



Quarterly Newsletter April, 2013

The Conservators, with their main partner and Marsh owners, the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (**RRCA**), together with Cornwall and Area Birding Club (**CABC**), the St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences (**SLRIES**) are working hard to restore and improve the outstanding facilities of Cooper Marsh in Summerstown, Ontario.

A drawdown to remove much cattail overgrowth was started in August 2011 with assistance from Ducks Unlimited Canada and will last at least 4 years. This explains the lack of water in the Marsh, with some overgrowth of non-wetland vegetation.

New areas of open water (ponds) with connecting channels that resist cattail invasion will be created and the existing pond bordered by the viewing blinds will be restored. This will create an improved environment for water birds, turtles, amphibian, fish and other wildlife and create new breeding habitat for birdlife.

The Cooper Marsh Conservators, with their partners, began a fundraising drive “Get on Board” in January 2012 to revitalize the Cooper Marsh by first raising funds to rebuild the aging boardwalk. To increase visibility, a new wheelchair accessible viewing platform will be constructed this summer adjacent to the Visitors’ Centre. Another will be built to the northwest of the visitors’ centre. The short boardwalks leading to the two viewing blinds will be restored next winter.

Volunteers from CABC will again be staffing the Visitors’ Centre during the spring, summer and fall to make your visit to the Marsh more enjoyable. The Cooper Marsh Conservators thank CABC for their considerable commitment to Cooper Marsh and fundraising. A YouTube publicity video is being prepared.

Fundraising for these activities is well underway. Our total goal is over \$400,000. We have already raised \$281,000. **Boardwalk reconstruction has started on the eastern section this past winter (2012/13), continuing next winter.** We thank the RRCA construction crew who endured some very cold weather.

The Cooper Marsh Conservators Inc. have contributed \$10,000 towards the project – funds raised in recent years. **Other donations** include \$6,600 from the Township of South Glengarry; \$1,000, Ontario Power Generation; \$2,000, Enbridge; \$1,000, CABC; \$1,000, SLRIES; \$1,000, St. Lawrence College Students’ Green Team; \$3,000, Toronto Dominion Friends of the Environment; \$7,500, TransCanada Corporation; \$100,000, Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Community Futures Development Corporation, \$125,726 Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund and generous in-kind help with construction from RRCA who own the Marsh.

The general public has already contributed over \$12,000 in donations. We thank you all for your generosity.

Applications for funding continue to be submitted to different sources that support environmental conservation. We are now asking local businesses to support our fundraising as well as other provincial and federal organizations. **Donors will be recognized beside the visitors’ centre on Totem Recognition Posts.**

We invite you to “**GET ON BOARD**” and join us in this venture as a donor partner and/or as a volunteer. The **Cooper Marsh Conservators Inc.** is a registered charity and all donations are tax deductible.

Please forward your donations to Normand Genier, C.M.C.Inc., Treasurer, c/o Raisin Region Conservation Authority, 18045 Cty.Rd.2, P.O. Box 429, Cornwall, ON K6H 5T2. Include your name and address so we can acknowledge your contribution and send you an official tax receipt.

Visit our website at www.rrca.on.ca/CooperMarsh as we will post new developments on our project as we move forward. We welcome new volunteers who should also contact Normand.