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Chair

Mr. Harold Albrecht

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•(0845)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC)): Members, I'll call our meeting to order, please. This is meeting number 61 of the Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), we are continuing our study of the role of the private sector in Canada in showing leadership by partnering with not-for-profit organizations to undertake local environmental initiatives.

Appearing today in person we have Mr. Robert McLean, executive director, Canadian Wildlife Service, environmental stewardship branch. Welcome, Mr. McLean. From the Earth Rangers, we welcome Ms. Tovah Barocas, director of development. Appearing by video conference from Mississauga, Ontario, we have from the Credit Valley Conservation Foundation Mrs. Terri LeRoux, executive director, and Mike Puddister, director of watershed transformation.

We'll proceed with 10-minute opening statements, first from Mr. McLean and then from Ms. Barocas.

Mr. McLean, you have 10 minutes.

Mr. Robert McLean (Executive Director, Canadian Wildlife Service, Environmental Stewardship Branch, Department of the Environment): Thank you.

Good morning. It's a pleasure to be with you again this morning.
[Translation]

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today about private sector partnerships with not-for-profit organizations to undertake local environmental initiatives. My comments today will focus on wildlife and habitat conservation and stewardship, as an issue that falls under the mandate of Environment Canada.

Conserving biodiversity is a collaborative effort and a responsibility that is shared among all Canadians—from all levels of government and industry to not-for-profit organizations, private landowners, and individual citizens. We must all be active partners.

Federal and provincial protected areas—like national and provincial parks and national wildlife areas—as well as private conservation lands, are all essential for long-term conservation of biodiversity. But conservation also depends on actions within the broader landscape where a significant portion of all natural areas are found. Careful stewardship of the broader landscape is key, and therefore private sector-not-for profit partnerships can play an important role.

•(0850)

[English]

Many people have an influence on these working landscapes. Collaborative conservation planning at the landscape level and complementary coordinated action help ensure the best possible outcomes. Stakeholders will each bring different influences and different contributions to the table. The biggest successes are often rooted in strong partnerships. We achieve more together than we can apart.

The impact and reach of the private sector in these efforts cannot be underestimated. There are many ways in which Canada's private sector is engaging with not-for-profit organizations to undertake conservation and stewardship initiatives that have a real impact in communities across the country. These efforts complement the role of governments and other partners—another spoke in the wheel of Canada's conservation and stewardship movement. These partnerships provide mutual benefits that allow initiatives to proceed and succeed. Resources, expertise, and information can be shared and leveraged to better manage land and resources for conservation outcomes. For example, companies can find data and information from on-the-ground conservation organizations about where best to work and what kinds of activities are needed on the landscape, including best management practices. These can allow them to focus their conservation and stewardship efforts where and how they are most needed. Non-profit organizations may get the financial resources they need to advance a particular project.

For the private sector, these efforts not only contribute to a company's public image as a good corporate citizen but are also good for the bottom line. This is evident in particular for natural resource companies, where a sustainably managed resource helps to ensure the long-term viability of the business. It applies across all industry sectors. Examples from these joint private sector and non-government organization efforts take many different forms, such as direct funding for NGO-led environmental initiatives, working together to move towards common environmental objectives, and cooperating in on-the-ground projects.

Indeed, under such federal funding programs as the habitat stewardship program, the aboriginal fund for species at risk, and the national wetland conservation fund, there are several examples of private sector and NGO partnerships for environmental initiatives.

Under the habitat stewardship program, in 2014-15 the Fraser Valley Conservancy received almost \$10,000 of in-kind support from Lafarge for a project on the recovery of the western painted turtle and associated species at risk in the Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley, to address threats of habitat loss and degradation from residential and commercial developments, road mortality, disease transmission from invasive species, human disturbance, low reproductive success, and wetland loss and degradation.

For the aboriginal fund for species at risk, in 2014-15 the West Moberly First Nations received \$2,500 of in-kind support from Canfor for a project to enhance caribou calf survival and to help avert extirpation of the Klinse-Za caribou herd, which had been reduced to only 16 individuals. The project was located in the caribou's calving range, in the Klinse-Za first nation traditional territory in northeastern British Columbia. The project protected pregnant cows and their calves from predators during the calving season by using a penned and supervised facility.

In the wetlands fund, in 2015-16 the Norfolk Land Stewardship Council received \$4,000 cash from the TD Canada friends of environment fund for a project to enhance and restore the wetland complex at the tip of Long Point in Ontario through phragmites management. The phragmites invasive plant species was identified as the nation's worst by researchers at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada back in 2005.

My final example relates to the Earth Rangers. Through the national conservation plan, the Earth Rangers received \$3 million over three years to expand its existing family-oriented conservation and biodiversity programming. Since you do have a witness this morning from Earth Rangers, I won't say anything more about that particular partnership.

In closing, private and not-for-profit partnerships are important to conservation and sustainable development in Canada. Whether it's NGOs providing expertise or undertaking conservation on private lands, or whether it's private sector companies assisting NGOs financially or through other means, these partnerships are important to achieving environmental objectives locally. They do make a difference, and they merit the attention that your committee is giving them.

Thank you.

•(0855)

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. McLean.

We'll move now to Ms. Tovah Barocas from Earth Rangers, from Brampton, Ontario. Welcome.

Ms. Tovah Barocas (Director, Development, Earth Rangers): Thank you very much.

I'd like to thank you first for providing me with the opportunity to speak before the committee today, and I'd like to congratulate you for addressing this important topic. At Earth Rangers we believe strongly in the importance of collaboration among all sectors of society in order to achieve environmental goals, and this includes the private sector.

Earth Rangers is a national ENGO focused on engaging children and their families in conservation. Our programs are based on

research indicating that the number one environmental concern for children across Canada is protecting animals from extinction.

We travel to over 650 elementary schools each year and give a fun and dynamic presentation featuring live animals, which captures the imagination of students and introduces them to environmental science themes. We also have a membership program, which just last week grew to over 100,000 children all across Canada.

Through this program, we provide our members and their families with tangible activities they can do to positively impact the environment, things like planting pollinator gardens in their backyards and recycling.

Earth Rangers is funded through a variety of sources, with about 30% coming from the corporate sector. We have partners across a variety of industries, including natural resources, technology, finance and insurance, pharmaceuticals, and consumer packaged goods.

Today I'd like to share with you three distinct examples of successful and innovative corporate sector partnerships from the past few years.

The first relates to our Bring Back the Wild program. Bring Back the Wild educates our members on the importance of protecting animals, and empowers them to take action by starting a fundraising campaign. Each year Earth Rangers works with our conservation partners to identify four unique Canadian species that are facing threats in the wild. We then develop tangible projects to protect those animals, ranging from conservation research to land acquisition to habitat stewardship.

Last September we launched a Bring Back the Wild project focused on the western screech owl in the Elk River Valley in southeastern British Columbia. The project was developed in collaboration with Teck, a large B.C.-based mining company, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. Teck and NCC have been working together since 2012 to protect significant portions of land in the Elk River Valley. We at Earth Rangers felt that this could be a great opportunity to bring national attention to this commitment while ensuring continued funding for ongoing stewardship and conservation research in the area.

The project has provided the opportunity for Teck to leverage the Earth Rangers' network to promote its work with NCC to a much broader audience, highlighting its environmental commitment. The benefit to Earth Rangers is significant funding from Teck to provide educational materials to our members about the screech owl project. As of earlier this week 5,200 kids across Canada, members of Earth Rangers, had raised over \$65,000 for the project, with a significant portion of these funds being donated by Earth Rangers to NCC to conduct important conservation research on the western screech owl. As you can see, this project is the true definition of a win-win-win.

The next partnership I want to talk about is one with Schneider Electric Canada, which is focused on our headquarters, the Earth Rangers Centre for Sustainable Technology. The Earth Rangers Centre is one of the most efficient buildings in the world, using nearly 90% less energy than other buildings of its size. One of the most unique and impactful aspects of the building is the Schneider Electric building automation system. The automation system controls the heating, cooling, and ventilation, and the operation of day-to-day systems in the building. It can turn on a light, open a door, heat or cool a room, and provide additional fresh air when needed. This sophisticated system allows the Earth Rangers Centre to operate more efficiently and to lessen our environmental impact. Schneider Electric not only provided this system at no cost to us but also continues to provide funding every year for its continued operation and maintenance. It has used our building as a testing ground for new products and innovations, as a sales tool for new customers to see their products in action, and even as an event venue for global executive meetings. This partnership is a perfect example of how the private sector can not only support ENGOs but also leverage that support to achieve its own business objectives.

Finally, I'd like to discuss another form of private sector partnership that has been highly successful for Earth Rangers. We have formed this type of partnership with many different companies, but today I will focus on the example of the Imperial Oil Foundation.

