

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2004



As one of the leading land trusts in Ontario, our mission is simple:  
*Protect the special natural features of the Couchiching region for future generations.*

We achieve that mission through a variety of means – land donations and conservation easements, partnerships with other organizations on major land purchases, encouraging good stewardship by private landowners, engaging volunteers in conservation activities. Community support makes our success possible.

Everything we do is focused on the protection of ecologically sensitive lands, directly or indirectly. Land protection is our top priority, and sound management is our bottom line.

*The  
Couchiching  
Conservancy*

We are a non-profit organization, incorporated in 1993, and registered as Canadian charity No. 13972 5030 RR 0001.



# 2004 A Good Year for Conservation

## Securing priority lands for conservation

After the successful acquisition of Cameron Ranch Alvar in 2003, we initiated another major project early in 2004 in cooperation with Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Parks, and other conservation groups. The 1600-acre Windmill Ranch, which abuts the east side of Cameron Ranch, is being purchased at an overall project cost of approximately \$1 million.

The Couchiching Conservancy has committed to raise \$100,000 towards this significant purchase, and we hope to attract an additional \$10-15,000 to cover our campaign costs. By the end of 2004, \$80,000 had been received, and we are hopeful that the property transfer will take place in the spring of 2005.

Sandy Agnew, a former Board member, completed the donation of a conservation easement on part of his rural property during 2004. The easement protects 39 acres within a significant wetland near the headwaters of Hogg Creek.

During the course of 2004, Conservancy staff met with four other landowners who intend to make future land donations, and explored the potential for acquisition of several other properties.



## Encouraging private land stewardship

A wrap-up of a three-year program on the Oro Moraine took place in February 2004 with the presentation of Stewardship Awards to 28 private landowners who have carried out good land stewardship in the past. The lands covered by these Awards includes over 1800 acres.

The Carden Plain Important Bird Area Committee continues to be active in promoting conservation activities in that area, including replacement of an interpretive sign, joint projects with students from Sir Sanford Fleming College to erect Wood Duck boxes, and planning for a new nature guide and conference.

## Managing lands for nature

With the Conservancy now involved in managing 18 properties totalling over 4600 acres, the ongoing involvement of our volunteer teams is vital. We provided two volunteer training sessions in April, and a bus tour of some of our properties in June.

Several properties received special attention during 2004. The Cameron Ranch hosted six breeding pairs of Loggerhead Shrikes, and volunteers carried out the first annual monitoring of breeding birds at 16 stations. A multi-stakeholder management committee reviewed interim management guidelines and recommended new public access guidelines and measures to better manage cattle on the property. An attractive new gate sign was installed by our volunteers.

Grant's Woods was also a focus of attention, with a total of nine footbridges now in place on a series of looped trails over four kilometres in length. A trailhead sign and interpretive booklet were completed, and Orillia Home Depot donated materials and expert volunteers to build a large Eco-gazebo for educational use. The Official Opening of the Conservancy

Centre at Grant's Woods took place in early September, and many visitors are taking advantage of the facilities now available. The Conservancy office is now settled in the fully-renovated house at Grant's Woods.

Another important development late in 2004 was the announcement by the Province of new regulations defining "Community Conservation Lands", which exempts our nature reserves from property tax. This incentive will be a major benefit in reducing our management costs in future years.

## Reaching out to the community



Increasing our membership was a major goal in 2004. Under the direction of a membership committee involving Nathalie Rockhill, Joan Rosebush, and Pat Tryon, we were able to double our active membership. Past members have been very faithful, with a 94% renewal rate.

Through a grant from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, we were able to hire an Outreach Coordinator, Rosalie Pratt, late in 2004. Rose is spearheading several new events and activities for 2005, including a return of the popular hands-on display of live snakes at Orillia Square Mall made possible through the generosity of Scienstational Ssnakes.

