

Speaking Notes for Len Ugarenko for  
the Bear Pit Session on Thursday, July 9, 2009 at the  
National Stewardship & Conservation Conference,  
University of Calgary

**INTRODUCTION**

- THANK YOU BOB.
  
- I WAS ASKED BY THE CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS TO RESPOND TO CANADA'S STATE OF STEWARDSHIP REPORT ON BEHALF OF THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.
  
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA IS A NATIONAL, NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION WHICH IS CELEBRATING ITS 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY THIS YEAR.
  
- OVER THE YEARS, WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA HAS DEDICATED OVER \$57 MILLION TO THE CONSERVATION, RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF WILDLIFE HABITAT.
  
- OUR GRANTS HAVE HELPED TO LEVERAGE, ON AVERAGE, OVER FIVE TIMES THAT AMOUNT.
  
- THIS PAST YEAR (2008-2009), FOR EXAMPLE, \$1.2 MILLION IN GRANT FUNDS, MAINLY OBTAINED FROM THE SALE OF THE CANADIAN WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION STAMP PURCHASED BY HUNTERS TO VALIDATE THEIR FEDERAL MIGRATORY GAME BIRD HUNTING PERMITS, LEVERAGED AN ADDITIONAL \$9.9 MILLION IN PARTNER FUNDING FOR CONSERVATION PROJECTS.
  
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA HAS WORKED FOR 25 YEARS IN WAYS THAT DIFFER FROM MOST OTHER NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND HAS EXTENSIVE EXPERIENCE WORKING ON BEHALF OF OTHERS.
  
- WE HAVE BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN THE *CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP* SECTOR IN CANADA.
  
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PROPONENT OF CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP, SO WE ARE PLEASED TO SEE THAT STEWARDSHIP HAS NOW BECOME A COMPONENT OF OPERATIONS OF MOST NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS.

- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA HAS FUNDED INNOVATIVE STEWARDSHIP INITIATIVES, SUCH AS THE MUNICIPAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR, THE ONTARIO WETLAND HABITAT FUND - AN INITIATIVE OF THE EASTERN HABITAT JOINT VENTURE, THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE QUEBEC PROVINCIAL HABITAT STAMP AND PROJECT FUNDING PROGRAM, THE COWS AND FISH PROGRAM IN ALBERTA, AS WELL AS THE PACIFIC ESTUARY CONSERVATION PROGRAM, TO NAME A FEW.
- WE HAVE BEEN A CHAMPION OF STEWARDSHIP AS AN EFFECTIVE MEANS OF DELIVERING CONSERVATION PROGRAMS IN ALL PARTS OF CANADA AND A SUPPORTER OF THE ROLES THAT INDUSTRY, AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS PLAY IN DELIVERING CONSERVATION ACTIONS.
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA WAS AN EARLIER INNOVATOR IN STEWARDSHIP, EXEMPLIFIED BY SUCH INITIATIVES AS THE NATIONAL WORKSHOP ON BACKYARD STEWARDSHIP.
- WE HAVE BEEN A SIGNIFICANT FUNDER OF THE 4 NATIONAL STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCES.
- WE ARE RECOGNIZED AS A PROVEN PARTNERSHIP ORGANIZATION THAT HAS REFRAINED FROM COMPETING FOR FUNDS WITH PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS.
- WE WERE THE *VOLUNTARY SECTOR INITIATIVE* LEAD AGENCY THAT LED REGIONAL AND NATIONAL WORKSHOPS YIELDING IMPORTANT RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STEWARDSHIP SECTOR.
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA HAS EFFECTIVELY LINKED THE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY WITH AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY AGENCIES AND INTERESTS BY SEEKING INNOVATIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES TO LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT; AND
- WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA HAS BEEN A NATIONAL VOICE FOCUSED ON LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP BEYOND THE PARAMETERS OF SPECIES MANAGEMENT.
- WE WERE AN IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTOR TO CANADA'S STEWARDSHIP AGENDA, AS WELL AS CONDUCTING A SERIES OF NATIONAL SURVEYS IN COOPERATION WITH

ENVIRONICS TO ASSESS FARMERS', RANCHERS' AND RURAL LANDOWNERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS STEWARDSHIP OBJECTIVES.

