



SAVE THE LAND YOU LOVE



Annual Report

July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009



# OLTA VISION STATEMENT

A strong and successful land trust movement that encompasses organizations protecting wilderness, agricultural and other lands, water and facilities that have a natural, cultural or heritage significance to communities throughout Ontario.

## BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### *Executive*

April Wepler	Chair	Mark Carabetta
Wendy Cooper	Vice-Chair	Peter Carson
Joe McCalmont	Treasurer	Tanna Elliott
Christopher Baines	Past – Chair, Chair, Member Services Committee	Katie Goldberg-Zwick
Dann Michols	Secretary	Lisa McLaughlin
Jo-Anne Rzadki	Chair, External Relations Committee	Lionel Normand
		Erica Thompson

## STAFF

Kathy Allan, Executive Director  
Phyllis Lee, Member Services Coordinator  
Jean Labrecque, Bookkeeper



THANK-YOU TO OUR PARTNERS FOR THEIR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR ALLIANCE:



Environment  
Canada

Environnement  
Canada



The EJLB Foundation

The Helen McCrea Peacock Foundation  
at the Toronto Community Foundation

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

APRIL WEPPLER AND KATHY ALLAN

This past year has been filled with challenges and opportunities for you as land trusts and for your Alliance.

This annual report talks about the many programs and initiatives that OLTA has been working on with you and for you. Together we are working towards our collective vision of a successful land trust movement.

We have articulated powerful reasons **WHY** we need to save land. In addition to the known threats to biodiversity, we can demonstrate the connections between land conservation and food security, clean air and healthy children.

We have clear standards and practices that show us **HOW** to save the land – just ask any of the dozen land trust that have completed the Assessing Your Organization program; and read about the new resources being developed by you as part of the new Best Practices Working Group.

With help from the Ministry of Natural Resources, we will soon have a parcel fabric level map of **WHERE** all conservation lands are today – a first step to clearly articulating the challenge that lies ahead.

**WHO** is involved in saving our land? By working together with each other and with partners, land trusts across the province are making great strides in conservation. You each make a unique contribution to your Alliance that when combined, results in greater influence and impact across the province.

**WHEN** will our job be done? If there is one truth in conservation, it is that we are never “done”. We can take great pride in the work we have accomplished and the differences we have made, and seek inspiration from them to continue to protect Ontario’s land legacy.

## OUR MEMBERS

Algoma Highlands Conservancy  
The Bruce Trail Conservancy  
Canada South Land Trust  
Couchiching Conservancy  
Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy Inc.  
Georgian Bay Land Trust  
Haliburton Highlands Land Trust  
Hamilton Head-of-the-Lake Land Trust  
Hastings Prince Edward Land Trust  
Kawartha Heritage Conservancy  
The Kensington Conservancy  
Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation  
Lake Clear Conservancy Inc.  
Lake Superior Conservancy and Watershed Council  
Lambton Wildlife Incorporated  
Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington  
Land Preservation Society of the Ottawa Valley\*

Lone Pine Marsh Sanctuary Inc.  
Long Point Basin Land Trust  
Lower Grand River Land Trust  
Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy  
The Muskoka Heritage Trust  
Northumberland Land Trust  
Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust  
Ontario Farmland Trust  
Ontario Nature  
Otonabee Region Conservation Foundation  
Rainy Lake Conservancy  
Thames Talbot Land Trust  
Thickson’s Woods Heritage Foundation  
Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust  
Thunder Bay Field Naturalists  
Valleys 2000 (Bowmanville Inc.)  
\* members with inactive land securement programs

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Conservation Ontario  
Ducks Unlimited  
Ontario Heritage Trust  
Nature Conservancy of Canada – Ontario Region  
Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority  
Essex Region Conservation Authority  
Hamilton Conservation Authority  
South Nation Conservation Authority  
Lower Trent Conservation Authority  
Credit Valley Conservation Authority

Conservation agreements are restrictions on title negotiated between a landowner and a conservation organization. They allow for creative conservation arrangements to be made that will endure beyond the current owner's tenure on the land.



## OLTA MEMBER SERVICES

CHAIR, CHRIS BAINES

Phyllis Lee, our new Member Services Coordinator, joined OLTA in August and plunged in to organizing the Gathering, started building our first member database and is providing staff support to member communications and our new Best Practices Working group. Thanks for a great first year Phyllis!

OLTA conservation group membership has grown from 32 to 51 in the first five years of the Alliance; with member fees over \$30,000 making a significant contribution to the operations of the alliance.

