



Algonquin to Adirondack Conservation Association

“Connect with Respect”

Citizen Science Program: Learn How You Can be Part of the Big Picture

IN THIS ISSUE

Citizen Science Program

President’s Message

Horizontal Wall

Updated Environmental Regulation

Lake Study

As a member of the Algonquin to Adirondacks Conservation Association you are concerned with the health of the 1000 Islands area. Would like to know how your land fits into the big picture? St. Lawrence Islands National Park (SLINP) is looking for participants to be involved in a long- term scientific monitoring program designed for local landowners. Residents can learn to monitor forest, wetland and river/ stream health on their own properties.

The Citizen- based Monitoring Program involves 1-8 hours per year of your time and SLINP staff members are available to train you, report findings and provide the equipment you need.

So far four forest plots have been established on private land, and multiple wetland plots are being established. “A workshop will be held in the spring to train residents using the various protocols and monitoring will start in the spring, summer and fall of this year”, said Chris Bellemore, Outreach Coordinator at the park.



If you are interested in ecological monitoring, have a piece of property you wish to have monitoring conducted on, or would like more information please contact Chris Bellemore, at 613- 923-5884.

Check out our website at www.a2alink.org

Mailing Address:
19 Reynolds Rd.
Lansdowne, ON
K0E 1L0

A group of landowners watch as SLINP staff teach about soil decomposition measurement.



- St. Lawrence Islands National Park

President's Message 2006-2007

Page 2 of 6

Greetings to everyone. This is our first A2A Conservation Association newsletter of 2007, and we have some big plans to tell you about. But first I want to extend special thanks to our all volunteer Board Members who have put in a very hard year of working for connected habitat in 2006. We are also grateful for secretarial help in the person of Melissa Francis, thanks to St. Lawrence Islands National Park, and to Gord Giffin who facilitated her working with us as well as for the use of Ecology House at the park.

The A2A board formally partnered with the Frontenac Environmental Partnership (F.E.P.) in 2006, which means that we will support each other's efforts in a variety of ways. They have already presented us with an information session on the effects of prospecting on wildlife habitat, which was a real eye-opener. You can find more information about the F.E.P. at www.newsweb.ca/FEP/FEP.htm.

Your A2A board is working on the next steps to do the Gananoque River Project, and is teaming up with a lake and a waterway association to undertake a Lake Study. See the lake study article in this issue for more information.

A2A is now taking the next steps to improve what's called "porosity" of the 401 (the ability of wildlife to get across), where innumerable animals lose their lives each year. This will be our most expensive project, and will take several years to complete.

More good news is that we are finally approaching the end of the work we have had to do to acquire Charitable Status. Soon we will be eligible for many funding sources. A big thank you to all those that helped with this endeavor and particularly to Cameron Smith who has spent hours preparing documents and working with Revenue Canada.

Over the fall your president went on the first U.S. speaking tour to promote the A2A concept in the northeast, and promote the idea of an American sister organization. I spoke to the Conference of Environmental Journalists in Burlington Vermont, and then to students who are studying ecology at St. Lawrence University, a particularly delightful encounter, since the students are in a program where they live away from civilization while they are learning-- in yurts deep in the Adirondacks. A2A will go wherever it takes!

Please see the announcement included with this newsletter for the time and place of the annual general meeting. We look forward to seeing you.

Emily Conger—A2A President

Horizontal Wall, More Than a Barrier for Safe Transit

There are two great migration corridors in eastern North America, and they intersect at the eastern end of Lake Ontario. One is the valley of the St. Lawrence River—a corridor from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic coast in maritime Canada. The other is the ancient backbone of the eastern continent—a billion year old granite Frontenac Arch which connects the Canadian Shield to the Adirondack and Appalachian Mountains. For 10,000 years, these have been routes for movements of plants and animals, and people, and all of their genetic variability, bringing a remarkably rich diversity to the living landscape, and in particular to the crossroads of these corridors on the Frontenac Arch.

Ironically, the greatest barriers to wildlife migrations are at the very intersection of these corridors: intense settlement and development along the river's banks, and highways that parallel the river.

While development is a growing limiting factor, it is the great "horizontal wall" of Highway 401 which is nearly insurmountable. The broad band of asphalt with the country's heaviest traffic flow is deadly for animals that attempt to cross.

The Algonquin to Adirondack s Conservation Association wanted answers, and funded by the Trillium Foundation, contracted with the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve. With additional funding from Environment Canada, FABR and A2A partnered with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest, Parks Canada and the Kingston office of the Ministry of Transportation.



The highway study area, in 2004, was the 46 kilometer length of the highway between the Leeds County line and the Highway 401 and County Road 2 intersection west of Brockville. Field work analyzed the development character of the road and its structures, the habitat on either side, and development on adjacent lands. Culverts shapes and habitats connected were categorized for their utility as crossing points.

The study findings were numerous. The 6.7 km. concrete median barrier on the west side of the studied area dramatically increases the death toll of animals attempting crossings. As was suspected, wildlife regularly crosses under the bridge over the Gananoque River forming an important aspect of the A2A linkage. Findings suggested locations for specially constructed wildlife overpasses, as used in Banff. However, the greatest opportunities lie in the reconstruction of habitats at specific culvert structures, improved by better inside and bottom surfaces, illumination and other means. Specialty fences for reptiles and amphibians would serve as funnels to high potential crossing points.

Much more work needs to be done. Highway 401 will one day become expanded to six lanes through the Frontenac Arch. The time for planning is now here.