Dr. Nancy Ironside, a local naturalist, has added a new element to our web page ([www.couchconservancy.ca](http://www.couchconservancy.ca)) by contributing her lists of mushrooms from various sites across Ontario. We hope to be able to add other ecological data in future, in part because of a generous donation from Nancy to support our web page over the next 10 years.

The Conservancy has also contributed to the broader conservation community. We were highlighted as a case study in a report of Best Practices in Environmental Grantmaking prepared for Community Foundations of Canada. Our staff participated on an advisory group for the County of Simcoe Official Plan, and a committee preparing national standards for conservation easements. Executive Director Ron Reid represented Canada at an international conference on private land stewardship in Spain.

## Looking ahead to 2005

We expect that 2005 will be a busy and exciting year for the Conservancy, including:

- Σ • Completion of several major land protection projects;
- Σ • Launching of a new collaborative project on the shallow rockland areas along the edge of the Shield, called The Land Between;
- Σ • Development of an education program at Grant's Woods in collaboration with Friends of Wye Marsh;
- Σ • Continued emphasis on membership growth, including a new corporate membership program;
- Σ • Hosting of a major Earth Day event on April 23rd at Grant's Woods;
- Σ • Delivering a public event at the Orillia Opera House on September 24 with Bob MacDonald of CBC Radio's Quirks and Quarks;
- Σ • Hosting a conference on the future of the Carden Plain on September 21. ∞

# 2004 An Overview of 2004 Finances

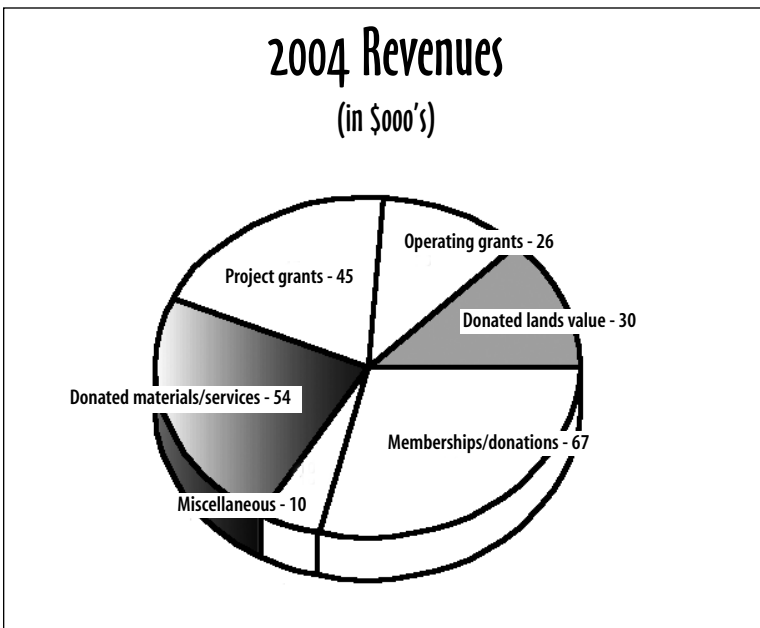
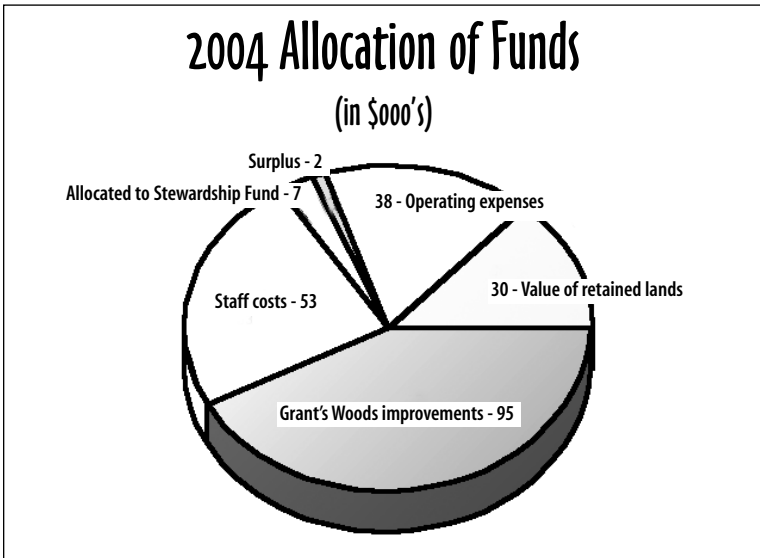
Our overall revenues were lower this year than in 2003, largely because of major 2003 donations associated with the Cameron Ranch Alvar project and Grant's Woods. However, revenue from cash donations and memberships increased significantly in 2004, as part of a long-term strategy to decrease our reliance on foundation grants. As shown on the Revenues chart, we have included the value of donated materials and services for the renovations to

