

The seeds of our future are taking root right now, for better or worse. This page shares better, forward-thinking ideas and celebrates significant environmental achievements that can help us lead the way in creating the Niagara Escarpment as a healthy, sustainable example of a thriving World Biosphere Reserve.

MALCOLM BLUFF SHORES PROTECTED

Malcolm Bluff Shores, a 233-hectare piece of the Niagara Escarpment on the Bruce Peninsula a little north of Owen Sound, was bought in March 2010 by Ontario Nature and The Bruce Trail Conservancy as the first part of a planned 400-hectare nature reserve. Two additional properties are to be purchased over the next two years, and Ontario Nature is currently raising the funds needed.

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSIONER CALLS FOR MORE THAN CONSERVATION

"It is clear that we have already degraded the environment in the long-term and we have significantly compromised the ability of future generations to meet their needs. The lofty goal of sustainable development is, regrettably, off the table. What is actually 'sustainable' is not what we are doing, but something less. Something that involves making do with less and using what we have more wisely. This is not a choice for us; this is the reality being imposed on us by the world we have created.

"Perhaps it is time to reconsider those old values we called conservation. But even the conservation ideas of the previous century are not enough. We need more than that. We need a concept of conservation that is based in our new understanding of ecological processes and the appropriate use of resources. Our conservation ethic must consider the cumulative impacts of our activities, incorporate a precautionary approach to decision making and include intergenerational equity in our considerations. To be successfully applied, conservation ideals must be integrated into our economic system."

Gord Miller, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario
Redefining Conservation,
Annual Report 2009/2010

TEEB PUTS ECONOMIC VALUE ON NATURE

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) is a study by the United Nations that has put a multi-trillion-dollar value on the global natural world.

"The TEEB study calls for wider recognition of nature's contribution to human livelihoods, health, security, and culture by decision makers at all levels (local to national and business to citizens)," states a TEEB news release. "It promotes the demonstration, and where appropriate, the capture of the economic values of nature's services through an array of policy instruments and mechanisms...TEEB's approach can reset the economic compass and herald a new era in which the value of nature's services is made visible and becomes an explicit part of policy and business decision making."

Lara Barbier, who writes a blog on a TEEB website, answers the question why value nature, with "[the] economic invisibility of nature is one of the key drivers of its destruction – by replacing natural areas with other land uses which do have visible economic values..."

More information: www.teeb4me.com