

Our Million Dollar Challenge

By Bob Barnett

Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) has offered Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) a challenge. They will match our donations up to \$1,200,000 to acquire land! We really appreciate their commitment to biodiversity and letting us help protect 25 per cent of Canada by 2025 and then 30 per cent by 2030!

We have 40 projects we could complete if we can find sufficient funds. The majority are land or agreement donations where we can complete the project for \$5,000 to \$10,000 with ECCC paying half. We also have several opportunities to purchase land. Sometimes the landowner has offered part of the value as a donation or other funders have stepped in to help. We project that if we can raise our side of the \$1,200,000 offer, we can protect 17 new sq km or 4,260 acres of nature. Below are some specific examples.

Michael's Bay East

This 300-acre project lies between EBC's new 488-acre Michael's Bay Reserve on Manitoulin's south shore and Blue Jay Creek Provincial Park. The cost to complete the purchase in late November was \$229,000, plus expenses of \$10,000. We received \$50,000 from another funder and used \$115,000 of ECCC funding. We only needed \$64,000 to complete the purchase. Your dollar to support this project buys almost \$4 worth of land and each acre needs only \$213.

Timber Bay

West of Manitoulin's Michael's Bay, we have purchased 202 more acres and 600 m of shoreline to add to our 300-acre reserve along the shore at Timber Bay. It closed in

September. We spent \$60,000 of EBC's funds plus that of two donors. If we replace that funding, we can push our resources that much further to acquire the projects below.

Pretty River

Near Collingwood, adjacent to Pretty River Provincial Park, this 101-acre conservation agreement will prevent hunting, allow only one house, and prevent severances or gravel pits. Our total cost to protect this \$75,000 agreement is only \$10,000, so our half of the cost is \$5,000 or \$50 per acre. Your dollar protects \$15 of conservation value. This project is representative of the landowner donating the land or agreement as a gift in kind. As you can see, we just need a few dollars to compete each one.

Kemble Mountain

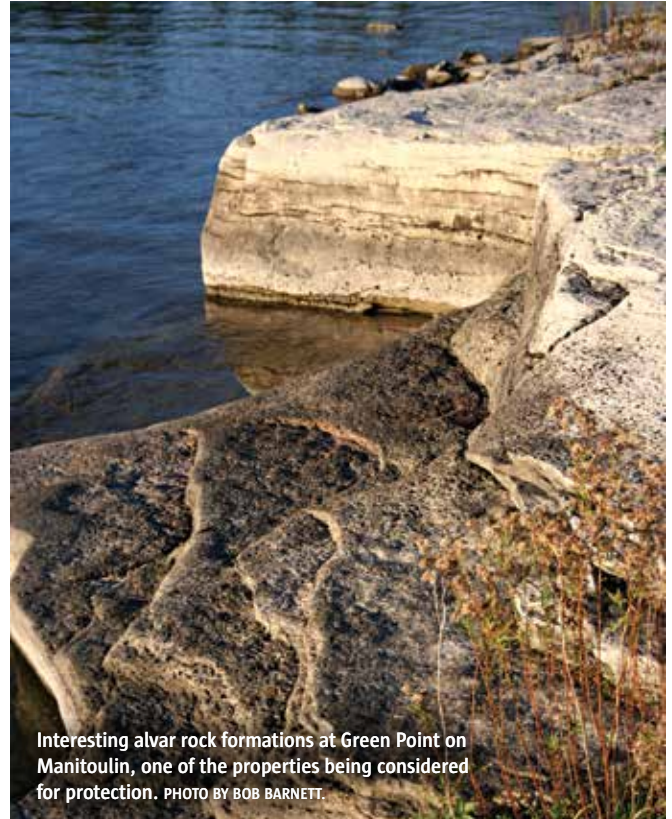
We have three other donations of Escarpment land coming near Kemble Mountain on the Bruce Peninsula. If we raise sufficient funding, we can use that and existing EBC funds to bring many more purchased projects. Following are some other projects we are negotiating for.

Long Swamp

We have received an offer of 200 acres of Long Swamp near Springmount, which is near Owen Sound and right beside three EBC reserves. This would consolidate our three Malcolm Kirk Reserves with those of Nature Conservancy and Ontario Nature.

Port Elgin

We could purchase a 34-acre property in Port Elgin on Lake Huron, southwest of Owen Sound, which will close half of the gap between our Campbell reserve and property donated to us by



Interesting alvar rock formations at Green Point on Manitoulin, one of the properties being considered for protection. PHOTO BY BOB BARNETT.

Canadian Auto Workers, and extend our trail there.

Green Point

On Manitoulin Island, we may be able to extend our Green Point Reserve by another 32 acres with 600 m of shoreline and alvar. We have a signed agreement to buy the land for \$160,000, contingent on raising the matching money. Beside that, there is a 2,200 acre parcel we'd love to add to our reserve which buffers the huge "Queen Mum" provincial park to the west. Established in 2014, the park's full name is Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Mnidoo Mnising Provincial Park.

With every donation, we can push into new frontiers. Land values are increasing. The faster we move, the more we can do. Please join us on this wild ride to secure the land by matching ECCC's funding before the best land becomes

developed and cottages ring the shores. We want our children and grandchildren to walk the trails and shore and gain inner peace. It costs you only \$60 to donate \$100. If you donate securities, it may only cost \$400 to donate \$1,000.

Your donation jumps from four times leverage to as much as 15 times with the landowner, ECCC and EBC matching! After tax savings, that grows to seven to 25 times. You can donate by cheque, by credit card over the phone, by email transfer, through our website or by arranging a donation of securities with your broker. Many people feel this would make a good gift or to remember a loved one or special person. This gift lasts forever.

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