Grant House, which complemented a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Several other grants were received late in the year; in total, just over \$90,000 is on hand for projects next year including over \$56,000 for the Windmill Ranch project. These are not included as part of 2004 revenues.

Overall, our operating expenditures were approximately \$224,000 for the year, including the value of retained lands and the materials and services which add to the capital value of Grant House. As shown in the summary of Allocation of Funds, we were able to achieve a small operating surplus.

By Board policy, some funds are held as investments for special purposes. At our 2004 year-end (October 31), the Acquisition Fund contained \$64,042. The Property Stewardship Fund, which is intended to help maintain properties in perpetuity, stood at \$61,321, with an additional \$6500 to be added from revenues collected during 2004. Investments and cash accounts for general operations and projects totalled approximately \$116,000, up slightly from the previous year.

A more detailed breakdown of 2004 revenues and expenditures is available on request in financial statements prepared by our accountant Jack Booth. ∞



# 2004 Our Thanks to Our Supporters

Without the support of our community, and of many individuals and agencies, the Conservancy would have little success. We particularly want to gratefully acknowledge the support of:

- The **Ontario Trillium Foundation**, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, which receives annually \$100 million in government funding generated through Ontario's charity casino initiative.

*We also received grants during 2004 from:*

- The George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
- HIVA Environmental Fund (for Windmill Ranch)
- Wildlife Habitat Canada
- Shell Environmental Fund
- North Simcoe Private Land Stewardship Network
- Charles Fell Charitable Trust
- The Sustainability Network
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- Ontario Job Connects
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- Community Foundation of Orillia and Area



Other organizations are an important source of support for Conservancy operations and projects. During 2004, we received contributions and volunteer support from:

- Kawartha Field Naturalists
- Orillia Naturalists Club
- Severn Township Ratepayers' Association
- Orillia Lions Club
- Orillia Fish and Game Conservation Club
- Twin Lakes Conservation Club
- Orillia Horticultural Society
- Marchmont Elementary School
- Sir Sanford Fleming College students
- North Simcoe Stewardship Rangers
- Volunteers for Nature
- Pickering Horticultural Society
- York Simcoe Naturalists Club ☺

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## The following individuals and groups

contributed \$100 or more to the Conservancy and its projects during 2004, not including Windmill Ranch donations which are listed separately.

The support from all of our donors is greatly appreciated.



