

Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative

“Facilitating a network of partners to connect lands and people across the Algonquin to Adirondacks region, a critical link for biodiversity and resilience in eastern North America”

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A2A COLLABORATIVE NEWS from the President

2014 has been a wonderful year for the A2A Collaborative, as you will see from the stories in this newsletter. But it’s newsworthy to report that the A2A collaborative itself has been growing and changing. We’re proud to say that we are becoming the multi-national organization we have always aspired to be: First Nations, American and Canadian-- not the almost strictly Canadian organization we were just a few years ago.

How? We are beginning the process of engaging with First Nations. Our board has had meetings at Plenty Canada, an organization associated with the Shabot Obaadjiwan Algonquin First Nation and at Thompson Island, part of Akwesasne Mohawk Territory. We are proud to have Larry McDermott as a director from the Shabot Obaadjiwan Algonquin First Nation, and Henry Lickers from the Mohawks of Akwesasne as an Advisor. And we also now very

pleased to now have four directors from the United States: Richard Grover from YESeleven, Tom Langen of Clarkson University, Mark Scarlett of the Indian River Lakes Conservancy, and Lee Willbanks from Save the River.

For more information on our board, please look at A2A directors’ biographies on our website:

www.a2alink.org/uploads/7/6/8/5/7685208/a2a_board__staff_bios.pdf

In addition to an expanded board, the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative of partner organizations has grown a lot bigger and more varied over 2014, with thanks to the hard work of our new Coordinator, Lilith Wyatt. We now have 31 organizations working together-- too many to list here. To meet them all, please go to our website:

www.a2alink.org/partners.html

Emily Conger — President



*Blanding's Turtles
vs. Windmills*

see overleaf



Update on OSTRANDER POINT WIND TURBINE COURT CASE

Sent by Myrna Wood, Prince Edward County Field Naturalists.

In a previous edition of this newsletter we brought you the story of the Prince Edward County Field Naturalists (PECFN), an A2A partner which is fighting a large-scale wind generation project at Ostrander Point, an important migratory route for birds. Here is the most recent update:

The PECFN is appealing the Ostrander Point Crown Land wind project at the highest Court in Ontario. The hearing will occur at Osgoode Hall, Toronto Dec 8-9. Ostrander Point Crown Land is situated in an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) - a refuge for migrating birds, bats and butterflies - it contains provincially significant wetlands, globally imperiled Alvar habitat and is the home and breeding ground of several avian, reptilian and amphibian species at risk, such as the Blanding's turtle.

On Dec 8-9 PECFN will be defending the Environmental Review Tribunal ruling that over-

turned the Ministry of the Environment's approval of the Gilead wind turbine project, which was later overturned at Divisional Court. At present the Divisional Court's ruling on Ostrander Point undercuts the ability of the Environmental Review Tribunal to make decisions based on the evidence before it. PECFN's appeal of the Divisional Court ruling is a precedent setting case that impacts the validity of the Environmental Review Tribunal, the Endangered Species Act and the Environmental Protection Act. As such it will affect environmental law across Ontario.

As Justice Blair, who granted a stay against any construction on the site said, "the issues raised on the proposed appeal are issues of broad public implication in the field of environmental law".

For more details:

<http://www.saveostranderpoint.org>





Photo Credit : Richard Grover

Beautiful sky near Thompson Island Cultural Camp, Akwesasne

Board Advance on indigenous engagement at Thompson Island Cultural Camp, Akwesasne Mohawk Territory, Oct. 16-17th, 2014.

Margaret (who helped cook), Waylon (coordinator, chef, and captain), Larry, Lilith, Vince (carpenter), and Henry enjoying apples, laughs, and the journey back to the mainland.



Photo Credit : Richard Grover

Partner Spotlight: Two A2A Partners Working Together

By Doug Wellman, Chair Kawartha Highlands Stewardship Committee.

Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park (www.ontario-canada-travel.com/kawartha-highlands-provincial-park.html) is Ontario's newest and largest park south of Algonquin, at 37,587 ha. It features a rugged rolling landscape of small lakes, wetlands, forests and rocky barrens. The Park begins just north of Burleigh Falls and follows Hwy. 28 to just north of Apsley (Burleigh Falls is 30 minutes north of Peterborough). Its western boundary stretches to the Mississauga River at Buckhorn and the eastern shores of Mississauga, Gold, Beaver and Catchoma Lakes. The Park has 120 backcountry/canoe access campsites.

