



# A2A

Algonquin to  
Adirondacks  
Collaborative

# NEWS

SPRING  
2017

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## The \$20,000 Mystery Donor Challenge!

The Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative (A2A) has just received its first big matching challenge. An anonymous donor has come forward with this proposal: To match one-to-one every dollar donated in 2017 from our members and friends, up to a total of \$20,000. That means that if we raise \$20,000 from individual gifts, A2A will have \$40,000 to maintain our capacity.

Why is this so important? In 2013 A2A received a Trillium Foundation grant for capacity building—money to build the organization itself so that we can fulfill our dream of a resilient, ecologically connected A2A region that sustains a full range of native wildlife. This grant allowed us to hire our first coordinator, a position that morphed into our first Executive Director, David Miller.

Having a full time person has dramatically changed the scope of what the organization can do; just witness the Roads Ecology work (reducing road mortality), the A2A Trail Project (“a Pilgrimage for Nature”), and the Conservation Action Planning we are doing across the region.

But, sadly, all good things must come to an end, and our capacity funding from Trillium runs out this spring. That means that to continue building conservation success, we must find a new model of funding to maintain our capacity to make programs and projects happen. We need to seek donations from individuals and foundations to achieve this.

So when the Mystery Donor came forward we all cheered wildly. Every donation you make to A2A will be matched dollar for dollar by the Mystery Donor, and you will receive a charitable receipt, allowing you to be even more generous. (In the U.S. charitable receipts will be issued for amounts

over \$200 U.S. through the American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts.) AND, all who donate \$1000 or more will be entitled to receive an original watercolor of the A2A region. (See example below).

Let’s not leave any of the Mystery Donor’s offer on the table. We are asking each member and partner to be as generous as possible to build the capacity of A2A to do what we do so well. You can send your donation by check to A2A, P.O. Box 88, Lansdowne, ON K0E 1L0 or to P.O. Box 1, Wellesley Island, NY 13640. You can also donate online at [a2acollaborative.org/support-us-with-a-donation.html](http://a2acollaborative.org/support-us-with-a-donation.html)

With deepest gratitude,

Sarah Walsh, President,  
on behalf of the A2A Fundraising and Finance Committee

Emily Conger, Past President  
Peter Milliken, Director  
Gary Bell, Vice President  
Mike Kehoe, Treasurer



We are grateful for support from



A2ACOLLABORATIVE.org

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- facebook.com/A2ACollab
- instagram.com/A2ACollab
- twitter.com/A2ACollab

# Public Pressure Triumphs - Snappers No Longer Hunted

► By Emily Conger

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“Based on public feedback, there was significant opposition to maintaining any open season for snapping turtles. Snapping Turtle is a long-lived species that reproduces slowly and is subject to other significant stressors such as road mortality. The Ministry (of Natural Resources and Forests or MNRF) has closed the Snapping Turtle season to help maintain populations of this species into the future.”

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With these words, the regulation that allowed the killing of up to two snapping turtles a day in Ontario has now been revoked.

The first lesson for conservationists is that ultimately public pressure is powerful. The second is that pressure on the government may take years to create change, so persistence is essential.

Submissions were made to MNRF through the Environmental Bill of Rights Registry (EBR) to change snapping turtle hunting. Most were based on strong scientific evidence that populations of snapping turtles, a species already recognized federally and provincially as “of special concern”, were in decline.

Decisions affecting conservation in the A2A region are constantly being made. Well-informed input from people who care about protecting nature can affect the quality of those decisions. So we need to know what is being decided and how to make our views heard.

The main website is <http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/>

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario now provides a service that will send you email alerts about notices on the Environmental Registry that may interest you.



Injured Snapping Turtle

Please check out [Environmental Registry Alerts \(http://alerts.ecoissues.ca/\)](http://alerts.ecoissues.ca/) to register.

I signed up to receive alerts that affect “species” (you have to choose a key word.) Now I get almost daily updates on what is being or has been decided with input from the Environmental Bill of Rights of Ontario; many affect species at risk. You can also choose your county for alerts about decisions affecting local enterprises that have applied for exemptions or licensing, such as developers or quarries.

