



2010 2011 Annual Report

Contents:

- Chairs Message
- Three Projects we are most proud of...
- Council profile
- Partners List
- Financial Summary
- Spreadsheet of PSN Projects
- Summary Comments

Chairs Message....

We would once again like to publicly thank all those who worked so hard making the Perth Stewardship Network successful. The continued support and committed involvement of our councilors is what makes projects advance towards completion. As a group we recognize, that it is their dedication to improving the environment which can not be put into words that compliment them enough.

Every year I acknowledge these volunteer Councilors who work to continue to champion several ongoing stewardship projects. They bring so much to our council in terms of dedication and commitment to protecting and enhancing our natural resources. However they also bring their contacts, social networks and most importantly their experience, innovation and creativity. It is through their commitment that we finish previous projects and through their guidance that we move ahead developing new stewardship projects every year.

Summary of past year

2010 has been another productive year and we are striving to make 2011 even more productive. Despite many negative factors detracting from our collective capacity (economic uncertainty and subsequent impacts on business and people's limited volunteer time) we have been able to maintain and expand our local stewardship program into a balanced array of community projects.

Like last year, when we participated in a "Council Review" by OS, District and Area Managers including a Business Practice Review, this year along with on-going OS program strategic reviews and discussions – all illustrate the evolution and changes that such a positive OMNR program needs to undergo on a regular basis.

The variety and types of projects completed demonstrates that this group can and has adopted new OMNR/OS program directions while still accomplishing significant local stewardship improvements. We are proud of our achievements.

Recognition of OMNR support

It is only through the OMNR & Ontario support that we as a local council can achieve the results we have become accustomed to seeing following the "Stewardship Model" and direct involvement of our Stewardship Coordinator. We continue to focus on the sustainability of our partners and their volunteers, especially in terms of leadership and motivation of these people as we all work towards sustaining our natural resources found in Perth County.

A future challenges:

Continuing to work with change

We are pleased to see that Ontario Stewardship has been kept as a significant part of the OMNR in the Regional Operations Division, Integration Branch. Collectively we should remember our volunteer base and their important role in balancing program bureaucracy with community values and directions. This is a "key stone" building block of our program – have our Chairs and Councilors being supported and encouraged to think, devise and bring their views and perspectives as well as support (partners, cash and in-kind) to our program. We really need to honour and respect their role in ensuring the relevancy of our program to the public and making sure that it is effective in sustaining our natural resources.

Expressions of thanks

I would like to "Thank" the PSN Councilors for their many volunteer efforts towards making such a challenging program work to benefit our Perth County resources and environment. We are just one Perth County based group, working to "make a difference" in improving the health of our environment and sustaining natural resources on our lands, we invite interested people to join us and help with projects. New ideas and opportunities are always welcome!

We invite you to review our annual report and share in our collective accomplishments. As we've said before, "Our success is your success!"

Robin Diehl
Chair
Perth Stewardship Network

The Three projects we are most proud of are...

Top three projects we are most proud of;

1) Youth Hunting Day "Tool Kit" & Provincial Youth Hunting Expansion with ENGO's

The Youth Hunting Day Planning "Tool Kit" is to be able to share the basic information and experience developed by several Ontario Stewardship Councils with others and supports their planning, organization and then their successful implementation of a youth hunt in a safe and educational manner. The "Youth Hunting Day" web page can be found at <http://www.youthhunting.ca/>

This successful youth hunting model has proven to be a win-win-win for every stakeholder, partner and participant. It has provided a logical extension for new hunters to participate in a mentored, real life hunting opportunity in a controlled and safe environment. This has allowed stakeholders to provide an educational and structured hunt while transferring knowledge and experience to our next generation of hunters.

Our network of Hunter Instructors has established a long tradition of hunter education and annually trains some 17,000 hunters. Through their dedication and interaction with the youth at their various training sessions they promote and encourage these youth to become Hunter Apprentices. Through the time tested and proven tradition of taking youth hunting with your hunting group or camp, has resulted in a successful recruitment and retention of new hunters into this outdoor activity. However, there are many youth who do not have those opportunities (especially with single parent families, new immigrants or simply people who have never been exposed to this activity in their past). With the Hunter Apprentice program working well and after collectively hosting 14 successful events held since 2005, the information, ideas and tips provide a great start for new groups in other areas of Ontario to use as a planning tool in developing an event their area.

