

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Scenic Views Abound at Wiidookdaadiwin Lookout Open to the public spring 2022

Midhurst/October 27, 2021 – This morning, the Friends of Wiidookdaadiwin, with support from the County of Simcoe, celebrated years of dedication, collaboration and hard work by hosting a small and safe event recognizing several recent project milestones, including the completion of construction at the Lookout. Today's celebration was an opportunity to showcase the generous donations and say a sincere thank you to these numerous donors for their contributions to the new attraction.

The Lookout will remain closed to the public until spring 2022 to allow for final enhancements to be made to the site.

The Lookout will serve as a regional heritage attraction with scenic vistas, including the Minesing Wetlands, historic Fort Willow, and panoramas from Collingwood to Mount St. Louis Moonstone. The Lookout is also home to the historic bronze Wiidookdaadiwin icon created by world-renowned sculptor Marlene Hilton-Moore, which was relocated from the temporary home of the Simcoe County Museum to its permanent home, fulfilling to the committee's original vision.

The Wiidookdaadiwin Lookout site is a unique partnership between the Friends of Wiidookdaadiwin, the Chippewa Tri Council made up of Beausoleil First Nation, the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation and the Chippewas of Rama First Nation, and the County of Simcoe. Work on the site, which began in the fall of 2019 and was completed this fall, was supported with significant funding from partners and donors. To learn more about the Wiidookdaadiwin Lookout, or to participate in sponsorship and donor opportunities, please visit <https://wiidookdaadiwin.org/>.

About the site:

The Friends of Wiidookdaadiwin approached the County 20 years ago to repurpose the closed landfill site on George Johnson Road in Springwater Township. The County manages more than 40 landfill sites, which were uploaded from local municipalities in 1991. The majority of these sites are now closed to the public and serve no productive purpose. This closed landfill site, now remediated and with permanent monitoring safety systems, has the ability to be utilized by the public as an attraction due to its scenic overlook. The views from the overlook are captivating and will serve as an attraction to local residents and visitors to our region.

About Friends of the Wiidookdaadiwin Board of Directors:

The Friends of the Wiidookdaadiwin Board of Directors is comprised of volunteer representatives from across the County including representation from the three First Nations in the Chippewa Tri Council. These individuals embrace the essence of Wiidookdaadiwin, which means working together and helping one another, and are committed to equitable relationships with Indigenous communities and to telling the true history of this incredible location. They believe this to be an essential step in the path to Truth and Reconciliation.

Quotes:

"The County recognizes the cultural significance of the Wiidookdaadiwin Lookout site to the heritage of our community. It has truly been an honour to work collaboratively with the Friends of Wiidookdaadiwin, and the communities of the Chippewa Tri Council to bring this project to fruition. We look forward to the gates opening next spring, as the site will serve not only an important heritage purpose, but also support our tourism sector for generations to come." – George Cornell, County of Simcoe Warden

“Through dedication and hard work, the Wiidookdaadiwin Board of Directors and numerous other volunteers, donors and partners, have created a site for residents and visitors alike to spend time with the beauty of our region and the truth of our history. We will continue our work to ensure generations to come will be able to remember our past, celebrate our present and build our future.” – Tony Guergis, Friends of Wiidookdaadiwin Board Chair

County of Simcoe is composed of sixteen member municipalities and provides crucial public services to County residents in addition to providing paramedic and social services to the separated cities of Barrie and Orillia. Visit our website at **simcoe.ca**.

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