



**ESCARPMENT
CORRIDOR ALLIANCE**
South Georgian Bay's Regional Land Trust

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Photo Courtesy of Brian Hunt

Message from the Executive Director

2025 will be remembered as the year the ECA's work was literally put on the map.

Days after we became a conservation land trust, including becoming one of four Niagara Escarpment Commission Approved Conservation Organizations, we closed on the ECA's first nature preserve: Sandy's Summit near Metcalfe Rock in Kolapore. As a land trust, the ECA can now protect land by title, ensuring sensitive habitats are preserved and degraded habitats are restored.

In 2025, the ECA played a key role in the conservation of the former Talisman Mountain Resort, welcoming the Bruce Trail Conservancy to take on long-term preservation and restoration. This reflects the power of collaborative community conservation and positions us for continued momentum in 2026. The 2025 Nature Corridor Summit was a standout, full of powerful knowledge sharing, ideas, and inspiration. We also began building meaningful relationships with the Chippewa Tri-Council Nations and Saugeen Ojibway Nation. Early, but important steps that are helping share a more thoughtful, responsible approach to conservation work in a good way. On behalf of the staff and Board of Directors, our sincere gratitude goes out to our generous and loyal donors who have made all of these achievements possible.

Happy Trails,



Jarvis Strong, Executive Director



Message From the President and Chair, Board of Directors

The ECA began with a simple but ambitious goal: to build a strong voice for conservation across the Southern Georgian Bay region.

From there, we have worked to establish a credible scientific foundation and to grow a broad base of community support. With the protection of Sandy's Summit, we have now taken an important next step from advocacy to stewardship. A recent land ceremony led by Indigenous Elders and First Nations partners, marked a powerful and humbling moment that grounded the Escarpment Corridor Alliance's stewardship work in shared responsibility and deeper purpose. Having helped to found the ECA just four years ago, it is remarkable to see how far we have come. This milestone reflects the commitment of many, our staff, Board, partners, and, most importantly, our donors who have supported this work every step of the way.

As a conservation land trust, we are now positioned to build something enduring. The opportunity ahead is to protect and connect landscapes in a way that creates a lasting legacy. Looking ahead to 2026 and beyond, our focus is clear: to deepen relationships, expand partnerships, and continue growing a community of people committed to this shared purpose. Through thoughtful collaboration and sustained effort, we believe we can make a meaningful and lasting difference in protecting this extraordinary region.

With Gratitude,



Bruce Harbinson
President, Board of Directors



Stephen Griggs
Chair, Board of Directors



2025: FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION

2025 marked a pivotal year for the ECA, as we expanded from advocacy into action, becoming South Georgian Bay's regional land trust. Key milestones included becoming an NEC Approved Conservation Organization and registration in Canada's Ecological Gift Program. At the same time, the ECA strengthened its foundation by expanding its team, advancing conservation efforts, and growing community and donor support.

CONSERVATION

- Became South Georgian Bay's regional conservation land trust
- Permanently protected 24 acres of Niagara Escarpment (Sandy's Summit)
- Protected critical habitat for 5 Species at Risk
- Protected 2 Provincial Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest
- Began habitat restoration and wildlife monitoring efforts
- Improved habitat connectivity and resilience for 8 Species at Risk
- Actively promoted Ontario's Protected Area Expansion to protect thousands of acres of crown land in SGB region
- Was a leading ally in conservation to the Bruce Trail Conservancy's acquisition of the former Talisman Mountain Resort lands, helping to secure and permanently protect 134 acres in the Beaver Valley

24
Acres of land protected

8,671
Acres of land protected with ECA support

COLLABORATION

- 50+ partners engaged across the region
- Hosted 11 events with 650+ people in attendance
- 300+ participants attended our annual Nature Corridor Summit
- Established active relationships with 5+ First Nations and Indigenous partners

650+
Attended ECA events

CAPACITY

- Secured \$444,870 in grants
- Secured \$1,776,500 in financial and in-kind donations
- Expanded our staff team by 2 adding a Conservation Director and Operations & Administration Manager
- Launched Evergreen Circle for Legacy Giving Intentions

+100%
Increased Staff Capacity

CONSERVATION



Permanently protected **24** acres of the Niagara Escarpment



Protected critical habitat for **5** Species at Risk



Protected **2** Provincial Areas of Natural Land and Scientific Interest



8 Species at Risk benefited from improved habitat connectivity



In 2025, the ECA made meaningful strides in advancing conservation, combining science, collaboration, and community to evaluate, identify, and preserve ecologically sensitive land. We expanded our regional science efforts including an evaluation of the Kimberley Wetlands and the drafting of a Species at Risk Action Plan. Together, these efforts are strengthening habitat connectivity, supporting the recovery of at-risk species, and guiding future conservation priorities across the ECA's Area of Influence.