- Don Ross, Biosphere Reserve Network

Updated Environmental Regulation

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) has a regulation called *Ontario Regulation 148/06 Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses*. Its purpose is to protect public safety, property and the environment. This is accomplished by requiring approval through permits for work that could impact or be impacted by what are referred to as natural hazards.

Natural hazards are processes such as flooding and erosion that could be worsened if development (buildings and structures) and site alteration (i.e. filling, excavating and grading) are not conducted in a manner that accounts for potential impacts. The CRCA's review process under the regulation ensures that no negative impacts related to natural hazards will result from the work.

The areas covered by the regulation are limited to watercourses, shorelines, valleys (next to watercourses), wetlands and lands next to these features. If any work is planned in these areas, you should contact the CRCA at 613-546-4228 or visit the website at www.cataraqueiregion.on.ca to find out if a permit is required.

There is a wealth of information about working in and around water on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada website (www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/canwaters-eauxcan).



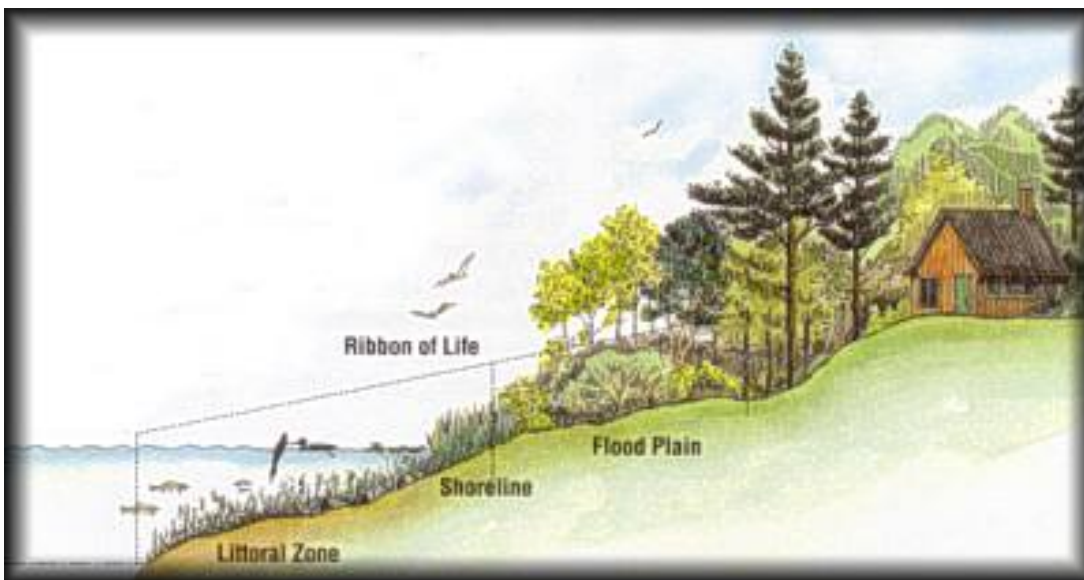
Above workers ensure that no sediment flows from the work site.

Lake Study

A2A is working with the Leeds Stewardship Council and Lake Associations on the Gananoque River system to begin a Lake Study that will yield information about the condition of the waterway, both historically and in the present. The associations involved at present are the Lake Associations of Upper and Lower Beverley Lakes and the Gananoque River Waterways Associations. The study will be used to create a River and Lake Plan that can be used for preserving and enhancing these water bodies. Such plans have been used successfully in municipal Official Plans, and can have very important benefits for wildlife habitat protection and enhancement, particularly when shoreline restorations are undertaken, as they have been on Charleston Lake.

The first part of any study is to survey residents and make them a part of the goal setting. To date surveys have gone out to all residents living on the Gananoque River and the lakes south of Lyndhurst that are part of the system. The purpose of the survey is to determine the value that residents and users of the waterway place on it, to find out what makes it special to them, why they live here, and to find out what they believe are the major issues facing the river and lakes now and in the future. The survey also asks what are the non-negotiable factors that should be kept in mind in the planning process.

Thus far 35 surveys have been returned by mail. It is planned to take the surveys from dock to dock next summer, in hopes of reaching all the residents. There will also be opportunities for users of the lakes who do not live there to complete surveys, as well as for municipal officials. We believe that a lake plan must reflect the needs of the whole community to be effective.



Do you know that approximately 90% of life within a water body relies on the near-shore area for one or more of their life processes?



Please send your membership form to: Algonquin to Adirondacks Conservation Association 19 Reynolds Rd. Lansdowne, ON K0E 1L0

Join A2A

“Our mission, through partnerships and cooperation is to restore, enhance and maintain the ecological connectivity, ecosystem function, and native biodiversity while sustaining responsible human land uses and practices in the distinctive region of Ontario that lies between and connects the Algonquin and Adirondack Parks.”

Membership Form

I’m joining as a member

I want to renew my membership

Name: _____

Street: _____

City of Town: _____

Province or State: _____

Country: _____

E-mail: _____

I would like to volunteer to help A2A

My skills are: _____

I am enclosing \$25 for one year’s membership payable to A2A Conservation Association

I am also enclosing a gift to help with the following:

Creation of wildlife highway crossings

Development of a website to help educate the public

Purchase of material to help landowners create habitat on their land

Establishment of workshops for landowners

The information collected on this form is gathered to help serve our membership and will be held in confidence.