



Volunteer Handbook

Long Point Basin Land Trust
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1. Welcome

1.1. Letter from The Executive Director

Welcome to Long Point Basin Land Trust's (LPBLT) volunteer program! Thank you for committing to volunteering your time and skills with us. We are so happy to have you on our team.

LPBLT is a volunteer-powered organization; we exist because of volunteers like you. The time and effort you spend volunteering will enormously influence the future of functioning, healthy ecosystems. Whether you are stewarding land, restoring habitats, educating the community, or doing office work, you will be helping to create a sustainable future. Your work is integral to the success of our organization and is greatly appreciated.

This handbook aims to provide a general overview of the Long Point Basin Land Trust and its volunteer roles and expectations, as well as what you can expect as a volunteer with us. We look forward to working with you.



Rick Levick

executivedirector@longpointlandtrust.ca

Phone: (519) 586-8309

2. Who We Are

2.1. Our Mission, Vision, and Goals

Our Mission: To protect the rich biodiversity and habitats of the Long Point Basin area.

Our Vision: A future where the habitats and biodiversity of the Long Point Basin area are protected forever.

Our Goals:

- Secure lands of ecological interest and cultural heritage
- Promote the conservation and preservation of the landscape, habitats, ecosystems, wildlife, and species at risk
- Promote education and scientific research and co-operates with other Canadian and international organizations doing the same work

2.2. About Us

Long Point Basin Land Trust is a charitable, non-government organization that aims to protect and restore functioning ecosystems in the [Long Point Basin](#). We achieve this through land securement, habitat restoration, research, and outreach. We work with landowners and the local community to provide a helping hand to wild species and ecosystems in one of Ontario's most naturally diverse regions.

2.3. Meet the Team

Staff	Title	Contact Information
Rick Levick	Executive Director	executivedirector@longpointlandtrust.ca (519) 586-8309
Ian Fife	Land Stewardship Manager	stewardship@longpointlandtrust.ca (519) 420-9122
Donnie Baker	Communications and Marketing Manager	Communications@longpointlandtrust.ca (519) 331-7020
Sandy Jukes	Executive Assistant	admin@longpointlandtrust.ca (905) 921-1974

For more information about our [staff](#) and [board members](#), please visit our website: <https://longpointlandtrust.ca/>

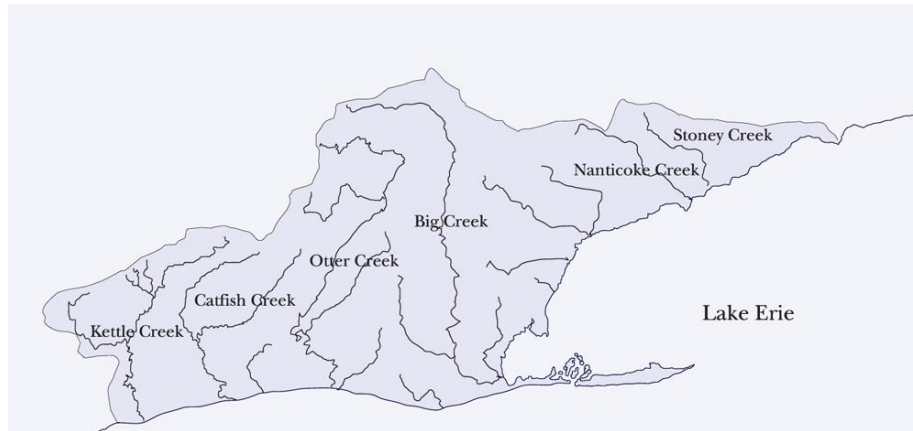
2.4. Office and Hours of Availability

Long Point Basin Land Trust Office: 1039 Bay Street, Box 498, Port Rowan, ON, Canada, N0E 1M0

Generally, our staff are available during weekdays from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. If you plan to come to the office, please call ahead, as our staff may be working from home or at our Nature Reserves conducting fieldwork.

2.5. Long Point Basin Land Trust Area

The geographical area in which LPBLT operates is part of what is referred to as Canada's Carolinian region. This includes Norfolk, Haldimand, and Elgin Counties, as well as adjoining portions of Brant and Oxford Counties. All the watersheds draining into Lake Erie from Kettle Creek east towards, but not including the Grand River, are considered in the Long Point Basin area.



Canada's Carolinian region is an incredibly rich and diverse eco-zone, considered a biodiversity hotspot. Although this area makes up only 1% of Canada's total land area, it hosts a more significant number of flora and fauna species than anywhere else in the country. Unfortunately, this area is also one of the least protected, making land conservation and habitat protection critical.