PARTNERSHIPS, COLLABORATION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In 2025, the ECA continued to grow a strong and connected conservation community. We engaged with partners and allies across the region, recognizing that lasting impact is built through collaboration and shared purpose. Hundreds of participants attended ECA events, our second annual Nature Corridor Summit brought together over 300 attendees, and the ECA remained active in the community through local gatherings, events, and initiatives, expanding our reach and deepening relationships.



The ECA made strong progress in building its Indigenous engagement foundation, completing an Indigenous Relationship Plan, Treaty and Traditional Rights research, and ongoing outreach and communications. The ECA also deepened Indigenous relationships through collaboration and trust, including a successful Indigenous Leadership in Conservation panel at the Summit.



30+ Volunteers
5 Staff
11 Board Members

Established relationships with:

- Chippewas of Rama First Nation
- Saugeen Ojibway Nation and Environment Office
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Huron-Wendat Nation
- Chippewas of Nawash



Board of Directors

- Bruce Harbinson, President
- Stephen Griggs, Chair
- Tom Eisenhauer, Treasurer
- Dale Biddell
- Ted Crysler
- Jane Pyper
- Mike Robbins
- Martin Rydlo
- David Scoon
- Gillian White
- Ian Whitton

Staff

- Amy Billinghamurst
Operations Manager
- Kaci Boyes
Social Media Coordinator
- Laura Page-Hamelin
Communications Manager
- Jarvis Strong
Executive Director
- Carolyn Thickett
Conservation Director



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2026

As a newly established land trust, 2026 will focus on both growth and improvements as we expand our conservation work to include long-term land stewardship, habitat restoration, and Species at Risk monitoring at Sandy's Summit Nature Preserve. With plans to preserve additional lands, enhance trails for community connection, strengthen and build partnerships, and increase fundraising capacity, we are building the foundation needed to leave a legacy.

CONSERVATION

- Protecting 5 new properties and/or conservation easements
- Initiate invasive species control and restore native cover at Sandy's Summit
- Identify provincially significant wetlands to enhance preservation



COLLABORATION

- Build the Partners in Conservation Program by guiding stewardship projects on private land
- Enhance trail systems on newly secured properties to strengthen community connection
- Host inaugural Annual Community Update event
- Launch a new initiative supporting farmers and sustainable agriculture
- Build a deeper understanding of the historical and present day relationships Indigenous communities hold with the lands held and stewarded by the ECA
- Create an Indigenous Advisory Circle and other opportunities for Indigenous worldviews to shape decision making by the ECA
- Strengthen relationships with various outdoor recreation user groups including anglers and hunters



CAPACITY

- Raise a minimum of \$1.5 million in 2026 to achieve conservation goals enabling the ECA to preserve more land
- Grow our Bedrock Donor Group: multi-year pledges offering reliable support that strengthen our foundation and provide flexibility required to act swiftly
- Stewardship Endowment Fund: dedicated capital for long-term care of our Nature Preserves, including restoration, legal protection, monitoring, and property taxes
- Add professional fundraising capacity to our staff team



2025 FINANCIALS

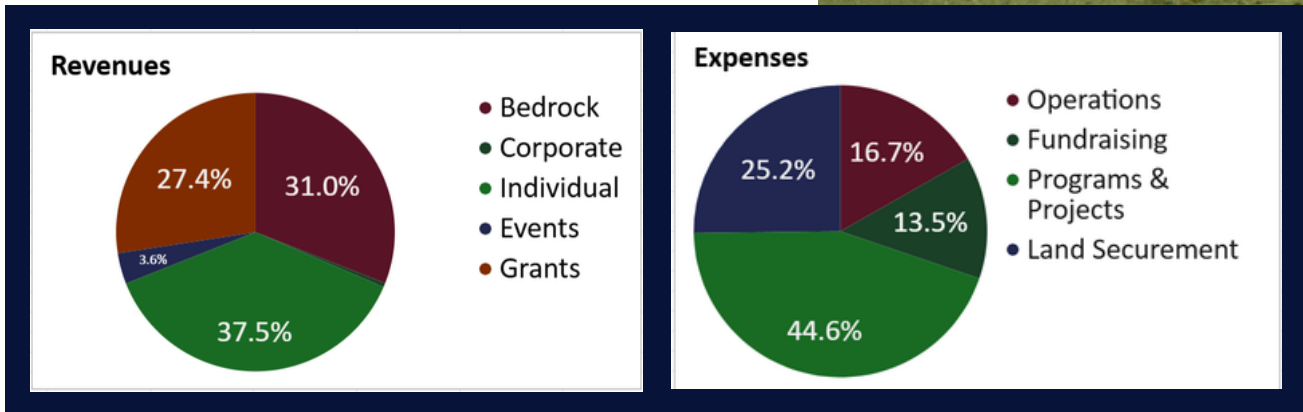
2025 was an incredible year for the ECA, made possible by the generosity and commitment of our community. Our Bedrock Donors contributed 31% of our total revenue, providing steady, foundational support for our work. Individual donations accounted for 37.5%, while grants from foundations, organizations, and municipalities represented 27.4% of our funding.