- IN PREPARATION FOR THIS PRESENTATION, WILDLIFE HABITAT CANADA ASKED THE CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION WHO PREPARED TWO REPORTS FOR THIS CONFERENCE, *THE STATE OF STEWARDSHIP IN CANADA* AND A *REVIEW OF STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES IN CANADA'S PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES*, TO CONDUCT A BROAD CONSULTATION OF THE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY TO GET A SENSE OF SUPPORT FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOUND IN THE *STATE OF STEWARDSHIP IN CANADA* REPORT.
- THEY CONTACTED OVER 50 NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND/OR PROVINCIALY-BASED NON-GOVERNMENT CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES AND THEY ALSO REVIEWED COMMENTS FROM THE STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE ON-LINE FORUM.
- THE CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CONSERVATION ALSO WEIGHED RECOMMENDATIONS ENCLOSED IN THE *STATE OF STEWARDSHIP IN CANADA* REPORT AGAINST THE MARCH 2009 SURVEY CONDUCTED BY THE CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK THAT SOLICITED ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS' VIEWS ON THE PROGRESS, CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED AND FUTURE BIODIVERSITY PRIORITIES.
- THE TOP THREE CHALLENGES CITED BY THE 128 RESPONDENTS TO THAT SURVEY WERE LACK OF FUNDING, AND POLITICAL WILL AND AWARENESS WHICH ALIGN CLOSELY WITH THE RECOMMENDATIONS HELD IN THE *STATE OF STEWARDSHIP IN CANADA* REPORT.
- THE FOLLOWING ARE THE OBSERVATIONS ON THE REPORT'S RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS.
- FIRST, THERE SEEMED TO BE LITTLE DISAGREEMENT THAT THE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE REASONABLE, SUFFICIENTLY CLEAR AND REPRESENT ENDURING TOP OF MIND CONCERNS.
- SECOND, DESPITE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT PROGRESS IN SUPPORT OF STEWARDSHIP IN SELECTED AREAS HAS BEEN MADE, THERE CONTINUES TO BE CONCERN WHICH IN SOME INSTANCES APPROACHES FRUSTRATION, THAT MANY OF THE OBSTACLES TO STRENGTHENING STEWARDSHIP IDENTIFIED SINCE THE FIRST STEWARDSHIP CONFERENCE IN 2000 CONTINUE TO BE HURDLES TODAY.

- NOTABLE WAS THE LACK OF MEANINGFUL FEDERAL LEADERSHIP, THE LACK OF ONGOING COMMITMENT TO BROAD-BASED STEWARDSHIP AND THE NEED FOR NEW STEWARDSHIP FUNDING.
- THIRD, FRONT OF MIND ISSUES VARIED DEPENDING UPON WHAT JURISDICTION THE RESPONDENT REPRESENTED.
- LOCAL CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS WERE FOCUSED ON GETTING WORK DONE ON THE GROUND AND KEEPING THEIR DOORS OPEN.
- THEY EMPHASIZED THAT NEW FUNDING SHOULD BE **PLACE-** BASED AND IN SUPPORT OF ACTIONS THAT MEET GRASS ROOTS NEEDS.
- IN SOME CASES, SUCH AS THE COMMUNITY OF LAND TRUSTS, THERE WERE CONTRASTING VIEWS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF STEWARDSHIP TO THEIR BUSINESS FUNCTIONS.
- PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS HAD VARYING VIEWS ON STEWARDSHIP PRIORITIES, POSSIBLY ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE PERCENTAGE OF PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LAND OWNERSHIP, FISHERIES, FOREST, AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY DRIVERS AND THE MEANS OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION AT ARM'S LENGTH OF GOVERNMENT.
- ORGANIZATIONS WITH BROAD-BASED NATIONAL INTERESTS PLACED ATTENTION ON GREATER INTEGRATION OF PROGRAMS, AND EXPRESSED THE GREATEST INTEREST IN THE CREATION OF A COALITION AS A MEANS FOR BUILDING A MORE SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR STEWARDSHIP.
- IN THE NON-GOVERNMENT CONSERVATION COMMUNITY, WE EACH HAVE A PIECE OF THE STEWARDSHIP PUZZLE THAT REFLECTS OUR ORGANIZATIONS' INDIVIDUAL VISIONS.
- THE LACK OF A COMPREHENSIVE, INTEGRATED AND BLENDED VISION IS A DETERRENT TO MOVING BEYOND RANDOM ACTS OF CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP.
- WE NEED TO BRING ALL THE PIECES TOGETHER IN A MANNER THAT IS COHERENT, COMPLEMENTARY AND VALUE ADDED.