The Bancroft Area Stewardship Council (www.bancroftstewardship.ca) was formed in 1995 under the Ontario Stewardship Council model and has survived the recent Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources transition that ended its support. The BASC is a community based program bringing together landowners, resource agencies, partner associations and individuals interested in the sustainable use and care of the land through the avocation of stewardship practices. The BASC catchment area includes roughly 635,000 ha covering the southern portion of Nipissing District (South Algonquin), the

northern portion of Hastings County, and the northern portion of Peterborough County. It continues from Apsley north to Bancroft and Algonquin.

Both KHPP and BASC are Partners of A2A, since together they manage a large section of the A2A region. The KHPP Stewardship Committee is new. After two meetings the group wants not only to be an advisory group to Park Management, but also to become involved in initiating projects within the park. The BASC, with its 20 years experience, is willing to help.

The big focus is sustaining the ecological integrity of the parklands with projects that will educate users and attract advocates to jump in and lend a hand. The KHPP is also a haven for Trent University and Fleming College studies, which need to be shared with the A2A Community. It is hoped that a one-day conference can be held next spring featuring Trent/Fleming speakers to highlight their work in the park and A2A region. Together, the KHPP Stewardship Committee and BASC look forward to working with A2A.



U.S. and Canadian Data – “A Marriage of Convenience”

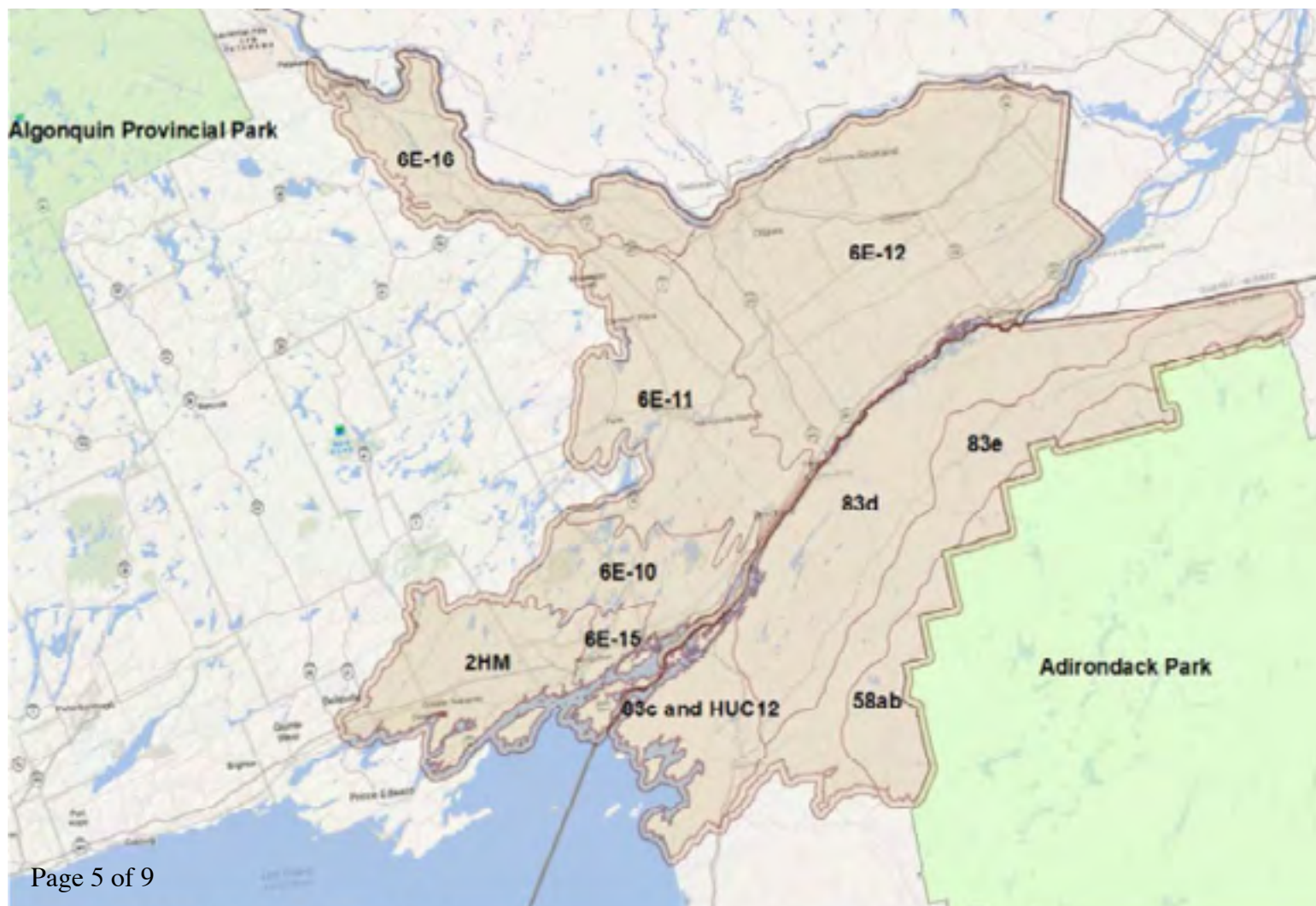
Since our first collaborative efforts, A2A’s partners have recognized the lack of consistent mapping between Ontario and New York sections of the A2A region, and indicated that marrying the datasets and producing maps from them was of the highest priority.

