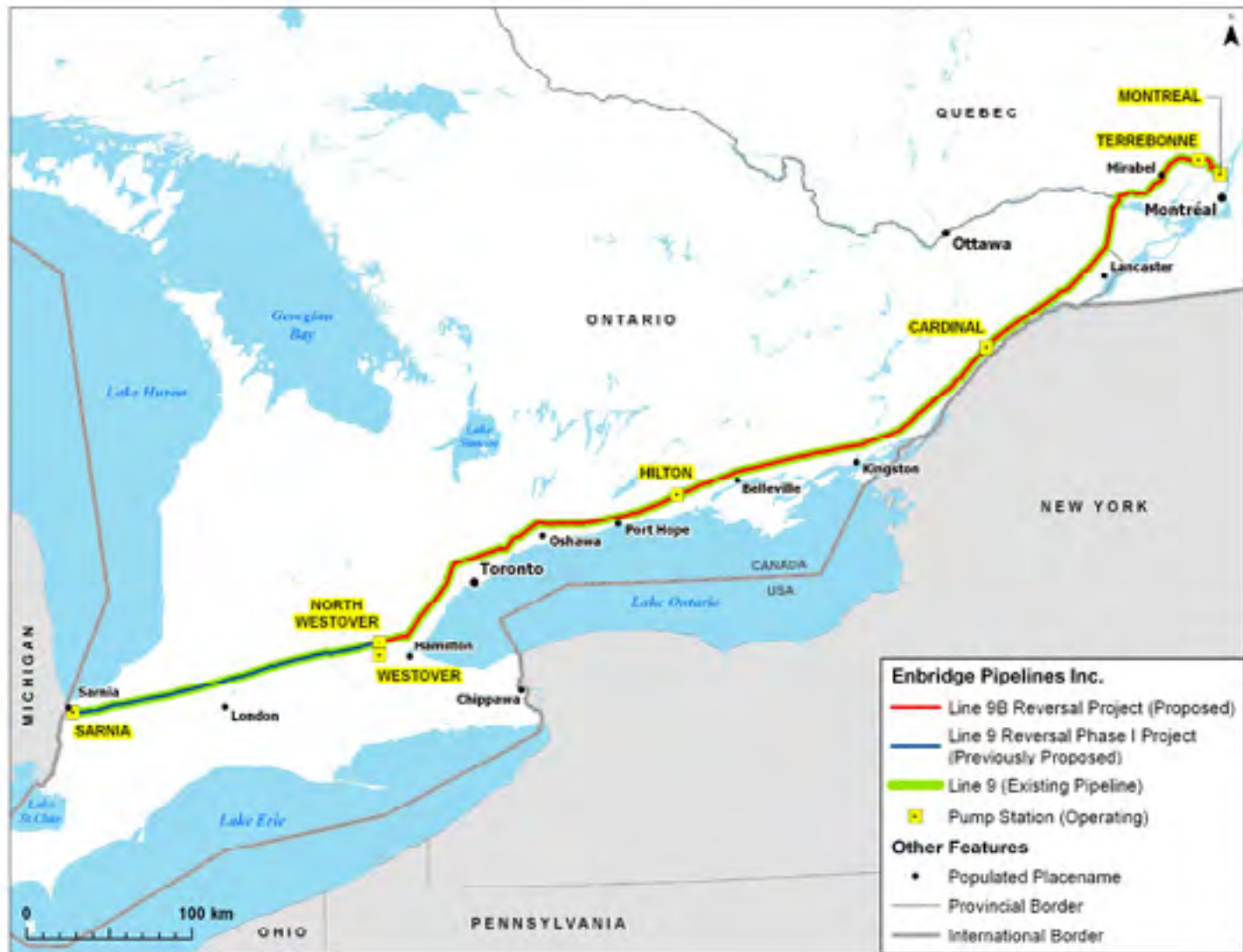
800 000 gallons of bitumen were spewed in the Enbridge pipeline disaster in Michigan, which destroyed aquatic life, sickened area residents and forced 130 from their homes, many for good. This is the largest inland oil spill in North America and the clean-up is not done, and perhaps never will be, as new balls of tarry substances are discovered in the riverbed.

*continued over*



*Enbridge’s burst pipeline in Kalamazoo, Michigan*





A great deal of damage has been done to the ability of the river to support species diversity.

