



Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation – a two time winner

ORMF conservation contribution applauded by experts

(KING CITY, ON, Nov. 4, 2011) In just one week, the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF) has been twice recognized for its vital contribution to the preservation, protection and restoration of the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM). The ORM is a geological landform extending across the top of Greater Toronto Area from Caledon in the west to Cobourg in the east and is critically important to protecting the area's drinking water.

The ORMF received the first award from the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority at their Watershed Awards Dinner last Thursday. Less than a week later, at the Charles Sauriol Dinner, the ORMF went home with the 2011 Living City Award for Regional Biodiversity.

The Living City Award recognized the ORMF's creation and implementation of the Caring for the Moraine Program which brought over 30 conservation-minded organizations on the Oak Ridges Moraine together to deliver "environmental services" to landowners. The genius of the program was that it offered a "one stop shop" service. Between 2005 and 2009, landowners could get technical advice and access to various programs and financial assistance to undertake projects on their land that helped protect and restore the Oak Ridges Moraine.

ORMF accomplishments include more than 1,000 acres of land restored through tree planting, wetland creation, habitat management, prairie restoration and stream rehabilitation; 5,582 acres of conservation lands protected through acquisition, donation and conservation easements; completion of a 75km continuous east/west recreation trail known as the Oak Ridges Trail; over 7,500 school children educated about the importance of the Oak Ridges Moraine; and the completion of research to fill knowledge gaps about the Oak Ridges Moraine.

In 2002, the ORMF was started with an investment of \$15 million from the Province. The ORMF's mandate is to preserve, protect and restore the environmental integrity of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Since opening its doors, the ORMF has efficiently granted \$14.1 million to 177 projects and leveraged an additional \$35.8 million. This means that the Province's original \$15 million was grown into \$50 million worth of projects. Each of these dollars has gone into essential headwaters recovery work on the Oak Ridges Moraine.

"These recent awards and recognition is greatly appreciated by our staff and Board," stated Kim Gavine, Executive Director with the ORMF. "A recent report called 'Measuring Success on the Oak Ridges Moraine' reveals that vital conservation work on the Oak Ridges Moraine remains incomplete. Ironically, without further funding, this award winning organization will be closing its doors in 2012. Yes, the future of the ORMF is in jeopardy – without any new money from the province, our ability to work with landowners is endangered. Renewed investment from the Province of Ontario is critical."

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For more information, contact: Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation at 905-833-5733, support@ormf.com or visit www.ormf.com.

The Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation (ORMF) is a non-profit organization mandated to preserve and enhance the Oak Ridges Moraine (Moraine). Originally established as a granting agency in 2002 following the implementation of the Provincial Government's Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan (ORMCP), the ORMF has successfully provided funds to many different partners in support of stewardship, education, research, the Oak Ridges Moraine Trail and land securement projects.

While the ORMF's granting role is currently suspended, it still has a pivotal role to play if the Moraine is to remain protected in the future. While plenty of positive work has been done on the Moraine over the last eight years, there are still outstanding goals that need to be met.