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CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

ATLANTIC REGION

BRIEFING BOOK

AUGUST 1991

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## **CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE**

### **NATIONAL PROFILE**

The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is responsible for the protection and management of migratory birds through development of regulations, habitat management, and supporting research and surveys. With the provinces and territories, the Service undertakes programs of research and management related to other wildlife where there is a national interest, and advises other federal agencies on wildlife matters. CWS participates in international agreements and programs on wildlife conservation.

Administratively, CWS is one element of Environment Canada's Conservation and Protection Service with regional Headquarters in Dartmouth. National program direction and support is received from CWS Headquarters in Hull.

The Canadian Wildlife Service derives its mandate from Acts, Treaties or Conventions, various agreements, and national/international obligations, and sectors of DOE priority programs which relate to wildlife (e.g. toxic chemicals and acid precipitation).

CWS has the lead nationally on State of Environment (SOE) Reporting and the promotion of the philosophy of sustainable development. Regionally, the director, CWS, chairs the SOE Steering Committee, although the principal coordination rests with the Environmental Protection branch.

## **Conventions, Treaties, and Agreements**

- Britain/Canada/USA Migratory Birds Convention (1916)
  - North American Waterfowl Management Plan (1986)
    - Joint Venture Agreements (1989)
  - International Polar Bear Conservation Agreement
  - Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species - Flora and Fauna (CITES) (1975)
  - Convention for the Preservation of Wetlands of International Importance (RAMSAR) (1971). Canada became signatory in 1981.
  - Latin American Program - Letters of Arrangement with various Latin American countries
  - Whooping Crane Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1985)
  - International Porcupine Caribou Agreement
  - Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (1986)
  - Federal-Provincial Migratory Bird Management Agreements

## **Client Groups**

Eighty-five per cent of Canadians express a direct and active interest in/or interaction with wildlife. The wide variety of photographers, hunters, hikers, tourists, and recreation industry operators are formally represented by name organizations with the key national ones being the Canadian Nature Federation, Ducks Unlimited, the Canadian Wildlife Federation, Wildlife Habitat Canada, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The activities of Canadians result in an annual expenditure of \$4.2 billion and creation of 185,000 jobs.

In addition to the above values, the commercial use of wildlife (guiding, trapping, subsistence harvest by native people, Canadian wildlife safari tours, etc.) add significant real values yet to be documented. CWS is well recognized as an organization by the Canadian public, thanks principally to long-standing promotional campaigns such as Hinterland Who's Who. The work of its researchers is well known and respected internationally.

## ATLANTIC REGION

The Atlantic Region of the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS-AR) covers the four Atlantic provinces: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. The regional headquarters is located in Sackville, New Brunswick, and there are additional offices located in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, St. John's, Newfoundland and Lewisporte, Newfoundland. The Fredericton office was phased out in 1991.

Waterfowl are important game species in the region, especially in Prince Edward Island where there are no big game species. Major game species are the Black Duck, Canada Goose, and seaducks, especially the eider. There are about 50,000 registered migratory bird hunters in Atlantic Canada.

Newfoundland and Labrador have had a long tradition of hunting seabirds, and a very significant hunt of murre continues. Approximately 15,000 hunters take an estimated 750,000 birds annually. Due to vagaries of the legal regime, control of that hunt is currently inadequate.

Illegal hunting remains a significant problem in many areas. In some of the Maritimes, spring hunting remains a tradition. In Newfoundland, there was no consistent enforcement effort until very recently, and thus compliance to regulations was generally poor. Enforcement in Labrador remains sporadic.

Native people hunt migratory birds in numbers only in Labrador to our knowledge where there are demands for a legalized spring hunt as in other parts of Canada. Recent court cases have put the legal issues surrounding native hunting into some doubt and elevated the profile of this issue.

Lead Shot, if ingested by waterfowl, can cause sickness or death. Surveys of hunting areas in the Maritimes have shown that there are several lead shot problem areas. Beginning in 1992, some areas will be zoned as non-lead shot zones and further monitoring and research is warranted.

Marine birds represent by far the most important group of birds numerically in the region. In Newfoundland, there are huge colonies of Common Murres, puffins, gannets, petrels, and other species. Colonies of gulls and terns dot the coastline. The tidal mudflats of the Bay of Fundy are invaded by millions of shorebirds each summer during their southward migration. Phalaropes in equal abundance congregate at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy en route to eastern Africa and South America. The offshore provides winter feeding grounds for millions of birds which nest in Canada's Arctic, Greenland, Iceland, and points east. In our summer, the Grand Banks are the home to shearwaters from the South Atlantic during their winter.

