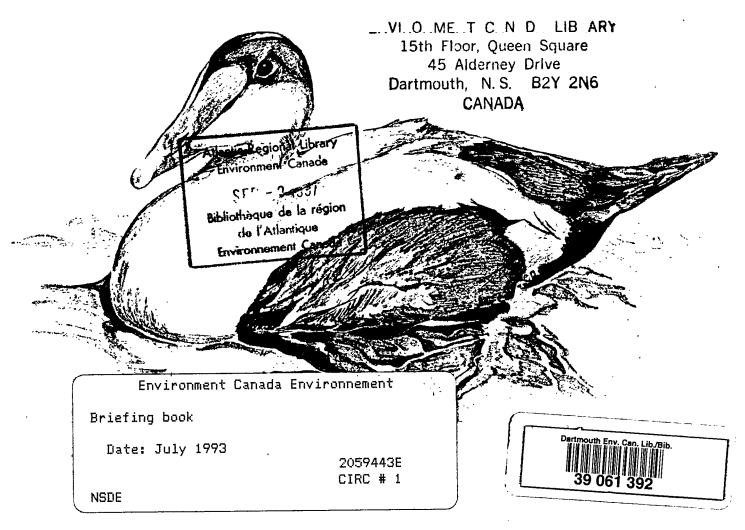
# # 1495~/ CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

## ATLANTIC REGION

### **BRIEFING BOOK**

### **JULY 1993**



Service canadien de la faune Conservation et protection Environnement Canada Région de l'Atlantique Sackville, Nouveau-Brunswick

Canadian Wildlife Service
Conservation and Protection
Environment Canada
Atlantic Region
Sackville, New Brunswick

#### NATIONAL PROFILE OF THE CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

The Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) is responsible for the conservation and management of migratory birds through development and implementation of regulations, habitat management, and supporting research and surveys, in cooperation 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 Atlantic Region Headquarters in Dartmouth, N.S. National program direction and support is received from CWS National Headquarters in Hull.

The Canadian Wildlife Service derives its mandate from Acts, Treaties or Conventions, bilateral agreements, and national/international obligations, and sectors of Environment Canada's priority programs which relate to wildlife (e.g. biodiversity, toxic chemicals and acid precipitation). Most CWS activities relate to the implementation of the Migratory Birds Convention Act (1917), the Canada Wildlife Act (1970) and the Wild Animal and Plant Protection and Regulation of International and Interprovincial Trade Act (1992).

#### Green Plan Programs

In 1990, the federal government announced the Green Plan, a major initiative to ensure that activities of government agencies, industry and private Canadians were environmentally sustainable and that decisions to minimize negative impacts on the environment were based on adequate information.

Many Green Plan initiatives relate to CWS programs. Those most directly involving the service are: the National Wildlife Strategy; the Wild Animal and Plant Protection Act; Marine Environmental Emergencies; and State of Environment Reporting.

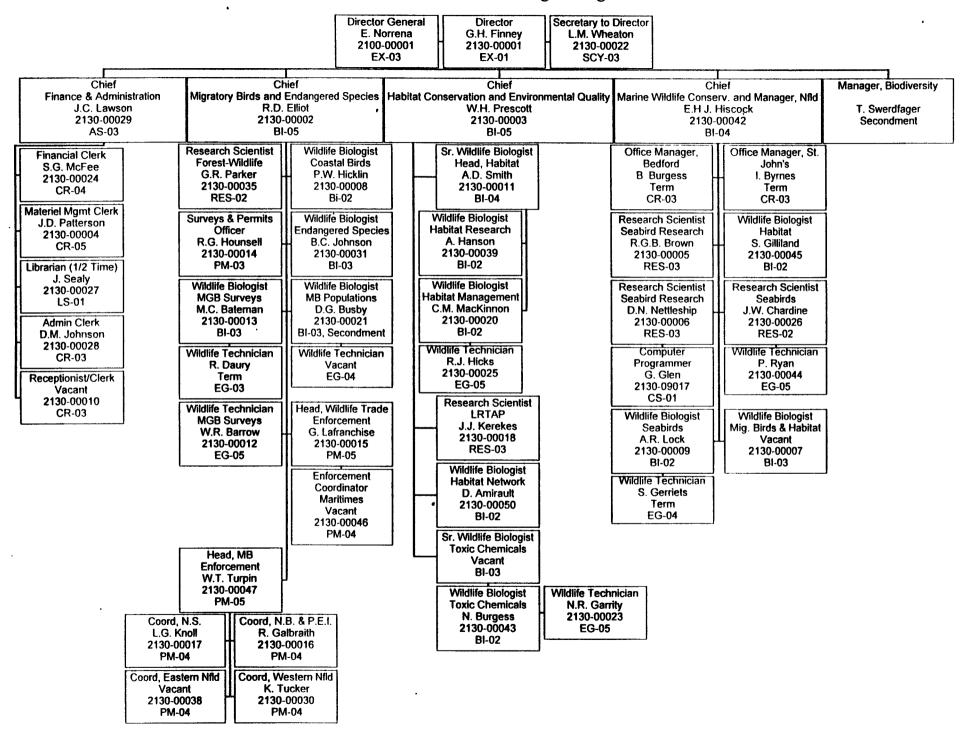
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CANADA