New members include **Lone Pine Marsh Sanctuary Inc.** (congratulations on securing your first property, the 124 acre Cold Creek), **Lake of Bays Heritage Foundation** (only land trust to salvage a boat; they also completed the first heritage building inventory and steward multiple natural heritage properties!) and **Otonabee Region Foundation** (kudos on excellent stewardship costing on the Leidra-Ardiel donated property valued at \$500,000).



*Pictured L to R – April Weppler, OLTA Board Chair, Ron Reid, Executive Director, Gayle Carlyle, Kyra Howes, Isabelle Thiess, Jane Ball, all Couchiching Conservancy of Orillia.*

As OLTA grows bigger, we are getting better too. This year, the OLTA Board of Governors introduced a new program to recognize excellence in leaders and land trusts across the province. In recognition of the enormous passion and dedication of the land trust movement, **OLTA's Community Engagement Award** recognized the extraordinary achievements of **Couchiching Conservancy**.

Couchiching has taken a challenge – being in a smaller community with more finite resources and fewer larger funders, and turned it into an opportunity in connecting so broadly and at such an intimate level.

*The Rainy Lake Conservancy Board of Directors at June 2009 AYO (incoming OLTA Executive Director Ian Macnab on far left)*



**OLTA'S Vision Award** is given to an individual or organization who has displayed extraordinary vision and exemplary leadership. The first award recipient is ahead of the curve in identifying challenges and opportunities, and works hard to develop solutions. **Our first OLTA Vision Award recipient Stew Hilts** was also the first Chair of the Ontario Land Trust Alliance and "wrote the book" on land trusts, *Creative Conservation*. Stew is a Professor at the University of Guelph, where he is also the Director of the Centre for Land and Water Stewardship. Most recently, Stew has been working to save Ontario's best places to grow food as Chair of Ontario Farmland Trust.



*Pictured L to R – Melissa Watkins, Executive Director, Ontario Farmland Trust, April Weppler, OLTA Board Chair, Stew Hilts*

### Assessing Your Organization (AYO) Program

With support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the AYO program is assisting every land trust in Ontario to assess their current competence in meeting the Canadian Land Trust Standards and Practices. One third of all land trusts have now completed their assessment. Be sure to ask them how the AYO program has helped their land trust. Congratulations to:

- Thousand Islands Watershed Conservancy
- Couchiching Conservancy
- Haliburton Highlands Land Trust
- The Muskoka Heritage Trust
- Canada South Land Trust
- The Kensington Conservancy
- Head-of-the-Lake Land Trust
- Northumberland Land Trust
- Ontario Farmland Trust
- Land Conservancy for Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington
- Rainy Lake Conservancy
- Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust Conservancy

## Best Practices Working Group

BARB HEIDENREICH, CO-CHAIR STANDARDS 8-12  
CHRIS BAINES, CO-CHAIR STANDARDS 1-7

This interactive committee is charged with providing examples of best practices that specifically pertain to each of the standards and practices. This is accomplished by utilizing state-of-the-art interactive websites and technology to consult broadly across the province with members, stakeholders and experts. With your input to set priorities and expertise to review each tool and template, resources will be helpful and applicable to all, from small, mid-sized to large land trusts.

## Fall Gathering

The 2008 Conference was co-hosted by Carolinian Canada Coalition (CCC) and OLTA in London, Ontario in October 2008.

Minister of Natural Resources Donna Cansfield opened the three day conference followed by Dr. Dr. John Howard's keynote address "Ecosystem Health - Balancing Health Care with Land Care."

Ontario Trillium Foundation board member Donna Passmore received thanks from OLTA, CCC and many of the land trusts themselves who have received generous support for conserving land across Ontario.



*Pictured L to R - Sheila Simpson, OTF Staff, April Weppler, OLTA Board Chair, Donna Passmore, OTF Board Member, Dr. Gordon Nelson, CCC Board Chair.*

And many thanks to our sector experts for donating their time and expertise to one on one meetings with land trust staff and volunteers.

- Jack Miller - Land Appraisals
- Karen Cooper - Charity Tax Issues
- Ian Attridge - Conservation Easement Agreements
- Robert Orland - Land Acquisition
- April Weppler - Land Stewardship
- Barbara Heidenreich - Land Securement
- David Love - Fundraising
- Dawn Laing - Ecological Gifts Program
- Wendy Cooper - Growing a Land Trust

Another first at the Gathering were the five Regional Forums of Land Between and North, Grey Bruce Escarpment, Oak Ridges GTA, Carolinian Canada and Eastern Ontario. Each region met to discuss the unique challenges they face and discuss possible collaborations for efficiency and excellence in their region.



