

# Earth Day at Raven Lake

April 22, 2006: 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## *Tractors, Bulldozers, Round-up and Wood Chipper – the Tools of Restoration*

Raven Lake in the City of Kawartha Lakes (former Bexley Township) is the location of a conservation and restoration project aimed at securing stewardship for the Raven Lake Wetland Complex. This complex lies immediately east of the Carden Plain, south of the Queen Elizabeth II Wilderness Park and west of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Park. It forms part of the Talbot River Watershed; a small watershed that outlets into the Trent-Severn Waterway.

The 73 ha (182 acre) site includes mature mixed and Swamp Maple swamp, thicket swamp and fen as well as second-growth mixed forest. Formerly used as pasture, most of the forest has grown up over the last 100 years but has been logged at least twice since the initial clearing about 150 years ago by agents of Gooderham and Worts. A remnant of the pasture is now the location of the family home built as a model of energy efficiency and renewable energy production. The former pasture will be restored to a meadow/prairie and the forest enhanced with 200 White Pine, Red Oak and Bur Oak this spring.

To date, efforts have been focused on inventory of the property, preparation of a Managed Forest Tax Incentive Plan and identification of goals and objectives for restoration. These include habitat enhancement for provincially threatened milksnake and Blanding's turtle that occur on the property.

On Earth Day 2006 the first concerted effort to restore vegetation will occur and you are invited to participate. (I now know what

Tom Sawyer felt like when faced with that huge white-washed fence, but rest assured that I do intend to pitch in.) Activities will include:

- removal of invasive honeysuckle and Common Buckthorn to enlarge the meadow;
- generating mulch using a wood chipper to provide the missing organics in the native soils;
- hand seeding of the meadow with native seeds and an oat cover crop;
- spreading the wood chip mulch and rolling the site with a tractor-mounted roller;
- excavation of a hibernacula and basking habitat for snakes (this involves moving a lot of stones that have grown on the site since the glaciers dumped off the resident till); and
- eating lots of food supplied by the Raven Lake Restoration Committee.

All those who register will receive the Raven Lake Restoration Ranger Certificate together with our thanks and the satisfaction of helping to restore this small corner of the planet to a native meadow that is more in tune with the pre-contact ecosystem.

*Happy Earth Day!!*

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