We are deeply grateful to every donor and partner who believes in this work. Your support ensures we can preserve and steward this landscape for generations to come.

Cash Donations:	\$1,169,915
Mission & Program Expenses:	\$434,288
Operations & Fundraising:	\$259,421
Total Expenses:	\$693,709
Cash Surplus:	\$476,206
Unrestricted:	\$245,411
Restricted:	\$160,828
Land donations:	\$625,000
Excess over Expenses:	\$1,100,205



Photo By: Andrew Interisano @theotterbiography



In 2025, 44.6% of our revenues were invested directly into projects and programs that advance our conservation mission, 16.7% supported essential operations, and 13.5% was allocated to fundraising and marketing to ensure long-term sustainability and growth. 25.2% was invested into our first land acquisition. Overall, 70% of funds raised went directly to mission activities.



DONORS & SUPPORTERS

Thank you to our incredible donors and supporters!

Bedrock Donor Group

\$10,000+ multi-year gifts that sustain the core expenses behind ECA's work.

Dale Biddell
Butterfield Family Foundation
Tom & Nancy Eisenhauer

The Harris-Taylor Family Foundation
The Langar Foundation
The Norman and Marian
Robertson Charitable Foundation

Liz Rykert & John Sewell
Maris Uffelmann
WC Kitchen Family Foundation

Land Donors

Clayton & Ian Scott

Evergreen Circle for Legacy Giving

Bruce Harbinson
Liz Rykert
Jarvis Strong
Carolyn Thickett

Foundations & Corporate

Andy and Beth Burgess Family Foundation
Chisholm Thomson Family Foundation
Community Futures South Georgian Bay
The Craighleith Cares Foundation
The Dickhout Family Foundation
Echo Foundation
Grey Northern Powerline Inc.
The Greenbelt Foundation
Longview Asset Management Ltd
Loretta Rogers Foundation
McCarthy Hansen & Company LLP
Middleton Financial Corporation
Nature Canada
Niagara Escarpment Foundation
Ontario Conservation Accelerator
Peggy Staite-Wong Community Foundation
Power Corporation of Canada
RBC Foundation
The Ross Mitchell Family Foundation
SGNC Foundation
ServiceBuilt Corporation
South Georgian Bay Innovation Fund

Donors who gave \$1,000+

Douglas Barrett
Rod Barrett
Jeannie Baxter
Joslyn Biggins
Jeff Black
Peter Blaiklock
Jody Bowle-Evans
Paul Chapman RBC Wealth
Management
John Chippindale
Kerry Connelly
Ted Crysler
Gordon Currie
David & Ann Doritty
Joanne & Ian Duff
Andrew & Gayle Duncanson
Janet Ellis
Paul Gregory
Ian & Judy Griffin
Stephen & Cathy Griggs
Bruce Harbinson & Gill Cameron
Dorris Heffron
Andrew Heintzman
Kathleen Heithorn-Althoff
David Hill
Elizabeth & Jaime Hugessen
Elizabeth & Garry Johnston
Jennifer Keenan
Edward Kernaghan
Leigh & George Knowles

George & Pam Kinzie
Kate Lazier & Jane Pyper
Katy Leighton
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Thomas & Susan Main
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Andrea Most
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Joan Nuffield
Daphne Peacock
Bo & Brian Penny
Mike Robbins
Lindsay Rogan & John Scott
Bill Ross
Martin Rydlo
David Scoon & Ann Kerr
Clayton Scott
Judi Sheppard
Jarvis Strong
Judie & Trevor Thom
Stephanie & Jeremy Thompson
Kevin Towers Financial Planning
Group Inc.
John & Victoria Tremayne
Robin Vaile
Ian Whitton
Sandra Wismer
Paul Woolner & Roberta Mohler

*Only donors who provided consent
are listed in the Annual Report.*

The Griffin Challenge Fund

Launched in December 2025, Ian and Judy Griffin
are focused on inspiring new conservation philanthropists

Escarpment Corridor Alliance

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Registered charity #76571 8309 RR0001



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