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Ceremony honours Linfield Wildlife Area land donation

Water and soil resources and wildlife habitat will be preserved and future generations will have additional nature appreciation opportunities, thanks to a land donation from the family of the late Bill Linfield.

A dedication ceremony, to recognize the family's bequest to the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation, was held on Saturday, July 18 at the site of the donated property, which will be home to Linfield Wildlife Area.

Present at the land dedication ceremony were Bill's wife Linda and their children Leslie and Hayley as well as other family members.

Bill Linfield was an elementary school principal and a former Chair of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation. He passed away on February 25, 2008 but, before his death, he and his wife Linda talked about donating the land for the benefit of future generations.

The Linfield Wildlife Area is a fitting testament to someone who was a dedicated conservationist during his



Brent Linfield and Ted Jones (in foreground) were among those who attended the Dedication Ceremony in July for Linfield Wildlife Area. The property was made possible through a generous bequest from the late Bill Linfield and family.

lifetime, according to representatives from the Foundation and the ABCA.

Linfield Wildlife Area is located west of the Pavillion Road and Goshen Line intersection, southwest of Varna and north of Zurich. The donated property is about 95 acres in size, including 70 acres of active farm land and 25 acres of natural areas. The ABCA intends to develop additional windbreaks, grassed waterways and tree planting in the coming years.

The Linfield Wildlife Area name

recognizes the two generations of Linfield family stewardship at the property including the work of Bill and Linda and family and Bill's father, Allin.

Several local families have recently left a local legacy through donations of funds and/or lands in ecologically important areas. Land donations are considered as part of the ABCA's Land Securement Plan. For more information visit abca.on.ca or phone 519-235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

New funding available for farm windbreaks

A new round of funding is available for environmental improvement projects through the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program (COFSP).



The recently-announced funding will support farmers' continuing efforts to complete positive, voluntary environmental stewardship projects, including planting treed windbreaks and watercourse buffers.

In some areas, additional funding may be available from other programs, to recover up to 70 or even 100 per cent of project costs.

For information on tree planting services and funding, visit abca.on.ca or call Ian Jean, ABCA Forestry and Land Stewardship Specialist, at 519-235-2610 or 1-888-286-2610.

To be eligible for the COFSP funding, farmers must complete a voluntary Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) for their farm business. Workshops are held locally by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA). Farmers may call their local OSCIA field representative for information.

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Ontario provides \$839,140 for stewardship in region

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE) announced earlier this year that it is providing \$839,140 in additional funding for voluntary stewardship projects by property owners near municipal wells and intakes to protect drinking water sources in the Ausable Bayfield and Maitland Valley watersheds.

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority and Maitland Valley Conservation Authority jointly announced in Atwood at the end of April the new grant approval from the Province of Ontario through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program (ODWSP).

The conservation authorities also announced that \$155,999 in 2008 ODWSP funding in the region has now been completely committed to projects adding extra barriers of protection to municipal drinking water sources.

John Wilkinson, MPP, Perth-Wellington, attended the event, held in the Maitland Valley watershed, where some eligible Atwood-area property owners were applying to replace septic systems with municipal hook-ups.

“Our government believes that rural Ontarians are the very best stewards of our precious clean water resources,” stated Wilkinson. “This new funding helps residents who want to do the



Shown in photo at funding announcement in Atwood on Apr. 25 are (left to right): Karen Galbraith, Source Protection Committee member, public-at-large; John Wilkinson, MPP, Perth-Wellington; Alison Lobb, Chair, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority; Bob Norris, Director, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority; Julie Behrns, Warden, Perth County; Larry Brown, Chair, Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Drinking Water Source Protection Committee (SPC); Mary McIntosh, Field Representative (Perth), Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA); Joe Vermunt, Regional Director, Ontario Federation of Agriculture.

right thing for themselves and their neighbours. It’s exciting to see that all the previous funds from this program are now committed in the region to practical projects that protect our drinking water sources.”

The ODWSP is delivered in the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Region by the ABCA, the MVCA and the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA).

The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program, created under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, provides financial assistance for owners of homes,

farms, businesses and other properties in vulnerable areas to decommission or upgrade wells; inspect or upgrade septic; review pollution prevention practices at their businesses; create runoff and erosion protection.

