

# Algoma Highlands Conservancy



ALGOMA HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY  
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[www.algomahighlandsconservancy.org](http://www.algomahighlandsconservancy.org)

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## The NEW Norm's Cabin

Norm's Cabin has always been a favourite stop-over destination for skiers, even after the AHC purchased it from Norm Bourgeois in 1996. Unfortunately, due to its isolated location and lack of funds to go towards upkeep, the cabin deteriorated beyond repair by 2013. With Norm's passing and the ultimate need to demolish the historic cabin, we have lost a vibrant part of our local cultural history and infrastructure that was used extensively by the local community and visitors to our region. We are building a new cabin now, to honour Norm's legacy, entrepreneurial spirit and unselfish willingness to share the wonders of this beautiful area with visitors. In this context, the new cabin will continue to serve its original functions as a free, publicly accessible, wilderness destination and refuge, but also as a remote base from which the AHC can further promote its core values. The cabin represents an essential component of our overall strategy to further extend silent sport recreation and environmental education opportunities through all four seasons to the benefit of the broader community. In addition, cabin rentals provide a unique and strategically positioned infrastructural element that will add to general ecotourism offerings available to visitors to the naturally gifted Algoma Region.

The cabin's remote location, topped off with the fact that it is lake-access only, were just two of many logistical challenges that did little to slow the incredible progress made in 2013! The project began with the demolition of the old structure in Mar. 2013 and has followed an exceedingly tight schedule ever since. Project Manager, Cynthia Marcinkowski, reports that as of Sept. 2013; foundation, sub-floor, and timber preparation/assembly phases have been successfully completed. Also, it is set to be closed in before the snow flies. This project would not be possible without an incredible work crew led by Master carpenter Richard Kargl, and funding support through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund, as well as from our partners at Stokely Creek Lodge.

### Photos

*Beginning from top: Early spring foundation work; Owen Blake working on timber assembly with a beautiful view of Bone Lake in the background; Final stages of timber assembly in late Summer 2013; Inside view of cabin; Roof construction as of early Fall 2013*



C. Marcinkowski



R. Kargl



R. Kargl



C. Marcinkowski



C. Marcinkowski

## Ongoing Research Projects

In keeping with our primary core value of conservation, the AHC continually strives to protect and enhance wildlife habitat through a variety of environmental research initiatives. Many people visiting our conservation forest may have come across the Great Lakes Power Transmission (GLPT) power line corridor that traverses an approximately 2km stretch of our property. Power companies, including GLPT, must keep these corridors clear of tall growing vegetation that could interfere with their equipment, and often use a combination of chemical herbicides and mechanical brushing to do so. This GLPT "right-of-way" on AHC land serves as a location for an ongoing research project, initiated in 2011, which focuses on investigating alternative vegetation management strategies to enhance wildlife habitat within these corridors, while still ensuring safe and reliable power transmission. The use of biological, as opposed to chemically-based, herbicides for vegetation control, as well as establishing demonstration plots that increase horizontal and vertical structure along corridor edges are just two examples of the alternative vegetation management practices currently being investigated.

We are also heading a multi-agency collaborative research project examining habitat preferences, threats and mitigation strategies for the protection of the endangered wood turtle in Northern Ontario. Wood turtles are a mid-sized turtle species that prefer a watercourse with a slight current and sandy or gravelly bottom as part of their habitat. Like its name suggests, wooded areas are also essential habitat for the wood turtle and they spend more time on land than other native Ontario turtles. Wood turtles are at risk due to habitat loss and degradation; road mortality, predation by raccoons, skunks, and foxes; as well as illegal collection by humans for personal pets or for the pet trade. This turtle's slow growth, late maturity and low reproductive success rate increases its vulnerability to these threats. Our study focuses on monitoring the movement patterns and habitat of two northern Ontario turtle populations using radio-transmitters and innovative GPS bug technology. Our goal is to better understand potential negative effects of disturbance factors on wood turtles and contribute to the development of scientifically based buffer zones and other threat mitigation practices to be used by managers in the recovery of this species.

The AHC's wood turtle research was recently recognized by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) **2012 Resource Stewardship Award**. Since 1996, individuals and groups have been annually recognized by each OMNR district for excellence in protecting and enhancing our natural resources. We are thrilled by this honour and acknowledge our partners: Sault Ste. Marie District OMNR, Canadian Forest Service, Hydro One, Great Lakes Power Transmission, and Algoma Power Inc. for their ongoing support in our research.



Assistance for this project was provided by the Government of Ontario



### Photos

**Beginning from top:** Captured adult male wood turtle; Volunteer Paul McBey attaching a glue-on transmitter to a wood turtle's shell; J. Cross monitoring tagged wood turtle movements using radio-telemetry receiver; SSM District Manager Martin Blake presents C. Marcinkowski (far left), J. Cross (middle left) and D. Thompson (far right) the 2012 Resource Stewardship Award

## FOSTER a FOREST!

*As of June 1, 2013, we raised \$50,000 towards our Foster a Forest (FAF) campaign thanks to \$25,000 in private donations and \$25,000 in matching funds from The ECHO Foundation. This accomplishment is an incredible first step towards the AHC becoming debt free in 2013, but there is still a long way to go! The ECHO Foundation has pledged to match an additional \$25,000 in private donations raised by the end of December 2013. Time is running out for us to take advantage of the generous offer and effectively double any contributions to the FAF Campaign!*

The FAF fundraising campaign gives you the chance to foster a parcel of our conservation forest, particularly the King Mountain property, which is 1,050 hectares of pristine wildlands in Goulais River that supports rare plants and animals and is cherished by naturalists, hikers, mountain bikers and cross-country skiing enthusiasts. Thanks to numerous supporters, the AHC raised about 85 per cent of the \$1.5 million cost of the King Mountain property, and took ownership of the land in late 2009. To make up the difference, we assumed a mortgage. With the balance due in late 2014, the Foster a Forest campaign was launched in an effort to pay off the debt.

