

**THE OTTAWA FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB BOARD OF DIRECTORS (BOD)  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

**April 22, 2014**

Fletcher Wildlife Garden Interpretation Centre, CEF, Ottawa, 7:00 p.m.

**Chair:** Fenja Brodo

**Directors Present:** Annie Bélair, Dan Brunton, Carolyn Callaghan, Julia Cipriani, Owen Clarkin, Barry Cottam, Don Hackett, Diane Kitching, Lynn Ovenden, Rémy Poulin, Henry Steger, Ken Young, Eleanor Zurbrigg

**Directors Absent:** Barbara Chouinard, Ann MacKenzie, Karen McLachlan Hamilton

**Guest:** Gary Bell, Eastern Ontario Program Director of the Nature Conservancy of Canada

**1. Minutes of the March 17, 2014 Meeting**

**Moved by** A. Bélair/D. Brunton that the March 17<sup>th</sup> minutes be accepted as distributed, with the correction of two typos.

**Carried**

**2. Gervais Property**

As the Eastern Ontario Program Director of the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Gary Bell was in attendance to discuss the purchase of the Gervais Property.

This property on the Ottawa River in Renfrew County was first described to the BOD in January 2014. It was suggested that the OFNC could contribute financially towards the purchase of this 30.2 hectare land as its exceptional karst landscape and regionally, provincially and nationally significant species make it a high conservation priority. The BOD had pointed out that funds from the Violetta Czasak bequest could be used for this. An ad-hoc bequest committee was therefore created to draft a bequest expenditure policy. On April 2, Dan sent the Bequest Proposal Analysis regarding the Gervais Property. (See [Annex 1.](#))

Gary took the opportunity to talk about the OFNC's past contributions to land purchases piloted by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (the Elbow Lake and Wolf Grove properties) and announced that the NCC has finalized its Ottawa Valley Conservation Plan. It is clear that the Gervais Property is an amazing conservation opportunity.

The OFNC directors then had a chance to ask Gary questions about the property and the procedures to acquire it.

- He said that even though there are no definite plans about who will be the caretaker of the property, one option would be to lease it to Ontario Parks; it would then become a provincial nature reserve.
- The appraisal of the land was done by the Appraisal Institute of Canada, following the standards of the Ecological Gift Program.

- The rest of the money needed to buy the property would be acquired through donations. The NCC will not receive more money from the federal government in 2014.
- Gary emphasized that recognizing the large contribution from Violetta Czasak's bequest will not be a problem, and that the OFNC can help with the wording for a plaque.
- The NCC has a stewardship fund. For the Gervais Property, Gary foresees the stewardship needs as regular inspections of the property, invasive species monitoring and management, establishing good relations with the neighbouring property owners and possibly developing trails with signage where appropriate.
- Although the underwater cave system has not been fully mapped out, the NCC estimates that the Gervais Property covers around 50% of the system. Gary and Dan pointed out that the caves actually pass under the Ottawa River and continue on the Québec side.

In light of this discussion and the Bequest Proposal Analysis received by the BOD, Dan tabled the following motion:

**MOTION:** That the OFNC support the initiative led by the Nature Conservancy of Canada to purchase the Gervais Property by contributing the amount of \$200,000 from the bequest of Violetta Czasak.

**Moved by** Dan Brunton/Carolyn Callaghan

**CARRIED**

Gary warmly thanked to OFNC. He also mentioned that there are two other properties in Eastern Ontario the NCC is considering: the last 200 acres of the Alfred Bog which are now for sale and a property on the Plantagenet escarpment with a rich and pristine mature hardwood forest.

Fenja also suggested that the Events Committee consider organizing a trip to the Elbow Lake property for the purchase of which the OFNC has made a substantial donation.

### **3. OspreyCam at Innes Point Bird Observatory (IPBO)**

Rémy announced that the MOU was signed by the chair of the Innes Point Bird Observatory, the camera has been purchased and installed and an osprey pair is indeed occupying the nest. Although there is still work to be done to connect the camera and make sure the feed can be broadcasted online, Rémy is pleased with the progress. The IPBO says that the OspreyCam and its live feed should be available for viewing by next breeding season.