For information on stewardship program eligibility and funding contact Derek Matheson, Source Protection Technician, at MVCA at **519-335-3557** or Kate Monk, Stewardship and Conservation Lands Supervisor at ABCA at **519-235-2610** or **1-888-286-2610**. OSCIA contact information is posted on sourceprotectionstewardship.on.ca

Ontario provides funding to help protect species at risk

The Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) has received \$17,275 in funding from the Province of Ontario to help protect species at risk, thanks to funding announced on July 7, 2009.

This year, Ontario is granting more than \$4 million to 118 projects to protect species at risk and their habitat through the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund.

Stewardship projects in Huron-Bruce will receive more than \$120,000 from the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund this year to help protect and recover species at risk. As a result, four organizations in Huron Bruce, including the

ABCA, received grants and will be able to protect local species and habitat in Huron and Bruce Counties.

“People in our community care about protecting species at risk,” said Carol Mitchell, MPP Huron-Bruce. “This grant will help protect Ontario’s biodiversity while preserving the species and their natural habitat.”

“The funding allows landowners to act not only at the larger watershed scale but at a local scale where they can make the biggest difference,” said Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Coordinator, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority.



Present for the \$17,275 announcement on Thursday, July 2, of funding support, from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, for projects to protect species at risk were (left to right): Lawrence McLachlan, Chair, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA) Board of Directors; Ken Oke, Mayor, Municipality of South Huron; Carol Mitchell, MPP, Huron-Bruce; Dave Frayne, ABCA Board of Directors member (representing municipalities of South Huron and Perth South); Mark Simpson, ABCA Board of Directors member (representing municipalities of Lambton Shores and Warwick).

Bayfield North Watersheds Plan unveiled

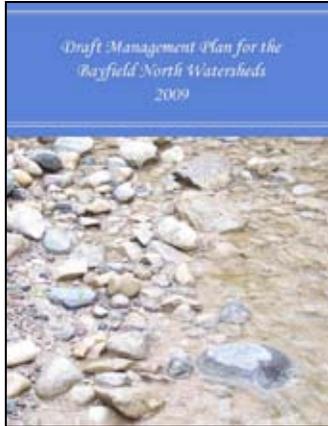
The local watershed community has been actively involved since December of 2007 in preparing a plan to protect Lake Huron through positive actions in an area between Bayfield and Goderich.

Information about how your property fits into the watershed plan is available to landowners.

The committee and the community have prepared the local watershed plan with public input through a series of well-attended public open houses.

This community-led watershed plan is an Environment Canada and Ontario Ministry of the Environment initiative with staff support from the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA). The plan, to protect and enhance the area north of Bayfield, will include:

1) A characterization of the watersheds for an area between Bayfield



and Goderich, and; 2) A section for management options identified by the community.

“It is important to remember that all actions to improve water quality start with the individual,” said Jim Ginn, a committee member. “If people need help developing a property plan, this assistance exists. Once the property plan is developed, we can all work on our projects as time and money allow.”

The local committee has created a series of information features highlighting the work of local residents who are helping to protect and enhance the water quality in the area. The series, ‘People like you, planning for a better lake’ was published in July.

The Bayfield North Watersheds Plan committee was scheduled to unveil the plan at an open house at Bayfield



Town Hall on **Thursday, July 23, 2009.** The open house was scheduled to run from 5 – 9 p.m., with presentations at 5:30 p.m. or 7:30 p.m.



For more information on the the Bayfield North Watersheds Plan phone **519-235-2610** or **1-888-286-2610**, and ask to speak to Hope Brock, or e-mail **hbrock@abca.on.ca**

Conservation Dinner to take place April 15, 2010

The date for the 21st annual Conservation Dinner has been set: **Thursday, April 15, 2010.** For information visit **abca.on.ca** or **conservationdinner.com**

The 20th Anniversary Conservation Dinner in 2009 was a big success thanks to donors, patrons and volunteers. The watershed community showed great generosity in difficult times; raising an estimated \$45,000 for conservation. It was the second highest total in the dinner’s two-decade history.

One of the highlights of the evening was the live-auction bidding on the round-trip, Silver-and-Blue Class dream getaway luxury trip for two from Toronto to Vancouver, courtesy of VIA Rail Canada.

Special guests at the evening were John A. MacNaughton and his wife Gail. John A. MacNaughton is a noted Canadian business leader, native of South Huron and Order of Canada recipient. “In many ways the park and the trail you have created, indeed the conservation authority as well, speak volumes about the community,” he said. “These treasures have been passed from one generation of caring stewards to the next – each enhancing what was given to them.” The Conservation Dinner Committee consists of volunteers from the watershed community, the Exeter Lions Club, the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Foundation and the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority. The dinner supports accessible trails, commemorative woods, fish stocking and conservation education for children in Ausable Bayfield watersheds.