Thick-billed Murres are thought to be under pressure from over-harvesting. All seabirds suffer from pollution of their environment, especially with oil and plastics. Fishery practices also impact on populations, most notably through gill-netting close to colonies or draft-netting. Commercial fisheries of capelin may be in direct competition with some seabirds.

Land-based bird species are most influenced by broad based habitat changes. Forestry is an extremely important industry in Atlantic Canada, and provincial governments are moving towards integrating wildlife values in forestry management practices. Implementation of the policy remains a challenge.

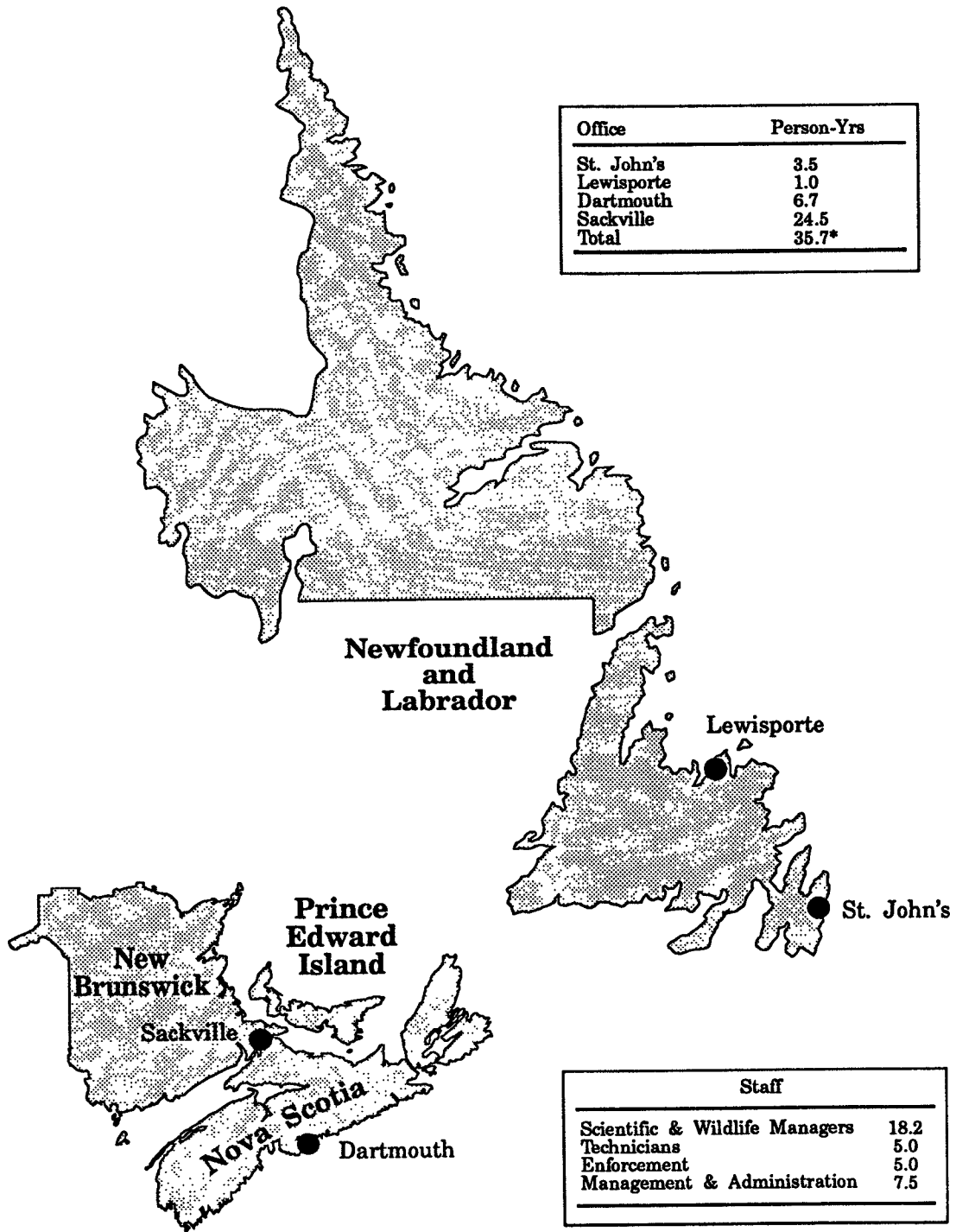
CWS-AR manages thirteen National Wildlife Areas and sixteen Migratory Bird Sanctuaries. Most were acquired or designated to complement the waterfowl conservation program with some notable exceptions (e.g. Mary's Point for shorebirds). Provincial governments have the principal responsibility for habitat conservation. With the aid of Ducks Unlimited and Wildlife Habitat Canada, provincial programs for wetland conservation have become much more active in the Maritimes during the last decade. The CWS role here has evolved to become one of coordinator of regional activities, cooperator in some federal-provincial projects, and influencer of programs and policies of other federal agencies. CWS-AR has the lead in implementing the new Eastern Habitat Joint Venture, a cooperative program worth \$3.8 million in Atlantic Canada in 1991.

