



Bruce Trail
CONSERVANCY

Annual Meeting
September 22, 2018

Committee Reports

*These reports supplement information provided in the
2017-2018 Bruce Trail Conservancy Annual Report*

Governance Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

It is with great pleasure to report on the Governance Committee for this past Board year of 2017-2018. First, I wish to recognize our committee members:

Warren Bell (Board Chair & Ex-officio, Governance Committee)
Walter Brewer (Peninsula Bruce Trail Club)
Rob Graham (previous Chair, Governance Committee)
David Hass (Chair, Fundraising Committee)
Bruce King (Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club)
Leah Myers (Chair, Government Relations Task Force)
Anjlee Patel (new Chair, Governance Committee)
Frank Schoenhoeffer (Sydenham Bruce Trail Club)

I wish to thank the members of the committee for their work and to welcome our new chair of the Governance Committee, Anjlee Patel, who is a governance lawyer and Vice President, Legal at Infrastructure Ontario and a Director on a leading Hospital Board. All of these folks are terrific to work with. During 2016 and 2017, when the Bruce Trail Conservancy Board went through its governance review, it was a lot of work. Thank you all. I couldn't have asked for a better team!

On the elections front, our friend Sue Simons decided to retire from the Board in 2018, we thank Sue for her service. The Board of Directors nominated John Dickason as her replacement from the Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club. John is standing for election at this 2018 Annual Meeting. This has been the second year using our updated nominations and elections policies and the process ran smoothly. You can see these policies, and the by-laws, on the Bruce Trail Conservancy website under the Plans and Policies tab.

Our Board Chair and Vice Chair were re-elected to a second three-year term by their fellow Directors, the maximum under the rules (by-law #12). So, Warren Bell and John Grandy have returned as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively.

As the Bruce Trail Conservancy grows in the amount of trail secured, achieves new heights in fund raising and continues to grow our membership ranks to over ten thousand, the Board has re-aligned itself forming new committees and task forces including Government Relations, Human Resources and a stand-alone Risk Committee to focus the Board's considerable and diverse professional expertise on our strategic plan.

Like every other part of the Bruce Trail Conservancy family, the Governance Committee continues to play its part in our shared growth and success. I congratulate my fellow Directors on our progress to date. It remains a great pleasure to serve on the Bruce Trail Committee Board of Directors.

Best wishes for this year's Annual Meeting.

Submitted by Rob Graham
Bruce Trail Conservancy Board Director
Governance Committee Chair (Fiscal 2017-2018)

Risk Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

The Risk Committee directive is to ensure that risk assessments are systematically performed on all aspects of the Bruce Trail Conservancy, to ensure that potential risks are identified and mitigation strategies are developed to eliminate or reduce risks and the potential impacts of risks.

The following are currently the major areas of responsibilities;

- To ensure that risk analyses are systematically developed and related risk mitigation strategies are prepared and implemented
- To monitor the Risk Register and revise as needed
- To review incident reports and make recommendations as required
- To review and make recommendations to the Board on Bruce Trail Conservancy insurance policies
- To ensure the oversight and review of the Bruce Trail Conservancy Trail Audits
- To monitor the completion rates of the Trail Status Reports
- To review and make recommendations on reducing risk to the Bruce Trail Conservancy posed by its programs

Over the past year the committee has developed a Risk Register to better identify the risks that face the Bruce Trail Conservancy. The Register identifies the major risks and rates them for likelihood and severity taking into account the current mitigation strategies. This will provide the organization with an ongoing report on the current status of our major risks and if current mitigation strategies are satisfactory.

Other ongoing activities include a review of Incident Reports, Trail Audits and Insurance coverage. The Trail Audits for 2018 have been completed thanks to the team of knowledgeable trail auditors.

During the past year one of our committee members, Erik Best, opted to retire after many years of service. I would like to thank Erik for the insight and support that he provided to me and the committee. The other members of the committee are Lynn Allen, Cynthia Archer, Stephanie Bird, Rob Graham, David Lamb, Peter Leeney, Michael Treuman, Warren Bell (ex officio) and Jackie Randle as Staff Lead.