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#### Canadian Wildlife Service - Atlantic Region Organisation Chart



#### Conventions, Treaties, and Agreements

- Migratory Birds Convention between Canada and the United States (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)
- Convention on Biological Diversity (1992)
- 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 bird watchers, photographers, hunters, hikers, tourists, and recreation industry operators are represented by non government organizations, with the key national ones being the Canadian Nature Federation, Ducks Unlimited, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, 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 related to the enjoyment and conservation of wildlife.

In addition to the above values, the commercial use of wildlife (guiding, trapping, subsistence harvest by native people, Canadian wildlife safari tours, etc.) adds significant real values yet to be well documented.

CWS is well recognized as an important organization by the Canadian public, thanks principally to long-standing promotional campaigns such as the Hinterland Who's Who series of pamphlets providing information on individual wildlife species, and the high-profile scientific expertise of its staff in many areas of wildlife conservation. The work of its scientific researchers is well known and respected internationally.

#### THE ATLANTIC REGION OF THE CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

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.

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

The people of Newfoundland and Labrador have had a long tradition of hunting seabirds, and a very significant hunt of thick-billed murres continues. Approximately 15,000 hunters take an estimated average of 750,000 birds annually. Little control of that harvest has been possible prior to the implementation of new interim restrictions for 1993-94 to reduce the harvest by 50%, with bag limits and shorter seasons.

Illegal hunting remains a significant problem in many areas. In parts of the Maritimes, spring hunting is a tradition. In Newfoundland, consistent enforcement effort only began in the 1980s, and compliance to regulations has generally been poor. Enforcement of migratory bird regulations in Labrador remains sporadic, and has been complicated by uncertainties in interpreting the rights of access to migratory birds by native groups.

Native people hunt migratory birds in significant numbers only in Labrador where, as in other parts of Canada, there are demands to legalize the spring hunt. Recent court cases have put the legal issues surrounding native hunting into some doubt and elevated its profile. Spring hunting has recently increased dramatically and may affect local populations of Common Eider and the endangered Harlequin Duck.

Lead shot, if ingested by waterfowl, can cause sickness or death. Surveys of hunting areas in the Maritimes have shown that there are many lead shot problem areas. By 1993, five such areas will be zoned as non-toxic shot zones, and by 1997 only steel or other non-toxic shot will be permitted for duck hunting throughout the three Maritime provinces.

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 stopping to "re-fuel" during their southward migration. Phalaropes congregate in equal abundance at the mouth of the Bay of Fundy en route to eastern Africa and South America. The offshore banks provide winter feeding areas for millions of seabirds which nest in Canada's Arctic, Greenland, Iceland, and northern Europe. In our summer, the Grand Banks are the home to shearwaters from South Atlantic colonies.

Populations of Thick-billed Murres that breed in colonies in the eastern Canadian Arctic and western Greenland have been under pressure from over-harvesting in Newfoundland. All seabirds suffer from pollution of their environment, especially with oil and plastics. Fishery practices also impact on seabird populations, most notably through the drowning of birds in gill-nets close to colonies or in offshore drift-nets. The commercial capelin fishery may be in direct competition for these small fish that many seabirds feed on.

Land-based bird species are most influenced by broad-based habitat changes. Forestry is an extremely important industry in Atlantic Canada and federal and provincial governments are moving towards integrating wildlife values in forestry management practices. CWS-AR is involved in research and providing advice in this process, and is a partner in the Fundy and Newfoundland Model Forests.

CWS-AR manages 10 National Wildlife Areas and 14 Migratory Bird Sanctuaries. Most were acquired or designated to complement the waterfowl conservation program, with notable exceptions such as Mary's Point, a key staging area for migratory shorebirds. Provincial governments have the principal responsibility for habitat conservation. With the aid of Ducks Unlimited Canada 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 \$3.0 million in Atlantic Canada in 1992.

In Newfoundland, provincial habitat conservation activities for migratory birds have focussed principally on the major seabird colonies, many of which are provincial ecological reserves. Wetland programs are just beginning with the stimulus of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and Ducks Unlimited agreements. A new Migratory Bird program is being implemented in Labrador with funds from the Labrador Development Agreement.

