



Quarterly Newsletter March, 2014

The Cooper Marsh Conservators (**CMC**), with the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (**RRCA**) owners of the **marsh**, together with Cornwall and Area Birding Club (**CABC**), the St. Lawrence River Institute of Environmental Sciences (**SLRIES**) and Ducks Unlimited Canada (**DUC**) have been working hard to restore and improve the outstanding facilities of Cooper Marsh Conservation Area in Summerstown, Ontario.

A drawdown to remove cattail overgrowth was started in August 2011 with assistance from DUC. This drawdown, which is in its third year, will last at least 4 years. This explains the lack of water in the Marsh, which will see some of the overgrowth of non-wetland vegetation being eliminated and therefore creating more open water areas.

New ponds and channels to restore lost wildlife breeding habitat, deep enough to resist cattail invasion, were created in January, 2014 beside the eastern boardwalk. In addition to the new wheelchair accessible viewing platform by the visitors' centre, **another viewing platform was built in January of this year beside Lake St. Francis on the perimeter dyke surrounding the main wetland enclosure.**

Together with their partners, CMC began a fundraising drive "Get on Board" in January, 2012 to revitalize the Cooper Marsh by first raising funds to rebuild the aging boardwalk. The eastern and western sections of the boardwalk have now been rebuilt and widened. Short boardwalks to viewing blinds were replaced in summer, 2013. We congratulate the construction team, which included 3 summer students with the workcrew from the Raisin Region Conservation Authority on an outstanding job.

Volunteers from CABC will again be staffing the Visitors' Centre on weekends this spring, summer and fall, to make your visit to the Marsh more enjoyable. CMC thanks CABC for their considerable commitment to Cooper Marsh. A YouTube publicity and fundraising video has been created and is posted on YouTube and our website (see below). We thank Vince Pilon for his excellent work on the video.

Fundraising for further habitat restoration work, creating additional ponds and channels, and renovation of viewing blinds continues. Our total fundraising goal is over **\$350,000, of which we have so far raised almost \$300,000.** CMC have contributed **\$10,000** towards the project from earlier fundraising activities. **Other donations** include \$10,000 from the Township of South Glengarry; \$1,000, Ontario Power Generation; \$2,000, Enbridge; \$1,000, CABC; \$1,000, SLRIES; \$1,012, St. Lawrence College Green Team; \$7,000, TD Friends of the Environment; \$7,500, TransCanada Corporation; \$100,000, Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry Community Futures Development Corporation, \$109,373 Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund (latter two are federal grants); \$10,000, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario and \$20,000 in funding from RRCA. **The general public and local businesses have already contributed over \$20,546 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 continuing to ask local businesses to support our fundraising as well as other organizations. **All donors will be recognized beside the Visitors' Centre on Recognition Posts. A fundraising raffle is under way with the draw at the CMC Spring Fling at Cooper Marsh visitors' centre on April 27th.**

We invite you to **"GET ON BOARD"** and join us in this venture as a donor partner and/or as a volunteer. **CMC is a registered charity and all donations are tax deductible. You can donate electronically and securely by entering Cooper Marsh on your search engine and clicking on CanadaHelps. Alternatively, please forward your donations to The Treasurer, Cooper Marsh Conservators Inc., c/o Raisin Region Conservation Authority, 18045 Cty.Rd.2, P.O. Box 429, Cornwall, ON K6H 5T2.** Include your name, address and e-mail so we can recognize your contribution at Cooper Marsh, send you an official tax receipt and keep you updated.