



PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2008





Information describing charity's activities - 2008

THE OBJECTS OF THE RUTTER VALLEY LAND TRUST, AS STATED IN THE CHARTER, ARE:

- To maintain tracts of land in perpetuity in the Eastern Townships of Quebec and elsewhere, as forest and open country for a view to the preservation of the wilderness, and to its enjoyment by members of the local community and the general public.
- To conduct such other activities as may help preserve the rural nature of the area, for example, the acquisition of land, the acquisition of development rights (easements and servitudes), the maintenance of productive farm and forest land, and the establishment of wildlife sanctuaries.
- To promote education and research into the conservation and proper use of our natural resources, human, physical and environmental, and to act as an information centre for other conservation groups and the general public. Results of any and all research will be published and made available to the public.
- To promote the concepts of preservation of the wilderness in schools and other institutions, through lectures, films, seminars and field trips.



SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

FUNDRAISING

Grants

Successful applications were made to Table des MRC de l'Estrie, Pacte Rurale, Townshippers and Pottton Municipality.

Events

A bake sale was held at the annual Pottton Multicultural Festival. Proceeds went to the purchase of loupes and magnifying glasses for the schoolchildren's Flora program.

Membership/Donors

The majority of memberships were renewed along with several new additions due to a repeat of a direct mail campaign in Pottton. The Trust is very appreciative of the long-term support and generosity of its donors.

ADMINISTRATION

Office and Staff

- General administrative overhead was again held to a minimum, as members, volunteers and directors all donated their time freely: Office space in the homes of board members and staff was provided as required. Eric Deschênes continues on as our program coordinator.
- Isabelle Gregoire is our educator for the schoolchildren in Pottton and Eastman. Along with Gaétan Champagne and Marie-Claude Lamy, she also assists with the "Faune sans frontières" program.
- The composition of the Board is as follows: Stansje Plantenga (President), Marie-Claire Planet (Vice-President-Secretary) Guy Langevin (Treasurer), Daniel Sultan, Rick Petersen and Bobbie Summers.
- Meetings of the Board of Directors were held on Apr. 20th, in addition to several other working committee meetings held throughout the year; with Éric Deschênes; and ACA.

We held our Annual General Meeting on December 28th, 2008.

Members of the Board were elected as follows: Guy Langevin Treasurer, Marie-Claire Planet Vice-President-Secretary, Stansje Plantenga President, Rick Peterson, Daniel Sultan and Bobbie Summers as administrators.



CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

PROMOTION RECREATION EDUCATION RESEARCH

Recreation and Networking

With the community:

- All RVLT trails are open to the public year-round. Éric Deschênes can be contacted on our website during the x-country ski season for an update on weather conditions.
- Board members are available to the community to answer any queries on Trust projects and activities.
- We can also be reached for updates on our programs at www.valleeruite.org or by email at info@ruitervalley.org. During x-ski season, Éric posts regular reports on trail and weather conditions.

With the municipality:

- The President acted as a liaison with ACA and the Municipality to facilitate planning for public access to the Green Mountain reserve area.

Within the region:

- The President attended the annual meeting of the Comité de gestion provisoire de la réserve des Montagnes vertes.
- The Vice President and Treasurer attended the annual ACA meeting.
- The Treasurer attended the annual UQCN conference.
- The Treasurer attended the annual meeting of Réseau de milieux naturels protégés.