Sandy Agnew  
Blair Bailey  
Margaret Carney  
Richard M. Clarke  
William and Dawn Davidson  
Gwendolyn R. Drew  
Don Evans  
Barbara Fallis & J. Miller  
Derek Ford  
Kim Gavine  
Michael Gordon  
James & Sheila Graham  
Janet Grand & Ron Reid  
William M. Grant  
Robert & Linda Hansen  
Robert J. Howard  
Mary Hunter  
Nancy Ironside  
Luke & Lorna Irwin  
Theresa Jenkins  
John & Sharon Jenkins  
Harvie & Shirley Johnson  
Marian & Harry Kits  
Duncan MacKenzie  
Cam and Mary Maltby  
Greg Jaski & Joanne Massig  
Dr. John McCulloch  
Hugh and Sheila McLachlan  
Alan McNair & Barbara Marshall  
Dorothy McRobb  
Judy Mitchell-Wilson  
Ann Murphy  
Peter & Donna Paul  
John Pitts  
Lou Probst  
Stanley Roberts  
Rocke & Barbara Robertson  
Hilary Robinson  
Nathalie Rockhill  
Evelyn Romero  
Joan & John Rosebush  
Ian Ross  
Don Ross  
Donald Scott & Kristi McKechnie  
Murray & Marcia Stephen  
J. Louise Stewart  
Wendy & Robert Sullivan  
Paul Sullivan  
Isabelle Theiss  
Ken & Corinne Thomson  
Matthew & Jane Valk  
J.R. (Mack) Williams  
C. Barry Withers  
Bernice Wyndowe

*Plus an additional 13 generous donors who wished to remain anonymous.*

## Corporate Support

*Many companies around the Orillia area have provided services, products, sponsorships or other assistance to the Conservancy during the past year. We particularly want to thank:*

- The Crow's Nest
- The Bird House Nature Company
- EcoMedic Ecosystem Restoration Services
- C.T. Strongman Surveying Ltd
- Chrisandra Firth: Zwicker Evans & Lewis
- Peter W. Gill Landscape Consultant
- Bell Canada Employee Volunteer Fund
- The Wild Bird Trading Company
- Rob Cutler: TD Waterhouse
- Russell Christie Miller Koughan Winnitoy
- Boston Pizza
- Food Basics Orillia
- Grover's Family Restaurant
- Highland Farms
- Renee Good: Royal LePage
- Artech Promotional Wear
- Hinterland Design
- Scensational Ssnakes
- Orillia Square Mall
- Old Tin House, Kirkfield
- Kirkfield Restaurant
- Lake Dalrymple Resort
- Sir William Mackenzie Inn

*Another group of businesses and trades have provided very generous support for the renovations of the house on Grant's Woods for use as a conservation training centre. As well as the numerous businesses listed in last year's Annual Report, we want to thank the following community-minded businesses and individuals for their support to make this project possible:*

- Strato Steel Kearney Company
- Speedy Signs
- Orillia Home Depot
- Jim Wares Aluminum
- The Water Market
- Dave Beckett
- Ray Kiff
- David Kennedy

## The Windmill Ranch Campaign

*The success of the campaign to purchase and protect Windmill Ranch is based on the broad range of support received from across Ontario. Organizations and businesses that donated to this project are included in the lists above. The following individuals provided major contributions during 2004:*

Ed & Vivien Abbott  
Charles Adey  
Ian Attridge  
Harold Atwood  
Jane & Gordon Ball  
Roger Ball & Barbara Massey  
Robert K. Ballantyne  
Ronald Beltz  
John & Janice Bick  
Konrad Brenner  
Kenneth & Mildred Brown  
Robert Browne  
Walter & Andrea Bunn  
John Robert Carley  
Douglas & Barbara Christie  
Richard Clarke  
Frank Cook  
Robert Cutler  
Bill & Helenmaria Darker  
Elinor Dearden  
Leo & Carolyn DeLoyde  
Gwendolyn Drew  
Leslie Dymont  
Barbara Elend  
Barbara Fallis  
Cyril Fry  
Shirley Gawman  
Elizabeth Gillan  
John A. Gingrich  
Joseph Glaister  
Barbara Glass  
Michael Gordon  
William M. Grant  
Jim Griffin  
Sidney Hadlington  
Marian & Harry Hall  
Ron & Sharon Hancock  
Diane Hardwick  
Nancy Harris  
Barbara Hart  
David & Juliana Hawke  
Linda Hellas & Ian Hale  
Sharon R. Hepditch  
Tim Hillson

# The Windmill Ranch Campaign

continued...

