



ALGOMA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY
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Trails for all seasons

With the turning of another season, it's time to get back in touch and let you know what we've been doing during these past few months.

As usual, we've had a busy summer in which we climbed many hills, crossed many streams, creeks, and rivers, and met, talked, and completed projects, with the help of our invaluable friends, supporters and partners.

Amid all of the projects and hard work, we often had to remind ourselves to "stop and smell the fragrant water lilies" and enjoy the natural splendor and ecological treasures protected by the Algoma Highlands Conservancy (AHC).

As we continue to strengthen our activities in all of our core areas: education, research, conservation and silent-sport recreation, it's important to remember that one of the best ways to experience the Conservancy's protected property is by taking to our trails.

This time of year is especially glorious, however, enjoyment can be found in all four seasons and through a variety of silent-sport recreation activities.

To plan your next visit contact us (pg 5) or visit our website for more information and to support us by making a donation: info@algomahighlandsconservancy.org.

*Photos top to bottom:
Bike trail in summer, Robertson Cliffs trail in fall, Snowshoe trail in winter, and Robertson Cliffs trail in spring.*



C. Ginou



C. Ginou



D. Thompson



C. Ginou

Trail Surveys

During the hot summer days, when Stokely Creek was looking like a great place to swim, AHC staff and students were out walking the trails surveying popular routes for upcoming maintenance work. The goal was to improve current routes for year-round recreational access. With the help of Stokely Creek Lodge and Bob Yankus, some significant work was completed on the Creekside trail, which was originally designed for snowshoers.

To pass on your feedback about trail conditions send us an email at: info@algomahighlandsconservancy.org.

NEW Trailhead

We are pleased to announce that thanks to Mountain Equipment Co-op's Access & Activity Fund, and a partnership with the Voyageur Trail Association, we finally have a trailhead sign welcoming visitors to the popular Robertson Cliffs trail.

The multi-stage project also included blazing a scenic new loop trail that travels along the backside of the cliffs, and creating directional signage for Robertson Lake Road and Highway 17.

The trailhead was officially opened on October 27th, 2012 during the Voyageur Trail Association's Annual General Meeting. The event featured a hike to the Robertson Cliffs, a talk about the AHC's recent accomplishments by Board Member Dean Thompson, and dinner at Stokely Creek Lodge.

Photos:

*Right: New Robertson Cliffs trailhead sign
Top Right: Hikers, Bikers, Thanking our MPP Mike Mantha*

Algoma Highlands Conservancy



2nd annual a success!

Our second annual Bike and Hike Day was a great success thanks to all of the wonderful outdoor enthusiasts and volunteers who joined us on a beautiful sunny Sunday September 16th, 2012.

Hikers participated in advanced and beginner walks, which included rewarding views from King Mountain and Upper Stokely Falls, while mountain bikers challenged our 10km single track route. We had approximately 130 people from babies to grandparents come and explore our forest and relax afterwards for a well-deserved BBQ and a chance to swap trail stories.

We were fortunate to have our MPP Mike Mantha and his wife join us giving us the opportunity to thank him for the provincial support provided to our Environmental Education Program by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.



J. Smart



J. Smart



J. Smart

Leave no trace on the trails

The Algoma Highlands Conservancy is a member of Leave No Trace Canada and asks visitors to practice good backcountry ethics.

- Be prepared
- Stay on the marked trail
- Pack it in, pack it out
- Leave what you find
- No campfires
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors

Protecting rare species

The AHC property is so much more than a great place to enjoy the outdoors – it is also 1200 hectares of conservation forest. This summer AHC staff, students and volunteers embarked on several initiatives to meet the Conservancy's mandate of conservation and furthering knowledge through environmental research.

An ambitious survey of the property confirmed that rare plants, Braun's Holly Fern (*Polystichum braunii*) and Oval-leaved Bilberry (*Vaccinium ovalifolium*) are maintaining populations in protected habitat zones. These species join the rare birds, Canada Warbler (*Wilsonia canadensis*) and Peregrine Falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), which have been identified as using habitat on Conservancy land during their critical breeding periods.