What particularly concerns A2A is that the Enbridge Michigan pipeline (6B) and the 9B pipeline were built at about the same time, and with the same design, with walls only ¼ inch thick. They are both subject to problems with corrosion and “tenting” of the exterior wrapping. Enbridge’s own documents show that the 9B pipeline in the A2A region has over 600 identified areas of corrosion, cracks and dents just in the area around where it crosses the Ganaoque River (2006, most recent data).

The diluted bitumen “dilbit” that Enbridge is proposing to carry, won’t move through pipelines without

the addition of undisclosed lighter products. But the more worrying part is that drag-reducing agents are used, which contain such toxics as benzene and n-hexane, both carcinogens. N-hexane also causes extensive peripheral nervous system failure. Another additive, toluene, causes nerve disorders. These are injected along the route of the pipeline at pumping stations, and can have disastrous effects on people and wildlife if released into the environment. When diluted tar sands oil spills into water, the condensate evaporates, creating a toxic, carcinogenic cloud. Most of the heavy bitumen remains and can sink, coating the bottom of the lake or river with thick goo, making it much more difficult to clean up than a conventional oil spill.

**Factfile:**  
 Enbridge is more than just the company that delivers natural gas to homes across Ontario. It’s also the largest shipper of tar sands oil, and is responsible for shipping enough of Canada’s oil & gas each year to equal, when burned, half of Canada’s entire annual release of global warming pollution.  
*Environmental Defence Canada*

**What is the A2A Collaborative seeking through its intervention?**

A2A has asked the National Energy Board to require Enbridge to give first responders day-to-day information about what is in the pipeline, including the diluents and drag reducing agents. A2A also recommended on-the-ground emergency response training to be completed all along the pipeline before any start-up occur.

A2A has further recommended that as conditions of licensing

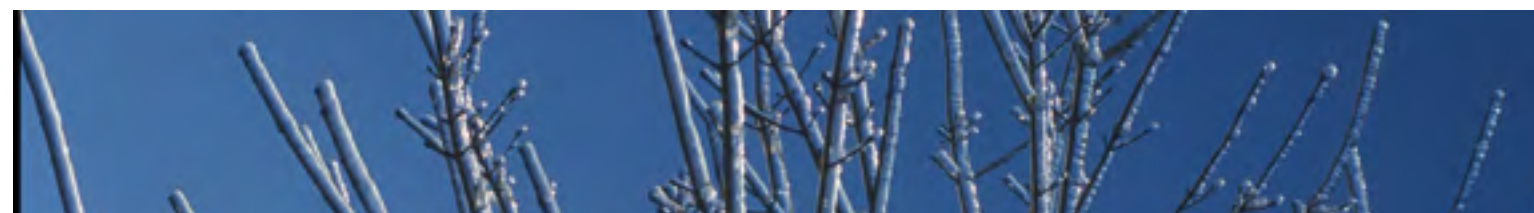
- the NEB give a special designation to the A2A region, based on Enbridge’s own description of what constitutes a High Consequence Area, and insist that the pipeline meet higher standards of safety here. The A2A region is unique, biologically essential to North America’s wildlife, and fragile. A spill here could cause permanent damage to aquifers, and would easily reach them due to the region’s shallow soils and fractured bedrock. A spill could cause permanent damage to wildlife and habitat. Many streams and rivers are crossed by Line 9B.

- the pipeline be re-laid across the A2A region, with today’s materials and standards.

- there be a first-rate emergency response plan. Enbridge’s is generic, and much of it is blacked out so the public can’t read it. A2A is insisting that this key document be made public.
- the response time to a spill be reduced from an unacceptable 1.5-4 hours, by putting response teams from Enbridge closer than Belleville and Montreal.
- the Thousand Island National Park be consulted right away in developing a clean-up plan to deal with an oilspill released into the Jones Creek Wetlands, part of the park, and that plans be in place for each endangered species found there.

A2A president Emily Conger presented A2A’s arguments at the NEB hearings October 16th in Toronto, with the assistance of Rob McRae of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority. There were many other interveners, including the Province of Ontario and the City of Toronto. The NEB will decide early in 2014 whether Enbridge will be allowed to go ahead with its proposal, and if so, what the licensing conditions will be.

*Emily Conger — President*



**Planning for Conservation in the Ottawa Valley**

*By Gary Bell, Eastern Ontario Program Manager, the Nature Conservancy of Canada*

The Nature Conservancy of Canada is in the process of completing a conservation plan for the Ottawa Valley Natural Area. The plan uses best available science to characterize the ecological landscape of the Ottawa Valley and identify strategies and actions to protect the region’s biodiversity.

