
Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre



Centre de données sur la conservation du Canada Atlantique

Executive Director's Report (Lautenschlager)

The 07/08 fiscal year (FY) was one of financial and staff stability, with modest growth for the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre (CDC). (An assistant botanist and a zoologist were hired to work on projects during the 07/08 FY and beyond.) Board of Directors meetings were informative and highly efficient, thanks to Kate MacQuarrie, Chair, the Executive Committee, and Board members.

The CDC worked on a variety of contracts focusing on species and communities of conservation concern, including species at risk (SAR); and finished the year with a modest surplus (Treasurer's Report – below). That surplus combined with internally restricted net assets is in line with the “financial buffer” the Board believes the CDC should maintain to ensure secure business operations.

Recognizing that observational data from the inadequately inventoried Atlantic regional landscape is insufficient for identifying where many species of conservation concern may be found, the Atlantic Canada CDC has continued developing and refining existing GIS-based *expert opinion range maps* (X-maps) for terrestrial plants and animal species. Increasingly, concerned users of CDC data are using species occurrence predictions, based on a combination of: 1) observational data, and 2) X-map identified possibilities.

The growing interest in Canadian CDCs, as a source of conservation science expertise and data along with funds from government agencies (federal and provincial) and others to support our efforts have been encouraging. Those funds are expected to enable the CDC to slowly increase the size and scope of our operation in the future. Although there are always challenges, there also seem to be significant opportunities ahead for the CDC.

Chair's Report (MacQuarrie)

The Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre has had another successful year delivering high quality products and satisfying the expertise and data needs of a variety of members and clients. That success is due largely to its highly dedicated staff, recognized as regional and national experts in their respective fields. The original field work completed by

CDC staff, during this and in previous years, has made significant contributions to our understanding of species and ecological community presence, distribution, abundance, and conservation status throughout Atlantic Canada.

The quality and utility of the expertise and data maintained by the CDC is evidenced by the growing number and types of data requests. Those requests have grown from a handful during the initial years, to over 500 during the 07/08 FY. CDC staff continue to identify species and ecological communities of conservation concern, throughout Atlantic Canada, for members, partners, clients, and others.

Staff efforts are highlighted below, but the following strike me as particularly important:

- The CDC has finished its third sound financial year – a significant accomplishment for any non-profit organization in the current climate of increased competitiveness and dwindling resources among similar groups;
- The Data Managers and staff continue to work with the Biotics 4 biodiversity data management software to ensure that it delivers information required by two federal members. The server delivering Biotics to Sackville, NB and Corner Brook, NL, maintained and supported by the Canadian Forest Service in Fredericton, was upgraded and now seems more dependable;
- CDC botany staff completed “cutting edge” field surveys: along central and northern New Brunswick rivers; in southwestern Nova Scotia; on Prince Edward Island; and for invasive species in places throughout the Maritimes.
- Ecological community work, describing the Maritimes forest communities, and related “fact-sheet” descriptions, will soon be providing the foundation for ranking the status of these communities throughout the Maritimes. Community ranking will improve habitat management and long-term conservation of critical habitats.

I thank staff, supporting members, and board members for making the past year another success for the CDC, and its clients. In the coming year, we’ll need to maintain the high quality the organization has become known for, and continue to focus on its long-term financial sustainability.

Treasurer’s Report (Towers) -

- Total revenue for 2007/2008 fiscal year (FY) was ~\$671K (up ~\$159K from the previous year). That revenue enabled us to finish the FY with a balance of ~\$247K; \$44K in capital assets, and \$203K (including \$125K internally restricted) carry-over funds
- Approximately 37% of total revenue was from federal sources, 37% was from provincial sources, and 25% from other sources [not-for-profit organizations (including funds from: federal partners, directly or flowing through NatureServe Canada), Service fees, Corporate contributions, Foundation funding, and Aboriginal communities]
- 45% of the total revenue was unrestricted “core funding”, 55% (including carry-over funds) was restricted