We also joined forces and led a multi-agency, collaborative project involving the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Canadian Forest Service, and local power distribution and transmission companies – Hydro One, Great Lakes Power Transmission and Algoma Power Inc. The project is an initiative to protect Wood Turtles (*Glyptemys insculpta*) and their habitat. The Wood Turtle is the most terrestrial of Ontario's turtles and is listed as Endangered. Data collected throughout the Algoma District this field season is currently being examined and will be used to develop scientifically based risk mitigation and contribute towards the goal's of Ontario's wood turtle recovery strategy.

Acknowledgements also go out to the Canada Summer Jobs program 2012, which allowed the AHC to hire two student Assistant Conservation Technicians to help with our environmental research projects.



S. Waite



J. Cross



M. Briehl

Photos clockwise from top left: Braun's Holly Fern, Wood Turtle and Oval-leaved Bilberry.

Alternative Vegetation Management & OVMA

To support our ongoing efforts in rehabilitation and habitat enhancement, native tree and shrub species, generously donated by Sault College, were planted this summer in key areas within the Conservancy property. This follows on previous successful planting initiatives concentrated in power line rights-of-way located on AHC land.

In September, professionals attending the Ontario Vegetation Management Association's (OVMA) Annual General Meeting, travelled to the AHC property for a guided tour highlighting some of the Conservancy's habitat protection and enhancement work including: demonstration vegetation plots, alternative bio-herbicide trials, and restoration work in the Stokely Creek valley.

The tour was followed by dinner at Stokely Creek Lodge and a virtual tour of the AHC's activities by Board Member, Dean Thompson. The event was a success and the group is expected to make return visits for future annual meetings.

Water monitoring

As stewards of Stokely Creek, the AHC is engaged in ongoing water monitoring of this sensitive freshwater ecosystem. Regular measurements have been taken in order to obtain a record of what temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen and conductivity levels are normal and expected throughout the year.

Sediment traps have also been routinely deployed at strategic areas within the creek in order to monitor erosion in the zones where bank rehabilitation efforts have been concentrated.



M. Briehl

Bookkeeper Wanted

We are looking for a volunteer to provide book keeping services for the Algoma Highlands Conservancy.

The time requirement for this position is approximately 5 to 6 hours per week.

If you are interested, please contact Board Member Bob Beggs at 705-253-7417 or bbeggs@shaw.ca for details.

Coming soon ...

For updates, see ["What's New?"](#) on our website and follow us on [Facebook](#).

Here are a few upcoming projects and events:

- AHC Annual General Meeting
- Stokely Creek Rehabilitation Project funded by the Ontario Community Environment Fund



Photos:

Above: View from Robertson Cliffs lookout

Top right: Executive Director, Jennifer Cross at work

We need your support!

Donations & Memberships

You can support the AHC by giving a tax-deductible financial gift as either a donation or a membership purchase.

1) AHC website

Donate securely on-line through the AHC's or your own PayPal account. Both Canadian and American credit cards and funds are accepted.

Click on ["Donate"](#) or ["Membership"](#)

2) Cheque

Make a cheque payable to the "Algoma Highlands Conservancy" and send it to either our Canadian or American mailing address. Please include your **name, mailing address, telephone number and email** to ensure that you receive your tax receipt. An email address allows us to contact you promptly and conserves paper!

3) In Person

Visit the AHC Office at the Stokely Clubhouse Loft in Goulais River, ON and drop off your donation directly to our friendly staff.

Tax receipts will be issued for all donations of \$20.00 or more. The Algoma Highlands Conservancy is a registered Charity in both Canada and the United States. We respect donor privacy and will never share or sell contact information.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed that's the only thing that ever has."

— Margaret Mead



Contact Us

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