



# A2A

Algonquin to  
Adirondacks  
Collaborative

# NEWS

Spring  
2016

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## New President For A2A!

**“It took several years, and a lot of looking, but we’ve found the very person I hoped would become the new president of A2A,” said retiring president Emily Conger.**

“Sarah Walsh was our choice for a number of reasons: We had seen her in action as Chair of the A2A Science Committee and then as Vice President of A2A. But most importantly, we saw how organized, kind, competent and passionate she is.” So at the 2016 A2A Annual General Meeting, Emily stepped down, and Sarah was elected.

Sarah is the statewide coordinator for the Trees for Tributaries program in New York State, after having been the Thousand Islands Land Trust’s Director of Land Conservation. She received her BS in Wildlife Science at State University of New York (SUNY) College of Environmental Science & Forestry in 2006. From 2007 – 2011, she was Program Manager for Save The River, in Clayton, NY. She received her MSc from SUNY Albany in 2012 and worked for the Adirondack Chapter of The Nature Conservancy/Adirondack Land Trust in their Adirondack Park Invasive Plant Program.

Emily is retiring after 14 years as president of A2A. When she was first elected, A2A had a few dozen members, and some informal partnerships on the Canadian side -- groups willing to donate time, money and expertise to the group known then as the Algonquin to Adirondacks Conservation Association. In 2002, A2A had no projects, and was working to get incorporated and achieve charitable status. But its board was filled with people with a broad vision, and the necessary structures were put in place that we still use today.

In 2004, A2A took on a Trillium project in concert with the Eastern Ontario Model Forest and the Leeds County Stewardship Council. In 2008 we got funding for our first big on-the-ground project on the Gananoque River system, a 3 year project surveying and reporting to owners of hundreds of properties on 7 lakes. We analyzed shorelines,

young-of-year fish, and water quality. In that project we learned the skills of working with landowners, and with a wide group of partners, to meet their goals as we pursued our own.

By 2012 A2A was ready to become the international collaborative it is today, inviting potential partners to help shape the organization to better help them achieve their own goals. From the very beginning, A2A has been guided by the wisdom of our Indigenous partners, especially in developing the Strategic Plan, to be considered for ratification at our 2016 Partner Meeting.



Sarah Walsh and Emily Conger

**“Being president of A2A for 14 years has been a thoroughly exciting second career for me. But it’s time for A2A to have new and energetic leadership, and I feel tremendously confident that Sarah will provide that.”**

We are grateful for support from



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# Following in the Footsteps of Ontario's Eastern Wolves



Photo credit: Michael Runtz

► By Hannah Barron

Director, Wildlife Conservation  
Campaigns, Earthroots

Not surprisingly, we found far more eastern wolves in remote, semi-protected habitat around Killarney, Kawartha Highlands, and Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands parks than in smaller, more accessible parks.

Land clearing and heavy persecution during European settlement pushed eastern wolves north to these areas, and wiped them out of their historic habitat in the northeastern states and Adirondack region.

At the northern tip of the A2A corridor, Algonquin Provincial Park is the protected stronghold of Canada's at-risk eastern wolf population.

Following a flurry of research identifying threats to this unique species - habitat loss, hunting, trapping and genetic swamping from coyotes - Canada's federal government is considering up-listing the species from "special concern" (not protected) to "threatened". To assess eastern wolves' at-risk status, however, we first needed to find out where these elusive wolves occur outside of Algonquin.

Dr. Linda Rutledge initiated the Eastern Wolf Survey to identify their current range. Working as project manager, I spent several months helping Dr. Rutledge search for wolves using noninvasive methods.

Surveying southern Ontario's provincial parks, we positioned trail cameras and collected scat, urine, and hair for DNA analysis.

Wild canines openly mark their family territories with scat and urine, making it relatively easy to collect samples along trails and roadways. Unfortunately, locating and counting eastern wolves is no easy task. Without a DNA profile, it's impossible to tell the difference between an eastern wolf, an eastern coyote, and a hybrid of the two.

Mating between the 2 species occurs in areas where hunting and trapping levels are high.

*capable of travelling great distances to find mates and new habitat is well known. Unfortunately, the established coyote population, vast road networks and high harvest levels in most of the A2A region are all major obstacles to establishment of eastern wolves in the Adirondacks.*

Dispersing eastern wolves have much lower survival than coyotes. While there have been reports of lone animals harvested north and south of the St. Lawrence, the eastern wolf is not a designated species, let alone a species-at-risk, in the United States. This designation, coupled with protection of potential source populations in the parks bordering Algonquin and in the A2A corridor, present the only real opportunity for eastern wolves to naturally re-establish south of the border.