Like the broader A2A region, the Ottawa Valley represents a remarkable interface between ecoregions, where the Great Lakes, the Boreal Forest and the St. Lawrence Lowlands come together with biotic influences of the northern Appalachians and the Alleghany Plateau. From this convergence of ecoregions has emerged an impressive diversity of ecosystems and species, which has resulted in the Ottawa Valley being touted as a major area of biodiversity signifi-

cance in several large-scale regional conservation plans.

The Ottawa Valley is a great rift valley and its relief takes the form of a gently undulating plain occasionally interrupted by granite, sandstone or limestone hills and escarpments. Its ecosystems include unique forest systems, alvars, limestone, and karst ecosystems, sand dunes and barrens, and extensive wetlands including bogs and fens. These systems, in turn, support a rich array of species: no fewer than 471 species of vertebrates have been documented, including 56 mammals, 308 birds (at least 181 nesting species), 18 amphibians, 16 reptiles and 81 fishes.

*(continued overleaf)*

## Planning for Conservation in the Ottawa Valley

By Gary Bell, Eastern Ontario Program Manager, the Nature Conservancy of Canada



Figure 1: Ottawa Valley Natural Area location

The Natural Area Conservation Plan for the Ottawa Valley provides a strategic plan for the Conservancy to work with partners to protect and maintain additional core conservation areas containing rare and unique systems, such as karsts, sand dunes, alvars, forests and high quality habitat for grassland birds. The plan also calls for improved conservation information management and planning across the landscape and the development of stewardship plans for existing conservation lands where such documents do not currently exist.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada collaborates with a wide range of partners, including all levels of government, other non-government organizations, local conservation organizations such as land trusts, township or city planners, cottage associations and community groups. Collectively, these groups can help design and implement a comprehensive community-based conservation plan aimed at conserving the area's key biodiversity features and functions.