Submitted by David Lamb
Risk Committee Chair (Fiscal 2017-2018)

Fundraising Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

A summary of fundraising successes in Fiscal 2018 is provided in the Annual Report. Fiscal year 2018 was a strong year for donations to the Bruce Trail Conservancy – in particular cash donations. Although less land was donated in Fiscal 2018, *cash donations received in Fiscal 2018 were higher than in Fiscal 2017*. (And overall donations in Fiscal 2017 were significantly higher than Fiscal 2016 so it's a very positive trend.) This past fiscal we received our largest pledge ever, \$2 million from the Patrick J McNally Foundation. We are most appreciative and most grateful for all donations received.

The Bruce Trail Conservancy continued our productive work on our Escarpment Legacy Campaign. We are diligently moving ahead on our goal to increase our rate of protection of Escarpment lands and to shorten the projected time to secure the entire trail within its conservation corridor.

Thank you to the volunteers in the Clubs, the Land Securement Secretariat, the Staff and Board who have ensured that there is a roster of nature reserves along the Optimum Route, approved and entering the purchase process. There is nothing as instrumental in encouraging our donors to step forward than conserving precious lands.

The Bruce Trail Conservancy Board of Directors is consistently very helpful in monitoring and assisting with the Escarpment Legacy Campaign and the Clubs have also helped us to identify potential donors. Escarpment Legacy Campaign Ambassadors have taken on an expanded role in building relationships with prospective donors and telling our story.

As I turn the Chair of the Fundraising Committee over to David Hass, I note that it has been a pleasure to work with the members of the Fundraising Committee – (Warren Bell, John Grandy, David Hass, Bill Murphy, Sue Simons, Danielle Waters), the Escarpment Legacy Campaign Ambassadors (Gordon Nicholls, Bob Ferguson, Ruth Moffat, Wendy Thompson, Chris Hoffman, Michael Treuman, Carl Alexander and Dave Moule), the consultants, Bruce Trail Conservancy Staff and Board as we all strive to achieve the goal of securing this ribbon of wilderness, the Bruce Trail.

I am pleased and excited to remain an active member of the Bruce Trail Conservancy Fundraising Committee at such a key time in our history.

Submitted by Janice McClelland
Fundraising Committee Chair (Fiscal 2017-2018)

Finance Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

The Finance Committee discharged its responsibilities during the year as follows:

- reviewed internal financial statements on a periodic basis
- reviewed the annual Budget for recommendation to the Board prior to Board approval
- reviewed the year end audited financial statements, considered recommendations made by the Auditors and agreed with 2 of the 3 recommendations made. One recommendation was not implemented. It relates to accounting for annual fees by BTC. The amounts involved were not considered material item and since it would have required a significant amount of work by staff the Committee supported the decision to not implement the recommendation

In addition to the foregoing, the Committee oversaw the implementation of Club Reporting, which is an ongoing initiative. This work continues; the major issue to be resolved is whether full consolidation of the financial statements of the Clubs is required for the BTC.

Brian Johnston
Finance Committee Chair

Land Securement Secretariat Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

Our most recent year has been the most exciting year yet in the history of the Bruce Trail Conservancy Land Acquisition program. CEO, Beth Gilhespy will give you the details of the extraordinary progress we have made over the last year, and the increasing ambition with which we are able to acquire large, strategic properties.

Our small team of staff have been indefatigable in their work to close these deals, and I would like to express thanks on behalf of all members of the Land Securement Secretariat (LSS) for their efforts.

One important new feature in our ability to acquire key properties along the Trail has been our new strategy of buying developed properties – typically with an expensive house located on them – and then reselling the developed portion of the property while retaining the wilderness land. This strategy was proposed by a Bruce Trail Conservancy Board task force, and has now been successfully implemented on several occasions. Most notably, the Kerbel property (now the Maple Ridge Nature Reserve) in the Toronto section of the Bruce Trail, where we succeeded in selling off the house for close to one million dollars, resulting in a very low net cost to us for our conservation land. We are in a position to take on short-term mortgage loans if necessary to bridge the cost of such purchases.