- THERE APPEARS TO BE WIDESPREAD GENERAL SUPPORT IN THE NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENT CONSERVATION COMMUNITY FOR THE TONE AND FOCUS OF ALL SIX OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE *STATE OF STEWARDSHIP IN CANADA* REPORT.
- IT IS RECOMMENDED THEY BE PURSUED ON THE NATIONAL SCALE.
- SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS INCLUDE:
  - THERE IS LITTLE NEED TO DEBATE THE DEFINITION OF STEWARDSHIP WHEREAS SIMPLE RECOGNITION THAT STEWARDSHIP IS BASED ON A WIDE SET OF INTENTIONS IS SUFFICIENT FOR PROGRESS.
  - IN OTHER WORDS, IF ONE AGREES YOU ARE SIMILAR WITHIN A FAMILY OF RESEMBLANCES, YOU CAN ACT IN COALITION MODE.
  - SOME HAVE SUGGESTED THAT A NATIONAL TEN YEAR STEWARDSHIP PLAN FROM 2010 – 2020, BE CALLED THE *STEWARDSHIP CANADA PLAN* WHICH WILL BE OF GREAT BENEFIT BY INCLUDING MEASUREABLE TARGETS FOR THE SUITE OF ACTIONS IT MIGHT ENVISAGE AND WILL BE A COMMON VISION TO HELP INTEGRATE PROGRAMS AND REDUCE DUPLICATION.
  - THE PLAN, IF IT IS TO PROMOTE INTEGRATION, SHOULD DEMONSTRATE THAT IT WILL REALLY GROW THE PIE AND NOT CUT OFF OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OR ISOLATE SMALLER ORGANIZATIONS.
  - IT WOULD BE VALUABLE FOR THE PLAN TO INCORPORATE SEVERAL ECONOMIC STUDIES TO DEMONSTRATE THE VALUE OF GOODS AND SERVICES PROVIDED BY STEWARDSHIP ACTIVITIES SUCH AS THE RESTORATION OF WETLANDS IN ORDER TO JUSTIFY THE NEED.
  - NEW FUNDS WILL BE REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE THESE RECOMMENDATIONS, YET THEY MUST BE TIED TO CURRENT MAJOR POLICY DRIVERS SUCH AS CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION, WATER CONSERVATION, BIODIVERSITY AND PROTECTING THE HABITAT OF SPECIES AT RISK.
  - WE WILL ALSO NEED TO CREATE POLITICAL SUPPORT FOR STEWARDSHIP AND SECURE A NATIONAL POLITICAL CHAMPION.

- WE NEED TO CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL STEWARDSHIP COORDINATING BODY, FOR EXAMPLE A SECRETARIAT, THAT IS DEDICATED TO:
  - (a) ADVANCING INTER-CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES;
  - (b) SUPPORTING THE ADVANCEMENT OF STEWARDSHIP TOOLS IN CANADA, SUCH AS INCENTIVES FOR LANDOWNERS, TAXATION ASSISTANCE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT;
  - (c) FACILITATING AN INTERAGENCY WRITING TEAM IN THE SECRETARIAT'S PREPARATION OF THE 2010-2020 *STEWARDSHIP CANADA PLAN*; AND
  - (d) SEEKING FUNDING SUPPORT FOR THE INITIAL PHASES OF THE PLAN STARTING IN 2010 FROM ALL LOGICAL SOURCES.
  
- THANK YOU.