The natural resource sector is unique because while oftentimes head offices are located in places like Calgary or Vancouver, their core operations are in smaller, more remote locations. Many resource companies have put a priority on giving in the communities where their employees live and work and in which they are having the most significant environmental impact.

Earth Rangers' in-school education programs are unique in their ability to travel almost anywhere in Canada. For the past four years Imperial Oil has been supporting our program in Cold Lake, Lac la Biche, and Bonnyville in northern Alberta. Not only does this provide a great opportunity for Imperial Oil to bring something exciting and different to the community but it also provides Earth Rangers with the opportunity to expand our programs and access to children in an area we wouldn't otherwise have access to.

● (0900)

In some other instances, we provided our partners with the opportunity to directly engage their employees in selecting the schools we visit. The employees nominate their children's or grandchildren's school, and the company then sponsors the program in the schools with the most nominations. The employee feels like a hero to their child, and the company knows that they're impacting the communities they care most about.

Without the support of the corporate sector, we would not be able to do nearly as much as we currently do. In order to encourage corporations to continue to give back and to increase their charitable dollars each year, it's important that ENGOs recognize that support and engage in honest and positive dialogue with the companies that have taken a leadership role.

I also believe the government can play an important role in encouraging these types of partnerships and collaborations. Things like promoting best practices, using its position as a regulator to

convene multi-stakeholder groups around certain issues, and providing seed funding for innovative partnerships would all be very valuable.

Thank you. That concludes my statement.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Ms. Barocas.

We'll move now to Ms. Terri LeRoux, executive director.

I understand you're going to be sharing your time with Mr. Puddister. I'll let you work out the 10 minutes between you. Welcome.

Mr. Mike Puddister (Director, Watershed Transformation, Credit Valley Conservation): Good morning, Mr. Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Mike Puddister. I am the deputy CAO and the director of watershed transformation at the Credit Valley Conservation Authority. With me is Terri LeRoux, the executive director of the Credit Valley Conservation Foundation, our charitable partner. We both wish to thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this morning about our relationships with the private sector.

To begin, I'd like to provide you a little background on who we are and what we do. The Credit Valley Conservation Authority is one of 36 authorities in the province of Ontario serving a total population of over 12 million people and 473 municipalities. Established by the provincial government in 1954, we are a community-based environmental organization dedicated to protecting, restoring, and managing the natural resources of the Credit River watershed. As the primary scientific authority for the watershed, CVC works in partnership with municipal governments, schools, businesses, and community organizations to deliver locally based programs.

Situated within one of the most densely populated and fastest-growing regions of Canada, the Credit River watershed contains some of the most diverse landscapes in southern Ontario. In this area, the Carolinian forest zone meets the deciduous forest zone, both of which contain unique species not found in other areas.

The Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine also run through the watershed, further increasing the number and diversity of plants, animals, and communities. The Credit River is almost 90 kilometres in length, running from the headwaters in Orangeville, Erin, and Mono through nine municipalities, including the regional municipalities of Halton and Peel, eventually draining into Lake Ontario at Port Credit, in the City of Mississauga.

The current CVC vision statement of a "thriving environment that protects, connects and sustains us" makes clear that in order to bring transformational change to the local environment, the public and private sectors must identify new ways of working together. CVC has a long history of private sector engagement, with a number of successful projects.

CVC carries out studies to develop environmental strategies for urban streams and the Lake Ontario shoreline. CVC then works with partner agencies, residents, businesses, institutions, and the landscape industry to promote sustainable approaches to caring for natural features and our public lands, residential yards, and corporate and institutional grounds.

Some of CVC's corporate engagement programs include the Greening Corporate Grounds program. This initiative was developed by Credit Valley Conservation with the Evergreen foundation, and it helps corporations, businesses, institutions, and places of worship to green their corporate and institutional lands.

Partners in Project Green, led by the Greater Toronto Airports Authority and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, with the support of Credit Valley Conservation, is dedicated to creating the biggest eco-business zone in the world. Partners in Project Green strives to build a stronger and greener economy by assisting corporations in taking sustainable actions that reduce their energy and water footprints and their waste generation while improving their bottom line.

Low impact development is an area where CVC is widely recognized as a national leader in regard to stormwater, using new approaches and technologies to manage stormwater sustainably and reducing water pollution and producing other environmental benefits in our communities. CVC works with developers, corporations, municipal partners, and others to develop best practices and implement innovative LID projects. Current partners include such corporations as IMAX, Teck Resources Limited, and the Royal Bank of Canada.

The Lakeview waterfront connection project aims to create a new natural waterfront park in the Lakeview neighbourhood of Mississauga to enhance degraded aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitat and provide public access to the waterfront in an area that currently does not provide such opportunities. A major fundraising feasibility study is currently under way to assess private sector capacity and willingness to support, and we are reaching out to the corporate community for their insight.

One of CVC's most successful private sector partnerships has been with Holcim Canada. Greg Zilberbrant from Holcim presented to the committee earlier this week. We have been working with Holcim for more than two years on a variety of projects. Through our Greening Corporate Grounds program, we have been exploring opportunities for habitat restoration at their Mississauga cement plant property, and they have carried out some initial tree-planting adjacent to their administrative building. In another case, we are cost-sharing with them on the potential restoration, or "daylighting", of Avonhead Creek, a tributary to Lake Ontario.

● (0905)

Most recently, on May 22, we were pleased to have MPs Peter Van Loan and Stella Ambler announce funding for a major joint project with Holcim, the Lake Ontario flyway habitat project, a public-private partnership. Credit Valley Conservation and Holcim Canada are the recipients of a three-year federal habitat stewardship program grant of \$104,000 with matching funds from Holcim and CVC that will create four hectares of stopover habitat, a combination of forest, shrub, and grassland habitats for migratory birds on

Holcim's property along the lakeshore in Mississauga through CVC's greening corporate grounds program.

I would now like to turn it over to Terri LeRoux.

● (0910)

Ms. Terri LeRoux (Executive Director, Credit Valley Conservation Foundation): Good morning.

The CVC Foundation works tirelessly to raise funds in support of the invaluable projects and programs of CVC. Raising these funds is a daunting task. As has been proven through numerous research studies by StatsCan and Imagine Canada, raising funds for environmental projects is incredibly hard work.

Research indicates that while 98% of Canadians consider our natural environment to be critical to both our existence and well-being, only 3% of all charitable donations support environmental charitable organizations and only 1.3% of all donations made via CanadaHelps in 2014 were directed to environmental charities.

Imagine Canada's report on business contributions indicated that overall, the four types of charitable organizations that receive the most contributions from the private sector are health organizations, social service organizations, hospitals, and sports and recreation organizations. Contributions to charities concerned with the environment and animal habitat have a firm hold on last place.

The CVC Foundation has generally found that corporate contributions are shifting from traditional chequebook philanthropy to more strategic and results-driven efforts that align with corporate social responsibility objectives. The four most common types of private sector community investments that CVC Foundation receives are corporate grants, sponsorships, in-kind donations of goods, and support from employee volunteering programs.

Since corporate philanthropy comes in many forms, the experience of the CVC Foundation in engaging private sector partners and catalyzing private sector investment has proven successful using a continuum of engagement.

First, we have our corporate sponsors. These are the companies that underwrite our signature special events, such as R&M Construction, Sunshine Design & Construction, Scotiabank and Dufferin Aggregates. These companies play a critical role in ensuring the success of our events through a marketing agreement that provides them with a defined return on their investment.

Second, we have our corporate donors. These are the corporations that invest in and underwrite CVC programs through grants and cash donations. Our major supporters at this level include such companies as the RBC Foundation, TD Friends of the Environment, and Brookfield Homes. Their history of giving to the CVC Foundation demonstrates their long-term commitment to helping achieve shared objectives.

Third, we have our Credit River guardians program, which recognizes corporations and businesses that have made a multi-year commitment to helping achieve CVC goals. It's about more than money; it's about companies getting involved, committing to finding ways to improve, and inspiring others to think about what our natural environment will look like for future generations. Enersource Corporation is the founding Credit River guardian. In addition to generous multi-year financial contributions to CVC programs, it is also recognized for donating trees to restore the Mississauga tree canopy after the ice storm, for investing in the CVC Foundation endowment fund to ensure healthy, protected green spaces for present and future generations, and for enabling and investing hundreds of employee volunteer hours to help CVC plant trees, build wildlife habitat, conduct fishing surveys, and remove invasive species from our conservation areas.

UPS is another Credit River guardian that demonstrates its commitment through generous six-figure financial contributions and through significant employee volunteer commitments. Since 2011, 405 UPS employees have helped CVC restore natural spaces and have personally planted more than 4,500 trees.

