

The Economic Value of Nature

The Economic Development & Marketing Case for Nature Tourism

Grey County Tourism Advisory Committee of Council

Prepared & Presented by: Linda Reader

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8:30 am

\$ VALUES FROM THE MNR 2009

Agriculture	\$/ha
• Crops	291
• Pasture, grasslands	353
• Fencerows	1 023

Water & wetlands	
• River	55 553
• Wetland	15 171
• Open body of water	5 050

Forests	
Non-urban	4 443
Urban	25 843

- Linda's farm 90 A./36.42 ha
- Crops \$10 598
- Pasture \$12 856
- Fencerows \$ 3 069
- Na
- Seasonal wetland \$7 500
- NA
- Na (If I did reforest \$161 814!)
- **Total \$22 453**

Recreational & Tourism Values in the Greenbelt*

Top 3 recreational/tourism activities total (The highest revenue in the Greenbelt)	\$1.434 billion
1. Hiking, climbing and horseback riding	\$872 million
2. Cross-country skiing and snowshoeing	\$326 million
3. Bird watching	\$236 million

*Evaluating the Economic Benefits of Greenbelt Assets, March 2012.

THE MARKET FOR NATURE TOURISM

- **Destination Ontario*** states that:
 - Nature based tourism is #1 for those planning to travel
1. 49 %, the highest number of those planning to travel, state walking & hiking as their motivators
 2. 34% represents the second highest number planning to travel and include nature/natural wonders as their motivators

*Destination Ontario - Travel Intention & Motivator Research, July 14, **2021**.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF NATURE TOURISM

- Destination Ontario 2021 states:

A group travelling to experience nature spend \$910 per trip

e.g. EBC'S Cup and Saucer Trail on Manitoulin Island hosts over 10 000 visitors each year potentially contributing \$4,550,000 (per 5000 hiking couples) to the local economy.

Nature travelers are estimated to generate \$621 .8 million in revenue, the highest of all other forms of tourism in Ontario.

Conclusion: Nature Tourism in Grey

A fundamental economic development tenet, is
'work with what you have':

- If Grey County has abundant natural resources for nature tourism and has expressed a desire to attract tourists and provide business opportunities...
- And the trends show that nature tourism is the leading choice for travellers in Ontario with the best potential to create revenue for both established and new businesses...
- Then a logical economic development strategy in Grey County is to focus on nature tourism creating a value proposition for the County like no other in the province.

Observations of Grey County Trail Network Today

- Mini Review of current trail/nature tourism situation re tourism pages on web-site
- Recognize an extensive County Master plan
- Acknowledgement of current County Tourism Advisory Committee concerns

Recommendations

- Collaborate with experienced land trust organizations creating nature reserves e.g. EBC
- Refine the trail experiences in your forests and target experiences for nature lovers
- Protect the forest/trail environment to mitigate climate change and protect water, wildlife
- Seek funding for trail development, signage, infrastructure

Hindsight is 20/20

- “ If Flesherton is truly ‘the Gateway to the Beaver Valley’ and the Osprey Wetlands the source of our major rivers then it is reasonable to envision a grand scheme from the wetlands to upper reaches of the Valley with several locations for:
 - seasonal activities from hiking and x-country skiing with boardwalks and groomed trails,
 - sightseeing and driving tours of landmarks and natural features like the Falls plus
 - interpretive walks with plaques etc as well as
 - historical points of interest and perhaps even
 - an interpretative centre for education.”
 - Linda Reader 2005

IN CONCLUSION

- “Sustainable tourism” leads to the management of all resources in a manner that economic, social and aesthetic needs are fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biodiversity, and life support systems.
- — United Nations 2014



ABOUT THE CONSULTANT

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Linda Reader is an Economic Development and Marketing consultant with experience in Community Economic Development (CED) since 2004. Prior to that Linda was a Professor in the Business School at Humber College for seventeen years. Linda resigned to follow a new career as a CED professional with studies at the University of Waterloo in 2005.

She is an Honours graduate of York University's Geography program with post graduate studies in Environmental Planning. She is well versed in the natural, cultural and economic characteristics of rural and urban Canada.

Linda studied marketing at Ryerson University and worked as a business marketing consultant prior to being hired at Humber. Her marketing experience gives her a unique perspective and skill set that has resulted in 11 Economic Development Association of Canada (EDAC) 'Market Canada' Awards for her clients plus one of her tourism projects was a finalist for the Economic Development Council of Ontario's (EDCO) Lieutenant Governor's Award.

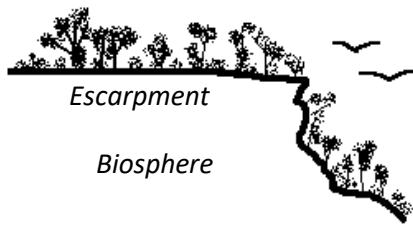
Projects for non-profit agencies and Municipalities ranged from tourism to local food, downtown revitalization, strategic and marketing planning, entrepreneurship and most recently promotion of Ecological Programs in Grey County for the largest charitable land trust organization in Ontario.