2.6. Nature Reserves

LPBLT owns and stewards many Nature Reserves in Norfolk County, totalling more than 1,200 acres of protected lands. Most of our Nature Reserves are open to the public, some of which have formally maintained trails. One of our goals is to provide opportunities for people to connect with the environment through hands-on and outdoor experiences. Please visit our website for more information, including trail maps, trail closures, and what activities are permitted at each [Nature Reserve](#).

3. Volunteer Program

3.1. Introduction to the Volunteer Program

Long Point Basin Land Trust depends on the dedicated commitment of community volunteers to help protect our Nature Reserves. By joining our team of volunteers, you will have the opportunity to share your talents, develop new skills and experiences, connect with nature, fulfil community service hours and network with other passionate conservationists to accomplish amazing things!

As a volunteer, you will be crucial in assisting us with our day-to-day tasks and preserving our nature reserves through maintenance, restoration, and outreach efforts. We offer periodic volunteer opportunities based on ongoing projects and your interests and skills. Volunteer categories include various options to suit your preferences, listed below.



3.2. Volunteer Categories

Ecological Property Restoration and Stewardship

- Property Stewardship:
Install or maintain wildlife structures, signs, trails, bridges and boardwalks, garbage clean-ups, and monitor properties.
- Ecological Restoration:
Plant native species, invasive species removal, seed collection and broadcasting.
- Trail Maintenance Team:
Monitor and maintain trails monthly. This volunteer position requires a more significant time commitment than other positions.
- Citizen Science:
Monitor and inventory species and habitats for research purposes.
- Seed Collection/Dispersal
Collection of native seeds, cleaning and dispersal.

Community Engagement

- Community and Educational Events:
Lead or assist with educational workshops, webinars, and events. This may include setup, registration, promotion, and delivering events. Managing booths at community events.

- Guest Newsletter Contributor
Use your expertise of biodiversity and writing skills to contribute articles for our monthly e-newsletter.
- Fundraising:
Fundraising events, sponsorships, and phone calls.
- Photography:
Take photos and videos at various events. Subjects would include participants at the event, wildlife and plants, action shots, group shots, and smiling guests. Independent photographers are also encouraged to photograph and share images taken on LPBLT Nature Reserves.

3.3. **What to Expect**

1. Onboarding:
Following recruitment, volunteers will be sent this handbook and the Volunteer Agreement as part of their onboarding package. The Volunteer Agreement includes a liability waiver and LPBLT Volunteer Code of Conduct. Volunteers are not accepted without returning the signed agreement.
2. Training:
Volunteers will receive training in the field specific to the task they are undertaking. In some instances they may be required to attend special training sessions in advance.
3. Sign up:
At this stage, a volunteer event or opportunity will be announced. You may hear about it in a few different ways including a call-out email, social media post, or LPBLT website announcement. There is no set volunteer event schedule as much of our work is weather-dependent or seasonal.



4. Preparation:
After successfully signing up for an event, volunteers will receive an email from the event leader regarding event-specific information. This will include the date, time, location, maps, protective equipment (if required), and other considerations. We encourage you to review our [Hazard Guide](#) to prepare for your attendance.
5. Attendance:
We expect volunteers to be punctual and come fully prepared for the planned activities. If you cannot attend your scheduled volunteer shift, please let us know as soon as possible so we can recruit another volunteer to take your place.
6. Follow up: Following some of the events, volunteers may receive an additional email from us containing a feedback survey and achievements from the event. We rely on your honest feedback to help us improve our future events.

4. **Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities**

Every volunteer has the right to:

1. Receive guidance and direction when needed
2. Access training and support resources
3. Ask questions to understand the task at hand clearly
4. Be heard and recognized
5. Refuse unsafe work

Every volunteer is responsible for the following:

1. Being punctual and notifying staff of absences
2. Knowing their physical limits and capabilities
3. Follow instructions, plans, and procedures outlined by the event leader
4. Abiding by LPBLT's Volunteer Code of Conduct
5. Practicing confidentiality with sensitive information. When in doubt, don't give it out

5. **Safety Protocols**

5.1. **Health and Safety Expectations**

It is expected that when a volunteer signs up to participate in an event, they are acknowledging that they are both physically and mentally capable of taking on the task. If, for any reason, the volunteer feels unwell, it is expected that the volunteer will not attend the event and will notify the event coordinator of their absence. This includes any physical injuries, illnesses, or

ailments, as well as any mental illnesses or disabilities that might interfere with or increase the likelihood of hazards or danger at the event.

It is expected that every volunteer conducts themselves in a manner in which they are not only mindful of their safety but those around them. This is especially important when working in a hazardous environment, such as around logging machinery, chainsaws, power tools, uneven terrain, etc.

5.2. Safety Hazards

Volunteer programs may run through every season, so it's essential to be aware of many hazards when attending an event.