Shown at successful dinner are: Tom Prout, GM, ABCA; auctioneer Norm Whiting; director Bob Norris; Exeter Lions Club volunteer Chris Arnold; committee member Fred Dobbs and auctioneer Ben Lobb. Bidding was exciting for the VIA Rail Canada Toronto to Vancouver Silver-and-Blue Class Round Trip for Two.



Exeter Lions/Conservation Dinner Committee member George Godbolt; Chair Bob Gehan; special guests Gail and John A. MacNaughton and feature artist Bill Nieuwland are shown at this year’s dinner.

Four wetlands restored in program's first year

Conservation partners in Middlesex and Huron Counties announced in 2009 the successful restoration of four wetlands in the first year of a three-year wetlands protection and restoration program, thanks to a \$225,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF).

Over the next two years, funding will be used to protect and enhance six hectares of wetland area each year within Middlesex and Huron Counties, according to Angela Van Niekerk, Wetland Specialist for the Healthy Headwaters Wetlands Initiative.

"Thanks to the funding commitment, we have more resources and staff involvement focused on providing technical and financial support to landowners to create and enhance wetlands," Van Niekerk said at a tour.

Rural property owners will be able to achieve successful projects to improve the environment while retaining the enjoyment and use of their land, she said. Staff will perform site visits, land surveys and facilitate on-the-ground



Heavy rainfall didn't deter this group of wetland restoration partners from participating in a tour of important local wetlands in Huron and Middlesex Counties in April. They are (back row, left to right): Steve Bowers, Huron Stewardship Council; Don Fairbairn, Middlesex Stewardship Council; Bob Shiell, Middlesex Stewardship Council; Denis Gadwa; Dr. Dev Sainani; Dr. Ted Lo, Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) Thames Valley Grant Review Team; Cale Selby, Middlesex Stewardship Council; and, (front row) Angela Van Niekerk, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA); Darrell Randell, Ducks Unlimited Canada; Cathy Quinlan, Middlesex Stewardship Council and Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

improvements with landowners.

Wetlands are one of the most diverse and productive ecosystems in Ontario. They are nature's reservoir, protecting

water quality and quantity, reducing flooding impacts, and providing habitat for plants, animals and insects (including species at risk) as well as recreation for humans.

Huron learns more about value of local wetlands

Members of the Huron County Water Protection Steering Committee learned about the value of wetlands as nature's reservoir during a visit to two local wetlands on Thursday, June 18.

Participants visited a Payment for Ecological Goods and Services (PEGS) pilot project, a well project and the two wetlands sites.

"Property owners are restoring wetlands in Huron County and that means better water quality and more water quantity, reduced effects of flooding, better habitat for wildlife and plant life, increased groundwater recharge and less soil erosion," said Angela Van Niekerk, Wetlands Specialist with the Healthy Headwaters Wetlands Initiative.

Participants on the bus tour visited two Healthy Headwaters projects, including John Haak's property on Summerhill Road, near the important Hullett Provincial Wetland Complex, and a site behind the Huron County Health Unit in Clinton.

The Healthy Headwaters Wetlands Initiative is a three-year, multi-partner



The Huron County Water Protection Steering Committee saw first-hand how wetlands are being enhanced and restored locally, thanks to the Healthy Headwaters Wetlands Initiative.

wetlands protection and restoration program, made possible thanks to a \$225,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). The Healthy Headwaters project is aiming to protect and enhance six hectares of wetland area each year within Huron and Middlesex counties.

Less than three per cent of Huron County's land base is wetlands, according to the wetlands specialist. A mapping initiative has indicated that 10 to 15 per cent of the area could support wetlands.

The Healthy Headwaters Wetlands Initiative will help protect wetlands through the enhancement of floodplain habitat; creation of wetlands through

small impoundments (areas created by restricting water flowing out of shallow, low-lying areas); livestock exclusion fencing; excavated wetlands (removal of earth to create a water retention area); and the creation of conservation buffers (small areas of permanent vegetation, to control pollutants).

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For more information, please visit trilliumfoundation.org

For more information on enhancing or restoring wetlands on your property contact ABCA at **519-235-2610** or toll-free **1-888-286-2610** or visit abca.on.ca