Our success in cultivating private sector partnerships can be attributed to our understanding that contributions to charities are used as a way to build a company's brand and reputation among consumers. Companies know that they benefit and prosper from healthy communities and that supporting charities is a direct investment in building strong communities. And finally, many businesses recognize that their success depends on how accepted and valued they are by the communities in which they operate. Support for local charities can help them build social capital, social licence, and support among citizens and governments.

Although the community investment practices of Canadian businesses are quite diverse, our experience indicates that they generally tend to be more reactive than proactive. Companies tend to respond to requests from community organizations rather than to proactively seek organizations that are aligned with their strategic interests. Further, despite the large scope of and significant resources managed by corporate community investment programs, the staffing levels for these programs are modest and most operate with one or fewer full-time staff persons.

• (0915)

Moving forward, the CVC Foundation aims to expand private sector investment and commitment to environmental solutions across CVC's focal areas and signature programs. Our desire is to deepen relationships with the corporations that already support us and to cultivate new and mutually beneficial relationships.

I will now turn it back to Mike to provide further insight and recommendations.

The Chair: We're a little over time, but we'll give you a minute, Mr. Puddister, to finish it up.

Mr. Mike Puddister: Thanks.

The government and the non-profit sectors are necessary but insufficient to address society's greatest environmental challenges. We envision a robust sector of the economy that harnesses the power in private enterprise to create public benefit. This sector comprises

corporations that are purpose driven, and it creates benefits for all stakeholders, not just shareholders. An environment that protects, connects, and sustains us requires that we, the public and private sectors, act with the understanding that we are dependent upon one another and thus responsible to each other and future generations.

We believe that the Government of Canada has an opportunity to help environmental charities like Credit Valley Conservation and the Credit Valley Conservation Foundation to attract investment from the private sector. As more companies move towards strategic giving that aligns with their corporate values and provides strategic market advantage, environmental charities need better ways to position our value and our cause.

That said, we appreciate that there is some reticence or anxiety within the not-for-profit sector in partnering with corporate interests. However, we believe this barrier can be reduced with the assistance of the Government of Canada. With your indulgence, I'd like to make two recommendations for you: one, promoting and highlighting the value of private sector investment in environmental charities by showcasing the success stories and commitments of private sector champions; and two, creating opportunities for education or training, as many business schools have yet to develop a comprehensive curriculum on community contributions and creating shared value, and there is limited opportunity for practical training in Canada.

We thank you for allowing us this opportunity to speak to the committee today and extend our thanks to the Government of Canada for investing in environmental initiatives carried out by Credit Valley Conservation.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

I'm looking at your recommendations, and hopefully the fact that we're doing this study will help a bit with recommendation number one in increasing awareness.

Mr. Mike Puddister: Yes, absolutely.

The Chair: We're going to move to our questioners.

First we have Mr. Woodworth, from the Conservative Party.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth (Kitchener Centre, CPC): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all of the witnesses.

I have a number of questions, but I'm going to start with one for the Credit Valley people, because I was very interested in Project Green and the idea of creating the greatest eco-business green area and lowering the footprint of energy and water. This isn't the first time I've heard that idea. In fact, in my region, we have "Sustainable Waterloo", which is working with corporations to the same end. Also, we had a witness here earlier this week, Mike Morrice from CoLab, who is doing the same thing.

I am interested in hearing whether the Credit Valley Conservation Authority is a partner in any provincial or national organization that brings together people with that same goal of creating a green awareness among members of the private sector. Do you know of any such national or provincial organization?

Mr. Mike Puddister: There is the Canadian Business and Biodiversity Council, which is chaired by Steve Hounsell, former staff person with Ontario Power Generation. That is a national organization that brings corporations together to reflect on their business operations and how they impact on biodiversity. In doing so, it obviously has crossed over into water conservation, habitat conservation, and related matters.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Thank you.

I'm going to recommend to Mr. Morrice and also to anyone who is engaged in this work that they connect through the Canadian council on biodiversity, because I'd like those best practices to be shared among those groups. I appreciate the work you're doing on that.

I'd like to switch over for a moment to you, Mr. McLean. You've told us about a number of government programs that provide seed money for environmental issues, programs whereby the Government of Canada in fact does put money on the table. You've mentioned, for example, the habitat stewardship program, the aboriginal fund for species at risk, the wetland conservation fund, and the national conservation plan.

I'd like to ask you about one that you didn't mention, and that is the eco-action community funding program. At least, I assume that it's apart from the four you've mentioned. If it's included within one of them, I'd like to know that. In particular, talking about the eco-action community funding program, I understand that money only goes to environmental and community groups in aboriginal organizations, not to businesses. So does it have an effect in interesting or incentivizing businesses to contribute in its programs? If so, how do businesses get involved in eco-action community funding programs?

● (0920)

Mr. Robert McLean: Thank you.

The eco-action program operates in the very same fashion as the programs I mentioned, which you just reiterated, the habitat stewardship program, and so on. Funding is encouraged through leverage. For example, the recipient, the non-government organization receiving the funding, is encouraged to find other partners. There are many projects where the other partner is a corporate entity.

I don't personally manage the eco-action program, which is part of the reason I didn't mention that program particularly. We can fund corporate entities. For the programs that I mentioned in my remarks, the only organizations that can't receive funding, in fact, are federal organizations, but after that, anyone can receive funding, including individuals.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: Okay.

I'm sorry to put you on the spot asking about the eco-action community funding program, but in that particular instance where one funds environmental and community groups and aboriginal organizations, you mentioned leveraging. How much of the cost of any particular environmental program under that funding stream has to come from non-Government of Canada sources? I'm thinking it's 50%, but I'd like you to confirm that.

Mr. Robert McLean: That's correct. In the programs that I mentioned, we operate at 50%, except for the aboriginal fund for species at risk. The reason for that is sometimes aboriginal

organizations or communities don't have the wherewithal to provide that kind of financial assistance, so the in-kind support is really important for that program.

I was just scanning a list of eco-action projects that was provided to me and I am noting that sometimes the recipient is perhaps what you would characterize as an organization. We have the Manitoba Museum, for example, with a partnership that leverages from the RBC blue water project—I don't know if members have heard about that—and also receives funding from Manitoba Hydro.

In particular, there is a project, I believe it's in British Columbia. The recipient organization there is the West Broadway Development Corporation. The sponsoring funder is the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, for example. West Broadway Development provided less than 50%, so more than 50% of the funding came from the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: The national conservation plan was one of the ones that you mentioned because money goes through that to the Earth Rangers. Can you tell me what the budget is for that particular kind of programming that went to the Earth Rangers? What's the total budget that the government puts through the national conservation plan for such things?

Mr. Robert McLean: For the Earth Rangers contribution agreement, it's a \$3 million—

Mr. Stephen Woodworth: No, I'm sorry; I didn't mean for the particular Earth Rangers program, but generally. I'm assuming that Earth Rangers isn't the only program funded through the national conservation plan. I'm looking for the total of such programs funded through the national conservation plan.

Mr. Robert McLean: My apologies, I misunderstood the question.

The national conservation plan is a \$252 million five-year investment. Of that, \$100 million went to the natural areas conservation program. The primary recipient is the Nature Conservancy of Canada, although they partner with other non-government organizations, and some of the land donations through that program in fact come from corporate Canada.

There is the national wetland conservation fund at \$50 million; the habitat stewardship program and aboriginal fund for species at risk were increased by \$50 million over five years. Those would be the three main programs.

A fourth key component of the national conservation plan is marine and coastal conservation, which is a \$37 million investment over five years.

● (0925)

The Chair: Okay, that's great.

Thank you, Mr. Woodworth. We'll have to move on.

Ms. Leslie, please.

Ms. Megan Leslie (Halifax, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thanks very much to all of our witnesses. This has been really informative.

Mr. Puddister, when you were mentioning your recommendations, I was writing furiously and I didn't manage to get them. Could you quickly tell me them again? Was one a government role to attract corporate donors?

Mr. Mike Puddister: Yes, the first recommendation was that perhaps there is a role for the federal government in promoting the existence of a number of successful partnerships. Certainly we've heard about a number of them this morning. The work of the committee is exemplary, but we need to somehow develop communication materials that get the message out to the NGO community and the corporate community so that there is greater recognition of the fact that there can be a very effective, true partnership between the not-for-profit sector and the corporate sector.

The second recommendation was that business schools tend to focus more on the bottom line than on creating shared value within the community, and maybe there is some opportunity to influence the curriculum there so that the new business leaders of tomorrow have a broader perspective on the potential opportunities and relationships that could be generated with the not-for-profit sector for good environmental stewardship work.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thanks. I completely missed that one. When you have recommendations, it's good that those of us who are here on committee understand what they are.

Ms. Barocas, I thought it was interesting that you led into some recommendations as well about the role of the federal government. You talked about facilitating more private sector engagement, a little bit like what Mr. Puddister said, but then you talked about the role of regulating. Can you expand on that? I wasn't quite sure what you meant by that.