**MOTION:** That the BOD approve the participation of the OFNC in the OspreyCam project as described in the MOU.

**Moved by** Rémy Poulin/Eleanor Zurbrigg

**CARRIED**

**ACTIONS:** Fenja to sign the MOU.

Rémy to inform the IPBO about naming the camera after Laurie Consaul as money from her bequest to the OFNC will be used for the project.

Fenja to contact her husband, Mark Armstrong, to inform him of this.

#### 4. Committee Reports

**a) Awards** – Eleanor Zurbrigg

The 2014 Awards Nights is coming up on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

**b) Birds** – Rémy Poulin

Chris Lewis has resigned from the committee; a new member, Claire Elliot, has joined.

**MOTION:** That the BOD approves the addition of a new member, Claire Elliot, to the Birds Committee.

**Moved by** Rémy Poulin/Dan Brunton

**CARRIED**

**c) Conservation** – Owen Clarkin

- a. At the last BOD meeting, Owen reported that Dave Seburn wrote a mitigation paper on how to reduce turtle mortality rate on Roger Stevens Road in the Marlborough Forest. Dave has since met with CPAWS; the mitigation paper will be sent to the city of Ottawa on behalf of the OFNC and CPAWS.
- b. The Conservation Committee is still discussing the possibility of organizing various bioblitzes.

**d) Events** – Julia Cipriani

- a. Julia reported that as decided at the last BOD meeting, students were hired for an honorarium of \$80 per meeting for the on-site coordination of the OFNC monthly meetings at the Neatby Building.
- b. Before the meeting, there was an email discussion on the issue of waivers for outings. Ken pointed out that it would indeed be worth strengthening the OFNC's waivers but in order to be useful, they need to be read and signed by each participant before the outings. It was suggested that trip leaders could carry a "leader's backpack" containing the waiver forms, a first aid kit and other necessary items for field trips. Training for trip leaders would also be a good idea.

**ACTION:** Julia Cipriani to look into waivers used by other clubs and possibly draft a new waiver for BOD approval.

**e) Publications** – Dan Brunton

- a. The Larose Forest Booklet has been approved by the Publications Committee.
- b. Dan indicated that Biodiversity Heritage Library is scanning all issues of T&L and will post the content online. However, they are missing many issues and Dan asked if anyone had a set they could give away. This question will be posted on the OFNC website and printed in T&L as well.

**f) Education and Publicity** – Lynn Ovenden

- a. See report in [Annex 2](#).
- b. Regarding [item #3](#), sponsoring a local youth to attend Ontario Nature Youth

Summit 2014: The Education and Publicity asked the BOD if they would consider sponsoring two students this year; the two spots would only be filled if two good applications were received. The amount of \$300 that the committee is proposing to give (same as last year) only covers the participation fee; the BOD also suggested adding \$200 to the sponsorship to cover transportation costs.

**MOTION:** That the BOD agrees to sponsor up to two local youths for \$500 each to attend the Ontario Nature Youth Summit 2014.

**Moved by** Lynn Ovenden/Ken Young

**CARRIED**

- c. Regarding [item #5](#), excess inventory of books: Lynn explained that they have added a sticker saying “Compliments of the OFNC” to the *Nature and Natural Areas* books and are now giving them away as a promotional item. Directors asked if some copies would be available for the Ontario Federation of Ornithologist 2014 Convention in Ottawa on September 26-28, 2014; Lynn said yes.

**g) Macoun Club** – Diane Kitching

See report in [Annex 3](#).

**h) Fletcher Wildlife Garden** – Barry Cottam

See report in [Annex 4](#).