- Poison Ivy
- Stinging Nettle
- Cow Parsnip
- Blacklegged (Deer) Ticks
- Sun/heat exposure (summer)
- Cold exposure(winter)
- Rough terrain

Please review the [Hazard Guide](#) below to learn more about potential hazards while volunteering outdoors.

5.3. Safety Precautions

Before an event takes place, we will reach out to you by email to discuss possible hazards to be aware of.

It is recommended that you:

- Learn to identify possible hazards
- Dress appropriately for the weather conditions
- Wear proper footwear for rough terrain to prevent injury
- Please wear long pants and tuck them into your socks to deter ticks
- Bring appropriate personal protective equipment for the occasion, i.e. sunscreen, bug spray, gloves, sunglasses/safety glasses, hard hat, etc.
- Always bring water




5.4. Emergency Protocols





In the case of an emergency during a volunteer event, please take the necessary actions (i.e. calling 911) and notify an LPBLT staff member immediately. An Incident Report Form must be filled out on the date that the incident occurred (provided by the LPBLT staff member or volunteer leader onsite).

5.5. Hazard Guide

Hazard Guide

Please be aware of these hazards before participating in any outdoor events. If you have any questions or concerns regarding potential hazards, please contact an LPBLT staff member.

Hazard	Potential Risk	Symptom	Treatment	Precaution	PPE & Aftercare
Poison Ivy Leaflets of 3, leave it be! 	Allergic reaction (rash)	Itchy and/or painful rash can develop after direct contact.	If your skin has come in contact with the plant, wash the area with soap and water as soon as possible. You can also clean the area with rubbing alcohol. Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.	Be mindful of its presence as it is extremely common in Southern Ontario. Avoid wearing clothes that expose skin.	Long sleeved shirts, long pants, impermeable gloves, handwashing equipment, rubbing alcohol, calamine lotion, antihistamines.
Stinging Nettle 	Allergic reaction (rash)	Itchy and/or painful rash can develop after direct contact.	If your skin has come in contact with the plant, wash the area with soap and water as soon as possible. You can also clean the area with rubbing alcohol. Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.	Be mindful of its presence as it is common in Southern Ontario. Avoid wearing clothes that expose skin.	Long sleeved shirts, long pants, impermeable gloves, handwashing equipment, rubbing alcohol, calamine lotion, antihistamines.
Cow Parsnip 	Allergic reaction (rash) Can cause serious long-term effects.	Itchy and/or painful rash can develop after direct contact. This rash is 'photovoltaic' meaning sun exposure can worsen the condition of the rash, etc.	If your skin has come in contact with the plant, wash the area with soap and water as soon as possible. You can also clean the area with rubbing alcohol. Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.	Be mindful of its presence as it is found in Southern Ontario. Avoid wearing clothes that expose skin.	Long sleeved shirts, long pants, impermeable gloves, handwashing equipment, rubbing alcohol, calamine lotion, antihistamines.

<p>Deer (Blacklegged) Ticks</p> 	<p>Embedded ticks can transmit Lyme disease</p>	<p>Visible embedded tick and/or bulls eye rash.</p>	<p>If you have confirmed that you've been bitten, remove the tick immediately using proper tools and technique to prevent infection. Save the tick in a container. Wipe the area clean with rubbing alcohol.</p> <p>Follow up by visiting a doctor to notify them of your experience.</p> <p>Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.</p>	<p>Avoid walking through tall vegetation. Wear long sleeved shirts and long pants, tucked into socks. Most importantly, do a thorough tick check after every excursion. Ensure you check areas where clothing is tight and areas that are typically warmer and accumulate sweat. These areas are targeted by ticks.</p>	<p>Insect repellent, bug nets, tick remover or tweezers.</p> <p>NEVER apply ANY substance onto the tick or irritate the tick in any way as it may cause the tick to regurgitate bacteria into your bloodstream.</p>
<p>Sun/Heat Exposure</p> 	<p>Heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration, sunburn</p>	<p>See our Outdoor Hazard Guide for more information. Excessive sweating or cold sweats, dizziness, overheating or feeling cold, nausea, feeling weak/faint, cramps, etc.</p>	<p>Heat exhaustion is treated differently than heat stroke. Please follow instructions on first aid manual when treating</p> <p>Remove the affected person from direct sunlight, find an area to cool down, stay hydrated.</p> <p>Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.</p>	<p>Dress appropriately for the weather conditions. Breathable long sleeve shirts and long pants are recommended. Stay hydrated, stay in the shade as much as possible.</p> <p>Be aware of the symptoms and stop working when you need a break.</p>	<p>Hat, sunscreen, water, ice packs.</p>
<p>Cold Exposure</p> 	<p>Hypothermia, frostbite, numbness</p>	<p>See our Outdoor Hazard Guide for more information. Shivering, numbness/tingling, impaired coordination, restricted movement, skin feels waxy, etc.</p>	<p>Remove the affected person from the cold and into a warmer area.</p> <p>Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.</p>	<p>Dress appropriately for the weather conditions. If you feel cold/numb/pins and needles, stop what you're doing and seek warmth immediately.</p>	<p>Warm layers of clothing, hat, gloves, boots.</p>
<p>Rough Terrain</p> 	<p>Leg, ankle, and/or foot injury</p>	<p>Sore feet/ankles, strained muscles, broken bones, etc.</p>	<p>Please refer to a first aid guide or doctor for further instruction.</p>	<p>If you have any pre-existing injuries or physical conditions that may be irritated by walking on rough terrain, please</p>	<p>Proper footwear</p>

