



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Georgian Bay Land Trust and the Canada Nature Fund protect 5,400 acres of key wilderness migration corridor

April 24, 2019 - Toronto, ON - The Canada Nature Fund and the Georgian Bay Land Trust today announced the completion of a conservation easement agreement to protect 5,400 acres of a pristine wilderness area on the eastern coast of Georgian Bay. Core funding of \$967,000 was supplied by the Nature Fund, with additional funding provided by the Echo Foundation and McLean Foundation. The Nature Conservancy of Canada did extensive initial field work that supported the Georgian Bay Land Trust's work on this project.

Named for the watershed it protects, the Tadenac Conservation Initiative preserves a regional biodiversity hotspot and contributes to Canada's target of protecting 17% of lands and inland waters by 2020. "This project enshrines the largest private landholding on the eastern Georgian Bay coast as a permanent sanctuary for nature," said Bill Lougheed, Executive Director of the Georgian Bay Land Trust. "It protects the aquatic and terrestrial habitats of one of the most diverse and ecologically intact places on the coast."

The eastern Georgian Bay area is recognized by UNESCO for its unique and spectacular habitat mosaic, which supports the largest diversity of reptile and amphibian species in Canada. The Tadenac Conservation Initiative protects the majority of one of the region's largest undisturbed natural areas, providing wilderness habitat for at least 32 species at risk including the Blanding's Turtle, Algonquin Wolf, and Bald Eagle, and 15 provincially rare plant species. It also includes nesting habitat for waterfowl and critical fish spawning and nursery areas used by endangered Lake Sturgeon.

The protected area also plays an essential role in establishing a protected habitat corridor along the Georgian Bay coast. Such intact corridors are of utmost importance for the survival of large mammals and migratory birds, and allow for greater ecological resiliency to climate change. The property's forests and wetlands also provide valuable ecosystem services including water purification, carbon sequestration, and flood and erosion prevention.

The land and lakebed included in the Tadenac Conservation Initiative will be protected by Conservation Easement and remain privately owned, with regular ecological monitoring to be undertaken by the Georgian Bay Land Trust. The initiative's primary purpose is to provide a sanctuary for biodiversity that will also provide opportunities for conservation-focused research. To this end, the landowners have established a foundation with a \$1 million endowment to support ongoing scientific research in this remarkable area.

QUOTES:

"The work of the Georgian Bay Land Trust and its partners is a great example of the leadership and collaboration needed to protect more of Canada's nature. By working together, we can double the amount of nature we're protecting from coast to coast to coast. This special place in Ontario will now be preserved for all Canadians for all time."

– Catherine McKenna, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

“The Nature Conservancy of Canada congratulates our partners the Georgian Bay Land Trust (GBLT) on the successful Tadenac Conservation Initiative. We look forward to working closely with GBLT to help study and steward this unique landscape.”

- Kristyn Ferguson, Program Director, Central Ontario West, Nature Conservancy of Canada.

ABOUT THE GEORGIAN BAY LAND TRUST

The Georgian Bay Land Trust is a registered charity dedicated to protecting wilderness lands along eastern Georgian Bay and the North Channel, through strategic conservation planning, land securement, stewardship, research, and education. We protect 59 ecologically significant properties stretching from Port Severn to the North Channel, which provide key habitat for 45 species at risk and recreational opportunities for communities. Find out more at gblt.org.

ABOUT THE CANADA NATURE FUND

The Canada nature fund provides for \$500 million of funding that will be matched by philanthropic foundations, corporate, not-for-profit, provincial, territorial and other partners who will contribute at least an additional \$500 million to raise a total of \$1 billion for conservation action. This funding will support the protection of Canada’s ecosystems, landscapes and biodiversity including species at risk. It is available to non-profit and Indigenous organizations, provinces and territories, and others.

<https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/nature-legacy/fund.html>

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