Preliminary discussions with representatives from most if not all hunting and shooting sport non-government organizations involved in wildlife conservation, suggested that they were very interested in working together within the Ontario context, to devise a form of a Youth Hunting Alliance to promote and encourage (advocate) broader opportunities for youth following the YHD model.

A conference call and a face to face meeting has advanced these groups towards developing a joint MOU which simply encourages all of them to continue to work together to promote future youth hunting opportunities. We are encouraging them to also adopt the YHD model as the basis from which to develop these new youth hunts.

If the success of the Youth Pheasant Hunt program can be adapted and modified by these various organizations to suit their specific targeted game species, more structured and educational youth hunts could be hosted across Ontario. Collectively the target of "50 new events in 5 years" has been endorsed by these groups. Leading the way is the network of Hunter Instructors and the numerous chapters of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. However many other provincial NGO organizations are also actively supporting and developing their versions of youth hunts.

Working together, the future of hunting looks brighter!

2) **Thames River Stewardship Initiative**

This was the first year that COA funding was extended upstream in the Thames River Watershed by the Lake Erie COA program. Although the amount was small, the achievement of getting the funders to realize that investments in the headwaters of the watershed, does bring about water quality and fish/wildlife habitat improvements both in the watercourse and also in the receiving body of water - in this case Lake Erie. The recognition of this “whole system approach” by COA is very meaningful to the ability of the PSN to be able to start restoring and enhancing riparian habitat in Perth County.

This is the first year of a two year extension to the original stewardship program to improve water quality in Lake Erie. This is being achieved through a combination of best management practices, habitat stewardship, education and complimenting the wetland drain projects. The basis of the program is providing technical assistance and financial incentives to private landowners in exchange for their commitment to be key participants in the project. This partnership is comprised of Perth Stewardship Network, Elgin Stewardship Council, Middlesex Stewardship Committee, Stewardship Oxford and Stewardship Kent.

The objectives of the Thames River Stewardship Initiative are as follows: - restore riparian habitat in Perth, Oxford, Middlesex, Elgin and Chatham-Kent - develop educational programs and raise community awareness/understanding - enhance participation of private landowners in projects to achieve long-term sustainability of program and individual project success.

Planting trees and prairie as buffers and creating wetlands in the Thames River watershed to improve water quality in Lake Erie

Forests: 126 trees of 8 different species

Fish/Wildlife: 0.6 acres wildlife habitat Buffer along Trout Creek ~ affects and buffers water for an estimated length of 800m down slope along the creek. Establishment of 5 acres of Tall Grass Prairie along the Avon Trail will also promote these best stewardship practices to others.

Social Impacts: Educational talk provided to tree planters and explained importance of buffer establishment to 55 people + linkages to Lake Erie LAMP and COA funding to enhance water quality in the lake.

3) **Conservation Easement – Black Creek Heronry**

The Thames Talbot Trust was continuing their work at establishing a conservation easement with a previous landowner to protect a 5 acre Great Blue Heron rookery on an adjacent property. The PSN was asked to partner with other partners to protect this site.

The conservation easement protects this area and is monitored by the Thames Talbot Trust. The PSN supported this with a \$3.0 funds towards the total cost of \$15.0 although Great Blue Herons are not endangered, they do require undisturbed wetlands in order to breed successfully.

Promoting such long term protection methods is very important, especially on the Perth County landscape. Future efforts to direct landowners to consider using these options might want to focus on linking into Agricultural Land Trusts such as the one being created at the University of Guelph. This might provide another option that these agricultural focused landowners should consider. We have a good working relationship with the TTT and will continue to promote their efforts.

The PSN has also supported the Ontario Farmland Trust (a University of Guelph affiliated initiative) by providing a letter of support to the Trillium Foundation to provide some funding to allow this new agricultural land trust to develop. An important part of this proposal is to host a meeting of local land trusts (and the Ontario Land Trust Alliance) to promote a greater degree of collaboration among local trusts and to increase awareness with key farmer landowners about this form of long term protection available to them.