**i) Membership** – Henry Steger

- a. Henry announced that since Dave and Verna Smythe have retired from the committee after over 20 years of service, he needs to reconstitute his committee. He will advertise in T&L and on the website to look for help.
- b. He mentioned that the OFNC needs to find volunteers with experience in advertising. This launched a discussion about the possibility of advertising in the *Ottawa Citizen*. The BOD asked the Education and Publicity Committee to contact the newspaper to inquire about advertising in print and online.

**MOTION:** That \$2000 be made available to the Education and Publicity Committee to spend on advertising.

**Moved by:** Ken Young/Julia Cipriani

**CARRIED**

**ACTION:** The Education and Publicity to contact the *Ottawa Citizen* regarding publishing advertisements for the OFNC.

**j) Ontario Nature** – Don Hackett

Don reported that the Eastern Ontario Regional Meeting which was held at the FWG on April 12<sup>th</sup> was a success.

**k) Treasurer** – Ken Young

- a. See report in [Annex 5](#).
- b. **ACTION** regarding [item #5](#), the Shawville Chimney Swift Project: Dan and Ken to forward information on simple structures for chimney swifts to the

project leaders.

**5. Motion to adjourn:**

**Moved by** Lynn Ovenden/Don Hackett that the meeting be  
adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

**CARRIED**

Recording Secretary: A. Bélair

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Meetings in 2014:

Tuesday, May 20 (because of Victoria Day)

Monday, June 16

Tentative dates for fall:

Monday, September 15

Monday, October 20

Monday, November 17

Monday, December 15

## BEQUEST PROPOSAL ANALYSIS SUMMARY

**Project Name: Acquisition of Gervais Property, Westmeath**

**Fund Amount: \$200,000**

### **Brief Description of Project:**

- Highest priority conservation property in the Ottawa Valley representing nationally significant earth and life science features;
- 30 ha landscape of intact, natural woodland with unusually high ecological integrity and unique complex of rare karst landforms;
- supports nationally and provincially designated Species At Risk, regionally significant vegetation and flora and exceptional Specimen Trees.

### **PRINCIPLES**

#### **1. Reflect OFNC Objectives**

- a. Identify which objective(s) and how it promotes
  - fundamental to two objectives:
    - *"to promote the ... preservation and conservation of Canada's natural heritage"*;
    - *"to support and cooperate with organizations engaged in preserving .... environments of high quality for living things"*.

#### **2. Respect Donor**

- a. In keeping with donor instructions, if any
  - no wishes designated but donor was interested in wild landscapes in general and the Ottawa River in particular; Gervais Property addresses both of these.
- b. **Able to acknowledge gift (plaque, naming, etc)**
  - Yes: binding conditions on the deed would require the land owner to acknowledge (through on-site signage) the significant OFNC role in the acquisition/ protection of this property, enabled by the generous bequest to the OFNC by Violetta Czasak.

#### **3. Beneficial**

- a. Contributions to OFNC objectives or operations:
  - will see substantial, self-sustaining area of provincially significant Ottawa Valley natural landscape area (including Earth Science ANSI) protected in perpetuity;
  - will extend important and constructive conservation management relationship with NCC that has achieved important natural values protection in the Ottawa

- Valley (e.g. Alfred Bog) and beyond (e.g. Elbow Lake);
- potential for enhanced cooperation with other Ottawa Valley conservation organizations (e.g. Pembroke Field Naturalists) for stewardship, research, public outreach;
  - will increase profile of OFNC and the importance of conservation of Ottawa River natural areas in the middle and upper Ottawa Valley;
  - provides potential for significant public interpretation of important ecological protection messages;
  - potential research and member education opportunities (e.g. ecological inventory, monitoring).
- b. Measurement of key benefit (how?)
    - periodical confirmation that extent of natural area remains in self-sustaining condition (reporting can be made a condition on the deed);
    - number of users of interpretive messaging (if applicable) can be calculated (remote devices(?) or periodic canvassing).
  - c. Visibility of OFNC
    - on-site signage identifies OFNC as key proponent of site protection and maintenance;
    - will generate significant local (Renfrew County) and regional (Ottawa Valley) media coverage and national profile through NCC promotion.
  - d. Membership – attract new or retain
    - potential to expand presently under-represented middle and upper Ottawa Valley membership.