RVLT as consultant to other Land Trusts

- The President continued in a consultant role to local conservation groups looking at using the "Faune sans frontières" program as part of their conservation strategy

With NGOs:

Memberships

- Union Québécoise pour la conservation de la nature (UQCN)
- Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA of Vermont)
- Missisquoi River Bassin Assoc. of Quebec
- Réseau des milieux naturels protégés (RMN)

Financial Partnership & working relationship

- Nature Conservancy Quebec
- Appalachian Corridor (ACA)
- Keeping Track
- Canadian Land Trust Alliance



Education

- SCHOOLCHILDREN OF POTTON COUNTY AND EASTMAN MUNICIPALITY

- 5th and 6th and 5-6 grade students from Mansonville's and Eastman's French and English schools participated in two classroom sessions, with Isabelle Grégoire followed by field outings. The theme this year was Flora with the production of an herbier, and wetlands. This possibility was made possible with funding received from the Programme de mise en valeur des ressources du milieu forestier - Volet II de la Table des MRC de l'Estrie, the Municipality of Potton, the Pacte Rural, the Townshippers fund and Pierre Paradis, Deputy of Brome-Missisquoi.
- As a result of collaboration with Citizen Advocacy, the students gave a public presentation at the Mansonville Youth Centre in the spring
- The Val de Grace School in Eastman present at the Eastman Art Gallery.

- PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:

- Prepare the students to present on what they have learned to their community;
- Teach the students to understand and distinguish between the different types of animal signs and tracks;
- Teach the students to understand and distinguish between the different types of native perennials
- Teach the students to understand the importance of preserving different kinds of habitat;
- Provide the opportunity for youths to teach others in their lives, their fellow students, parents and community members the importance of protecting a variety of habitats.

- KEEPING TRACK & TRACKING FLORA

The "education" principle of its mission is very important to RVL. On top of offering various timely workshops to raise awareness of flora and fauna, the Land Trust has participated actively in implementing, in the community, a training program for the identification of animal signs. Since 2002 "Keeping Track / "Faune sans frontières," has been offered to residents wishing to better understand animals and their habitat and to learn to identify telltale signs of their presence.

Once again this year the Land Trust organized funding to train volunteers to assist with the data collection on 10 focal species in the region.

A new course "Faune sans frontières/Flora" was offered this year. This course given by Louise Gratton focuses on using the key system to identify different species of ferns, shrubs, trees and wildflowers.

- WORKSHOPS

- How to manage your woodlot in an ecologically respectful manner was given with ACA in June.
- Caroline Dagué - Dragonflies and Demoiselles at the Shepherd's Dream lot in July.
- How to manage your woodlot for wildlife was given by Gaétan Champagne October 25th.

CONSERVATION

SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

- Universités de Sherbrooke (UdS), McGill and UQAM research project
The UdS team, headed by the Faculty of Science, continues on with the Chipmunk research project, which has been extended for another three years.
- Sue Morse did a wildlife habitat study on a lot contiguous to the RVLT holdings to record animal presence and habitat requirements for future work on establishing a teaching site for how to manage your woodlot for wildlife.

LAND: ACQUISITION, SERVITUDES & MAINTENANCE

• ACQUISITIONS

Stansje Plantenga donated 2 lots on Fullerton Pond Rd. Vulnerable species that will be protected are the large-leaved Bellwort, Maidenhair Fern, Butternut and the Northern Dusky Salamander. The habitat rich in its biodiversity is typical of the Appalachians.

• TRAIL MAINTENANCE

• NEW TRAILS AND ALLIANCES

- The RVLT worked in partnership with the Réserve des Montagnes vertes, Sentiers de l'Estrie and the Missisquoi North Back Country Pathways to set up the trail network linking the village of Mansonville to the RVLT holdings and the Réserve des Montagnes vertes.
- With the assistance of funding from The Hydro-Quebec Foundation considerable work was done in the Shepherd's Dream Sector. A new bridge was put in as well as gravel and culverts on the trails.
- The forest interpretation panels on this sector were redesigned and updated.
- As usual, autumn clean up and trail grooming in the winter was done by Eric Deschênes of Cultiv'Art. Eric patrols the trails regularly in winter and files reports on usage along with your comments! Thank-you to the volunteers who participated in the trail clean-up this year.
- The provincial eco-reserve on Fullerton Pond Road was monitored on their behalf on a quarterly basis