- Approximately 42% of core funding came directly from federal sources while 58% was from other sources; federal funds flowing through NatureServe Canada, provincial governments, service fees, etc.
- Total expenses were ~\$663K; approximately 81% for salaries and employee benefits, 5% for travel, 5% for contract personnel, 3% for office occupancy, and 6% for other costs (staff training, banking, phone/fax/internet, insurance, etc.)
- We ended the 2007/2008 fiscal year with revenue exceeding expenditures by ~\$8K, which will be carried over to the 2008/2009 fiscal year

Founding Partners, Members, and Supporters

The Atlantic CDC gratefully acknowledges support received from the following organizations during the 2007/2008 fiscal year. That support for: core staff, projects, and infrastructure, was critical as we worked to accomplish **our mission: to assemble and provide objective and understandable data and expertise about species and ecological communities of conservation concern, including those at risk, and undertake field biological inventories to support decision-making, research, and education.**

Founding Partners Supporting the CDC

- Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service
- Nature Conservancy Canada
- New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy
- Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation¹
- Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
- Parks Canada Agency
- Prince Edward Island Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Environment

Additional Members

- Bowater Mersey, Ltd.
- J.D. Irving, Ltd.
- Neenah Paper
- Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour
- Public Works and Government Services
- StoraEnso
- Transport Canada

¹ The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation, Wildlife Division, also provides office space and related materials for our Data Manager and Assistant Data Manager stationed in Corner Brook, and contract employees in Newfoundland. The value of those facilities, related materials, and other support, as well as the direct connection to this major partner, can not be overestimated.

Other Supporters

- Canadian Food Inspection Agency
- Confederation of mainland Mi'kmaq
- COSEWIC
- Environment Canada's Endangered Species Recovery Fund
- Monsanto Canada
- NatureServe Canada, and NatureServe
- New Brunswick Environmental Trust Fund
- New Brunswick Museum
- New Brunswick Wildlife Council

Program Overviews

Administration

Dr. R.A. Lautenschlager - Executive Director - worked with the Chair, the Board of Directors and other Members, Staff, and Clients to address needs, identify and pursue business opportunities, participate in projects, and ensure project development and delivery. He continued leading the development of GIS-based expert opinion maps for federally and provincially listed Species at Risk in Atlantic Canada. Those maps, combined with species specific observational information, stored in the CDCs database, are expected to improve conservation decisions throughout the region. *Dr. Lautenschlager* was ably assisted by *Cindy Spicer* who attended all Board meetings presenting financial overviews, and handling all financial related activities.

Cindy Spicer – Administrative Assistant

- Worked closely with the Executive Director on major administrative issues
- Prepared - payroll, invoices, cheques, T4's, monthly remittance, revenue and expense reports, bank reconciliations, WHSCC reports, receipts for income tax, health plan deductions, release slips, various other forms;
- Worked with the Auditor and entered financial transactions into Simply Accounting;
- Received, reviewed and organized: monthly time sheets, project proposals, project budgets, and employee expenses;
- Attended staff meetings and presented revenue and expense overviews at Board meetings; and
- Responded to calls and e-mails relating to invoices and projects.

Botany

Sean Blaney - Botanist/Assistant Director - ably assisted by David Mazerolle and Youth Intern Erica Oberndorfer, completed field inventories along New Brunswick (central and northern) rivers, focusing on Anticosti Aster – which was more common than expected. (These results are expected to lead to COSEWIC reexamining the status of this *Threatened* plant.) The botany team also conducted surveys: for plant species of conservation concern around lakes in southwestern NS; and invasive species (for the Canadian Food Inspection Agency) throughout the Maritimes. During the year they: found stinkwort (*Dittrichia graveolens*) a plant previously unreported in Canada, and a number of other plant species previously unreported in the Maritimes; contributed to a data gathering exercise focused on

proposed New Brunswick Protected Areas; and contributed to second generation expert opinion map development for federally and provincially listed plant and animal species in the Maritimes.

Cindy Spicer – Assistant Botanist, led botany field training exercises for J.D.Irving; pressed and identified plants, prepared field notes, and entered data.