#### **4. Defensible**

- a. Technically sound (science based where applicable)
  - Yes; significance documented in 2013 natural environment assessment referred to in attached summary; endorsed by Ontario government ecological specialists and through designation as NCC's top Ottawa Valley priority for conservation acquisition.
- b. Long lasting
  - Yes: in perpetuity
- c. Justifiable investment (to membership and authorities)
  - Yes; see all clauses, above; financial estimates determined from 2011 independent appraisal (likely requiring 2014 review).
- d. Substantial (not trivial)
  - Yes; see all clauses, above (especially 'Contribution to OFNC Objectives)

#### **PRIORITY**

HIGH - Exceptional Opportunity - site in under active consideration for severance and sale for rural estates residential development; present ownership has expressed preference for transformation of the property to a protected state.

## **IMPLEMENTATION IMPACTS**

### **1. Financial**

- a. Value for Money
  - OFNC contribution represents 2/3 of purchase cost, to be acquired in partnership with 1/3 contribution by Nature Conservancy of Canada.
- b. Future liability
  - None; property ownership will be transferred to suitable long-term owner determined by NCC led search (provincial nature reserve park?) with binding conservation and protection conditions attached to deed.

### **2. Member Involvement**

Technical expertise in identifying prime protection values, facilitating OFNC participation with partners (especially NCC as logistical lead) for acquisition; commitment for this by Dan Brunton (individually) and Conservation Ctee members, as needed.

- a. Implementation needs
  - technical expertise required to assess and document values to be protected; liaison with NCC and appropriate Renfrew County organizations and individuals.
- b. Future needs
  - Immediate action required - important to ensure firm acquisition commitments secured before presently stalled development initiative recommences.

**Drafted:** D.F. Brunton

**Date:** 26 March 2014

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## Education and Publicity Report – April 22, 2014

1. Ottawa Regional Science Fair April 4-5, 2014. Natalie Sopinka and Kathy Conlan judged and awarded 3 OFNC Special Awards to Aidan Gurung, Shamus McCoy and Emma Kirke.
2. Larose Forest: a naturalist's guide. The booklet is acceptable to Publications Committee as OFNC Special Publication No.4. Two hundred copies will be printed for a cost of approx. \$600, to sell for \$4 each. We plan to make them available for the May 13 and June 10 monthly meetings and at OFNC's events in Larose Forest on June 8 (birding), June 13 (moths) and June 22 (butterflies).
3. Ontario Nature Youth Summit 2014. Will the Board approve sponsoring a local young person to attend the event this year?  
OFNC sponsored Sarah Wray (\$300) to attend Ontario Nature's Youth Summit in September 2013, at Geneva Park on Lake Couchiching. The E&P Committee would like to repeat this offer, namely to advertise the opportunity, collect applications and select a youth to attend the Youth Summit Sept. 19-21 with OFNC support.
4. We have excess inventory of the John Macoun autobiography and *Nature and Natural Areas*. We will discount the Macoun book and use the Nature book as a complimentary promotional item for OFNC. We gave 50 copies to people in Ottawa Bird Count's current Bird Song course.
5. We created a new 3-poster display for use at public events. The FieldNotes blog has a photo of the display at its first showing, an event at Ottawa City Hall about Backyard Biodiversity on April 11.

Lynn Ovenden

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## **MFC Report – April 22, 2014**

Our first activity after March Break was a talk about frogs and toads of the Ottawa area, presented by Dave Seburn. He had good photos, useful information on frog identification, habitat and recorded calls, and he ended his presentation with a quiz to challenge our identification skills by sight and sound – a challenge which was enthusiastically received!

On April 1, we had Part 2 of our rocks and minerals give-away. Rob's focus this time was on graphite, silver and asbestos, and we were shown both the raw materials and examples of different products that are made from them.

