



MEDIA RELEASE

Rideau Waterway Land Trust Celebrates the Creation of a New Nature Reserve on Big Rideau Lake!

Township of Rideau Lakes, ON (June 2025) – Thanks to the generous support of private landowners who value conservation, as well as contributions from the community, corporate donations, and provincial and federal grant programs, Rideau Waterway Land Trust (RWLT) has successfully established a new 33-acre Nature Reserve on Big Rideau Lake.

Paul and Barbara Sneyd have made a significant donation of land, ensuring that 33 acres of Island 186 in the Long Island Cluster on Big Rideau Lake are now permanently protected. This initiative guarantees that over 2,500 meters of natural shoreline will remain undisturbed, supporting the surrounding designated fish sanctuaries of Lost Lake and Long Island Lake. RWLT has already identified 27 bird species, 12 mammal species, 13 invertebrate species, and 11 tree species, along with various other plant life on the island. Notably, at least 10 of the species identified are considered at-risk, including 6 species of bats and 3 species of turtles, underscoring the importance of long-term protection for these habitats. This effort complements the habitat already protected on Parks Canada's adjacent Colonel By Island and represents a significant milestone for habitat protection in eastern Ontario. With the completion of this initiative, RWLT now conserves **23 Nature Reserves** in the Rideau Corridor, totalling **1,442 acres**.

This project was supported in part by the Greenlands Conservation Partnership program, facilitated by the Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA). The Greenlands Conservation Partnership program is a collaborative effort that brings together land trusts, conservation organizations, and local communities to achieve lasting environmental sustainability. "We deeply appreciate the Ontario government's investment in safeguarding the environment, enhancing biodiversity, and ensuring that ecologically significant areas within the Rideau Corridor are protected forever," said RWLT Executive Director Sara Warren-Roberts. "Through partnerships like the Greenlands Conservation Partnership, we are not only preserving vital ecosystems but also advancing efforts to mitigate climate change."

"Through the Greenlands Conservation Partnership program we are supporting the work of conservation and community leaders to preserve ecologically significant lands while creating more opportunities for people to enjoy the incredible natural wonders Ontario has to offer,"

said Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks. “By protecting this 33-acre nature reserve — roughly the size of 20 soccer fields — we are supporting tourism along the Rideau corridor and protecting an invaluable natural asset that will benefit this community for generations.”

The Greenlands Conservation Partnership program is the single largest provincial fund to secure private land in Ontario. This unique program, administered by the Ontario Land Trust Alliance, leverages non-governmental dollars to acquire, restore and manage privately owned natural areas such as wetlands, grasslands and forests. For every dollar of provincial funding provided, grant recipients match it with a minimum of \$2 from other conservation partners, including individual donors, foundations and other levels of government. Since 2020, the Ontario government has invested \$58 million into the program, which has helped to protect over 430,000 acres (174,310 hectares) of private land across the province – more than 2.75 times the size of Toronto.

Rideau Waterway Land Trust (RWLT) is a registered charity dedicated to preserving ecologically and culturally significant lands within the Rideau Corridor, in perpetuity. Their interest area includes the Rideau River Watershed and part of the Cataraqui River Watershed, which are both located within the Frontenac Arch Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO-recognized biosphere region in Canada. The Rideau Canal is a designated National Historic Site, Canadian Heritage River, and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

RWLT works with property owners and community organizations from Kingston to Ottawa to acquire and protect critical lands for the benefit of the community and future generations. They also provide recreational access to nature through two community-use lands: Rock Dunder Nature Reserve and James H. Fullard Nature Reserve. If you are interested in learning how you can support their conservation efforts, or for more information, email info@rwlt.org.

RWLT would like to extend their heartfelt thanks to all donors, supporters, and granting organizations for making these successful projects possible. **Nature has a future because our community cares!**

Organization Contact for Media Inquiries:

Sara Warren-Roberts, Executive Director, Rideau Waterway Land Trust
swroberts@rwlt.org