In Newfoundland, provincial habitat conservation activities for migratory birds has focussed principally on the major seabird colonies, many of which are ecological reserves. Wetland programs are just beginning with the stimulus of the Waterfowl Management Plan and Ducks Unlimited agreements.

The principal endangered or threatened bird species in the region are the Peregrine Falcon, Harlequin Duck, Piping Plover, and Roseate Tern. Several other species are rare and warrant careful attention. Many species are believed to be well below optimal numbers such as the Common Eider in Newfoundland and Common and Arctic Terns. The eider has apparently suffered from over-exploitation, while the terns appear to be victims of a burgeoning gull population and, more particularly, invasion of the Black-backed Gull from Europe.

General degradation of the environment has its impacts on wildlife as well as other resources and the economy. Acid precipitation has clearly impacted fish-eating aquatic species such as the Common Loon. The wide-scale application of pesticides and herbicides has in the past had dramatic impacts on some species such as the hawks, eagles, and falcons. A wide array of those chemicals are in use, particularly in forestry and agricultural application, and careful monitoring of their effects is prudent. The loading of surface and coastal waters with toxics and nutrients is of particular concern in some areas of the region.

# Canadian Wildlife Service Atlantic Region 1991-92



Office	Person-Yrs
St. John's	3.5
Lewisporte	1.0
Dartmouth	6.7
Sackville	24.5
Total	35.7*

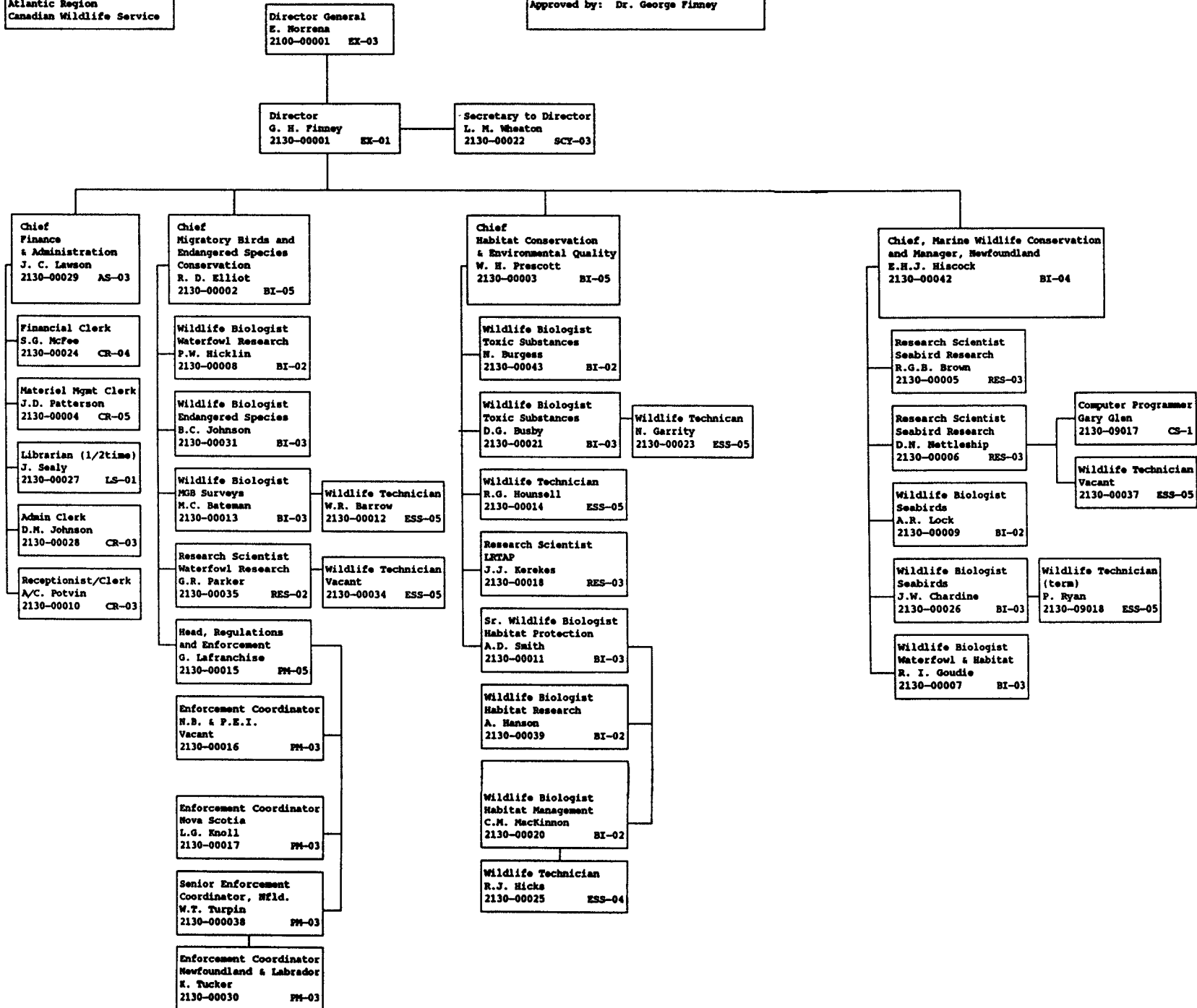
Staff	
Scientific & Wildlife Managers	18.2
Technicians	5.0
Enforcement	5.0
Management & Administration	7.5

