

A Lending Hand Saves Old Growth Forest

Rudy Haase and the Nature Trust Team up to Protect St. Mary's River Treasure



November 10, 2014 (Halifax)—Renowned conservationist Martin Rudy Haase and the Nova Scotia Nature Trust have again teamed up to save one of the province's most special places. Mr. Haase provided a \$100,000 interest-free loan that helped to close a conservation deal protecting a spectacular 54 hectare old growth forest property on the St. Mary's River. The property is home to nationally endangered birds and turtles.

On Sept. 28th the Nature Trust launched a \$260,000 fundraising drive to acquire the top priority conservation site near Glenelg, Guysborough County. The Nature Trust had just over a month to raise the funds required to purchase and protect the property.



Celebrated environmental advocate and long-time Nature Trust friend, Martin Rudy Haase, stepped up with a timely and creative solution. He had already protected four of his own properties with the Nature Trust, and at 93 years of age, he's not slowing down. While not in a position to make a big donation, he realized he could help by giving the Nature Trust the gift of time.

According to Bonnie Sutherland, the Nature Trust's Executive Director, "Rudy has an endless passion for the environment. The day he heard about this opportunity, he called to offer an interest-free loan to cover any shortfall in funding by the deadline. And his loan made all the difference."

Asked about the generous bridge financing, Mr. Haase said. “I’m in favour of supporting everything the Nature Trust is doing, all the time, but when there’s a crucial deadline like this one, we all have to step up to help the Nature Trust make it happen.” He added, “The St. Mary’s is a beautiful river, with the most beautiful fall colours I’ve ever seen. The more of this river that can be preserved, the better!”

The Nature Trust has now finalized the land deal. The St. Mary’s River property is protected, forever, as part of the Nature Trust’s growing protected areas network.

The property is well-known and treasured by many paddlers, birders, anglers and local residents. It is also one of the top conservation highlights on the river. It supports both old growth Hemlock forest, and beautiful Acadian floodplain forest, with massive Red Maples and Yellow Birch. It has over four kilometers of undisturbed river shoreline and is home to three endangered species of birds and turtles, rare floodplain plants, and important habitat for frogs and other amphibians.



While the property’s protection is exciting news, the Nature Trust’s work is not yet done. Just over \$140,000 in donations has been raised to date, but they still need to raise \$120,000.

With the holidays on the horizon, the Nature Trust has a creative way for people help. Sutherland noted, “As part of our *Gifts of Nature* program, people can “adopt” an acre of forest as a unique and meaningful holiday gift. All funds raised will be dedicated to the St. Mary’s property.”

Gift recipients are sent a beautiful certificate, St. Mary’s forest notecards, and a description of the property saved. The donor receives a charitable tax receipt. Donations can be made online at www.nsnt.ca or by calling the Nature Trust at (902) 425-5263. The Nature Trust can also accept gifts of securities, which provide added tax benefits for donors.

The Nature Trust is a conservation charity dedicated to protecting Nova Scotia’s most important and imperiled natural areas, through private land conservation. It has preserved over 9000 acres of land across Nova Scotia to date, including seven conservation sites on the St. Mary’s River.