Zoology

Denis Doucet – Zoologist, completed his first full year with the CDC, in part focusing on surveys for rare Ondatra species along the Miramichi river drainage. (Results indicate that the Pygmy Snaketail is more common than previously believed while the Skillet Clubtail is less common than previously thought). He also led a New Brunswick Protected Areas data gathering exercise; entered extensive new migratory songbird, and other zoological data into the CDC's database; helped rank butterflies in Prince Edward Island; and contributed zoological understanding to second generation expert opinion map development in the Maritimes.

Community Ecology

Sean Basquill – Ecologist, working closely with the Canadian Forest Service, developed definitions for ecological communities (associations) – starting with forested communities (focusing on diversity, distribution, and status); identifying ~135 “forest associations” in the Maritimes. He has also developed provisional status ranks for forest communities in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, using NatureServe protocol for ranking and the associated “Excel Rank Calculator”. In New Brunswick, slightly more than 30% of the forest communities identified (mostly flooded and coastal forests, but a few upland forests) have been ranked as being “of conservation concern”

Data Management:

Sackville, NB

Stefen Gerriets – Senior Data Manager -

- Continued ongoing data improvement efforts (with help from CDC staff specialists); plant, songbird, and odonate records were improved significantly;
- Participated in the Parks Data Improvement Project;
- Responded to close to over 500 data requests;
- Spent significant amounts of time on the Biotics server upgrade and working with staff who were working in Biotics. (The Atlantic CDC is using the first 'multistate' version of Biotics); and
- Worked with staff from the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources on approaches to providing them with data online.

Corner Brook, Newfoundland

Meherzad Romer - Data Manager (ably assisted by Kirsten Miller) – continued to the increase in the amount of data maintained, responding to data requests, and worked closely with the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation, Wildlife Division. They made significant progress on GIS-based expert opinion range map development for federally and provincially listed Species at Risk in Newfoundland and

Labrador (completing 16 maps, and worked on six others) and developed habitat descriptions for 22 species. They also worked with contract staff compiling data for small mammals and plants in Labrador. Data in Newfoundland is managed in both Access and Biotics; and recently much of that has focused on Newfoundland Marten and Piping plover. Taxonomic improvements were made to the Boreal Felt Lichen Database. In addition, progress toward a First Nations Species at Risk Traditional Ecological Knowledge data gathering exercise has been made. Data gathered will be housed and supported, in many ways, by the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation's Wildlife Division which provides numerous contributions to CDC staff working in the Corner Brook office and contract CDC staff working in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Acknowledgements

In addition to our members, partners, clients and other supporters, we thank the following individuals and groups for providing help and data during our 2007/2008 fiscal year.

Individuals

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Rob Cameron, Nova Scotia Department of the Environment & Labour
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Rosemary Curley, PEI Dept. of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Environment
Dr. Don Faber-Langendoen, NatureServe
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Bill Glen, PEI Department of Agriculture & Forestry
Dr. Jim Goltz
Dr. Heinrich Harries, Mount Allison University
John Hutchison, PEI Department of Agriculture & Forestry
Dr. Judy Loo Canadian Forest Service
Art Lynds, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Don MacAlpine (New Brunswick Museum)
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Bruce Matson, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy
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Vince Zelazny, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy

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Canadian Wildlife Service

Canadian Forest Service
Connell Herbarium, University of New Brunswick
E.C. Smith Herbarium, Acadia University
Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation (Surveys and Mapping Division)
Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Nova Scotia Herpetofaunal Atlas
Parks Canada

Our People

Board of Directors

Deborah Austin (Parks Canada)
Doug Bliss (Canadian Wildlife Service) – *Ex officio*
Joe Brazil (Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation)
Kate MacQuarrie (Prince Edward Island) – *Chair*
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Julie Towers (Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources) – *Treasurer*
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Margie Whyte (Transport Canada)
Andrew Hebda (Nova Scotia Museum)

CDC Staff

Sean Blaney, Botanist/Assistant Director
Denis Doucet, Zoologist
Stefen Gerriets, Sr. Data Manager
Dr. R.A. Lautenschlager, Executive Director
David Mazerolle, Botanist
Kirsten Miller, Contract Conservation Assistant ~~Data Manager~~
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Cindy Spicer, Administrative Assistant/Assistant Botanist ~~Administrative Assistant~~

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