Chart Title:  
Conservation & Protection  
Atlantic Region  
Canadian Wildlife Service

ORGANIZATION CHART

Effective Date: July 19, 1991

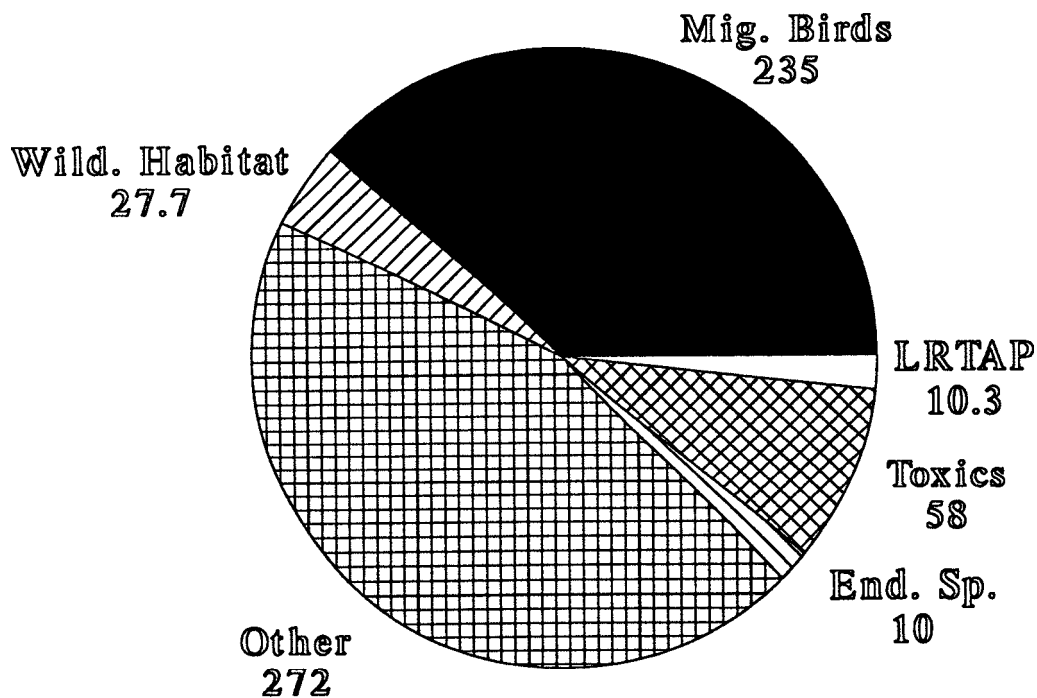
Approved by: Dr. George Finney





# A-Base Budget 1991-92

## Operating and Maintenance (\$x1000)

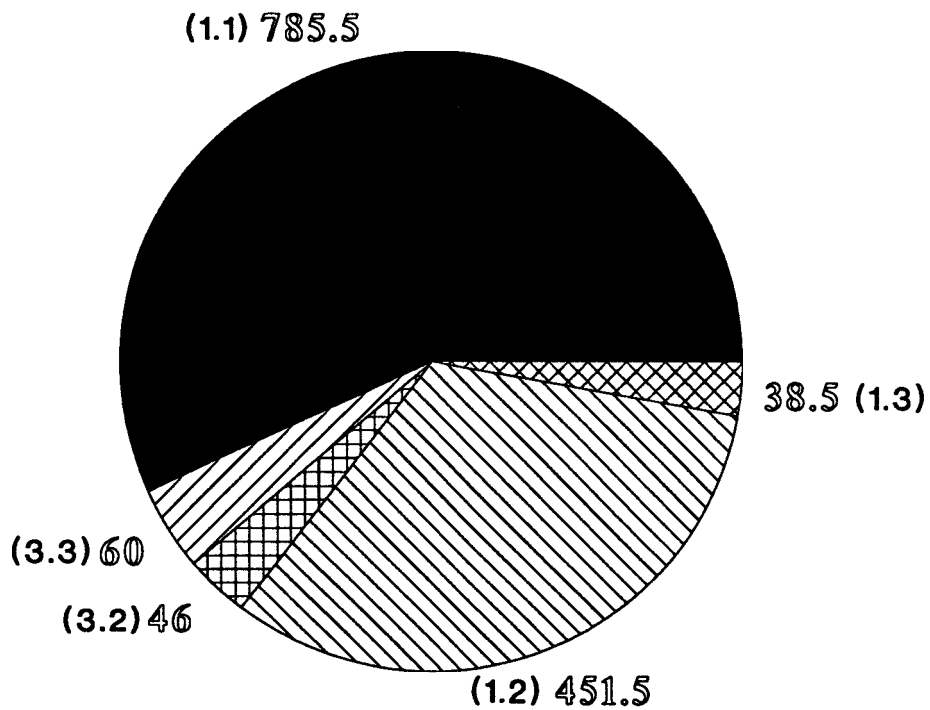


**Person Years**

1.1 Migratory Birds	19.2
1.2 Wildlife Habitat	4.0
1.3 Endangered Species	1.0
2.1 Management & Administration	7.5
3.2 Air & Water Emiss./Effluents	1.0
3.3 Toxics	3.0

(O & M = \$613K, Capital = \$127.8K)

# Supporting Non A-Base Resources, 1991-92 (\$x1000)



1.1	Migratory Birds	785.5
1.2	Wildlife Habitat	451.5
1.3	Endangered Species	38.5
3.2	Air & Water Emiss./Effl.	46.0
3.3	Toxics	60.0

Canadian Wildlife Service - Atlantic Region

Supporting Non A-Base Resources 1991-92

<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Source</u>
Duck Banding	\$ 60,000(US)	U.S. Atlantic Flyway
Black Duck Monitoring	140,000	Black Duck Joint Venture CWS-HQ/USFWS
Black Duck Research	50,000 12,500 7,000	Black Duck Joint Venture US F&W NB DNRE