*April Weppler, OLTA Board Chair (far right) thanks Ministry of Natural Resources Minister Donna Cansfield (second from right) and MNR staff at Partners for Protection Conference 2008.*



*Haliburton Highlands Land Trust volunteers on Norah's Island, newly secured 22 acre wilderness island*



*Minister of Natural Resources Donna Cansfield with volunteers and staff at Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust AGM 2009 at Alan and Anne Wells farm*

# ONTARIO LAND TRUST ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

CHAIR, ANGUS MCLEOD

Our thanks to Dawn Laing and Andrea Kettle of Environment Canada who serve on the OLTAP committee. Since 2003, Environment Canada has contributed \$67,000 to the program. Also, Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program has committed \$58,000 to OLTAP next year.

## 18 individuals/families donated over 1,300 acres of land to Ontario land trusts last year!

"Norah's Island" is a 22-acre island donated to **Haliburton Highlands Land Trust** by Bruce Carruthers to honour his late wife's wish for the island to remain in wilderness in perpetuity.

**Thunder Bay Field Naturalists** secured a small island in February 2008, the "Gordon and Elizabeth McLaren Memorial Hare Island Nature Reserve". Gordon McLaren was one of the original founding members of TBFN back in 1933. The couple were both active in the club for many years and were bird watchers, hikers and generally loved the outdoors.

The McTavish Tract, 46 wooded acres near Shakespeare, cared for by generations of the McTavish family, was donated to the **Thames Talbot Land Trust** in June of 2008. The property includes a variety of habitats such as a mature upland hardwood forest, a cedar swamp and a spruce plantation and features a spring-fed stream that is a tributary of the Avon River one of the sources of the Thames. The McTavish Tract will remain as a testament to the foresight and land ethic of one of our founding families.

The **Bruce Trail Conservancy** secured the 62-acre Bull Homestead property located just north of Warton on the Bruce Peninsula. Acquisition of Bull Homestead secures 305 m of Bruce Trail Optimum Route along the Niagara Escarpment.

# OLTA EXTERNAL RELATIONS

CHAIR, JO-ANNE RZADKI

## Communications and External Relations Program

Our sincere thanks to EJLB Foundation, and Helen McCrea Peacock Foundation at the Toronto Community Foundation for their continuing support to heighten the profile of local land trusts and their important work.

Thanks to Minister Donna Cansfield of the Ministry of Natural Resources for inspiring members with her remarks at our annual Gathering and deepening the relationships with landowners and donors by attending Oak Ridges Moraine Land Trust and The Bruce Trail Conservancy special land securement events.

Additional thanks to Ministry of Natural Resources as a major partner on the OLTAP program and MNR field office staff who give generously of their time and expertise to land trust across the province.

## Government Relations Working Group

CHAIR, IAN ATTRIDGE

The Government Relations working group met with the provincial registrar of titles this past year to discuss streamlining and making consistent the land registration processes for conservation agreements across the province. While discussions are ongoing, we discussed how best to ensure that our land trust best practice of linking the agreement to the baseline documentation report can be achieved.

The Conservation easement agreement template was completed and circulated at Gathering 2008 to all members - another tool to assist members to achieve best practices in their land securement programs.

As well, the Ministry of Natural Resources has now granted OLTA and its members access to the provincial parcel fabric database, allowing us to see property boundaries in GIS.

## OLTAP-MNR has made over half a million dollars in grants to secure 7,761 acres of conservation lands valued at \$21 million!

Agency Holding Title	Natural Area	Securement Method	Area Secured (acres)	Appraised Value	OLTAP Contribution
2005-2006					
11 Land Trusts	26 Properties	16 Donations	3,104	\$4,643,901	\$132,986
2006-2007					
9 Land Trusts	12 Properties	11 Donations	695	\$5,726,800	\$96,491
2007-2008					
9 Land Trusts	22 Properties	18 Donations	1,344	\$3,923,275	\$175,512
2008-2009					
12 Land Trusts	21 properties	12 donations	2,619	\$6,998,300	\$171,228
GRAND TOTAL ALL TIME					
	81 PROPERTIES	57 DONATIONS	7,761	\$21,292,276	\$576,218



Land trusts help to link public and private stewardship for ecosystem recovery. As registered charities, they receive donated or purchased lands and conservation agreements in important natural, cultural and agricultural areas. These organizations work to achieve a healthy balance between development and conservation in their communities, improving the quality of life in rural and urban areas by preserving natural and cultural heritage.

## Finance Report

JOE MCCALMONT, TREASURER

For the third year, thanks go out to the professional assistance provided by our bookkeeper Jean Labrecque.