Ms. Tovah Barocas: What I meant was just that the government's role is as a regulator and that corporations or the private sector would be more encouraged to partner with NGOs, as the previous speaker said, if there were more communication and more promotion of the importance of those partnerships by the regulating bodies. They would see the benefits of partnering more.

Ms. Megan Leslie: I completely understand that.

Thanks to both of you. Those are great recommendations.

Ms. LeRoux, you talked quite a bit about some of the benefits but also some of the challenges of working with companies, with the private sector. You talked about how some organizations have marketing agreements where they'll help you out but they get to have their logo on things, and stuff like that. I thought your analysis that they are more reactive than proactive was really interesting. You said that they will respond to requests, but they're not out there saying, "Oh, gosh, what can we get involved in?"

I can only imagine that takes a lot of management on your part and that there are folks in your organization who are actively monitoring, making those outreach requests, asking for those funds, and applying for those grants. How exactly does your organization manage all of this?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: We do our best. Absolutely, it is a tremendous amount of work. One of the things we have found to be very successful, in the sense that companies seem to be more reactive, is

cultivating those personal relationships with employees at the ground level. We have found that the groundswell coming from employees influencing corporate management is where we end up getting traction in attracting investment into our projects and programs. Enersource and UPS are two really great multi-year examples that started with relationships between CVC staff members and their employees in just creating that experience.

Ms. Megan Leslie: It's interesting that you talked about that groundswell, that way into an organization through individuals and building those relationships.

When you talked about employee engagement, your example was how some companies actually want to roll up their sleeves and plant trees. We had another organization here on another day of this study and I asked some questions about that tough balance where you want to engage individuals at a company, for example, and let them get their hands dirty and plant trees, but at the same time they're often not the most efficient people to be doing that project. The people working in your organization probably have a lot more expertise.

How do you get that balance of having corporate engagement while at the same time actually accomplishing your goals and not just creating more work for you?

• (0930)

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Credit Valley Conservation has an extensive program of volunteer engagement, so dozens of activities per year that are based on projects that need and have to be done. That is the primary consideration. Then they enrol corporate volunteers and volunteers from the community. Those volunteers are trained by incredibly skilled staff and they are supervised by staff so that the outcomes of the programs are met. The added value of those programs is that they're a starting ground, if you may, for cultivating those relationships and having those people turn into ambassadors or advocates or ideally donors in support of our causes.

Ms. Megan Leslie: It makes sense that you're laying the foundation by working with individuals, letting them come and put their rubber boots on for a day and plant some trees.

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Right.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Ms. Barocas, can you talk a little bit about the experience with Earth Rangers in terms of organizations that want to be involved? How do you get them involved? Is it you who's always asking? Do you have that feeling of businesses being reactive rather than proactive?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: Absolutely. It's a well-oiled machine in the fundraising department, prospecting for different areas, reaching out to corporations on a regular basis. We've found it really helpful, through the support we've received from the federal government, first through FedDev southern Ontario and now through the national conservation plan, to have initial funding to expand into a new geographic area. Let's say you contact a corporation who has never seen you on the ground in Edmonton. Even though you have an objective of expanding your program into Edmonton, they don't want to be the first people to put money towards that. We've been able to leverage support from the federal government to go to a community for the first time and then, in future years, almost every single time we've been able to replace that money with local corporations who want to see the program stay.

As the Credit Valley Conservation Authority mentioned, once the employees see the value of your program, it's really hard for the corporation to cancel it. If we visit an employee's child's school with wild animals, and we inspire them to join Earth Rangers, then the employee becomes an advocate for us. It ends up being very good for us financially in the future.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Committee members, I neglected to mention that we've had a request from the committees branch to have formal pictures taken of the committee at work. We have a photographer here who will be taking a few photos over the next five to ten minutes while we're at work—just so you don't think we've been invaded by another group.

Hon. John McKay (Scarborough—Guildwood, Lib.): The one day I don't wear a tie.

Voices: Oh, oh!

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): We were waiting for the day.

Voices: Oh, oh!

The Chair: With that, we'll move to Mrs. Ambler, please, for seven minutes of questioning.

Mrs. Stella Ambler (Mississauga South, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all of you for being here today, with a special thanks to Mike and Terri for speaking to us and letting this wonderful committee know about all the great things that are happening in the Credit Valley watershed. I happen to know about them, and am delighted to share them with my colleagues and with other Canadians. Thanks for your time.

I want to ask you a few questions, particularly in the area of water pollution.

Mike, I know that your area of expertise is water transformation. What is CVC doing...? You talked about low-impact development and reducing water pollution. Can you tell us how companies like Imax, Teck Resources, and RBC are helping CVC to do its work in the area of water transformation and water pollution?

• (0935)

Mr. Mike Puddister: Thank you, Ms. Ambler.

As you know, Imax is a corporate leader in innovation. In fact, our greening corporate grounds program was actually launched at Imax. They've been a partner with us from the very beginning. Our staff was working with them, and they came to realize that they were planning for major renovations of their parking lot facility. As you know, the impervious surfaces that parking lots represent are a major source of pollution—and of flooding, for that matter.

We sat down with them. Our engineers met with their technical staff. We talked about some innovative solutions that could be integrated into a retrofit of their parking lot. A variety of LID, or low-impact development, technologies have been integrated into the design. They're also supporting us in the monitoring of those facilities so that we can learn from that experience. As you can appreciate, they're very much in support of scientific research. They've become a very valuable and important demonstration site.

They are leading the charge and showing other corporations and other potential partners the opportunities that some new technologies can represent to reduce impacts on water quality and peak flows flooding downstream.

Teck was a very earlier partner in the same general neighbourhood, the Sheridan research park in southern Mississauga just north of the QEW. They investigated the opportunity to really put in place environmentally sustainable landscaping, reducing chemical inputs into their landscaping operation by creating viable natural habitats. They were one of the early adopters and were willing to use their site as a demonstration site so that we could show others that these ideas can really work.

RBC has one of their major corporate headquarters at the intersection of Mississauga Road and the 401. I'm sure many of you are familiar with the large towers there. They have a variety of issues they're trying to deal with. Flooding is one of them. It's become a hazard for them. They have partnered with us, through Partners in Project Green, actually, to put in place another demonstration site. They will be retrofitting a portion of their parking lot. They will be converting it to permeable pavement so that we get infiltration rather than ponding, rather than flooding, recharging the groundwater system, and addressing a hazard that's there right on site. They'll also be participating in a habitat naturalization project along the edge of the property fronting on the 401.

So a variety of different initiatives are benefiting the local environment.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Would you happen to know the dollar amounts these companies are contributing? Roughly what kind of money are we talking about?

Mr. Mike Puddister: I don't know the exact figures. The Imax project is well into the hundreds of thousands. It's a very major initiative and capital investment. For Teck industries, I don't have a number. For RBC, the current pilot project is around \$90,000.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thank you.

On the subject of water quality and water pollution, I've participated in a couple of CVC-organized activities, in shoreline cleanups along Lake Ontario, and I know that a number of volunteers are involved. I'm wondering if any of those volunteers, or if the bulk of them, come from the private sector, companies that partner with you. Is that where you find the majority of your volunteers?

Mr. Mike Puddister: A significant number of our volunteers do come from the corporate sector. Along the Mississauga shoreline, we have the Holcim facility that I referred to earlier. Their employees have engaged in a variety of stewardship-related projects. Suncor is also a major facility right on the shore, not too far from Holcim, and their employees have been engaged in stewardship activities. At the other end of the scale, we have places like Michael's salon, a small private business in Clarkson. Their employees have been actively engaged in fundraising for Rattray Marsh, for instance.

We cross all aspects of that sector, reaching out to try to get more public and corporate engagement.

• (0940)

Mrs. Stella Ambler: In fact, I was at Michael's when they were promoting their tree-planting initiative as well, so I know they're very active in that area.

Terri, would you mind talking for a moment about the anxiety that you were talking about with regard to corporate involvement with environmental organizations? Where does that come from, and how can we fix it so that it doesn't happen?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: I think there is some anxiety within the ENGO sector about partnering with corporations. I think there's a little bit of resistance and a fear of greenwashing, if you may. There's a fear that the shared objectives are not truly mutual and that the corporation is looking to enhance its brand.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: What's greenwashing? Sorry. Tell us what you mean by "fear of greenwashing".

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Greenwashing is essentially the term that's used in the ENGO sector. It's the fear of corporations, who may be viewed or perceived by the public as being the cause of some environmental degradation or who are not doing their part. So the corporation will partner with an ENGO to increase their profile and their reputation, without that being a true engagement and a true commitment to changing practices or having an open mind to what they can truly contribute.