Waterfowl Surveys - Labrador	30,000 20,000	DND ACOA
Seabird Surveys - Labrador	12,000	ACOA
Harlequin Surveys - Labrador	10,000	Nfld Hydro
Eider Enhancement - Hare Bay	270,000	Ducks Unlimited Canada, CEIC, EPF
- Placentia Bay	10,000	CEIC(?)
Seaduck/aquaculture Nfld	80,000	Nfld DOF
Toxic Chemical Assessment	30,000 30,000	CEPA Pesticide Action Plan
Acid Rain Studies	46,000	C&P-HQ
Habitat Research	50,000	Ducks Unlimited Canada
Habitat Protection	291,500	Eastern Habitat JV
Wetland Inventory - Labrador	50,000	ACOA
Phalarope Surveys	6,000	C&P Baseline Studies
Peregrine Recovery Project	15,000 5,000 5,000	World Wildlife Fund Parks End. Spec. Recov. Fund
Piping Plover Surveys	3,350	End. Spec. Recov. Fund
Latin American Program	25,000	CWS-HQ
Beached Bird Surveys	55,000	CEIC, NLEA
<b>TOTAL APPROVED</b>	<b>\$1,313,350</b>	

CWS Atlantic Region

Issues and Initiatives (1990-91)

Migratory Birds Conservation

- \* Regulate the harvest of murre off Newfoundland to arrest/prevent population declines

Approach:

- promote assignment of murre to game bird status or other parliament legal remedy
- encourage voluntary restraint
- upgrade enforcement to reduce selling of birds
- monitor population trends at Arctic breeding colonies
- undertake research to support management strategies

- \* Ensure proper management of game bird species

Approach:

- maintain improved breeding pair surveys of inland duck species
- undertake population management research (e.g. distribution of species, impact of hunting mortality, etc.)
- update and implement the Enforcement Strategy for each province
- modify regulations as required
- identify areas where lead shot ingestion leads to toxicosis and introduce measures to reduce these effects;
- implement provisions of provincial Waterfowl Management Plans
- coordinate program to reintroduce eiders to Newfoundland in the context of an Atlantic Eider Management Plan
- implement specific regulations and policies to accommodate special native harvesting rights and conservation programs

- \* Protect important wetlands, estuaries, and coastal areas in the Maritimes

Approach:

- coordinate implementation of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture in eastern Canada and Atlantic Canada
- assist in implementation of approved projects under the EHJV
- assist in implementation of Atlantic Hot Spots Program

**\* Minimize the impacts of pollutants and fishery activity on seabirds**

- Approach:**
- undertake research and surveys on seabird distribution and ecological interactions
  - implement a Seabird Colony Registry in Atlantic Canada
  - publish an Atlas showing distribution of seabirds at sea
  - research ways to reduce bycatch in gill nets
  - implement a regional oil spill response strategy

**\*Build wildlife values into the management of forests**

- Approach:**
- develop a Forest Wildlife program as approved by the Green Plan and integrate activities of other interests

**\* Assist in international wildlife conservation activities**

- Approach:**
- lead in the conservation of shorebirds in the Americas through chairmanship of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network
  - represent Canada on International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau
  - undertake projects in association with the Latin American Program

**\* Protect and rehabilitate endangered, threatened, and vulnerable species**

- Approach:**
- implement a regional recovery plan for Piping Plovers with all governments and interested NGOs
  - continue mass hack program in Bay of Fundy for Peregrine Falcons
  - develop recovery plans and recovery teams for Roseate Tern, Harlequin Duck, and the Eastern cougar

**\* Implement programs to effectively monitor songbird species**

- Approach:**
- develop and coordinate implementation of volunteer-based survey programs

**\* Protect areas of national significance in Atlantic Canada to migratory birds**

- Approach:**
- designate Portobello NWA (1992)
  - develop management plans for Newfoundland seabird sanctuaries (provincial) with Newfoundland Parks Service
  - develop a management plan for the Southern Bight of Minas Basin and Shepody Bay

**\* Develop and implement inter-governmental agreements and other cooperative arrangements**

- Approach:**
- implement Newfoundland/Labrador Migratory Bird Habitat Protection Plan
  - sign agreements with France and Denmark for management of migratory birds, i.e. St. Pierre et Miquelon
  - develop a Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Centre for Atlantic Canada

**\* Monitor persistent toxic chemicals in the environment and provide research related to CEPA priority chemicals**

- Approach:**
- once every four years, sample seabird populations
  - spot checks and other surveys of potential trouble sites
  - improve monitoring capability
  - undertake and coordinate research on the biological effects of CEPA priority chemicals

**\* Minimize the negative impacts on wildlife from the use of pesticides to control forest and agricultural pests**

- Approach:**
- experimentally monitor the impact on wildlife of pesticides proposed for registration
  - provide advice to Agriculture Canada, the provinces, and industry

**\* Assess the impact of acid rain on the wildlife and the ecosystem**

- Approach:**
- participate in DOE multi-disciplinary study on the Kejimikujik Watershed to provide information and effects on the biota
  - assess the impact of acid fog on eggs of forest birds

**\* Assist in the implementation of Sustainable Development Agreements in Atlantic Canada.**

**Approach:** - provide support to the Nova Scotia Sustainable Development Agreement

**\* Control the impact of expanding gull populations on people and other bird species**

**Approach:** - implement the Atlantic Gull Management Plan  
- carefully monitor impacts of gulls on other species and man  
- undertake public consultations and communications  
- publish the Tern Management Plan

CWS ANNUAL REVIEW 1990-91

**PROGRAM - 1.1 MIGRATORY BIRDS**

**A2** Amendments to the MBCA Regulations were proposed and implemented which resulted in: a reduced bag limit for eiders in Labrador; revised hunting zones in Newfoundland; delayed goose hunting seasons in Nova Scotia; and a reduced bag limit for sea ducks in New Brunswick.

Public and Provincial Consultations on zone changes were completed.

