

Help us push the Thomas C. Agnew Appeal over the top

We are \$19,000 away from reaching our campaign goal to secure the long-term care of the newly created 85-acre Thomas C. Agnew Reserve near Washago.

Major donations from family members, the Township of Severn and the Ontario Land Trust Alliance have all pushed us toward our goal of \$77,600. Now we need your help to push the campaign over the top.

The Conservancy is planning to develop trails, fencing and signage on this property in 2013 to make the property accessible to the public at the same time as we curb abuses that threaten its natural features. A ceremony is planned to officially celebrate the acquisition in the fall.

Protecting such vanishing wetlands remains a high priority for The Couchiching Conservancy, and when the opportunity to create the Thomas C. Agnew Nature Reserve arose, we acted. Thomas Agnew was an early settler and businessman in the Washago area. His descendents developed a growing love for the landscape. In 2011, his grand-daughters, Joan Berndt and Susan Campbell, generously arranged a part-donation /part-sale of an 85-acre property to The Couchiching Conservancy.

Set on the edge of the Trent-Severn Waterway, the property is adjacent to the Robert and Emily Fawcett Natural Area and the two properties contain the same precious wetland complex, teeming with wildlife. The new Agnew Reserve also contains a mixed upland forest which is a groundwater source for the larger wetland. More than 228 native plants have already been identified in the wetland/forest complex and there are undoubtedly more to be found. From rare insect-eating pitcher and sundew plants to pink moccasin orchids, the wetland is jeweled with fascinating flora. Wood warblers and vireos dart among the branches of mature trees while marsh birds such as the American bittern wade through cattails and sedges. Black bears raise their young amidst sandy ponds hosting some of the numerous varieties of frogs which fill the air with their music. Endangered turtles make the reserve their home, including Blanding's and snappers.

Please help us to push this campaign over the top by making a donation today. Cheques can be made out to The Couchiching Conservancy – Agnew Reserve, and mailed to Box 704, Orillia, Ontario, L3V 6K7. If you prefer, you can also pay by VISA by calling 705-326-1620 or by using our online donation service through Canada Helps on our website www.couchichingconserv.ca. Charitable receipts are issued for all donations over \$20.