From our end, part of what we do is to ensure that all of the partnerships we engage in are mutually beneficial. Further to what Mike was saying about the volunteer piece, we really engage them at all levels of the organization. We want to see dirty fingernails and rubber boots on the employees, because it's the employees that speak to management.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thanks so much.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll move to Mr. McKay, please, for seven minutes.

Hon. John McKay: I want to continue on that line of questioning. It's actually what I was thinking about as you were testifying, because the relationship between the ENGO, the government, and the corporation is sometimes a touch problematic.

Let me focus on Ms. Barocas for a second, with the Earth Rangers. One of your corporate sponsors is Teck. I was out at Teck's operations in southern B.C. about two years ago, and they are pretty impressive. They basically take a mountain and slice it off and process it, put the coal in rail cars, and send it off to China. However, whichever way you want to slice it—and I'm not punning that—it's an environmentally impactful corporation in its activities.

So help me with your thinking as to how you approach or vet a sponsor or potential sponsor. Would the Rangers ever feel comfortable when they are in a relationship with Teck—or Imperial Oil was another one you mentioned—calling into question some of the company's core business activities? I ask because I think that in some respects you have probably faced this decision-making process, and I'd be interested in your thinking.

Ms. Tovah Barocas: That's an excellent question, and it's something we have spent a fairly significant amount of time discussing here.

Because of the nature of Earth Rangers' mission, which is engaging children and their families on environmental issues and empowering them to get actively involved in them, we don't feel it would be appropriate for our audience to be used for advocacy. They really are not at an age where they can think for themselves. So they trust in Earth Rangers, they trust in their teachers, and they trust in their parents to provide them with guidance. Because of that we have strict policies in place that none of our corporate partners, or individuals or governments for that matter, have any direct say in the message we provide to our members.

We provide them with objective and scientifically proven facts about various environmental issues, whether it be climate change, pesticides, or deforestation, but we don't engage them in any kind of advocacy activities. That's why we're able to take donations and funding from a variety of sources.

Like Terri said, as long as the relationship is mutually beneficial and the organization is providing us with much-needed funding for our programs and has a commitment to that program, we are usually comfortable with it.

• (0945)

Hon. John McKay: I'll direct the same question to Ms. LeRoux, who's obviously done some thinking about this. It is anxiety-producing, shall we say. On the face of it, some of the activities by some of these sponsors are incompatible with good environmental stewardship. How do you sort your way through those conflicts?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: I won't lie and say that it's easy. I think from a very practical point, we have a very solid gift-acceptance policy that's approved by our board of directors and reviewed on a biannual basis. It's available to the public. It's incredibly transparent. For example, it speaks to things about who we will accept gifts from and under what situations we would not accept a gift.

One of the conditions is also that whenever there is a donation of over \$100,000, which has any implications, real or perceived, the board of directors considers it at a board meeting, and there's some very healthy debate around the impact from a perception point and from an ethical point. It really evaluates how we are going to achieve our objectives, meet the environmental outcomes, and help CVC realize its goals while managing the possible public response to a corporate partnership.

Hon. John McKay: I had an interesting conversation with the head of a large NGO. Everyone here would know the name of the NGO. It had entered into a relationship—this is offshore—and its analysis was that it lost donors because of its relationship with the particular corporation. The attitude of its donor base was that, "Well, you're going to get money from corporation X, Y, or Z, so you don't need my money, and you don't need my time." Have either of you experienced that?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Yes.

Hon. John McKay: That's interesting.

Ms. Terri LeRoux: It's a very real part of the fundraising process with environmental fundraising.

Ms. Tovah Barocas: I wanted to add to my response before that you have to be committed as an ENGO, and you have to spend a lot of time discussing with your board and your management team what your stance on these issues is going to be. From Earth Rangers' perspective, we also feel passionately that a lot of the environmental challenges that Canada is facing can't be solved through alienating entire sectors, and that there is a need for collaboration. Making the energy sector or the mining sector feel that it's in a battle against ENGOs is not necessarily going to advance your cause either. Having that collaboration without going too far and making sure you're not compromising your values is really important.

The Chair: Mr. Bevington, go ahead, please, for five minutes.

Mr. Dennis Bevington (Northwest Territories, NDP): Thank you, witnesses. It's very interesting.

Just to follow up, have your boards turned down any contributions in excess of \$100,000?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: I'm just reflecting. They have definitely turned down gifts of less than that, which were more sponsorship arrangements in which the companies were really looking for extensive promotion that wouldn't necessarily substantiate the marketing or sponsorship agreement. But no, for gifts of over \$100,000 we fortunately haven't been posed with an ethical dilemma of that sort.

• (0950)

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Okay.

Has it happened to Earth Rangers?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: We've never had to turn one down, but we have had to go back and kind of renegotiate some agreements and some of the expectations regarding what the corporation wanted from Earth Rangers. We've had to go back and say we can't do this, this, and this, but if you're willing to kind of readjust your expectations, we can still move forward with a partnership.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: Do you have a set of ethical standards that you give to companies along with your requests for donations?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: We don't.

Like the Credit Valley Conservation Foundation, we have a gift acceptance policy. That's just an internal document that the board of directors and our advisory committee use to assess potential partnerships, but we don't provide our partners with any kind of regulations in that sense.

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Yes, we do have a code of ethical standards that is published on our website. We also adhere to the standards of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. As an individual member, I adhere to their code of ethical standards, and our agency belongs as well.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: The biggest issue right now with corporations in resource development is social licence. That's a factor that has built up over the last number of years into what it is today and will certainly increase in importance going forward. Is this something your organizations are very aware of?

When you're dealing with an area, say with the Earth Rangers in Cold Lake, where there is lots of opposition to potential development and companies absolutely require social licence, is

there a sense when you're working with schools there that you're avoiding prejudicing the social licence aspect of the relationship?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: We've been lucky enough to have a really positive response from schools, from the parents of our members, and our members themselves. I think that goes back to just how much importance we place and time we put into ensuring that every message that we put out there to our constituents, if you will, to the kids who are members, is scientifically based.

We've had situations before where a company in the energy sector is supporting our program and then the school program that year is primarily about climate change and the importance of reducing our impact on the planet. I think that because of that they feel they can trust our programs, so we've been lucky enough not to have met a lot of resistance.

In fact, we've had in the past on a few occasions a parent call us and say, "I see that you've partnered with this company and they are looking to develop very close to our home, and we're against that, and we're disappointed that you would partner with them." When we explain our thinking around it, they usually end up seeing it our way and being okay with it. We've been lucky on that.

Mr. Dennis Bevington: I have one last question.

You're charitable organizations, so do all of these contributions from corporations count as charitable donations?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: For us they do, yes. We don't really have a sponsorship program, so the recognition that we provide isn't valuable enough to really be considered a sponsorship. It's more community investment or corporate philanthropy, rather than marketing sponsorships.

Ms. Terri LeRoux: No, for us we have both portfolios. We have the corporate grants, corporate donations, which would constitute the charitable contribution, because they're voluntary with no expected return or benefit. Then we have the sponsorship and cause-related marketing arrangements that are not charitable.

The Chair: Thanks.

Thanks, Mr. Bevington.

Mr. Sopuck, please.

• (0955)

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Thank you.

I'd like to take off from the line of questioning of Mr. McKay. The implication of his point was that this mining company went and just tore off the top of the mountain on its own accord.

I hope both groups, Earth Rangers and Credit Valley, realize that every single natural resources operation cannot move its first yard of dirt unless it has an environmental licence and adheres to strict terms and conditions. Those environmental licences are issued by duly elected governments, so by definition, once a company has an environmental licence after going through the environmental process, they are by definition an ethical company. To set your minds at ease, once a company is in operation, as I said, they do have an environmental licence and I think you shouldn't have any worries in that particular regard.

Regarding Credit Valley Conservation, I would assume there's a fair bit of private agricultural land in the watershed. Is that a fair assumption?

Mr. Mike Puddister: Yes, that's correct. About a third of the watershed is in agricultural land use.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I represent a very large natural resource and agricultural constituency, so I'm very interested in the interplay between the privately owned agricultural landscape, the farming communities, and the issue of the conservation of public resources.

What is your approach at Credit Valley to dealing with private agricultural landowners when it comes to encouraging conservation on that privately owned landscape?

Mr. Mike Puddister: I'd have to say that the first thing is trust. It's about building relationships. We have really put a lot of time and effort into ensuring that the agricultural sector knows who we are and what it is that we're trying to offer them. We're fortunate to have some funding through the Region of Peel for our rural water quality program. I have an individual who is leading that program who has an agricultural background and is building those bridges and working directly with the operators to provide them with some new opportunities for water and land stewardship. We're also combining some other interests in dealing with species at risk, creating a market-based mechanism to provide habitat for significant breeding birds, the meadowlark and bobolink. We've created a certified bird friendly hay program, where we're bringing together producers and operators and buyers of late-cut hay—steer operators and the equine industry—and it's a win-win for everybody.

