



# Essex Region Conservation Foundation Action Plan 2011

### About the Essex Region Conservation Foundation

The Essex Region Conservation Foundation (ERCF) was established as a registered, charitable public foundation in 1977 with a vital goal to receive and maintain funds for charitable, educational, conservation and heritage purposes related directly or indirectly to the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural and heritage resources in the Essex region.

The Foundation’s Mission reflects that purpose - **to create awareness and raise funds to enhance our natural environment for healthy living and economic vibrancy in the Essex region.** In keeping with this mandate, the Foundation supports the Essex Region Conservation Authority by raising the funds required to reforest and green the Essex region, protect those significant natural areas that remain, preserve our cultural heritage, restore wetlands, and increase green connections through acquiring and developing trails.



**Our Shared Vision: To achieve a sustainable environment with healthy watersheds, highlighted by clean creeks, rivers, and Great Lakes, thriving natural areas, productive agricultural lands; and vibrant places.**

### 2011 Action Plan

The Essex Region Conservation Foundation’s Strategic Plan guides the priorities and plans of the Foundation for the next five years. This accompanying Action Plan provides an outline on how these strategic directions will be moved forward in 2011. In partnership with ERCF’s Board of Directors, members, volunteers, and the community, we can optimize our ability to achieve the goals and outcomes of these plans. By setting our goals, achieving our actions, and tracking our progress, we will be able to improve the human, economic, and environmental health of the Essex region.

## Our Goal

Over the next five years, is to raise \$2,000,000 to improve the human, economic, and environmental health of the Essex region.

## Strategic Actions

### Protecting and Restoring our Environment

**Outcome: Secure \$1,000,000 over five years to protect and restore key natural areas for a cleaner, healthier environment.**

- Action 1:** Develop a fundraising campaign through a W.E. Green Acres Challenge, daily carbon-offset donation program, and annually giving campaign for local restoration projects.
- Action 2:** Challenge professional associations (i.e. Greenhouse Growers, Wine industry, Real Estate Board) and corporations to offset development with planting trees, creating new wetlands, and replacing prairie landscapes with a Corporate Challenge, Workplace Volunteer Action Day, corporate giving, sponsorship, or through the Gift that Honours program.
- Action 3:** Collaborate with existing and new partners to fund the acquisition of significant natural areas throughout the region.

### Supporting Education in Environment

**Outcome: Raise \$150,000 over five years to create opportunities for more students in our region to experience the wonder of nature through one of the Essex Region Conservation Authority's environmental education programs.**

- Action 1:** Create a 'Kids in Nature Corporate Challenge' with ERCA to engage private sectors in our education programs to provide sponsorship and recognition.
- Action 2:** Initiate a plan to pursue a possible Education Centre Capital Campaign.
- Action 3:** Pursue transportation funding to offset the costs of the program for local schools and community groups.

### Connecting the Region through Trails

**Outcome: Secure \$750,000 over five years to build a regional trail network to connect people and landscapes and link our human and environmental health with a stronger economy.**

- Action 1:** Develop a Trail Sponsorship Package, including naming rights to the Essex to Amherstburg Trail, for enhancement and redevelopment of Conservation Area trails and boardwalks.
- Action 2:** Pursue existing and new partners to acquire the CN/CP CASO line for trail development.

### Preserving our Heritage

**Outcome: Raise \$100,000 over five years to protect and improve cultural heritage in our region.**

- Action 1:** Secure funding in bequests and other planned commitments for our cultural heritage sites.
- Action 2:** Create an Our Living History program to increase sponsorships and grants to protect our cultural heritage sites through repairs and upgrades.
- Action 2:** Engage partners to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the Detroit River being designated as a Canadian Heritage River through a celebratory event and commemorative book.

### Building A Strong ERCF

**Outcome: A strong and influential Foundation, engaged Board of Directors, and active Committees recognized as leaders in advancing local environmental initiatives.**

- Action 1:** Develop a Membership Engagement Strategy to connect with our current and prospect members to increase ERCF membership, involvement, and recognition of members.
- Action 2:** Improve ERCF's effectiveness at communicating the value and importance of conserving and protecting our natural resources through ERCF's newsletters, articles, website, press releases, and social media in partnership with ERCA.
- Action 3:** Pursue new fundraising trends i.e. text donations, social media, fundraising software and events in keeping with our 2011 Fundraising Plan.



If you wish to receive more information on how you can help the Foundation, or on how to donate, Please contact the Essex Region Conservation Foundation directly at **519-776-5209** or by email at [foundation@erca.org](mailto:foundation@erca.org) or [www.ourgreenlegacy.org](http://www.ourgreenlegacy.org)