The good news is that in Ontario if enough responses are received and are based on good scientific evidence, better decisions can be made.

In New York please check out a similar service from the NYS department of environmental conservation: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/public/65855.html>

# A2A Volunteer Profile: Nicole Wooten in her own words

*I was introduced to A2A through a graduate school class on the Adirondacks as a unique protected area management system. I was immediately fascinated by the A2A Trail initiative, and the associated opportunity to increase awareness and protection of the wider landscape it offered. I also was intrigued by how it could increase the vitality of and recreational opportunities for interested communities nearby.*

*Before returning to school for my Masters of Environmental Management at the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, I had worked with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in land stewardship. I loved the similarities between these two conservation-minded organizations. I wanted to bring the perspective of my previous work and my then-current school learning to this new opportunity, the A2A Trail.*

*I was fortunate enough to get to do just that in the context of a separate class called "Strategies for Land Conservation". There, I connected with the A2A board, staff, and volunteers. Together, we began regular Trail Committee calls to discuss projects mapping, communications, and next steps. I was able to help with mapping and researching funding opportunities on the New York side.*



*When not volunteering with A2A, I work as the Conservation Stewardship Manager of the Hudson Highlands Land Trust, based in Garrison, New York. As field staff, I feel fortunate to get to hike in lands that contain a southerly version of the rich natural resources, beauty, challenges, and opportunities of the Algonquin to Adirondack connectivity corridor.*



# Partner Report: Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust

► By Mary Vandenhoff

Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust (MMLT) is one of AZA's most northerly collaborative partners. Its catchment area includes 560,000 hectares to the west and southwest of Ottawa, encompassing the entire Mississippi River watershed and reaching northwest to the Madawaska River. The region contains parts of the City of Ottawa, and of the Counties of Lanark, Renfrew and Frontenac. More than two-thirds of this area falls on the Canadian Shield and is a mix of lightly populated rural areas and wilderness. Established in 2004, MMLT currently protects 2,430 acres of wilderness with negotiations for additional properties currently underway. To facilitate the land acquisition process, heritage mapping work has been initiated.

Being a small charity, MMLT looks for innovative ways to be more effective guardians of the lands under its care. Challenged to inventory and monitor wildlife with limited human resources, MMLT is planning to implement a comprehensive Bioacoustic Monitoring Program this year with support from Steve Lougheed of the Queen's University Biological Station and Josh van Wieren of the Thousand Islands National Park among others.

While faithful to its core mission of land conservation, MMLT is also committed to promoting the educational, physical, mental and spiritual benefits of immersion in the rich natural worlds of these wilderness properties. The 1250 acre cliffLAND, home to Blueberry Mountain (voted



Mississippi Madawaska Land Trust

Photo credit: T.K. Marsh Photography

one of the Seven Wonders of Lanark County) received over 2000 visitors last year, some international. This open sharing approach is fostering growing community support for conservation.

Aware of the growing problem of the nature deficit in children (and adults for that matter), MMLT just launched a Wild Child Initiative focusing on organizing activities to get children and youth to explore and experience Nature. In 2017 a Festival of the Wild Child is planned for July 29 and 30, the first of annual such celebrations.

You are invited to visit us virtually at <https://mmlt.ca/>, or better yet, come to one of our many outdoor events.



# Success! More Natural Flows Restored to the St. Lawrence River

► By Lee Willbanks

After almost 20 years of effort the St. Lawrence River has a new, modern water levels plan. In December, the International Joint Commission approved Plan 2014. The plan which returns more natural levels and flows to the River went into effect January 7<sup>th</sup>. It is second only to the restoration of the Everglades as the largest wetland restoration project in North America.

The benefits of replacing the current, more than 50-year-old plan, include: a 40% increase in wet meadow acreage; a 39% rebound in populations of Northern Pike, the top fish predator in coastal marshes; a 16% rebound in Black Tern populations; a \$9.1 million annual increase in recreational activity along the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario; a frequently longer recreational boating season; and the continuation of significant shoreline protection.