I think we have to be sensitive to the fact that those operators are in fact running a business and want to run that business in a sustainable way, which means that they have a long-term view of the land and water resources they're utilizing. We have to provide tools, mechanisms, and support for them so they can carry out their operation in a very challenging industry.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I find it very intriguing that you're providing incentives for late-cut hay, because we had the same thing in prairie Canada with waterfowl, and so late-cut hay as well. I know that Ducks Unlimited, for example, encourages the late cutting of hay. So I'm intrigued, given the lower quality of late-cut hay, that you're able to get producers to do that.

I'd like to turn to Mr. McLean for a minute.

Mr. McLean, you've been involved in the conservation field for decades now. Can you talk about the private and public partnership that created the North American waterfowl management plan, which, quite frankly, is the single largest conservation program in the world? Could you talk about that, Mr. McLean?

Mr. Robert McLean: The program that Mr. Sopuck is referring to, the North American waterfowl management plan, started in 1986. To date in Canada we've invested about \$2 billion in it—"we" being the partnership—securing about 8 million hectares of wetland and upland habitat, enhancing about 1.4 million hectares of habitat, and influencing producers with respect to another 46.4 million hectares of habitat—a staggering number.

The program is successful, I think, because it engages all the key partners in conservation, not just, if you will, the government

agencies. We've worked with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Canadian Wildlife Service. We worked with provincial ministries, but we also work with Duck Unlimited and the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation. When you get down to on-the-ground delivery, those organizations are engaging with industry, and with the community-based conservation organizations as well, but industry is an important player. Clearly, with respect to waterfowl, as you just mentioned with respect to agriculture, the agriculture community is really critical and working with ag producers, whether it's farmers or ranchers, is dependent upon the trust that Mr. Puddister just referred to, building that longer-term relationship and enabling those longer-term agreements. But that's a public-private NGO partnership that's made that program successful.

● (1000)

The Chair: Okay, thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Sopuck.

Mr. Choquette, please.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette (Drummond, NDP): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to go back to Mr. McLean.

In my riding of Drummond, the CRECQ, the Conseil régional de l'environnement du Centre-du-Québec, the regional environmental council, received funds from the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk for two endangered species, the Northern spring salamander and the wood turtle.

For some years now we have observed that there are some big issues with the Endangered Species Act. The government had to go to court for the sage grouse and the orca in British Columbia. Currently it is also in court for the striped chorus frog in Quebec. This problem is very serious and that is why the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk is so important; we have benefited from it at various times in Drummondville and in the Centre-du-Québec region.

Currently, is the Habitat Stewardship Program an annual program? Can people submit a three-year project, or something similar?

I think that would have to be renewed every year. Is that the case?

[*English*]

Mr. Robert McLean: Thank you for your question.

We have agreements that are for more than one year. In fact, one of the agreements that's been mentioned earlier, the Holcim project, is a three-year agreement. We would be limited by the nature of the approved funding within the national conservation plan. There are four years left in the funding we have approved. We could enter into, as of today, four-year agreements.

[*Translation*]

Mr. François Choquette: If I understand correctly, a project funded through the Habitat Stewardship Program can be subsidized for three years. Is that correct?

I think that normally it is one year at a time. You have to obtain a renewal for a second year, and so on.

[English]

Mr. Robert McLean: We have projects that are annual. If the recipient would wish to have a second year of funding, that's absolutely possible. Equally, it's absolutely possible for that project proponent to apply for multi-year funding.

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: Fine.

I saw on the Environment Canada website that there had been a change in 2014-2015. I am still talking about the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk. That is the one we turned to in Drummond. My fellow citizens are really concerned, among other things, by the situation of the wood turtle which is an endangered species.

This is what the website says:

Starting in 2014-2015, the Prevention Stream focuses on the very same results as the Species at Risk Stream, but with a focus on species of interest beyond those listed under Schedule 1 of SARA.

So there has been a change in the prevention aspect. Can you explain why this change was made for 2014-2015?

[English]

Mr. Colin Carrie (Oshawa, CPC): Mr. Chair, I have a point of order.

We're supposed to be talking in this study about private-public partnerships. We're really not supposed to be talking about this topic. I don't think it's relevant to our study.

The Chair: Mr. Choquette, can you bring some relevance to the issue that we're studying?

[Translation]

Mr. François Choquette: As everyone knows, the Habitat Stewardship Program is a shared-cost program. Every dollar from the Stewardship Program must be matched with a dollar from private funds or organizations. The study we are doing currently is precisely on that.

Mr. McLean talked about this program in the beginning of his presentation. I am asking him questions because the community in my riding of Drummond participates in the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk, and there have been changes. In what way are these changes important? Are they going to help the companies, enterprises and organizations in Drummond to use that program?

I will repeat my question: what is the explanation behind the changes made to the Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk for 2014-2015?

•(1005)

[English]

Mr. Robert McLean: Thank you again for your question.

I would need to double-check the exact facts with respect to the wood turtle just in case it had changed status, but perhaps I could make a more general comment about the priority species for funding.

The habitat stewardship program started way back in 2000, and our priority obviously was to focus on those species that are listed

under the Species at Risk Act. Within that we focus on endangered and threatened species, species of special concern. When we score project proposals, they get a lower score because we're trying to keep our eye on the ball of the highest-priority species.

The habitat stewardship program has operated since 2000. In the initial year it had \$5 million. It was operating at about \$12 million per year until the national conservation plan came along, which added funds to the program.

The other feature or policy change that occurred was the opportunity to fund projects for species that are not actually listed under the Species at Risk Act, so now we can also fund projects to prevent species from becoming endangered. What does that mean? It means it opens up an opportunity for any species. If it's a good project delivering on the Species at Risk Act or helping to prevent species from becoming at risk, we can fund it. So I think we now have a policy frame for the program that is not limiting.

The only other comment I want to make is that I wouldn't want any of my comments to be seen as being linked to the matter of the western chorus frog. That matter is before the courts, and I wouldn't want anything I'm saying today to be construed as being connected to that particular court case.

The Chair: Mr. Carrie, go ahead, please.

Mr. Colin Carrie: Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

I have one question, and I'll give the rest of my time to Ms. Ambler.

I wanted to talk to you, Ms. Barocas, just to let you know I had the pleasure of having Earth Rangers come to Oshawa. I was there during the presentation and I want to let you know about the awe and the wonder your program created with the young kids in the gymnasium just by letting them see wildlife and having people there to answer their questions. You do have a fantastic program, and I'm very proud we are supporting you.

Without the partnership of the private sector you wouldn't be able to continue such a vigorous outreach program and to really get Canadian kids excited the way you do. I was wondering if you could outline for the committee any barriers you see or any difficulties you have working with businesses on your endeavours, and if there are barriers, whether there are things the federal government could do to lessen those barriers.

Ms. Tovah Barocas: The private sector has been a really successful source of funding for Earth Rangers over the last five or six years since we've begun to focus on that area. As I said at the beginning, really sometimes our biggest barrier is that we are a national organization so even though we're headquartered in Vaughan, we have members in every province and territory, and really our membership follows pretty accurately the population of Canada. We're a little bit under-represented in Quebec because we're just now truly becoming bilingual.

The biggest barrier for us is geography. Oftentimes businesses—and this makes perfect sense—want to support organizations that have a local connection to where their head office is or where their operations are.

The one thing I would say is that oftentimes we get questions about whether our programs are competing with smaller, on the ground, access to nature programs or things like that. Our answer to that is that we feel the Earth Rangers program actually reinforces all of those global programs because we provide a broader kind of perspective on biodiversity nationally, and we provide kids and families with a brand and organization to associate themselves with.

You probably saw in the show—and thank you for saying those kind words about it—that kids across Canada self-identify as Earth Rangers. They will send us letters and sign off Ranger Katie or Earth Ranger Joel. I think the program creates that initial awareness and connection, and then it can serve to support local initiatives even more just by staying top of mind with families all year-round.

•(1010)

The Chair: Ms. Ambler.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

If I could echo Mr. Carrie's comments about the Earth Rangers to you, Ms. Barocas, I was so impressed when you were talking even about just the three examples. I remembered about five or six years ago that I had been to visit the headquarters with the late Honourable Jim Flaherty, who was a big supporter, which I think was because of the family component. When we, at this committee, did our study of the national conservation plan to inform the minister about what the committee thought should be included in the plan, children and youth were a top priority, as was urban conservation. I think you've done a really great job of putting those two things together towards your goal of conservation and raising a new generation of young people who care about the environment. I wanted to thank you for that.