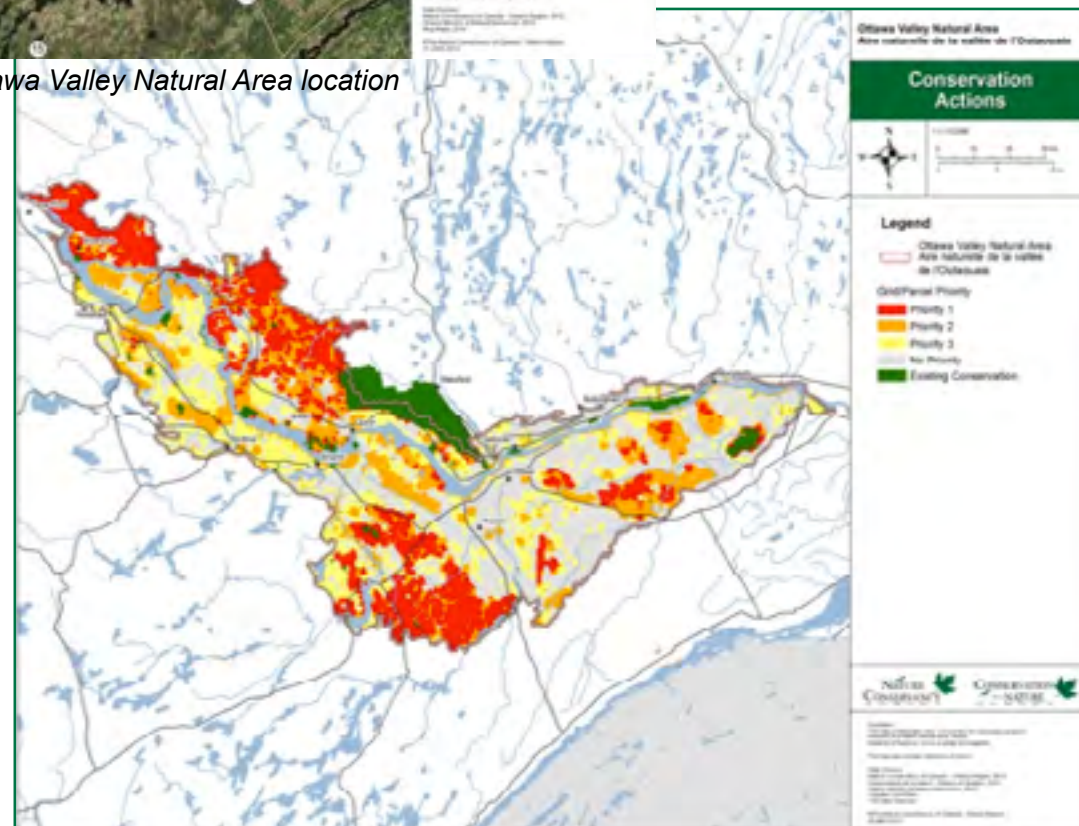


Figure 2: Ottawa Valley Natural Area location and associated conservation actions

If you would like more information on the Ottawa Valley Natural Area Conservation Plan or would like to learn more about the Nature Conservancy of Canada's conservation planning and programs, please contact Gary Bell, Eastern Ontario Program Manager, at [gary.bell@natureconservancy.ca](mailto:gary.bell@natureconservancy.ca) or (613) 321-3559.

## Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas Smartphone App

By Catherine Jimenea, Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas Assistant, Ontario Nature

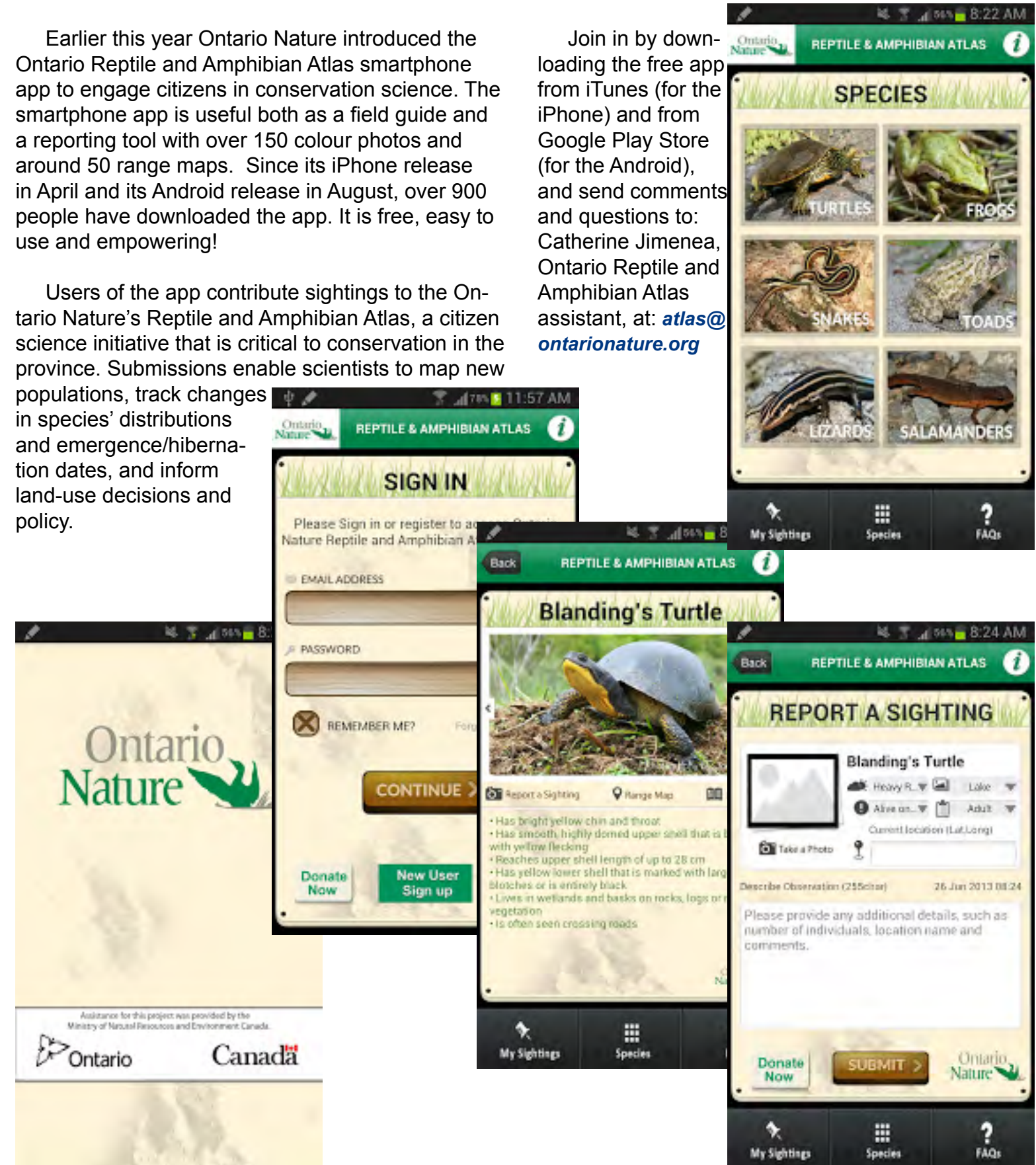
Seven of Ontario's 24 amphibian species and 18 of Ontario's 24 reptile species are species at risk. What can you do about this grave situation? Pick up your phone!