The long fight to achieve a new water levels plan for the River received a significant boost last April when American Rivers designated the St. Lawrence one of America's Most Endangered Rivers due to the environmental harm caused by the old plan. That led to an outpouring of support from thousands of individuals who love the River and from conservation groups environmental and sports organizations, businesses, governments, and elected officials who demanded action to approve Plan 2014.

In a final push last fall, Save The River, with partners American Rivers, Audubon, Citizens Campaign for the Environment, Ducks Unlimited, the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, The Nature Conservancy and World Wildlife Fund-Canada, delivered over 36,000 expressions of support for the Plan to the White House.

Because more natural water levels are essential for biodiversity, the Algonquin to Adirondack Collaborative has been involved in this effort for over a decade, and congratulates Save The River on this victory.



Link to Plan 2014 Thank You Video



[https://youtu.be/3F\\_xI5RvLYw](https://youtu.be/3F_xI5RvLYw)

**Links to more information:**

The IJC announcement on Plan 2014 ([http://www.ijc.org/en/\\_news?news\\_id=581&myID=1](http://www.ijc.org/en/_news?news_id=581&myID=1))

Press release on approval of Plan 2014 (<http://blog.savetheriver.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Coalition-Approves-Enactment-of-Plan-2014-Press-Release.pdf>)

# Ecological Connectivity Goes Political

► By David Miller

While those of us committed to the Algonquin to Adirondack Collaborative have long recognized the importance of ecological connectivity at a regional scale for wildlife movement, biodiversity conservation, and as a buffer against the affects of climate change, recognition at the political level has been slower in coming. That all changes now!

In August 2016, the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers made a major first step towards action on connectivity at the political level with resolution 40-3. Beginning with a recognition that cross-border ecological connectivity in the Northern Appalachian-Acadian Forest provides a vital link for bird migration, an important role in protecting ecological resilience and biodiversity.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers recognize the importance of ecological connectivity for the adaptability and resilience of our region's ecosystems, biodiversity, and human communities in the face of climate change; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers acknowledge the need to work across landscapes and borders to advance efforts to restore and maintain ecological connectivity;

Specific actions referred to in the resolution include:

- Advising respective government agencies of the need to consider ecological connectivity in their projects and programs
- Protecting connectivity zones and incorporating connectivity objectives inland use planning
- Considering connectivity in transportation enhancement programs
- Creating a working group to report back on progress by 2020.



While resolution 40-3 addresses the Northern Appalachian-Acadian corridor, it is equally applicable to the A2A region. In 2017, the A2A Collaborative is building on this effort by working with partners to promote similar recognition by the Ontario and New York governments for this region, and monitor progress on Resolution 40-3.

Stay tuned for more information on our Connectivity 2017 initiative.

Full text of resolution 40-3 can be found at:

<http://www.scics.ca/en/product-produit/resolution-40-3-resolution-on-ecological-connectivity-adaptation-to-climate-change-and-biodiversity-conservation/>



# Sharing the Earth with a Turtle

► By Cameron Smith

Look at the photo of Joshua Jones holding a Snapping Turtle hatchling, and you'll find it easy to understand why he says, *"The best experience I had last summer was when I saved a Snapping Turtle hatchling for the first time."*

Josh sees it as his responsibility, *"as well as everyone else's to do all we can to protect other species with whom we share the Earth."* Snapping Turtles are a protected species in Ontario, but their death toll on roads and highways is enormous.

Josh, 23 years old, is studying for his Master's degree in environmental studies at Queen's University. Last summer he worked for A2A as lead field researcher helping to develop plans that will ensure wildlife can safely cross the triple threat of Highway 401, Highway 2, and the Thousand Islands Parkway between Gananoque and Brockville. Josh was working on Highway 2. Work is funded with a grant under the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry Species-at-Risk Stewardship Program.