PERSONAL

In 1989, Linda bought her farm in Grey Highlands situated near the Beaver Valley in Grey County where she has lived and farmed ever since.

Since moving from her home in Toronto, Linda has been active in a number of volunteer organizations from being a founding member of the Board of Directors for the Flesherton & District Farmers' Market to most recently as Chair of the Physician Recruitment Committee and as a founding member of the Cultural Planning Steering Committee. She initiated the first 'local grower to commercial buyers' organization in Ontario, Grey County Chefs' Forum from 2011-15.

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Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy

Protecting the Niagara Escarpment World Biosphere Reserve
503 Davenport Road. Toronto Ontario Canada M4V 1B8

(416) 960-8121 rbarnett@escarpment.ca

www.escarpment.ca

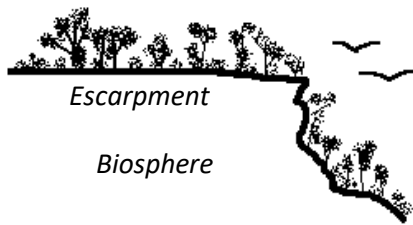
THE ESCARPMENT BIOSPHERE CONSERVANCY (EBC)

After 25 years, EBC is the largest land trust organization in Ontario. The achievements are notable. Led by Executive Director Bob Barnett since 1997, another 40 projects are to be completed this year. Bob and EBC are prepared to discuss collaborative projects with Grey County.

In 1997 The Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy was established to preserve the landscape, ecology and wildlife in the area of the Niagara Escarpment, Manitoulin, Bruce Peninsula and Saugeen River by developing and managing a system of nature reserves on which only ecologically sustainable recreational activities would be permitted.

- Protects **19,806 acres of land as nature reserves** .
- Hosts **70 species of conservation concern** including many endangered and threatened.
- Delivers over **\$36 million worth of ecosystem services** including flood reduction, better air and water quality and habitat protection
- Maintains over **80 km of public Nature Trails**.
- Contributes to achieving Canada's goal of **protecting 30%** of our land through land purchases and conservation agreements*..
- **Protects a donated acre of land for as little as \$50**. That acre can produce over \$1,800 of ecosystem services every year.
- Fights climate change by sequestering carbon in mature trees and wetlands, **700,000 tCO₂ of carbon reductions** from 2002 to date.
- Establishes **a new reserve every month**

* [Protect Your Land — Escarpment Biosphere Conservancy](#)



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EBC IN GREY

The chart below indicates acreages, trails, number of species protected and the tonnes of carbon sequestered plus the total value of ecosystem services provided to the County equaling \$10 744 million by EBC properties.

While EBC was gifted with the land for the Trout Hollow Trail in Meaford last year, EBC also creates conservation agreements with Municipalities as in the Heathcote Nature Reserve jointly owned with Blue Mountains. On Manitoulin Island where the Cup and Saucer Trail attracts over 20 000 visitors a year, EBC not only purchased the land for the trail but built an expanded parking lot for 50 cars in conjunction with the Municipality..

ESCARPMENT BIOSPHERE CONSERVANCY - GREY COUNTY NATURE RESERVES 08/2022

MUN.	ACRES OWNED BY EBC	ACRES CONSERVATION AGMNTS	TOTAL ACRES	TRAILS BUILT km	POSSIBLE TRAILS km	RARE SPECIES	CO2 TONNES	\$000 *ECO SERVICES
GEORG	1011.9	428.27	1440.17	2.4	10.5	25	7 472	4314
CHAT	134.06	1068.2	1202.26	-	3.1	3	4628	1473
WG	314.7	247.64	562.31	-	3	3	939	661
SG	171.79	142.0	313.79	-	1	3	1419	630
GH	231.78	636.96	868.74	1.8	2	17	3833	1690
MFRD	422.1	854.1	1276.2	3	4	6	3426	1364
HANR	18.0	-	18.0	-	-	-	-	-
B.MTN	75.1	301.93	377.03	1	-	-	1067	612
GREY TOTALS	2397.53	3679.10	6076.63	8.2	23.6	58	23 784 TONNES CO2	\$10 744 MILLION

* ECO SERVICES -Value of the services derived from the natural capital, both aquatic and terrestrial, found on EBC nature reserves and made available to the residents of Grey. Examples are cleaner water, less flooding, sustainable recreation, eco tourism, cleaner air, carbon sequestering**, less erosion and more biodiversity.

** EBC is the only land trust organization managing the collection and sale carbon offsets

L. Reader 2022_