6. FAQ

6.1. What is a land trust?

Land Trust refers to non-profit, charitable organizations whose core activities are the acquisition of land or interests in land (conservation easements) for conservation in perpetuity.

The hallmark of a land trust is their direct action to protect the local land base and that they hold those lands or conservation easements in trust for future generations.

Land Trusts and conservancies are generally local in scope and operation but may be provincial, regional or national. Most land trusts focus on conserving the biological values of land, but across the continent, land trusts have been established to protect scenic, historical, agricultural, and recreational land.

6.2. Can my efforts be tracked?

Yes! There are two ways your efforts can be tracked. After each volunteer event, staff at LPBLT enter the hours each volunteer works in our volunteer tracking software. You may also wish to download a GPS Tracker on your phone, turn it on as you set out, and report back to us how many kilometres you travelled while performing your volunteer duties.

6.3. How else can I support Long Point Basin Land Trust?

Support us by:

- Donating your time
- Financial donations
- Donating land
- Corporate donations and sponsorships
- Sharing our message
- Sharing our content on social media
- Inviting a friend out to our events
- Hosting a fundraiser or garage sale to collect donations
- Wearing our logo'd [SWAG!](#)

For more details, please visit our website and check out the '[Support our work](#)' page.

6.4. Can I speak on behalf of LPBLT to the media?

Unless specific permission is given, only certain members of LPBLT's staff and Board of Directors are permitted to speak to the media on LPBLT's behalf. However, we welcome guest contributions which are fully reviewed by our Communications and Marketing Manager.

6.5. How do I report biodiversity on LPBLT nature reserves?

You can report wildlife sightings on our nature reserves by [visiting our website](#). This can also be done using the app [iNaturalist](#), [EDD Maps](#), or [eBird](#).

6.6. What is an Oak Savanna habitat, and why is it ecologically significant?

An Oak Savanna habitat is an open woodland ecosystem characterized by scattered Oak trees, grassy understory, and a diverse range of herbaceous plants. This habitat type is maintained by periodic fires, which prevent the encroachment of woody vegetation and promote the growth of grasses and wildflowers.

In the Long Point Basin area, the Oak Savanna habitat is of particular importance because it is one of the most biodiverse and threatened habitats in the region. This area is home to a variety of rare and endangered species, many of which are dependent on the Oak Savannah habitat for their survival. This includes species such as the Eastern Hognose snake, Red-headed Woodpecker, and Butternut tree.

Due to human development, agriculture, and fire suppression, the Oak Savannah habitat has been dramatically reduced and fragmented, making it increasingly vulnerable to further loss and degradation. Therefore, conservation efforts to protect and restore this habitat are crucial for the long-term health and sustainability of the Long Point Basin.

6.7. How is LPBLT funded?

LPBLT receives funding through 3 core areas: government and foundation grants, individual donations, and business sponsorships. Visit the [Financial Reports](#) page on our website for more information.

6.8. What activities are generally permitted on the nature reserves?

Nature appreciation, hiking, photography, and bird watching.

6.9. What uses are generally prohibited on nature reserves?

Camping and fires, removal or damage to any species, foraging, littering, dumping, mountain biking, horse riding, motorized vehicles, and building shelters are not permitted on the nature reserves.

6.10. Is hunting permitted on LPBLT nature reserves?

Hunting can be permitted on some of the nature reserves when given direct permission by LPBLT staff. If you are interested in hunting on the properties, please email our Land Stewardship Manager for more information:

stewardship@longpointlandtrust.ca

6.11. How can I stay informed?

To further your involvement, you can sign up for our [monthly e-newsletter](#) to hear about our upcoming community events and important announcements.

Check us out on social media:

- Facebook: [@LPBLT](#)
- Instagram: [@LPBLT](#)
- Youtube: [@Long Point Basin Land Trust](#)
- LinkedIn: [@Long Point Basin Land Trust](#)