A further recommendation from the task force was that LSS develop a ranking system for prospective properties. Each target property will be ranked based on factors such as its importance for trail routing and its conservation values. A first cut at this ranking system is now being rolled out. It is expected that this will assist the board in prioritizing our purchases.

During the year two of our most seasoned members in LSS retired. I would like to sincerely thank Ruth Moffatt (Niagara Bruce Trail Club) and Jack Morgan (Beaver Valley Bruce Trail Club) for their invaluable contributions to our discussions at LSS over many years.

Our land acquisition calendar for fiscal 2019 is already full! Even more exciting properties will be secured over the coming year.

Submitted by John Grandy
Land Securement Secretariat Chair

Government Relations Task Force Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

The Government Relations Task Force was approved by the Board of Directors at its meeting on February 3, 2018 with a mandate to, among other things, develop and support the execution of a government relations plan to help address the Bruce Trail Conservancy Strategic Priority 5 to enhance stakeholder relationships. Its term was approved until December 31, 2018, to be renewed by the Board of Directors if deemed necessary.

Members of the Task Force include myself as Chair, Danielle Waters, David Hass and Rob Graham. Warren Bell is an ex-officio member; Beth Gilhespy and Marsha Russell Bruce Trail Conservancy staff support the work of the Task Force.

At its first meeting on March 28th, the Task Force discussed its mandate, the current state of the Bruce Trail Conservancy's relationships with various levels of government and the desired outcomes related to improving the relationships. Issues related to Access to Provincial Lands (Ontario Parks and Conservation Authority lands) were identified as a priority.

At its May 22nd meeting, the Task Force reviewed the Access issues in detail. It also identified the need for effective key messages and metrics (eg., the number of users of the trail) to communicate with governments.

Discussions at the June 19th meeting focused on the outcome of the provincial election and next steps including letters of congratulations and requests for meetings with the Premier's Office and key Ministers, and the development of key messages. The Task Force also had an initial discussion about measuring the number of users of the trail.

I am expecting it to be a busy fall on the government relations front as we engage with elected officials and refine our metrics and messaging!

Submitted by Leah Myers
Government Relations Task Force Chair

Land Stewardship Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

This past year the Land Stewardship Committee has continued to work diligently on its mission to protect and restore all land under care of the Bruce Trail Conservancy. Our nine Bruce Trail Club Land Stewardship Directors helped to coordinate a team of over 200 Land Stewards and initiated a variety of stewardship events aimed at managing our conservation land. These included the installation of bird and bee houses, planting of native wildflowers, trees and shrubs, confirmation and marking of Bruce Trail Conservancy property boundaries, invasive species control, and installation of infrastructure to prevent vehicular intrusion and trespassing.

2017 saw some sizeable properties added to the Bruce Trail Conservation Corridor and the team that represents the Land Stewardship Committee stepped up to the ever-increasing task of managing them as to conservation standards.

The Annual Report describes some of the activities of the Land Stewardship Committee, including the partnership with the Ontario Land Trust Alliance to perform bat and Loggerhead Shrike surveys on some of our properties north of Wiarton, the continued efforts of staff, Land Stewards and Land Stewardship Directors to identify healthy Butternut trees for the Forest Gene Conservation Association to aid in their recovery, the installation of boot brush stations with the Bruce Peninsula Sportsmen's Association to help curb the spread of invasive species and the ongoing effort to locate and protect all rare species that exist on Bruce Trail Conservancy managed land.

Trail Development & Maintenance Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

Keeping our trail open, safe, and convenient for hikers is a constant challenge. In the spring of 2018, we experienced 2 severe wind storms and a late April ice/snow storm over a one-month period. Numerous trees were brought down along the entire length of the Trail. As always, our dedicated volunteers responded quickly to make the Trail passable again.

The increased pace of Land Securement led to trail reroutes in several club sections. The acquisition of the Dunedin Ravine property last year, enabled the Blue Mountains Bruce Trail Club to move the trail onto a beautiful new route, and eliminate 600m of road walking.

In the Beaver Valley section of the Bruce Trail, the acquisition of the Daphne and Gordon Nicholls Nature Reserve made it possible to open 910m of new trail on the Optimum Route.