If I could go back to CVC, I'd like to ask Terri and Mike how these partnerships come about. For example, you mentioned UPS being a six-figure donor and very involved in tree planting. You talked about corporate grants and cash donations from RBC, TD Friends of the Environment, Brookfield Homes, Scotiabank, and Dufferin Aggregates. These are all very large companies. If your focus is on large companies, how could smaller and medium-sized enterprises also consider these programs? How could they manage the scale of them to fit a smaller business? Do you approach them? Who makes the first approach to whom?

For the Lakeview waterfront connection, for example, you mentioned you were looking for corporate partners. Would you just start with those big companies? Are they the low-hanging fruit and then you move to smaller ones? How does it all get started? Do they come to you or do you go to them?

The Chair: All right, we'll have to move to the answer. We're well beyond our time.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Yes, sorry. Thank you.

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Thank you.

Yes, it's a combination of approaches and efforts that we take. With the larger companies we do quite extensive prospect research to understand their values, their motivations, their history of giving, and then generally the initial approach happens either by me or another member of senior management. We'll initially attempt to cultivate that relationship. Very often, as well, the volunteer

members of the foundation's board are instrumental in forming those relationships.

To your point about the small to medium-sized organizations, absolutely. In fact, we have more small to medium-sized private sector partners than we do the large ones. They tend to be scaled also to the size of the project and to the community that they exist within. Again, speaking to the point about local impact and companies wanting to have local impact, we have some incredible projects. For example, a trail project in the Orangeville area has raised well over \$2 million, with the majority of that coming from very small, local, family-based businesses.

The Chair: Thank you, and thank you, Ms. Ambler.

Ms. Leslie, please.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Thanks, Mr. Chair.

There's a lot of stuff coming out today about the tensions that exist for NGOs when they work with the private sector, some of the dangers and pitfalls, some of the opportunities, some of the challenges. I like where that conversation is going, sort of teasing out those tensions, because we can't figure out how to work with them or around them unless we know exactly what's going on.

Mr. Puddister, during your testimony, you brought up the roles of residents, businesses, institutions, and government in conservation. I liked that you named the individual residents, you talked about institutions and businesses, and you also named government. I think, from what I'm hearing from the testimony today, all those players need to be at the table and all those players need to be engaged. I want to ask you and Ms. LeRoux, but also Ms. Barocas, about how those relationships work. Can you take one out?

I think it's important that you mentioned government because the role of this study is to look at the private sector working with non-governmental organizations, but I really do see that government has a fundamental role to play with those relationships when it comes to conservation, when it comes to protecting the environment.

Maybe, Mr. Puddister, I can start with you and your thoughts about how all those relationships work together and who really needs to be there.

•(1015)

Mr. Mike Puddister: Thank you.

As I mentioned, we position ourselves as being the watershed experts, if you will, the leading science authorities for the ecosystem we have responsibility for.

As I'm sure you and other members would appreciate, the environmental issues we're challenged with, whether they be in an urban or rural area, are quite substantial. There are simply not enough resources in the public sector to fully address those. It really does need to be a community partnership, so we need to create those opportunities.

As Terri mentioned, we have a volunteer calendar on our website. People can get engaged in different projects if they have the time. We reach out to the community. We create learning and educational opportunities so that they understand a little bit about their local community, the local environmental issues it's facing. For instance, almost 50% of our watershed community is made up of new Canadians, and so we found ways of reaching out to them so they understand that their new community is facing environmental challenges, which they may not fully appreciate. They have other significant issues they have to deal with first. It's an educational process.

We also need to recognize those leaders and those volunteers who have put sweat equity into addressing environmental issues. We have an annual awards ceremony, which is usually broadcast on the local cable network and we have a number of press releases that go out afterwards, to recognize those leaders in all sectors, whether they be individuals, community groups, institutions, or corporations.

To try to build that momentum to make people aware that there are opportunities and they can all contribute to doing something positive in their community, it really does need to be a collaborative effort based on relationships.

Ms. Megan Leslie: Your role is key. You talked about being the watershed experts. You talked about the fact that you have that scientific knowledge. You certainly don't want the private sector to just say, "Oh, I have a great idea. Why don't we dox", and it actually is not based on science and doesn't have good environmental outcomes.

Ms. Barocas, how do you see all these players working together, and what are the roles of each?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: I think it's absolutely integral that all these groups do work together, to be sure.

From the Earth Rangers' perspective, our partnership and the funding we've received through the national conservation plan have helped to build so much credibility for us in the communities we go into. It has helped us to focus on areas that we weren't able to focus on before. We have a huge, massive strategy for increasing our presence in Quebec. We now have a new French brand. We are moving into the territories. We're bringing the program to Yellowknife this September. All of those things wouldn't be possible without that funding.

From the perspective of the private sector, I think they see that. They see the investment the federal government has made in Earth Rangers and they feel now that their investment is being leveraged, in the same way that the government sees us leveraging your investment with the private sector. For us, it's been incredibly important and valuable. We'd love to see more of that for our other partners and our other ENGO partners as well.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Leslie.

Mr. Toet, please.

Mr. Lawrence Toet (Elmwood—Transcona, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our guests today. This has been very interesting.

I want to go back to the private sector engagement and some of the talk of the tensions that can sometimes exist in that relationship due to donors having a sense that the relationship may not be a positive one. I want to talk about what I would see as probably an inverse aspect to that, and that's your opportunity to work with local businesses.

Ms. LeRoux, you talked about the program in the Orangeville area, with many smaller and medium-sized businesses getting involved in that program. Are you finding that through those opportunities you have the ability to create a greater influence within that business community, to create more of a stewardship sense within their corporate structure, that there's an educational opportunity, and that there's growth in that through those types of processes?

• (1020)

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Absolutely. In fact, one of our ultimate motivations is always to instill that appreciation and understanding in anyone we work with at any level—volunteers, donors, business owners—because it's really their engagement and their true involvement that's going to make the long-term difference. Through the achievement of the short-term goals and outcomes we have with projects and programs, we're always looking to the future and what those relationships will mean.

Mr. Lawrence Toet: Are you finding that as you're dealing with these small to medium-sized corporations, you are really having an impact on their outlook, not just for a particular project but towards conservation and the need for habitat conservation in all the work they do?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Yes. We're definitely finding that if we look at a community context and track involvement, say in Orangeville, the businesses that have become involved over the past decade—it's been a long campaign—have steadily increased their level of involvement. It's gone from general interest to financial investment to being engaged on volunteer committees to being watchdogs or trail stewards in our conservation area and now to participating in processes to develop and review management plans for the conservation area. It's a very holistic approach to it, and working with local businesses has been incredibly beneficial for us. I think it speaks to the shared-fate rationale, that once we start working together everyone realizes that we're in this together and it truly speaks to the mutual benefit.

Mr. Lawrence Toet: Thank you.

Ms. Barocas, would you also care to comment on that? Are you finding the same thing in your relationship with businesses as you're working forward with them, that there is that ability to actually encourage them not just in the particular project but in their perception and their work within their communities?

Ms. Tovah Barocas: Absolutely. Because Holcim has already come up in this discussion, I'll give as an example the large partnership we have with Holcim Canada to support migratory songbird habitat. Later this year that will move on to include supporting some birds of prey.

Our executive director, Peter Kendall, has actually been chairing an organization called the Cornerstone Standards Council, which is an attempt by the aggregates industry and a variety of ENGOs to create a voluntary standards organization, not dissimilar to the FSC, the Forest Stewardship Council for the paper industry, but for aggregates, in order to create a higher environmental standard. His involvement in that project, which really is an industry-led initiative, came out of our partnership, on the Earth Rangers side, with Holcim, with Lafarge, and with some other large aggregate companies. I think that's a perfect example of them getting their feet wet partnering with different environmental groups and then seeing a business opportunity and an opportunity to take that a lot further and then also engaging a number of stakeholders in that process.

Mr. Lawrence Toet: It's interesting that you talk about FSC. It's an organization I'm very familiar with from my former days in the print industry. It actually did a fantastic job of bringing forward those issues and concerns. The way they did it was actually a bit outside the box from what everybody else did. Instead of working with the forestry companies, it actually went after the corporate world to make sure the corporate world was engaged and wanted to be online with its program. It did a very effective job of that and could be an example to many other organizations.

The Chair: Okay, you have about two seconds left.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Talk fast.

Mr. Lawrence Toet: I'll talk really fast.

The Chair: Ms. Ambler is next.

I want to ask if I can take just one minute to ask one quick question related to the funding.

Ms. LeRoux, you commented that only 1.3% of all donations made through CanadaHelps were directed to environmental charities. That other topic came up in terms of 3% of all charitable donations.

Today we focused largely on SMEs and large corporations in terms of support for your foundation and other charitable activities in the environmental sector. Are you targeting at all individual Canadians, ordinary Canadians who might have a passion for this, who would write a \$200 or \$300 cheque a year? Is that part of your initiative?

