

A2A COLLABORATIVE INAUGURAL PARTNER MEETING

A2A will begin its life as a true Collaborative on March 29 and 30th, when it conducts its Inaugural Partner Meeting, a chance for our increasingly large number of Partners to begin to work together through A2A for conservation of this amazing region. Who are these Partners?

They are organizations from hundreds of kilometers apart—all the way from St. Lawrence, Lewis and Jefferson Counties in New York to Prince Edward and Hastings Counties to the west, to Lanark and Renfrew to the north, and to Frontenac, Leeds and Grenville near the St. Lawrence -- in other words, most of the A2A Region!

They are organizations that have decided that working together can increase their effectiveness and help them with specifics such as outreach. A2A partners represent land trusts, field naturalists, federal and provincial ministries in Canada, conservation authorities, stewardship organizations, wildlife oriented groups, and groups with an interest in conservation of particular water bodies, such as cottager's groups, for a total of 21 groups as of this writing. To learn more about them, please go to Partners on our website a2alink.org

In addition to partners, we have also invited groups to the meeting which play an important role in the landscape, but who haven't yet formally joined.

At the meeting we will be asking each representative to identify their organization's projects or programs where other partners or A2A as a whole could help. Reps will also be asked to come to a consensus about projects of a broader nature that would be done on a larger regional or international basis that fit A2A's mandate. And finally they will be asked to ratify A2A's Draft Mission and Vision statements (see below) and as much of the Draft Strategic Plan as possible, which has been circulated in advance to them.

In setting up this Inaugural Partner Meeting, A2A is extremely lucky to have had the help of Dr. Nicole Klenk of the University of Toronto. As a researcher she is interested in learning more about cross-border environmental work and governance. She has brought funding to allow partnering groups to attend. She will conduct a focus group to allow the Collaborative to work on Climate Change as a cross-border issue as part of the meeting.

A2A Vision: An A2A region comprising a resilient, ecologically interconnected landscape that sustains a full range of native wildlife and enhances people's quality of life for generations to come.

Through attainment of this vision, the landscape will:

- Support a rich mosaic of interconnecting wildlife habitats
- Sustain ecological integrity
- Strengthen native biological diversity
- Provide resilience to climate change impacts
- Function as a critical link in conserving native biodiversity in eastern North America
- Inspire an increasingly strong stewardship ethic and sense of “home place” among residents of the A2A Region

A2A Mission: To conserve and restore the A2A region to realize the A2A Vision.

A2A aims to achieve this mission by:

- collaborating with our partners at bi-national, national, regional and local levels to develop strategic and site-specific initiatives
- establishing a strong scientific understanding of the A2A region
- providing partners with leading edge science-based knowledge to guide planning and stewardship action across the A2A region
- supporting grassroots and on-the-ground efforts that help implement our Vision and Mission
- promoting ecologically sustainable land use
- engaging in public outreach and education
- fostering a sense of pride and home-place among the residents of the A2A region