In the Toronto section of the Bruce Trail, land purchases led to 2 significant reroutes: the 650m Ridge Side Trail near Limehouse, and 5.8 km of new main trail on Optimum Route east of Terra Cotta.

In the Sydenham section of the Bruce Trail, the Sydenham Nature Reserve near Rockford now has an attractive new loop side trail connecting with the Keeling Side Trail.

While land securement is an essential component of our strategy to complete our Trail on the Optimum Route, there is still an important place for traditional handshake agreements with private owners. One such agreement led to a 1.6 km reroute in the Sydenham section of the Bruce Trail, just to the northeast of our Kemble Rock Nature Reserve. This removed our main trail from a very muddy section of Coles Side Road.

An activity that was undertaken jointly by Trail Development and Maintenance, Land Securement, and Landowner Relations Committees is the comprehensive review of our Optimum Route, to ensure that it is up-to-date and achievable, and that it takes into account all practical opportunities for our “ribbon of wilderness”. This has begun to bear fruit, as the Niagara Bruce Trail Club was able to make 2 trail improvements identified by our review: one at Woodend, and another in Short Hills. Both changes resulted in a more attractive trail with less road walking.

The Optimum Route review has been carried out with 3 clubs so far; the remaining 6 clubs will be done over the next year.

Submitted by Dave Moule
Trail Development & Maintenance Committee Chair

Landowner Relations Committee Report to the Bruce Trail Conservancy

September 22, 2018

On March 29, 2018, BTC Club Landowner Relations (LOR) Directors gathered with volunteers from a number of other land trusts at the BTC head office for a full day workshop on the topic of landowner relations. Topics covered included understanding the difference between handshake and license agreements and options that secure the trail and land. We touched on the impact of Bill 100 and the Ontario Trails Act, 2016. We also learned about the types of landowners we have, their concerns and ways to address them plus a host of other interesting topics to assist us in landowner relations.

Many club LOR Directors also attended a full day workshop on the topic of land securement which was held at the BTC head office on April 12, 2018. The workshop was attended by BTC volunteers and also those from other land trusts who are interested in fully securing trails and ecologically sensitive lands. Topics included an overview of the land trust community, land securement options available to landowners and land trusts, as well as planning policies that control development. Guest speakers included industry professionals who survey and appraise land and those who provide insurance.

BTC staff are meeting with the clubs to discuss their current approach to establishing and maintaining effective relationships with landowners who have granted handshake agreements, and owners of land adjacent to the Bruce Trail and BTC properties. Through these discussions we hope to improve or develop new strategies and initiatives to increase handshake agreements/and or acquisitions.

The Beaver Valley BTC should be commended on the launch of their Ambassador Land Group initiative. This is a new approach to landowner relations that divides the Trail into a number of smaller and more manageable sections which are overseen by an Ambassador, who then reports to the LOR Director. The club has worked closely with BTC staff on this initiative and it's a model we hope might work for other clubs. In fact, the Iroquoia club is working on implementing the model and have three potential ambassadors at this point.

In addition to discussions on how landowner outreach can be improved, LOR Directors are participating in the Optimum Route (OR) review so that they have a precise understanding of which properties they must target in order to fully secure the Trail through their club section. OR reviews have been completed for Niagara, Iroquoia and Toronto club sections. By October staff hope to have completed Beaver Valley, Peninsula and Blue Mountains club sections and to coordinate a date to meet with the Sydenham club to review their OR section.

By the Annual Meeting all clubs should have picked up their 2019 Calendars, one of the BTC's oldest, but much loved, outreach tools and token of landowner appreciation. In addition, there are a number club landowner appreciation events planned. The events include gathering landowners and volunteers for dinners or guided hikes and other initiatives as a way to show appreciation to landowners who support the Trail. These events are extended to adjacent landowners as well to foster relationships with them in hopes of receiving handshake agreements or better yet, securing the Trail in these locations. Landowners also receive the Bruce Trail Magazine and club newsletters and are encouraged to join organized hikes and other club and BTC events.

Submitted by Doug Yungblut
Landowner Relations Committee Chair (Fiscal 2017-2018)