In response, A2A completed a comprehensive mapping project to identify the best potential habitat connections between existing core conservation lands in Adirondack Park in New York State and Algonquin Park in Ontario. These lands provide important habitat for large mammals, migratory birds and other organisms moving between these two large conservation areas. The goal of this mapping project was, through this identification of connected lands, to collect mapping data and information that will support stewardship activities, land use planning, and conservation efforts by planning authorities, conservation groups, community organizations and

residents in the A2A region.

The A2A Science Committee contracted this project with the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, identified the data needed for this project, collected the data and organized it for the A2A Collaborative’s future use. NHIC and A2A worked closely to delineate the study area, and NHIC conducted the analysis to identify the highest priority areas for species moving through the A2A region.

We are grateful to the McLean Foundation for the funding to carry out this work. The results of the mapping have helped to further the A2A Collaborative’s mission, and have taken the work of this organization to a whole new level. We will be seeking additional funding to communicate the results of the project to a wide audience through distribution of the dataset, workshops and presentations.



By Cameron Smith

As the climate changes, it's going to become increasingly important for wildlife to be able to move to new areas, not only for the health of the creatures moving, but for ensuring that genetic diversity is maintained for each species. For the A2A Collaborative, this means there will have to be ways for wildlife to safely cross Highway 401 between Gananoque and Brockville Ontario, because it's this stretch of highway that forms a formidable barrier for wildlife reaching the St. Lawrence River, allowing animals to cross to and fro on the "stepping stones" of the Thousand Islands.

As a first step in creating eco-passages, A2A is developing recommendations for safely getting species at risk turtles and snakes across the highway, which we're doing with a \$73,000 grant received from Ontario's Ministry of Natural Resources. The grant is for two years. A2A's field researchers have spent this past summer and fall walking the 50-kilometre length of the

highway shoulders to identify where the snakes and turtles are congregating and trying to cross.

A2A researchers will do the same next year, and then identify which of the more than 60 culverts crossing under the 401 can serve as safe passageways. We will then recommend the alterations that will have to be made to the culverts, the remedial work that will be needed for adjacent habitat, and the fencing and other infrastructure that will have to be installed to keep turtles and snakes off the highway and directed to the culverts.

Officials in the Ontario Ministry of Transport have expressed a keen interest in the project and have been most helpful, which bodes well for eventually implementing successful passageways. Next on the horizon will be determining what can be done to help mammals cross the highway.



Eastern Milk Snakes (Species at Risk-Special Concern) found beside Highway 401 between Gananoque and Brockville by field researchers Rory Tanner and Clayton Shearer.

Summer Interns from Brazil Connect with A2A

By Lilith Wyatt, Coordinator for the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative.

Victor Limeira and Eneas Filho are senior students at the University of Toronto, on exchange from Brazil with the Ciência sem Fronteiras (CsF), or Science Without Borders, program. The A2A Collaborative was lucky to have them join us as interns from June to August 2014.