Margo Holt  
Robert J. Howard  
Wendy & Al Hutchings  
Mardi Hutchings  
Morris Ilyniak  
Herbert Irwin  
Greg Jaski  
Tom Jenkins  
Theresa Jenkins  
Sharon & John Jenkins  
Harvie & Shirley Johnson  
Jean Johnson  
Eleanor N. Kerr  
Ray & Janet Kiff  
Howard & Byung Kim  
Marian & Harry Kits  
Myrtle Lamb  
E.M. Langstaff-Veale  
Ellen Larsen  
Frances Laver  
Scott Laver & Tawnya Hallman  
Betty Learmouth  
Robert J. Leask  
Paul & Joan Leeson  
William Lewis  
John & Gail Little  
Wendy & Si Lowry  
M. Ruth Malcolm

Cam & Mary Maltby  
Beulah Martin  
Joanne Massig  
Wendy McComb  
John McCulloch  
Jane McCulloch & John Hunter  
Sheila & Hugh McLachlan  
Alan McNair and Barbara Marshall  
Janet Meldrum  
Michael & Margaret Michalski.  
W. Omer and Mary Mick  
Elaine R. Milner  
Kevin W. Moran  
Jean O'Grady  
Lougi Orsi  
Barbara & Ron Peat  
Mike Pidwerbecki  
Alice Pitt  
John Pitts & Kathleen Milligan  
Lou Probst  
Jack A. Reid  
Florence Reilly  
Barbara Robertson  
Hilary Robinson  
Nathalie Rockhill  
Mark Rolland  
John and Joan Rosebush  
Jean E. Sarjeant

Jack Seigel and Connie Cochrane  
Steven Stamper  
Murray & Marcia Stephen  
John Strathearn  
Chuck & Susan Strongman  
Robert Sullivan  
Ric & Sandy Symmes  
Vern & Barb Taylor  
Gary & Isabelle Thiess  
Renee and Gary Thompson  
Adam & Shirley Thomson  
F. Beverley Troupe  
N & C Turnbull  
Anne Waggoner  
Margaret Lois Wakeman  
Bill Westcott  
Bev Westman  
Leanore Wiancko  
Mack Williams  
Dan Williams  
Susan Willsey  
Pat and Jim Woodford  
Susan Woods & Fred Beck  
Norm Yan  
Dr. W. Zufelt

*Plus several very generous individuals  
who asked to remain anonymous.*

## Our Volunteers are Priceless



This year has shown once again the talent and dedication of our volunteers. They participate on property management teams, work on bridges and trails at Grant's Woods, help with fundraising, sit on committees, and do a hundred other useful things. They are the lifeblood of the Conservancy.

For the past several years, **Gwen Drew** has served as our volunteer coordinator, and she welcomes enquiries by anyone who would like to get involved. Among out most active volunteers are our Board members, who dedicate many hours to overseeing Conservancy affairs as well as often being involved in projects.

At each annual meeting, we present silver pins to recognize special volunteer dedication and special friends of the Conservancy. This year, pins are being presented to **Kim Gavine** for her five years of service as a Board member and active participants in Conservancy activities, to **Sharon Jenkins** and **Konrad Brenner** for their many hours of volunteer labour on the Grant House renovations, to **Nancy Ironside** for her innovative support of the Conservancy's web page, and to **Sherry Lawson** for her enthusiastic and cheerful support for the Conservancy and other community organizations.