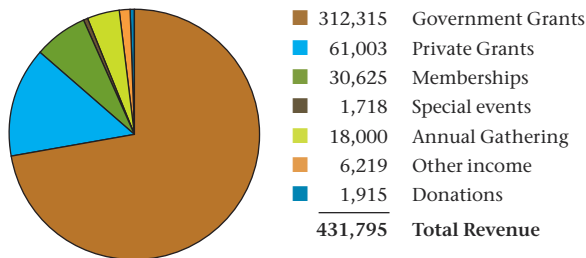
OLTA revenues reached an all time high this year with a three year \$300,800 Organizational Assessment grant approved at the start of the year and a \$337,800 Stewardship Fund grant in the last quarter, both thanks to the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Also climbing to an all-time high are OLTAP grants to members,

from \$142,500 this year to \$240,000 next year. The annual Gathering now includes staff time as an expense and is on track to achieve breakeven in the next few years. Although private grants also increased, limited staff capacity led to some of these projects being deferred.

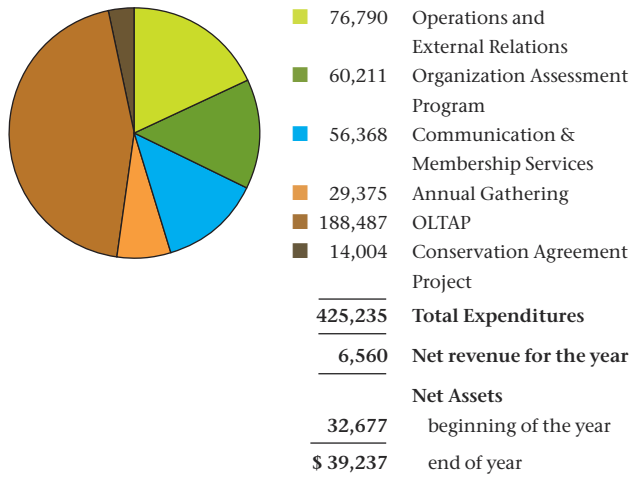
We look forward to next year with over 90% of revenue committed or in hand. All in all, I can report to you that your Ontario Land Trust Alliance is in excellent financial condition.

### 2007-2008

#### Revenue

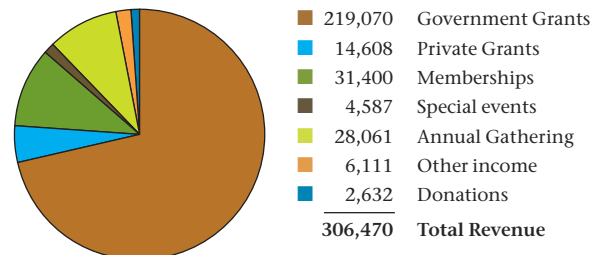


#### Expenditures

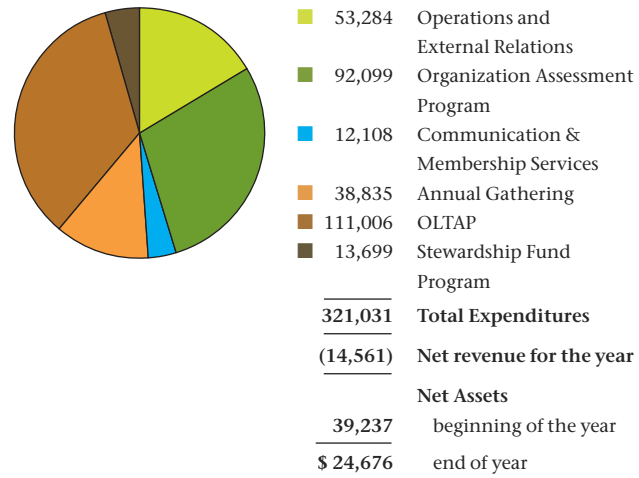


### 2008-2009

#### Revenue



#### Expenditures



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## OLTA BOARD OF GOVERNORS

Katie Goldberg-Zwick	2002-2005, 2006-2009
Christopher Baines	2003-2006, 2006-2009
Jo-Anne Rdazki	2003-2006, 2006-2009
April Wepler	2004-2007, 2007-2010
Lisa McLaughlin	2005-2008
Lionel Normand	2006-2009
Wendy Cooper	2007-2010
Dann Michols	2007-2010
Duncan Jones	2007-2008
Joe McCalmont	2008-2011
Peter Carson	2008-2011
Mark Carabetta	2008-2011
Tanna Elliott	2008-2009
Erica Thompson	2008-2009

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