Earlier this year Ontario Nature introduced the Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas smartphone app to engage citizens in conservation science. The smartphone app is useful both as a field guide and a reporting tool with over 150 colour photos and around 50 range maps. Since its iPhone release in April and its Android release in August, over 900 people have downloaded the app. It is free, easy to use and empowering!

Users of the app contribute sightings to the Ontario Nature's Reptile and Amphibian Atlas, a citizen science initiative that is critical to conservation in the province. Submissions enable scientists to map new populations, track changes in species' distributions and emergence/hibernation dates, and inform land-use decisions and policy.

One happy app user reports, "I am so happy to have this app! The setup makes it really easy to figure out what species you're looking at and track all the important details."

Join in by downloading the free app from iTunes (for the iPhone) and from Google Play Store (for the Android), and send comments and questions to: Catherine Jimenea, Ontario Reptile and Amphibian Atlas assistant, at: [atlas@ontarionature.org](mailto:atlas@ontarionature.org)



## Focus on the Thousand Islands

Grassroots efforts to preserve a small but crucial part of the A2A ecosystems corridor.

By David Bull

Founded in 1975, the **Thousand Islands Area Residents' Association, (TIARA)**, was born from adversity. The flush Canadian federal government of the day had just announced plans to expropriate 30 Sq. miles of privately held islands in the St. Lawrence River located between Howe Island and Malorytown Landing. Their plan was to create a "Flagship" Canadian National Park.

Once word was out, it resulted in waves of protests from affected private land owners, among others. After all, the area at risk was not comparable to other Canadian wilderness National Parks. Heritage homesteads of early settlers, island farms and seasonal dwellings, many of which had been family holdings for five or more generations were at risk of being totally eliminated.

Led by local resident Douglas Mackintosh, TIARA was initially formed with over 1,500 founding members, mostly local property owners at risk of losing their homes. A formidable bunch, they began by developing a carefully thought out and professionally crafted strategic plan to aggressively oppose Parks Canada's local expansion plans, while at the same time, keeping several steps ahead of them! TIARA's extensive and comprehensive public consultation process, the likes of which had never before been seen by Parks Canada, was widely acclaimed and in fact, resulted in the very first citizen-developed Official Land-use Plan adopted by the province of Ontario. TIARA's citizen-driven public consultation process continues to be the focus of many social studies and academic theses at universities throughout North America.

By the late 1970's, it became clear that local property owners had prevailed. Parks Canada abandoned their expansion plans for the Thousand Islands. TIARA's role since that time has been to act as a grassroots watchdog group which helps in protecting the area's natural environment. TIARA actively monitors land-use development plans and when appropriate, defends the Official Plan when local governments approve development which contravenes it. Yes, it certainly happens. Since downloading provincial services began in the mid 1990's, coupled with ever increasing development pressures, money

and growth are paramount in the minds of local municipal governments. They can stretch and break their own rules to fund themselves. As a consequence, TIARA's role as a watchdog has never been more necessary.

Ironically, Parks Canada is now one of TIARA's biggest allies. Parks Canada's mandate has been updated to include "protecting the ecological integrity of its holdings." TIARA's mandate is to preserve the natural beauty of the Thousand Islands. We're now mutually aligned in our conservation efforts.

TIARA is governed by an elected board of Directors and financially supported by its members. When TIARA legally challenges a municipality's land-use contraventions, it looks for potentially precedent-setting decisions that risk negatively impacting the overall Official Plan in the future. For example, when the owners of a small island classified as "undersized" and deemed inappropriate for development in the Official Plan, sought approval to build a residence and marine facility, TIARA challenged it. TIARA cited that the approval was based entirely on sketchy technicalities none of which conformed with the intent of the Official Plan. Supported by a professional planner and a lawyer, and with testimony from Parks Canada at the hearing, TIARA successfully challenged the decision, thereby avoiding a dangerous precedent.