“I really want to learn how large conservation projects happen in North America,” said Eneas, when he began his internship, “I hope I can take lessons with me back to Brazil and help to protect our landscapes.”

Eneas took on the challenge of researching how to best share the GIS connectivity mapping data with our partners and beyond. *You can read more about the mapping project, which wrapped up in June, above/below.*

“The goal of the project was to create a comprehensive shared set of conservation priorities to support land conservation, stewardship activities, land use planning, and other conservation efforts,” says Sarah Walsh, chair of the A2A Science Committee, “Clear communication and easy-to-use maps are essential for this project to have an impact.”

Eneas connected with A2A partners and other groups who have created good maps and tools with GIS data to learn about options. He has now proposed a plan for creating the right maps and sharing them. Fundraising efforts are now underway to put that plan in motion.

“It was important to get a real [North American] experience, and to see how this work is done outside of Brazil. I met amazing professionals who are so passionate about conservation and preservation, and I can now see a little bit of how important it is to protect the environment here.”

Our second intern, Victor, also worked with the

Science Committee, but focused his database skills on building an A2A research database.

“To support conservation planning and resource capacity building in the A2A region, we are developing a database of research papers, white-papers, management ‘grey literature’, and other documents relevant to the region,” says Dr. Tom Langen, A2A Board member, Science Committee member, and professor at Clarkson University.

Victor finished a prototype by the end of the summer and is excited to join A2A again in January as a volunteer to help populate the database with resources. This hub will help provide our partners with an evidence base of western science, aboriginal traditional knowledge, and community knowledge to inform conservation work in the A2A region. *If you have any pertinent resources please send them to us by December 19, 2014.*

“It was wonderful to have Eneas and Victor on board! Even though they worked from Toronto, we were regularly in touch by email, phone, and Skype, and they were an important part of the A2A team,” says Lilith Wyatt, A2A Coordinator, “Their summer work helped us to hit the ground running with projects this fall. We are so grateful to them.”



Eneas Filho

A HOLIDAY GIFT FOR WILDLIFE

Wildlife in the A2A region needs your help.

The A2A Collaborative has been successful in getting partial funding for projects like the 401 eco-passageways, indigenous engagement, and our bi-national mapping project for land use planners and conservation groups to effectively protect habitat and movement areas. Now we need funding to build the eco-passageways, learn and share how to effectively work cross-culturally with indigenous peoples, and help mapping recipients learn to use this tool most effectively to save native plants and animals' homes.

Please consider making a holiday gift to help A2A complete these projects for wildlife. A2A keeps its overhead low so that your gifts go further.

I'm sending my holiday donation for wildlife of
\$200 _____ \$150 _____ \$100 _____ \$50 _____ Other
_____.

Please send your cheque to A2A Collaborative:
19 Reynolds Road, R.R. 1, Lansdowne, ON K0E 1L0 in Canada or
P.O. Box 1, Wellesley Island, NY 13640 in the U.S.A.

Donate online using PayPal at www.a2alink.org/support-us-with-a-donation.html
Tax receipts will be issued for Canadian donations.



Just a few words in your will...
create a legacy to save wildlife in the A2A region.

For information about making a gift in your will please contact:
Lilith Wyatt, A2A Coordinator, t. (613)659-4824, e. coordinator@a2alink.org

**For those of you who have not yet renewed for 2015,
we are including a membership form...**



Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative
2015 Membership Form

***Facilitating a network of partners to connect lands and people
across the Algonquin to Adirondacks region,
a critical link for biodiversity and resilience
in eastern North America***

To renew your membership online, please visit:

<http://www.a2alink.org/join-a2a.html>

To renew by mail, please send this form and a cheque to:

19 Reynolds Road, Lansdowne, ON, K0E 1L0 in Canada
or P.O. Box 1, Wellesley Island, NY, 13640 in the U.S.

Cost: \$25.00 per year

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Affiliation: _____ Website: _____

I would like to receive information from A2A including newsletters and notices of
upcoming events: by e-mail by regular 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 \$_____ *Charitable receipts issued for Canada.

I would you like to volunteer for A2A! I have the following talents/interests that might
be helpful to the A2A effort: _____

Comments: _____