*Until then, Algonquin will remain one of the few places where we can hear the haunting howl or catch a glimpse of these rare wolves.*

*That all wolves, including eastern wolves, are*

# A2A Welcomes New ED

*“The opportunity to combine my work experience and interest in the NGO community with my love for conservation planning and the natural world is exactly the kind of challenge I have been looking for. It is an exciting new chapter in my career!”*

A2A is thrilled to announce that we’ve hired our first Executive Director, David Miller. He has an extensive background in environmental planning and project management, and over 20 years experience working with municipalities, non-profit organizations, the provincial government and the public on issues of conservation and sustainability. His most recent project was providing environmental and strategic planning services for the Footprint House project in Ottawa, where he created a business plan, fundraising strategy and educated multiple stakeholders on this innovative demonstration facility for sustainability.

David's background gives him a broad view for long-term planning, perfect for A2A's anticipated application of Conservation Action Planning, as well as a sense of how to best meet the needs of communities, through understanding their values. David's work in the A2A region has given him excellent connections that will serve A2A well as we embark on the Trail Project and create eco-passageways to facilitate safe movement for species across highways. So he will have so many A2A initiatives and possibilities to tackle!



David Miller and son Kieran Ferren-Miller

Photo credit: Debbie Ferren

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## A2A Adopting CAP

Conservation Action Planning, or CAP, is a framework for collaborative conservation, and thus a natural fit for the A2A Collaborative. Pioneered by The Nature Conservancy (U.S.), it has become, over the years, a well-regarded approach to environmental conservation. It brings organizations together to develop consensual conservation targets, reasonable action plans, and specific, measurable goals that are implemented, evaluated, and adapted. Its chief purpose is to *“get conservation work done in real places on this earth.”*<sup>1</sup>

The CAP framework is made up of four basic components: defining a conservation project; developing conservation strategies and measures; implementing the strategies and measures and using project results to adapt and improve.<sup>2</sup> This framework has been applied around the world in almost every type of eco-region imaginable.

By introducing CAP to this region, the A2A Collaborative will provide its partners with extra tools in their conservation planning efforts. We have invited Jarmo Jalava, a seasoned CAP expert, to present the concept and lead a workshop at A2A’s 2016 Partner Meeting, where partner organizations will learn to identify first steps to a CAP in their regions.

**The CAP process:**

- *Enables participants to discuss what they want to conserve, how they would define “good health” for each conservation target, and the current status of that target.*
- *Is scalable: the scale and scope can be modified based on a region’s needs, resources, and capabilities; conservation goals can be set at the species, site, or broader landscape level.*
- *Has specific and measurable goals, and actions are concrete, which appeals to funders.*
- *Emphasizes results: strategies are improved through ongoing monitoring and assessment of the results.*
- *Integrates local, place-based knowledge with evolving scientific understanding.*

1. CAP Introductory Overview, Nature Conservancy, Nov. 5 2011, Powerpoint  
2. The Nature Conservancy. Action Planning Handbook. p. 8. Arlington, Virginia: 2007.

# Land Stewards' Confessions

► By Penelope & Richard Deering

PART TWO

*Here's our philosophy: As a society we can't continue to develop and exploit the land (and oceans) in a way that diminishes and degrades the habitats that wildlife, in all its myriad forms, depends on for survival. But how does this translate into the decisions we make about the land we share with nature? Here's more of where the rubber meets the road!*



Photo credit: Emily Conger

We enjoy watching the cyclical progression of wild plants, (read weeds) which thrive along the disturbed soil of our long lane. Initially our response was to uproot them, until it was pointed out to us that the thistles, for example, provided food vital to some bird species. Today our lives are enriched by a plethora of wildflower blooms that often make their way onto our dining table. Similarly, we were initially intent on removing the unsightly nests of tent caterpillars in the shrubs and small trees along the lane, until we learned what they mean to bird diets.

The outflow from the water conditioner in the house was a special problem. The discharge was full of salt that could reach the lake about 100 feet away. The answer: a "dry" well full of stones that absorbed the salt. Now we have soft water, and the lake stays clean!

Dogs: we love ours, but he doesn't have the run of the property. He would be a risk to wildlife and at risk from critters like porcupines. So we walk our dog several miles each day and reap the health benefits.