We encourage members of the public and private organizations to donate to this cause! In return for every \$50 contribution, we offer the choice of an acre of land on King Mountain to protect. Levels of support include Forest Friend (\$50), Trail Traveler (\$100), Creek Companion (\$500) and Peregrine Partner (\$2,000). Donations are tax deductible and all donors will receive a certificate that includes the GPS coordinates of their acre. ***FAF sponsorships make great gifts!*** You can foster an acre in honour, on behalf, or in memory of a friend or loved one. To be part of this huge conservation success, please consider making a donation today! Give us a call (705-649-5751) and/or go to our website ([www.algomahighlandsconservancy.org](http://www.algomahighlandsconservancy.org)) for more information!

## AHC Community Outreach

Hosting and participating in local outreach initiatives are extremely important to the AHC, as it helps us spread the word about our organization and mission and gives us the opportunity to connect community members to the natural world.

**Environmental Education:** Ten school groups, varying in size from 10-50 students, have visited the AHC so far in 2013. Cynthia worked hard to tailor environmental educational experiences to meet the objectives of each group, many of which involved guided interpretive hikes and lessons on "Leave No Trace" principles. Cynthia was also appointed the Algoma Region Envirothon Coordinator and will be busy planning activity days and running the final competition in Spring 2014. Envirothon is a unique team competition where local organizations, like the AHC, partner to provide students with interactive field trips and workshops to help them understand forests, soils, wildlife, aquatic ecosystems and the human impact on nature.

**Gear Swap Fundraiser:** The AHC, in partnership with the Sault College Adventure Recreation Program, held its first annual gear-swap fundraiser on June 14 in the Essar Hall at Sault College. The venue was ideal for displaying the wide variety of lightly used outdoor gear such as bikes, kayaks/canoes, camping gear, hiking equipment/accessories, which was sold by students, community members, and local businesses. Hundreds of items were sold and consignment proceeds went towards the AHC Operating Fund. We plan to hold a bigger and better Gear Swap again next year, so set aside your surplus silent sport recreation equipment for May 2014!

**Bike and Hike Event:** We held our 3rd annual Bike and Hike event on September 15 2013 in partnership with our friends from the Sault Cycling Club and Voyageur Trail Association.

### Photos:

*From Top: Zoey Swanson enjoying the fall colours by Stokely Creek - demonstrates our mission to conserve the natural wonders of the Algoma Region for the benefit of future generations; J. Cross and D. Thompson leading a hike that showcased AHC research projects as part of a OMNR staff day; J. Cross with a group of Bike and Hike participants making their way up King Mountain*

This FREE family event offered guided hiking and biking adventures for participants and concluded with a yummy BBQ. Although the dreary weather kept many people away, more than 30 hearty participants braved the cold and the drizzle and were rewarded with great exercise, views, and food!



J. Cross



OMNR Photo



B. Tomkins

## 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.*

## Contact Us!

### Staff:

Executive Director: Jennifer Cross  
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### Photos:

*Left: Family at the lower Stokely Falls*

*Below: Spectacular view of King Mountain and Robertson Lake Cliffs from the Mile Hill in Goulais River*



J. Cross



J. Cross

\*\*\*Please fill out the following form if you would prefer to send your contribution to our Foster a Forest Campaign through the mail. If you want to choose your specific acre go to:

<http://www.algomahighlandsconservancy.org/index.cgi?page=foster>

to load our FAF map with parcel ID numbers and values.

*All credit card transactions are processed securely through PayPal.*

NOTE: If you are paying by cheque, fill in everything except the credit card information.

Any donations made to this campaign will be matched by the ECHO Foundation if received prior to December 31 2013!

We deeply appreciate your support!

Payments processed by 

## Foster a Forest Donation Form

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| Select a Donation Level   | <input type="text"/>   |
| Unique acre ID of parcel: | <input type="text"/>   |
| Name the parcel:          | <input type="text"/>   |
| Country                   | <input type="text"/>   |
| Card number               | <input type="text"/>   |
| Payment Types             |     |
| Expiration date           | mm / yy<br><input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>   |
| CSC                       | <input type="text"/>   |
| First name                | <input type="text"/>   |
| Last name                 | <input type="text"/>   |
| Address line 1            | <input type="text"/>   |
| Address line 2 (optional) | <input type="text"/>   |
| City                      | <input type="text"/>   |
| State/Province            | <input type="text"/>   |
| ZIP/Postal code           | <input type="text"/>   |
| Telephone                 | <input type="text"/>   |
| Email                     | <input type="text"/>   |