Council Profile

Robin Diehl, CHAIR

Life-long resident of Stratford, Robin was Employed for 40 years at Honeywell CPG (auto filter manufacture in Stratford), retiring from a 28 year Industrial Engineering position in December of 2003. This has allowed him to spend more time outdoors, hunting, fishing and extending his conservationist activities while assuming the role of Chair. He has participated with the PSN since its inception in 1995 and strongly believes in natural resource stewardship. Robin supports all the PSN projects but is keenly interested in the Friends of Ellice and Gadshill Swamps where he also serves as a director.

John Drummond

Landowner, farmer and business owner (owns and operates Greenbelt Farm nursery), John is a former President of the Perth Federation of Agriculture and is well networked and respected across Perth County. He has participated since our founding meetings in 1995. John brings a valued perspective of practical landownership, business and concerned social advocacy (individual responsibility to “walk the talk”) to his role as a community stewardship leader. His leadership and generous community support related to tree planting and guiding people in their efforts to plant trees has made Perth County a better place to live.

Doug Cota

Long-term resident of Listowel and business owner. As a keen outdoor recreation enthusiast Doug has also acted as past Chair of the North Perth Trails group and former executive member of Ontario Steel headers. He owns and operates “The Sports Exchange” and coaches and manages the local lacrosse league. Since joining the PSN in 2001 he has demonstrated his interests in community trails, fisheries enhancement projects and wise use (mountain biking through our natural areas). Currently, Doug is working to support the Millbank Trail extension and future trail develop related to this unique tourism and economic development opportunity.

Don Jones

Long-term resident of Mitchell, Chair of the West Perth Wetland Sub-committee and former head of Science at the Mitchell District High School and former West Perth Councillor. Since joining the PSN in 2002, Don has played a key role in advancing the creation of the West Perth Community Wetland (now constructed) and actively supports wise stewardship across Perth County (trails and educational stations as well as long-term protection of natural heritage features).

Geoff Neigh

A retired high school science teacher from Stratford Central, Geoff is keenly interested in growing trees from native and local seed sources. He has established a tree seedling nursery in his backyard and has actively supported the development of the Stratford node of the Trees for Tomorrow (Perth) project. A satisfying personal interest is his playing and teaching bagpipes.

Tony Jackson

As a rural property owner, outdoor enthusiast, active angler and hunter, Tony has a personal interest in ensuring that there is a future with wildlife and healthy natural resources for our children to enjoy. These same interests have also prompted him to play many roles in the Perth County community. Roles which include being past Chair of LOOP, Zone J director of OFAH, past Chair of the “Friends of the Ellice Gadshill Swamps”, as well as his current seat as a director on the board of the UTRCA and provincially with the OFAH.

He also has a considerable background working with local sportsman clubs, the Perth Pheasant Committee and the Trout Creek Conservation Club, to name a few. Former plant manager of, and current national sales representative for Precise Castings Inc., a major foundry in Elmira, Tony brings extensive leadership experience to every role he pursues. Tony received the Ontario Stewardship - Russ J. Piper Award in 2009

Doug Grant

As an outdoor enthusiast and keen steelhead angler as well as hunter, Doug lives in Listowel and has a strong desire to improve the environmental conditions in this part of Ontario. Doug is the Chair of the Middle Maitland Rejuvenation Committee and works closely with their volunteer members as well as the staff at the MVCA and local landowners. They have successfully undertaken several important aquatic, river and wetland restoration efforts and have planted thousands of trees over this group's history.