Trying to be good land stewards, we wanted to plant hundreds of trees. The local conservation authority offered programs to assist landowners...the owner bought the trees and prepared the site and the conservation authority provided the labour and planting expertise.

*But in our enthusiasm, we neglected to have a professional evaluation of the land beforehand with respect to the value of the habitat we were intending to change.*

We did pay attention to soil suitability for various species, and planted around 2000 trees in total, including tamarack, white pine, white spruce, red and white oaks, burr oaks, black locust, walnut and white pine. We planted many in the uplands to replace the birches, ashes and hemlocks that appear to be in trouble from disease, invasive species and age.

Planting trees is both rewarding and frustrating: rewarding in watching progress over the years, and frustrating because of predation by beavers and deer.

We are still debating the pros and cons of a legal restriction on development by future owners of the property (a conservation easement), which would identify a portion of the open land where future development would be prohibited. The easement could be monitored and enforced by an organization such as a land trust.

We derive considerable satisfaction from the decisions we have made to maintain the natural features of the land and to sustain the wildlife habitat we have inherited and hold in trusteeship for future generations. And, with a little thought and planning, we believe everyone can contribute to the enrichment of the natural environment that sustains us all.

# A2A Partner Profile: The CRCA

*In an era of rapid and profound climate change, concerns about the quality and safety of drinking water and the growing need to preserve environmentally-sensitive lands and waterways, the role and mandate of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority could not be more vital.*

The CRCA is one of 36 Conservation Areas in the Province of Ontario. It was created in 1964 to manage the natural resources in 11 different watersheds within southeastern Ontario. Representatives of Kingston, Gananoque, Brockville, Athens, Napanee and 6 rural townships sit on our board of directors. It is a non-profit organization.

Our unique contribution stems from the depth of our professional expertise from a variety of disciplines, including environmental science, biology, geology, engineering, planning, outdoor education, and communications/marketing.

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The CRCA provides special programs to landowners to help them manage resources on their own properties, with a specific focus on reforestation.

Our tree-planting program is offered to rural landowners on a cost-sharing basis. We deliver reforestation programs in partnership with the Trees Ontario Foundation and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. Since the early 1980s, we have planted more than 3.2 million trees.



CRCA Staff Photo

*From our inception, the CRCA has acquired land to be held in perpetuity for the purpose of managing wildlife, plants, and water, and for selected recreational purposes. We also have seven Conservation Areas throughout the watershed, with varying degrees of amenities and services.*

We also own the Cataraqui Trail, which runs for 104 kilometres between Strathcona and Smith Falls, managed by an independent board. Its eastern section is part of the Trans Canada Trail Network.

For more information, visit [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca), email [info@crce.ca](mailto:info@crce.ca), or call 613-546-4228. Our administration office is at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, 1641 Perth Road, on the outskirts of Kingston.



# A2A

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# 2016 Membership Form

*We envision a resilient, ecologically interconnected landscape that sustains a full range of native wildlife and enhances people's quality of life for aenerations to come.*

### A Happy Reminder!

Memberships can now be treated as donations, which means that we can issue you a charitable receipt. You can choose whatever level of membership you wish each year. Please be as generous as you can so that A2A can:

- ▶ provide safe passageways for animals to cross highways
- ▶ build an A2A trail connecting Algonquin and Adirondack Parks
- ▶ provide the research and facilitation needed by A2A's 50+ partners to restore habitat and connectivity in this unique, fragile A2A landscape

American Donors: The minimum donation for which we can issue a tax receipt is \$200. Please send to P.O. Box 1 Wellesley Island New York 13640

Canadians Donors: We can issue a tax receipts for \$25 or more. Please send your donation to 1 Jessie Street, P.O. Box 88, Lansdowne ON K0E 1L0

Or complete an online membership at [A2ACollaborative.org](http://A2ACollaborative.org)

In appreciation of our donors, we will be pleased to send to those donating \$1,000 or more an original framed watercolour of the A2A region, and to those donating \$500 – \$1,000 a hardcover book about the region. All donors of \$100 or more will be recognized on the A2A website, unless anonymity is requested.

<b>Membership Level:</b>	<b>Shagbark Hickory</b>	<b>Blue Beech</b>	<b>Black Ash</b>	<b>Yellow Birch</b>	<b>White Pine</b>	<b>Red Oak</b>
Cost:	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25

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

New:  Renewal:  Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

I am enclosing a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_, made out to the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative.

I would you like to receive information from A2A including notices of upcoming events by:

regular mail:  by e-mail:

Would you like to volunteer for A2A? \_\_\_\_\_ In what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_