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**Our thanks to  
our volunteers  
(and our apologies if  
we missed anyone)**



Photo by David Hawke

Agnew, Sandy  
Allison, Gail & Doug  
Allison, Bill  
Atwood, Harold  
Babbineau, Rose  
Ball, Gord & Jane  
Ballard, Elena  
Bennet, Pearl  
Betts, Charles  
Bissett, Mark  
Bowden, Lydia  
Bowles, Bob  
Bowman, Ken  
Bray, Nancy  
Brenner, Konrad  
Buchanan, Terry & Anne  
Byer, Reid  
Card, Mary Jane  
Christie, Douglas  
Connor, Kathy  
Cooney, Colleen  
Cutler, Robert  
Dagloria, John  
Darker, Bill & Helenmaria  
Darker, Dave & Amy  
DeBiase, Paul  
Drew, Gwendolyn  
Duncan, Ted  
Dyment, Leslie  
Engeland, Linda  
Fildey, Donna  
Finley, Elaine  
Firth, Chrisandra  
Forman, Ed  
Gamroth, Mary Sue & Avery  
Gauldie, Heather  
Gavine, Kim  
Gill, Peter & Pat  
Good, Renee  
Gordon, Michael  
Govendo, Leon  
Grand, Janet  
Hadlington, Dorothy & Sid  
Hall, Harry  
Harte, Peter  
Haskins, Joanne  
Hatch, Mark  
Hathaway, Jeff  
Hawke, David & Juliana  
Hawke, John  
Hepinstall, Janalea  
Hodgson, Tony  
Holt, Margo  
Hungate, John  
Hunt, Katrina  
Ilyniak, Morris  
Ingram, Nancy  
Ironside, Nancy  
Jaski, Greg

Jenkins, John & Sharon  
Kelk, Al  
Kerr, Jacqui  
Kim, Howard & Byung  
Kirby, Mary Lou  
Koughan, Bill  
Lauer, Rhonda & Tim  
Lenssen, Ted  
Leyland, Don & Marion  
Lombardi, Lina  
MacDonald, Keith  
Macdonald, Jim & Cathy  
MacNaughton, Ann Marie  
MacPherson, Allan  
Madden, John  
Marshall, Sandra  
Massig, Joanne  
McCabe, Kristie  
McCreath, Paul  
McDowell, Linda  
McKechnie, Kristi  
Mick, Omer & Mary  
Miller, Jeff  
Mitchener, Gord  
Mould, Brian  
Ness, Ken & Estelle  
Noble, Jacquelyn  
Oliver, Bill  
Patterson, Cathie  
Pierce, Jenny  
Pitts, John  
Probst, Lou & Judy  
Reid, Ron  
Richard, Mike & Terry  
Rockhill, Nathalie

Rosebush, Joan & John  
Ross, Don  
Rowe, Nickolas  
Rowell, David  
Russell, Paul  
Sales, Pam  
Scott, Don  
Seager, Brad  
Seigel, Jack & Connie  
Sloley, Jane  
Smith, Ken & Judy  
Smith, Dennis  
Stanton, Jim  
Stephen, Murray  
Stinson, David  
Stoutt, Dan  
Sullivan, Judy  
Sullivan, Robert & Wendy  
Symmes, Ric  
Taylor, Vern  
Thiess, Gary & Isabelle  
Thomson, Adam & Shirley  
Thomson, Dave  
Thomson, Ken & Corinne  
Tomlinson, Cindy & Neil  
Tryon, Brett & Pat  
VanderMarel, Ingrid  
Wagner, Doug & Marg  
Wand, Kim  
Watt, Val  
Wells, Greta  
Whitman, Bill & Christie  
Wilkins, Dave & Mary  
Woodford, Jim & Pat

## The Couchiching Conservancy Board 2004

**Bob Sullivan**, President .....325-8775  
**Nathalie Rockhill**, Vice-President .....438-1301  
**Rob Cutler**, Treasurer .....robert.cutler@td.com  
**Kim Gavine** .....835-5716  
**Earl Dertinger** .....487-2840  
**Dan Stoutt** .....325-5262  
**Renee Good** .....326-2563  
**Isabelle Thiess** .....326-5547  
**Joan Rosebush** .....329-1448  
**Ron Reid**, Executive Director .....326-1620

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Charitable Reg. No.  
13972503ORR0001

*The  
Couchiching  
Conservancy*

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