

German Partner Biosphere Reserve at Redberry Lake

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Left to right: Andrew Hawrysh (Redberry Lake), Claude Letarte (Charlevoix), Karl-Friedrich Abe (Rhoen), Rebecca Pollock (Georgian Bay), Reinhard Braun (Rhoen).

The collaboration between the Canadian Biosphere Reserves Charlevoix, Georgian Bay and Redberry and the German Rhoen dates back to a meeting in 2005 where the regional network of Biosphere Reserves for Europe and North America (EuroMAB) encouraged its members to initiate partnerships. “There are almost 600 sites in this worldwide network of Biosphere Reserves but networks can only thrive if the people involved get to know each other, exchange ideas and implement joint projects”, explains Karl-Friedrich Abe, Head of Administration of the Rhoen Biosphere Reserve/Thuringia. In the following two years representatives from these four Biosphere Reserves visited each other and exchanged best practices that had been established in their Biosphere Reserves. An agreement was signed in 2007 with the goal to transfer and share knowledge in tourism, agriculture, landscape management and education for sustainable development. “We are very proud to have such a vital partnership that goes beyond being colleagues – we found friends here and that is very important to us”, says Abe.

He and his colleague Reinhard Braun, responsible for Geographic Information System (GIS) at the Rhoen Biosphere Reserve/Thuringia also had the chance to visit Saskatchewan's north.

Tourism Saskatchewan invited the two delegates as well as representatives from Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve to "Forest House", a wilderness lodge in the Boreal forest near Missinipe. This lodge is constructed and operates to have a minimal impact of the delicate ecosystem. The owners use solar collectors to generate power, installed a self-composting septic system and have a self-sustaining garden. "This is a very good example of the sustainable co-existence of people and nature", says Andrew Hawrysh, Chair of Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve, "Although this region is not a Biosphere Reserve, it demonstrates exactly what a Biosphere Reserve is all about: Living and working in a way that we can offer future generations the same ecological goods and services we were offered." The two German delegates left Redberry Lake and Saskatchewan on September 28.



Karl-Friedrich Abe, Head of Administration of the Rhoen Biosphere Reserve/Thuringia, Showcases Projects of the German Partner Site.

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Ric Driediger, manager and co-owner of Forest House, shares his knowledge about local history, ecology and their way of sustainably operating this lodge.

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Copies of the brochure "Partners in the World Network" can be ordered at Redberry Lake Biosphere Reserve: communications@redberrylake.ca or downloaded.