Commissioning of a new patrol boat resulted in significant increase in offshore enforcement presence in Newfoundland/Labrador.

Meetings were held with various hunter groups who are showing an increased interest and concern in illegal hunting activities.

Provincial enforcement strategies were revised and presented to RCMP and provincial senior officers. They were received with enthusiasm and resulted in increased commitments for cooperation during the fall hunting season.

The new enforcement evaluation and reporting system was implemented resulting in better enforcement statistics being generated.

Regional enforcement training workshops were held in September for RCMP, provincial and DFO fisheries officers.

A CITES enforcement review indicated low priority by OGD enforcement officers; efforts to inform the public and appropriate agencies were initiated.

**A3** Liaison, strategies and action plans were continued; Nfld. eider management plan was completed and implementation begun (e.g. agreement reached with prov. Fisheries to address eider/aquaculture interactions and terms of reference were finalized; 2 MBS's for eiders were gazetted; seaduck bag limits reduced and closure effected for "inland ducks"; a lead shot workshop was organized for November; and technical and steering committees reviewed management and research proposals).



Eider reintroduction was completed for 1990; 550 eggs obtained from N.S. were hatched in Northern Nfld.; raising and release of young eiders was successful; reintroduction techniques were improved; a meeting was held with all participants to rectify administration difficulties.

Because funding was not received for two community liaison officers, direct discussions with representatives of native groups were initiated. A request made to ACOA for support under native development strategy was successful; project to be initiated in 1991.

- A4 Hunter interview projects at Shepody and Wallace NWAs were implemented in October.
- A5 A cooperative proposal has been received from three Atlantic universities and funding possibilities are currently being investigated under the Green Plan.
- A6 Waterfowl breeding pair surveys undertaken in all four provinces in 1990 indicate that Black Duck populations are increasing in New Brunswick, stable in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland, and decreasing in Prince Edward Island. Survey design was revamped for 1990 and supported by funding from the Black Duck Joint Venture. Canadian woodcock surveys were completed, and a report has been drafted.

Waterfowl banding field work was completed, and two new banding stations were established. Results show a successful year, and reports were prepared. Canada Goose banding was more successful in Prince Edward Island with over 300 geese captured.

The Newfoundland Hunter Opinion Survey has been analyzed and shows that Newfoundland hunters generally agree with our management directions. The National Species Composition Survey and Woodcock Wing Survey have been successfully completed. The murre harvest report is available, and other reports are under preparation.

The 1989 Breeding Bird Survey report and 1989 Maritime Nest Records Scheme report have both been completed.

Surveys for phalaropes in Passamaquoddy Bay indicate a major redistribution. The Seabird Colony Registry has progressed to the output stage with analyses of over 300 Ontario colonies completed.

An international Colonial Wading Bird Group meeting was held in St. John's, Newfoundland.

A Forest Bird/Habitat Study was undertaken in cooperation with the province of New Brunswick. A National Songbird Program was developed which will determine CWS project direction.

The Black Duck Study has been completed at Amherst Point MBS, Nova Scotia. Results indicate different movement patterns on managed and unmanaged marshes.

#### **PROGRAM - 1.2 WILDLIFE HABITAT**

- A8** Provincial Enforcement Strategies were updated for NWA's and MBS's. The compliance strategy for the Grey Islands MBS was developed and declaration of the sanctuary status is progressing via the regulatory process. Enforcement of revised waterfowl hunting regimes for Shepody and Wallace NWA's was undertaken and reports and summary statistics were prepared.
- A9** Changes in external funding allowed the 5-year plan to be completed ahead of schedule. 15-year plan is currently in preparation. The R&E plan concept is in development. EHJV Board meetings were held and the program coordinated. Project submissions for 1991 were coordinated and submitted to the Migratory Birds Council (US) in July. Program plan was approved and is on target for implementation. All 1990 (2nd step) projects were implemented via bi-lateral funding arrangements and considerable progress was made at land purchases in Grand Lake Meadows, Mt. Stewart and Mt. Hope, P.E.I., Stewiacke River and Yarmouth Salt Marshes in Nova Scotia.
- A10** Interim guidelines for northern Nfld. forest management unit were completed and incorporated into provincial environmental impact assessment process. CWS was represented in model forest design initiation. A positive reception in New Brunswick has allowed for continued participation on New Brunswick Wildlife Technical Committee and contributed to the development of a Forest Wildlife Research Framework for New Brunswick.
- A12** The field work for both level-ditching and draw-down studies was completed. Progress reports were submitted and new budget submissions were presented and approved for 1991. The literature review for wetlands sewage treatment was completed.

