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for future generations



Media Release _for immediate release

Haliburton Highlands Land Trust Receives \$25,000 Grant from the RBC Foundation, Tech for Nature

Haliburton, May 12, 2021: The Haliburton Highlands Land Trust (HHLT) is excited to announce that we are the recipient of a 2021 RBC Foundation, Tech for Nature grant in the amount of \$25,000.

This project will provide new research to support conservation efforts in the Highlands Corridor. This corridor stretches from Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park to Queen Elizabeth II Wildlands Provincial Park and extends across the southern township of the County of Haliburton. HHLT recognizes this area for its rich biodiversity and high representation of wetlands and forests. HHLT owns, manages and protects two properties within this corridor.

Since 2017, Ontario Nature and the HHLT have identified 3000 ha of provincially significant wetland to be protected in perpetuity, including the protection of the Lochlin Wetland Complex (830 ha) which was funded by RBC Foundation in 2020.

The focus of the 2021 RBC Foundation, Tech for Nature grant is twofold: wetland typing and circuitscape analysis.

1. Wetland Classification

This research will build on HHLT's new wetland mapping by typing wetlands as marsh, swamp and bog/fen. Fens, bogs and conifer swamps are nutrient poor sites characterized by blankets of sphagnum moss and deep pockets of partially decayed plant material (i.e., carbon storage). During periods of high water these wetland types have exceptional abilities to absorb surface water and mitigate flooding. Correctly identifying the type of wetland will provide critical information regarding climate change mitigation ecoservices such as carbon sequestration, flood attenuation, carbon sink, and biodiversity. This information is useful to HHLT as it helps us prioritize areas for our conservation efforts in both land acquisition and education.

2. Circuitscape Analysis

By applying "circuit theory", HHLT will model how wildlife moves through the Highlands Corridor. This will also allow us to assess connectivity within this landscape and will provide a valuable tool for focusing HHLT's conservation efforts.

"It's great to be working with an organization like the Haliburton Highlands Land Trust who are tackling one of the most pressing issues of our time – climate change," said Marjolaine Hudon, Regional President, RBC. "Their work to develop nature-based solutions to climate change, together with community stakeholders is making a difference in the health of our waterways and wetlands."

HHLT is thrilled to have the opportunity to add to our previous research on wetlands and biodiversity and continue to be a leader in environmental and conservation research in Haliburton County.

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