



East Cross Forest Conservation Area

A Township of Scugog Initiative

In 2002, the Township of Scugog established the **Test Hill Task Force**. Its purpose was to develop a long-term strategy to address illegal activity taking place in the south eastern area of the Township, near the headwaters of the East Cross Creek. Major issues included trespassing, dumping, hunting and environmental damage.

In November 2003, the task force, renamed the East Cross Forest Task Force, released a report entitled **Proposal for the Protection of East Cross Forest**, which recommended that a comprehensive acquisition strategy be developed. One of the recommendations was to seek funding to undertake and sustain restoration and management activities. A large grant was subsequently secured through the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation.

In December 2005, the team turned over leadership of the initiative to Kawartha Conservation who agreed to hold title to future properties and manage them as a conservation area. The Team assumed the role of a stakeholder group to provide input into the management plan.

In 2005 the Nature Conservancy of Canada approached Kawartha Conservation with regard to a significant tract of land that was available as a donation. The property was within the targeted acquisition area of East Cross Forest. Discussions began, and in October 2006 Mr. Erast Huculak donated 552 acres of property to the Nature Conservancy of Canada, who then transferred title to Kawartha Conservation.

Generosity Moves the Vision Forward

In October of 2006, **Mr. Erast Huculak** came forward with a donation of just over 233 hectares (550 acres) of property located in the East Cross Forest, moving us towards our collective vision of the East Cross Forest as a natural, protected area. Mr. Huculak has a long history of philanthropy both here in Canada and abroad, and has been awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta for his international humanitarian activities and his advancement of Ukrainian Studies. He is a successful businessman with roots to Durham stemming back fifty years. He is President and Chairman of Medical Pharmacies Group Inc, the largest provider of pharmacy services to long term care facilities in Canada, and company that he founded in 1957 with a single store in Oshawa. In 2004 Mr. Huculak was appointed Honorary Consul of Ukraine in Canada. He and his wife Yarmila have five children and four grandchildren.

The Cornerstone of East Cross Forest Conservation Area

East Cross Forest Conservation Area is a 233 hectare (552 acre) property lying within the East Cross Forest, in the south eastern corner of the Township of Scugog, Region of Durham. It is situated entirely within the Oak Ridges Moraine, and is a largely forested area containing a variety of species of plants including prairie grass remnants. The headwaters of the East Cross Creek originate in this landscape. The property is known locally as the Emedi property, as the Emedi Lumber Company once operated out of the site. Neighbouring lands may be acquired and added to the present conservation area, so that one day over a thousand acres will be protected in a natural state for generations of visitors to enjoy.

Kawartha Conservation is currently in the process of creating a management plan for this conservation area. Public input will be sought as the plan progresses. It is anticipated that East Cross Forest Conservation Area will open in 2009, providing there is good compliance with restricted access, so that heavily damaged sections of the land can recover and new roads, trails and structures can be created.

Partners and Supporters:

Township of Scugog, Region of Durham, East Cross Forest Implementation Team, Durham Regional Police Service, Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Erast Huculak