**PROGRAM - 1.3 ENDANGERED SPECIES**

- A15** The Regional Action Plan for Piping Plovers was approved by the regional Recovery Team and implemented ahead of schedule.

The Core group for Roseate Tern Recovery Team met in November and begin preparation of the recovery plan; revised target is fall, 1991. The Recovery Team for the endangered eastern Harlequin Duck has been appointed; plan development is now scheduled for Oct. 1991.

Twenty-five falcons were released in 1990 and the regional nesting survey was completed. Reports were submitted to the National Peregrine Falcon Recovery Team.

**PROGRAM - 1.4 INTERNATIONAL WATER/WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

- A21** The CWS-AR Regional Director, George Finney chaired the WHSRN Council. The strategic plan was finalized and funding was arranged with two US foundations.

**PROGRAM - 1.5 NATIONAL/REGIONAL WATER AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES**

- A25** Progress in the development of a wetlands designation agreement has been slow due to low provincial priority and staff changes. This has been the subject of discussion at senior management levels and despite the mutual recognition of the merits of such an agreement, there remains no firm provincial commitment to proceed.

**PROGRAM - 2.1 MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

- B2** The new CWS, St. John's office occupied in January, 1990 meets their needs. Negotiations with DPW on a new office for CWS-AR regional headquarters in Sackville, N.B. progressed well with plans for 1991 construction agreed upon.

**PROGRAM - 2.2 ECOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCE**

**B7** ACOA has agreed to fund CWS under the Comprehensive Labrador Cooperation Agreement for 1991-1995 to undertake an evaluation of migratory bird resources in Labrador that can be used to spur economic development on a local basis. In addition, funds will be used to carry out an inventory of wetlands in an effort to ensure that they are managed in ways which maintain wildlife resources and environmental quality.

Migratory bird interpretive centers recommended under the Newfoundland Tourism Development Agreement are currently being negotiated.

CWS has contributed to the development of the N.S. Sustainable Development Agreement. Agreement has been reached with DFO for experimentation with alternative gear technology to reduce by-catch of seabirds in areas of high tourist activity.

**PROGRAM - 3.1 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF NEW INITIATIVES**

**C2** CWS reviews of PEI Fixed Link and Labrador low level flying EIS were completed. The Labrador review has led to a CWS advisory role on DND avoidance and effects monitoring programs. CWS contributed to Scientific Review Committees chaired by EP along with regular membership on the EACC.

National Guidelines (draft) for Environmental Assessment in CWS have been developed as well as assessment procedures for EHJV projects.

**PROGRAM - 3.2 AIR AND WATER EMISSIONS/EFFLUENTS**

**C10** All field work was completed and data summary reports were prepared on the following:

- (a) The effect of changes in acid deposition on wildlife and their habitats.
- (b) data comparison between automatic water quality monitors and an AES event model and assessment of the models performance in predicting transport of inorganic acids.
- (c) snowmelt data and
- (d) the role of wetlands in the production and storage of inorganic and organic acids.

**PROGRAM - 3.3 TOXICS**

**C13** The Fenitrothion Registration Review has been initiated and completion is scheduled for May, 1992. C&P will participate in the review. A draft booklet on pesticides and wildlife problems has been produced and is to be finalized in the spring of 1991.

CEPA research and monitoring activities were coordinated through Research and Monitoring Steering Committee.

**C16** Field work was completed on pesticide/blueberry study and a report was submitted to management.

**PROGRAM 3.4 SPILLS**

**C17** CWS participated in an oiled bird cleaning workshop and an international CONSULTANT mock simulated oil spill exercise. A building was constructed for bird cleaning at Placentia Bay, Newfoundland with CEIC funding, and some equipment was acquired. 1984-89 beached bird survey data set was computerized and partly analyzed as background for report. Surveys were continued on southern Avalon Peninsula, Nfld. A joint CWS-EP-Coast Guard winter oil spill surveillance and compliance exercise in Placentia Bay (Operation Clean Feather) was successfully completed; a report was prepared.

Green Plan input was made on recommendations of the Public Review Panel Report on Tanker Safety and Marine Spill Response Capability. Submissions were made to an internal review initiative.

**C20** REET meetings and contingency plan update has been delayed until second half of the fiscal year.

Second draft of Migratory Birds Oil Spill Contingency Plan for the Marine Environment of the Atlantic Region was produced in preparation for circulation to approximately 35 "wildlife partners."