The highways block the traditional route for wildlife moving north and south across the St. Lawrence River over the Thousand Islands. It's a critical pathway for biodiversity in eastern North America.

The worst experience Josh had was finding five dead hatchlings that were trapped on a bridge over a creek. *"It was a horrible experience, but it's the reality out there, and it's something I have to confront firsthand, and what I hope to eliminate with my work."*

## From Death to New Life

► By Emily Conger

Maybe because it's spring and new life is all around us, I am reminded of my first visit to the Sandy Pines Wildlife Rescue Centre in Napanee, Ontario. A visitor to our farm had found an injured bird on the road, and since our local veterinarians couldn't help, I drove it to Sandy Pines. As a volunteer took the intake information, a young woman came running out of the back and said, "You have to come and see this!"

Seeing the sign that said "Employees only" I thought she didn't mean me, but she said, "Yes, you come too!"

We went into a back room where I saw an aquarium with sand in the bottom and tiny, new baby turtles emerging from their eggs. A driver had spotted a dead female by the side of the road and brought her body to the Wildlife Centre. Female turtles are often attracted to the gravel at the sides of highways as nesting places, so the turtles killed by cars in May and June are overwhelmingly gravid females (ones with eggs ready to lay.) The driver had brought the body to Sandy Pines, where they were able to extract the eggs and hatch them. These were painted turtles. Other species of turtles

have been hatched there as well. All the hatchlings are released into the wild, in a place as safe as possible.

Saving turtle eggs this way is not for the faint of heart, but if you are interested, be aware that this kind of rescue can be dangerous with vehicles whizzing by. I always carry a flat shovel in the back of my car, so that I can safely help snapping turtles cross our country roads, and it would be handy for lifting up a dead turtle as well. Knowing the location of turtle rescue facilities that do this kind of work is essential, too, so that you can get the turtle there as quickly as possible. If you are in the Kingston-Belleveille area, Sandy Pines is available to help.



You can learn more about them at <http://www.sandypineswildlife.org> or you can call them at (613) 354-0264. They rely on donations from the public to do their work, which includes helping save turtles. Sandy Pines is a partner of the A2A Collaborative.





# A2A

Algonquin to  
Adirondacks  
Collaborative

# 2017 Membership Form

**Our dream: A resilient, ecologically interconnected landscape that sustains a full range of native wildlife and enhances people's quality of life for generations to come.**

Make it happen: Join to Donate to A2A!

Memberships can now be treated as donations, which means that we can issue you a charitable receipt. You can choose whatever level of membership you wish each year. Please be as generous as you can in 2016 so that A2A can:

- ▶ provide safe passageways for animals to cross highways
- ▶ build an A2A trail connecting Algonquin and Adirondack Parks
- ▶ provide the research and facilitation needed by A2A's 50+ partners to restore habitat and connectivity in this unique, fragile A2A landscape

Please send your donation to 1 Jesse Street, P.O. Box 88, Lansdowne ON K0E 1L0 in Canada or P.O. Box 1 Wellesley Island New York 13640 in the U.S. or complete an online membership at [A2ACollaborative.org](http://A2ACollaborative.org)

In appreciation of our donors, we will be pleased to send to those donating \$1,000 or more an original framed watercolour of the A2A region, and to those donating \$500 – \$1,000 a hardcover book about the region. All donors of \$100 or more will be recognized on the A2A website, unless anonymity is requested.

<b>Membership Level:</b>	<b>Shagbark Hickory</b>	<b>Blue Beech</b>	<b>Black Ash</b>	<b>Yellow Birch</b>	<b>White Pine</b>	<b>Red Oak</b>
Cost:	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

New:  Renewal:  Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

I am enclosing a cheque for \_\_\_\_\_, made out to the Algonquin to Adirondacks Collaborative.

I would you like to receive information from A2A including notices of upcoming events by:

regular mail:  by e-mail:

Would you like to volunteer for A2A? \_\_\_\_\_ In what capacity? \_\_\_\_\_