***TIARA enjoys a productive working relationship with A2A and is indeed proud to do its best to help protect this small but key region in the much larger A2A ecosystems and wildlife corridor.***

Additional information about TIARA including a comprehensive history of its origins and raison-d'être can be found on TIARA's website, [www.tiara.on.ca](http://www.tiara.on.ca)

*David Bull is a two-term past President of TIARA and currently its Executive Director.*

An Association Dedicated to the Preservation



of the Beauty and Character of the 1000 Islands Region

## WILD APRICOT; A NEW APPROACH TO A2A COMMUNICATIONS, EDUCATION and OUTREACH

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By Richard Deering, A2A Communications

The A2A Collaborative has upped its game by subscribing to the Wild Apricot Membership Management service. This software will enable A2A to maintain more accurate and timely records of members, improve our capacity to serve the interests and requirements of partnering organizations, expedite internal communication among the various committees and groups of the organization and enhance our capacity to promote two way communication with the membership and the public.

What will this program mean to you? Individual members will be able to self-subscribe to membership, alter your membership information, indicate your areas of interest for customized emailing, get membership renewal reminders and pay membership fees, be informed of and register for events all online. If you haven't received it already, be looking for notification about Wild Apricot in your email. You will need to enable cookies on your browser for Wild Apricot to work.

In addition to serving individual members, Wild Apricot has other advantages over what we have been using: First, it will enable A2A to have better capacity to coordinate activities and information sharing with partnering organizations in order to better protect and conserve wildlife habitat.

Second, it will integrate a number of operations that are now separately maintained (eg. newsletter mail outs, membership lists, digital email subscribers, collection of membership dues), Since members and organizations can be grouped into different categories (fields) we will be able to selectively direct communication to specific groups. Examples might be Board members, people interested in stewardship projects on private land, members and organizations interested in a specific area of scientific research, etc. Wild Apricot will also facilitate event organizing, thereby freeing up A2A's volunteers to do more conservation related work.

James Lolley, who has been advising us on our communication technology, has played an instrumental role in the adoption of the Wild Apricot program and we are very appreciative of his work and initiative on this file.

Would you like to be involved in Algonquin to Adirondack's membership, outreach or education programs? Does working with Wild Apricot interest you? There are opportunities available. Please go to: [www.a2alink.org/get-in-touch.html](http://www.a2alink.org/get-in-touch.html) and tell us how you would like to be involved. We will try to find the right volunteer job for you!



### An Invitation to Our Readers

***Do you have an interesting environmental story to tell?  
A stewardship project you have been working on?  
An interesting encounter with wildlife? An area of intense interest in the environment? A particular environmental need that should be addressed? Planting for wildlife?  
Consider writing a story for the A2A newsletter.  
Contact R.Deering at: [thepurpledoor659@gmail.com](mailto:thepurpledoor659@gmail.com)***

**For those of you who have not yet renewed for 2014,  
we are including a membership form...**



## ALGONQUIN TO ADIRONDACKS CONSERVATION ASSOCIATION 2014 Membership

Our mission is to provide leadership and facilitate collaboration among partners to restore, enhance, and maintain ecological connectivity, ecosystem function, and native biodiversity, while respecting sustainable human land uses in the Algonquin to Adirondacks region. We will work at international, national, regional, and local levels to develop strategic and site-specific initiatives to achieve connectivity.

New Membership \_\_\_\_\_ Membership renewal \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost \$25.00 per year**

Please send to 19 Reynolds Road, R.R. 1. Lansdowne ON K0E 1L0 in Canada  
or P.O. Box 1 Wellesley Island New York 13640 in the U.S.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

I would you like to receive information from A2A including notices of upcoming events by regular mail \_\_\_\_\_ by e-mail \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to make a charitable donation\* to A2A to connect and protect habitat for this region's wildlife and for improved air and water quality of \$250 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_.

Would you like to volunteer for A2A? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, in what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

I have the following talents/interests that might be helpful to the A2A effort:

\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Charitable receipts issued for Canada.

\_\_\_\_\_

**[www.a2alink.org](http://www.a2alink.org)**