On March 29 we had a field trip to Pakenham. There was still a lot of snow, and we all used snowshoes. We saw a Red-shouldered Hawk, but no eagles this time. As a special lunchtime treat, Rob provided maple taffy on snow.

On April 12 we were in the study area. Most of the snow had melted in the places we wanted to explore, and we saw lots of signs of spring, both plant and animal. We thought we might hear frogs, but there was still ice on many of the ponds and we heard only one Wood Frog, tentatively calling, in the late afternoon.

Diane Kitching

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## FWG Report – April 22, 2014

We are beginning to gear up for the new season. On April 6, we held our Spring Fling potluck for our volunteers, an event that is primarily social but also gives the various group coordinators the opportunity to discuss upcoming plans. The main changes in planning are:

- Former BYG manager Jay Ladell is helping with the continuation of the stone path into the east end of the BYG where several plum trees were planted and a dry stream bed created last year.
- The Invasive Species Group is rescheduling from Tuesday to Wednesday mornings. It is a very small group and will likely remain so again this year. The group is hoping to follow through on the decisions made re invasives at the Feb. 17 meeting as well as supporting activities of the Butterfly Meadow group.

Other items:

- The FWG Management Committee (MC) has informed the Board of its acceptance of the OFNC “Future of the FWG” directive.
- The MC is immensely pleased that the President’s Prize is being awarded to Al and Erma Beaulieu.
- Christine Hanrahan has decided not to organize a BioBlitz, so discussions are being had on alternative plans; hopefully these will be put before the committee for a decision very soon.
- We are moving ahead on advertising for a Volunteer Coordinator.
- We are resurrecting the dredging project for the Amphibian Pond. Forms for EC approval are being prepared and planning will proceed if EC decides in favour of the project.
- Jeff Skevington and Sophie Cardinal with one of their graduate students came to our March meeting to outline some projects that they and other entomologists would like to undertake at the FWG should there be sufficient volunteer interest.
- Several tours of the FWG and displays at different locations have been or are being planned, in keeping with our renewed emphasis on being a demonstration garden. For example, a booth was organized for the Backyard Biodiversity event at City Hall on April 11.
- For the past year we have had rotating chairs and while this has worked reasonably well, we are realizing the need for a permanent chair. The MC will be discussing this in the near future. The ranks of the MC would benefit from one or more new members.

- Liaison with the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm (FCEF) continues. For two years now we've had a representative at the FCEF spring and fall team leader meetings. The MC is pleased to welcome the Vice-President of the FCEF, who is joining us this month for a two-year term, restoring a past practice.

Barry Cottam

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## Treasurer's Report – April 22, 2014

### 1. Financial Position

The annual report to the Charities Branch of the Canada Revenue Agency was submitted, and has been accepted. The information is at [www.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebsci/haip/srch/basicsearchresult-eng.action?k=ottawa+field-naturalists'+club](http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/ebsci/haip/srch/basicsearchresult-eng.action?k=ottawa+field-naturalists'+club)

### 2. Insurance

Our insurance coverage has been renewed. We obtain Directors' & Officers coverage, and Commercial General Liability. The cost this year is \$1,702.08 (\$1,652.40 last year). Proof of Insurance certificates have been provided for St. Basil's Church (the Soirée) and AAFC (for the Fletcher Wildlife Garden).

### 3. Violetta Czasak Bequest

Welch LLP has been retained to do the tax accounting for the estate. This is underway.

### 4. T4A returns

They have been prepared for people receiving contract fees from the Club.

### 5. Shawville Chimney Swift Project

I have been in touch with the organizers and have offered our support, up to \$5,000. They have arranged with the local municipality to act as an agent for collecting funds for the project. That means we can donate funds through the municipality, which is a qualified donee.

Unfortunately, the cost of the project exceeds the available funds. As things stand, it does not look like the project will go ahead.

Ken Young,  
Treasurer

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