

Dear Friends,

This is just a quick update of the latest happenings. Thank you as always for your interest and support for this important issue. A special thank you for the generous donation received from community members who attended the most wonderful performance of The Great Gathering on August 28th right here in the valley . Thank you to Jonathon Robinson and Ingrid Remkins for making this possible. We have raised in excess of \$20,000 towards the purchase of the land and the due diligence required for that purpose.

As you are aware, the Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy put an offer in to the municipality for the 2 municipal parcels. The appraised value is \$2.8 million, based on the price of land and the development restrictions in place. It was done within the last 4 months by a respected independent appraiser. This offer will come in to play if the Westway offer is taken off the table and then EBC would be spearheading a collaborative approach to managing the land.

On August 19, 2021, the Friends of the Beaver Valley (FBV) and representatives from The Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy (EBC) met with staff at the Municipality of Grey Highlands, Mayor McQueen and Councillors Cathy Little and Tom Allwood to present a collaboration proposal, **PROTECT AND INCREASE THE NATURAL ECONOMY OF THE TALISMAN SITE WHILE PRESERVING NATURE.** Our messages were as follows:

The goals of EBC are similar to those found in Grey Highland's Official

Plan – “To provide opportunities for sustainable resource development and outdoor recreation for the continuous economic, social and health benefit of area residents and visitors, and to support the management, protection and conservation of public lands in an environmentally sound manner”. *see below for full document.

Other news

There was an interesting development within the last couple of weeks as the news was announced that Skyline Investments Inc. is selling many of its resort and land assets. You can read about it [here](#) and [here](#).

On a different note, the [ProtectTalisman.ca](#) group have put in a Freedom of Information request to the municipality about the conditional sale of the municipal lands to Westway. You can read about that [here](#).

A delegation from this group will also be presenting this [second petition](#) to council on Wednesday October 20th. You can [register](#) to view this on the Grey Highlands website or just go to their [YouTube channel](#) where all council meetings are livestreamed.

We can enjoy the beauty of the changing of the seasons as we continue to pursue our mission!

Best wishes,
Jeanette on behalf of Friends of the Beaver Valley

*FBV and EBC, while seeking to acquire the municipally owned lands on the Talisman site, propose a collaboration with Grey Highlands to increase the economic value of the lands, to preserve nature, to combat climate change and support other green initiatives.

Nature Tourism: EBC is committed to working with Grey Highlands to make the valley a sustainable tourism destination for those seeking natural escapes. According to DESTINATION ONTARIO May 21, the majority, 49 %, of those travelling in 2021 in Ontario are seeking sites to walk and hike" while the second largest group, 34 %, are looking for natural wonders. The good news, according to the same study, is that every group that visits nature spends \$910 dollars per group, be it a couple or a family during their excursion.

EBC has proven success in creating trails for tourists with the Cup and Saucer Trail on Mantoulin, (returning approximately \$4 million to the local economy in 2020), trails on the Elephant Thoughts/Kimbercote property in the Valley, and most recently the Trout Hollow Muir trail in Meaford.

Ecosystem Services: EBC described other benefits of a nature preserve to the Municipality including natural climate solutions from green spaces and even potential revenues from the sale of carbon credits. Ecosystem services or the role nature plays to protect species and prevent flooding for example, has real dollar value according the Ministry of Natural Resources. Open partially treed lands like those found on the Talisman site provide \$353 per hectare per year but, if rewilded with forest cover, the value would increase to \$4400/h and

increase potential carbon sequestration revenue significantly. The proposed collaboration between the Municipality of Grey Highlands and EBC will shelter the lands under a social enterprise model with the priority of developing a sustainable green economy that will create a new prosperity in the valley.

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