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In Our Own Backyard

By Jacqueline Gillard

The Palmyra Women's Institute has been one of the many supporters involved in saving 576 acres of Carolinian forest in the Clearville area near Lake Erie. It is in their own backyard, less than five kilometers east of Palmyra at the junction of the Talbot Trail (Highway 3) and Duart Road. The Clear Creek forest is a "...rare chunk of Canadian nature ... undisturbed," which the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) believes is a worthwhile project for organizations, corporations and the local public to pledge their support. The NCC is a national group and has been involved in several protection projects.

The Clear Creek woodlands is comprised of both secondary growth and old growth sections. It is home to some of the largest trees in Southern Ontario and it has the largest remaining hardwood trees in the province. Some of the trees predate European settlement and are over 300 years old. Clear Creek is one of the last three places in Chatham-Kent for many wildlife species and one of the last places in Canada for the Southern Flying Squirrel, Acadian Flycatcher, Redheaded woodpecker and Shumard oak. Although there are pockets of Carolinian forest along the north



shore of the Great Lakes in the Toronto to Windsor corridor, Clear Creek is the prime example.

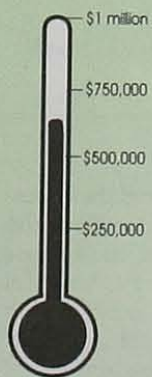
As of November 2000, the Conservancy's campaign to save the forest had attracted more than 1,000 supporters. The group is working to raise \$600,000 to complete the land acquisition and establish a stewardship fund to ensure its future protection. The Federal Government will contribute \$1 million from Environment Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program; its availability to take effect once the land is purchased.

For more information about Clear Creek contact the Canadian Nature Conservancy at 1-877-343-3532, or check out the following website:

Ontario@natureconservancy.ca

Submitted by Jacqueline Gillard, Secretary/Treasurer, Palmyra WI, Kent.

Headquarters Fund



To date:

\$579,552.57

Goal: \$1 million

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