Partners List 2010 2011

Partner Number	Partner Name
1	Amy Bennewies
2	Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA)
3	Avon Maitland Dist. School Board
4	Bill Osborn
5	Brian Luinstra
6	Central Huron Secondary School
7	CFWIP - Guelph District
8	City of Stratford - nursery
9	COA - Lake Erie
10	Delta Waterfowl Foundation
11	Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)
12	Ducks Unlimited Barrie
13	Ducks Unlimited Canada
14	Ducks Unlimited GRCA
15	Ed VanOsch
16	Elgin Stewardship Council (ESC)
17	Ellwood Epps Sporting Goods
18	Eric McFadden
19	Forests for Life - Woodstock and District Developmental Services
20	Fred Buck Electric
21	Friends of Ellice and Gadshill Swamps
22	Friends of Hullett
23	Friends of Pinery Park
24	Gadshill Sportsman's Club
25	Greenbelt Farm
26	Hullett Youth Hunt Steering Committee
27	Hunter Instructors
28	Huron Fish & Game Association
29	Huron Perth NWTF Chapter
30	Huron Stewardship Council (HSC)
31	Huron Tractor Inc. - Blyth
32	Jenni Boles
33	Joe Laurie
34	Long Point Waterfowl Research Center
35	LOOP
36	Luke Schoonderwoerd
37	Maitland Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA)
38	Middle Maitland Rejuvenation Committee
39	Middlesex Stewardship Council
40	Millbank Community Association
41	Mitchell 4H Fishing Club
42	Mitchell District SS
43	Mitchell Fish & Game Club
44	Municipality of West Perth
45	NWTF - Brant Oxford Boss Gobblers
46	OFAH Peterborough Main Office
47	OFAH Zone H
48	OFAH Zone J
49	OHEP Hunter Instructors

50	OMNR - Guelph District
51	OMNR Clinton Area Office
52	Ontario Forestry Association
53	Ontario Gun Services
54	Ontario Stewardship
55	OS Opportunity Fund 2009/10
56	Perth Cattlemen's Association
57	Pheasants Forever
58	Pinery Provincial Park
59	Quality Deer Management Association
60	Rob Ayres
61	Robin Diehl
62	Rural Lambton Stewardship network
63	Schneiders Auto Wrecking Ltd.
64	Scouts of Mitchell
65	Sean Sepers
66	Stewardship Kent
67	Stratford Central Secondary School
68	Tavistock Rod & Gun Club
69	TD Canada Trust - London
70	TD Canada Trust - Stratford
71	Thames Talbot Trust
72	Thamesview United Church
73	Tony Jackson
74	Tracy Potter
75	Tree Canada
76	Trout Creek Conservation Club
77	Upper Thames River Conservation Authority (UTRCA)
78	West Perth Energy & Environment Committee
79	West Perth Forestry Committee
80	West Perth Trails Sub Committee
81	West Perth Wetland Sub Committee
82	YPH - Dog handlers & Dogs
83	YPH - Presenters

Financial Summary

The fiscal year for the Perth Stewardship Network (PSN) runs from April 1st to March 31st This matches that of our main funding partner, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR).

We maintain a community bank account with the Your Neighbourhood Credit Union, and keep our own records of deposits and cheques issued. All purchasing follows OMNR policies, and standard financial protocols are followed (*i.e. to be authorized, cheques require signatures from both the Stewardship Coordinator and one Councillor*).

Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) are issued to control and account for the public funds utilized by our council.

Annually we receive \$10,000.00 through the Ontario Stewardship Program as seed money, less the costs of insurance. In 2010/2011 we received \$9,550.00 as per the MOU.

Summary of PSN Stewardship Projects

See Table 1 – Summary of PSN Projects 2010 2011

Summary Comments

As we work together as one of 46 (soon to be more in the North and far North) Ontario Stewardship Councils with our local partners we feel we have advanced the stewardship of our natural resources with our larger community.

The PSN has completed a significant quality and quantity of stewardship projects in 2010. Our 2011 2012 Work Plan is ambitious as well, including several on-going projects but several new ones! See attached 2011 2012 PSN Work Plan

Remembering our Past...

We were able to continue to offer tree seedlings to Thames View United Church in Fullarton (through Bruce Morris) to continue to remember Norman Jefferson a former PSN Councillor through an annual “Norman Jefferson tree plant” facilitated through the Men’s Club at the church. This will be a project we will continue to support through future years. It means a lot to the PSN members, to be able to continue to honour Norman.

The future is bright, as we look forward to integrating new partners into our work plans and focus on emerging topics of interest to complement our annual work plan. Some of these new exciting areas to explore in terms of stewardship are Biodiversity and Species at Risk. Of course on going tree planting and wildlife habitat enhancement projects need our continual attention and working with landowners is always fun and rewarding!