I'm asking because we've been aggressive in trying to bring streams of new donors into the charitable sector through the first-time donor's super credit and some of these initiatives that would actually possibly help you to engage on an individual level.

If you could just respond to that, I would appreciate it.

•(1025)

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Definitely the private sector corporate contributions are just one part of our fund-development portfolio, and we have a very robust individual donor program.

The Chair: Would you be able to just give a percentage? Would it be 80:20 in terms of the ratio of corporation to individuals? Do you have a ratio?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Probably about 25% of our annual donations would come directly from individual households.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mrs. Ambler.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: My first question is to you, Mike, about the emerald ash borer, the invasive beetle that's taking so many of the trees along the watershed, and I see the same thing in my own neighbourhood. Are there any private sector partnerships helping you deal with this problem?

Mr. Mike Puddister: Thank you.

Well, as you point out, it's a huge issue. Right now we've been fortunate to have municipal funding to address the bulk of the issue. Down in the southern part of the watershed, in our Rattray Marsh Conservation Area, consisting of about 80% to 85% ash trees, the community has become engaged. So to respond to the earlier question, individual residents have stepped forward and are providing a portion of the funding. It's not a huge proportion, but there is some local residential commitment to help offset the environmental devastation the EAB is creating.

In terms of corporate contributions, currently we do not have any corporate support for it.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: I noticed that you held some public workshops last year. Do individuals sometimes come forward who perhaps own their own companies? Does that ever happen? I'm just wondering how an organization like CVC might find corporate sponsorship or partnerships with the private sector, and maybe that's one way.

Mr. Mike Puddister: Well, it's a matter of marketing, I suppose. We've certainly made some efforts there in the Mississauga community, making them aware of the EAB issue and how significant it is, including with press releases and workshops, as you pointed out. We've always provided that opportunity. We currently call the campaign Save Our Ash, and it's made available to anyone. We certainly promote it in the hope that both private and public sector individuals would come forward and help support the funding of a major management initiative.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: Okay, thank you.

Mr. McLean, I was wondering if I could ask you about your comment regarding the broader landscape and how critical coordination and partnerships are, and how the work is so much more meaningful when you have these and can leverage the entities and make more of a difference. You mentioned that when private sector partnerships are part of the mix, they make a different contribution. Could you tell us what are some of the unique contributions made by the private sector that you've observed?

Mr. Robert McLean: That's a two-part question. I'll deal with the second part, as other witnesses have already talked about the unique contributions.

I think there's the in-kind provision of goods. There's the provision of expertise. If we're talking of the forest sector, companies can have particular expertise with respect to forest management. I can guarantee you that if I'm talking to ranchers, they will tell me that they know how to manage grassland habitat, the native prairie, way better than other people do. Absolutely, ranchers can manage native prairie very well because their business depends on it. Those would be the primary ways in which corporations can contribute.

With respect to the landscape approach and kind of roles of government, if I could turn back to that a little bit, there's tremendous interest, I think, at the community level in finding things to do. I think that organizations like the conservation authorities who have an eye on that broader landscape or watershed can help people understand where in the watershed action is needed, and what kind of action is needed, and then find ways to provide those goods and services, or the technical information on what to do.

I think the North American waterfowl management plan is successful because it provides a little bit of context, which then enables that kind of community-based action, or action by environmental organizations or corporate Canada, if you will. I think we need to do a little more of that. I can't get too far into it—it's not secret—but we've been working on multi-species approaches with respect to species at risk, working with provincial and territorial jurisdictions. We do have an action plan that I hope we can post this year under the Species at Risk Act, a multi-species approach that we call "South of the Divide", meaning southwestern Saskatchewan, and we are working hand in hand, if you will, with the ranching community.

We're also working with the province, I would add. The role of the provinces is critical. With our provincial colleagues we are providing information on the important habitats, the characteristics of those habitats, but also talking about some of the tools—I was actually out west last week—moving beyond simply a plan to the tools that will work for that community. Here I refer to the habitat management tools around habitat restoration, conservation agreements around taking existing habitat and enhancing its values, talking about grass banking on private land and conservation banking on crown land, and whether or not there are opportunities to advance that. If we can move to that level, then I think it opens doors for the agriculture sector, both ranchers and agricultural corporations, to become involved.

•(1030)

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Ambler.

Thank you, Mr. McLean.

At this point Mr. McKay is the last person on our sheet.

Hon. John McKay: Last and least. My goodness.

The Chair: Last but not least, especially now with....

Hon. John McKay: Does line 9 run through the Credit Valley?

Mr. Mike Puddister: Yes, I believe it does.

Hon. John McKay: Did the authority or the foundation make any representations to the NEB about line 9?

Mr. Mike Puddister: Certainly, the foundation would not be providing advocacy in terms of that particular application. Our planning staff may have commented. I'm not responsible for that area, so I'm not certain.

Hon. John McKay: My recollection is that there was a huge aggregate proposal somewhere in and around Orangeville—and I'm not sure whether it was in the Credit Valley authority—which provoked enormous citizen opposition. I can't even remember the name of it.

Am I correct in my recollection, that there was an enormous aggregate proposal?

Mr. Mike Puddister: Yes. There was a large quarry proposal to the north and east of Orangeville, outside of our area's jurisdiction, but we were certainly made aware of it through a variety of public outbursts, if I might say.

Hon. John McKay: "Outbursts" is probably a good way to put it.

How did the foundation handle it, or did it get involved at all in that particular environmental issue?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: No, we weren't involved. As Mike mentioned, it was outside of the boundaries of our watershed.

Mrs. Stella Ambler: On a point of order, Mr. Chair, I would argue that there is a lack of relevance to our study topic here. Not only is the quarry a done deal and no longer an issue in any way for the residents, or government, or the community, but it also has no relation to private sector involvement with environmental organizations.

Hon. John McKay: Frankly, Mr. Chair, I don't think it's up to another member to determine relevance.

The Chair: Mr. McKay, I wouldn't rule on this point of relevance, but I am questioning the point of relevance questioning the foundation as to whether they had been involved.... The foundation is responsible for fundraising, whereas the Credit Valley Conservation Authority—

Hon. John McKay: The foundation doesn't raise money in the abstract and just raise it for nothing. The core point of any foundation is to raise environmental awareness.

In local terms, an aggregate or a quarry generates huge public interest. I know this particular one generated.... In fact, there were elections that were called on it.

I'm actually not so much interested.... I just want to know whether there was any participation. Ms. Ambler was objecting to this in terms of its relevance, and they said that, no, they didn't actually get involved, so I'm fine with that.

I'm curious about your 75:25 ratio in terms of donations. It's often said that he who pays the piper calls the tune. Does that bother you? Are you concerned about a ratio where your revenues are largely dependent on corporations?

•(1035)

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Actually our revenues.... The other split to be considered is our signature event portfolio and our grant portfolio. It's not that the corporations make up the remaining 75%. They would probably represent about 20% of our income, so in fact, they are lower than the individual donors.

The ratio overall does concern me as a fundraiser. From a sustainable point of view and in terms of wanting to increase the revenues in our supportive conservation, I would like to see more individual support of the foundation. I would love to see that up around 70%.

Hon. John McKay: I hear that various charities get very frustrated. They seem to spend a disproportionate amount of time fundraising and are frustrated because they'd rather be doing the charitable work itself. Have you broken down the amount of time you spend fundraising as a percentage of the overall activities of the foundation?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: We're in a unique position. Our foundation is strictly a fundraising foundation, so 100% of the activities we do are fundraising efforts.

Hon. John McKay: Okay, so there's no aspect.... So the moneys get directed over to the authority after that. Is that how it works?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Yes. Absolutely.

Hon. John McKay: They're the working arm of the foundation.

Ms. Terri LeRoux: Yes.

Hon. John McKay: Okay. That's a clarification. Thank you very much for that.

I'm also curious about this arrangement where a corporation is trying to build its brand. How do you price that? You in effect sell

advertising for whatever project you're pursuing. How does that get priced?

Ms. Terri LeRoux: That's an excellent question. CVC does have a marketing department with experts. If it's something that's easily assessed in terms of reach and output, it's very easy to put a cost to it using standard marketing formulas. It becomes much more difficult when we're creating opportunities to share a company's message.

That speaks to the distinction I made between charitable versus non-charitable and why we keep those relationships very compartmentalized as non-charitable contributions and simply marketing relationships. We tend to assess them based on what we can provide them in terms of reach and their expected return.

Hon. John McKay: Thank you very much.

The Chair: That brings our committee to an end for today.

Thank you to our witnesses who appeared by video and in person.

Mr. McLean, I appreciate your input to help us in our study.

Thank you. The meeting is adjourned.

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