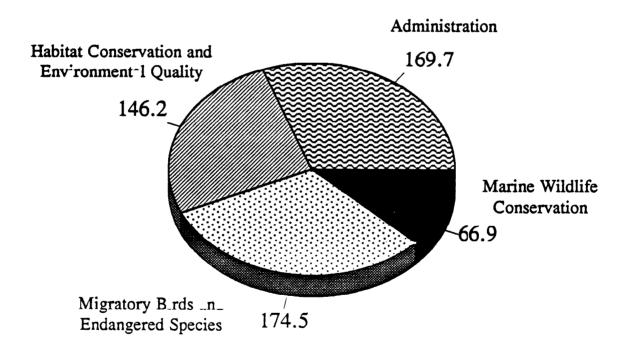
The principal endangered or threatened bird species in the region are the Peregrine Falcon, Eastern Harlequin Duck, Piping Plover, and Roseate Tern. Several other species are rare and warrant careful attention. Many species are believed to be well below optimal numbers, such as the Common Eider in Newfoundland,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

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 gulls. A wide array of those chemicals is in use, particularly in forestry and agricultural applications, 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, a problem being addressed in part through the Atlantic Coastal Action Program.

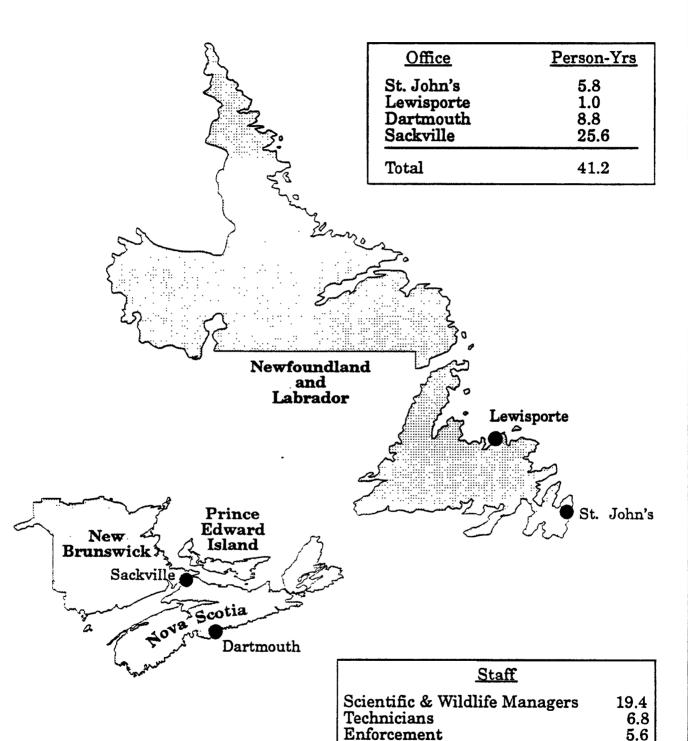
## A-Base Budget 1993-1994

## Operating and Maintenance (\$x1000)

This diagram shows the distribution of the Canadian Wildlife Service's internal operating and maintenance among the four divisions in the Atlantic Region



## CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE ATLANTIC REGION 1993-94



5.6

9.5

Management & Administration

#### Canadian Wildlife Service - Atlantic Region

#### Supporting Non A-Base Resources 1993-94

Project	Amount	Source
Duck Banding	28,100 33,650	U.S. Atlantic Flyway U.S. FWS
Black Duck Monitoring	138,300	BDJV, CWS-HQ/USFWS
Black Duck Research	93,405	BDJV, CWS-HQ/USFWS
Waterfowl Surveys - Labrador	40,000	ACOA
Breeding Bird Surveys	6,000	NWRC
Operation Clean Feather	200,000	COG
Marine Ecosystem Research	16,000 4,000	MUN & NSERC Nfld DOE
Colonial Seabirds	18,200 1,000	Polar Shelf MUN
Eider Enhancement - Hare Bay	190,000	DU, CEIC, EPF, EHJV
Pearl Island Tern Project	12,000	NS SEDA
Human Resource Dev - Labrador	20,000	ACOA
Wetlands Inventory - Labrador	65,000	ACOA
Toxic Contaminants in Waterfowl	31,000	NWRC-CEPA
Pesticides - Bt Studies (PEI) - Technique Development	12,000 28,000	WTF NWRC
Acid Rain Studies	53,000	NWRC-LRTAP
Habitat Research	32,000 13,000 18,000 7,800	DU BDJV EHJV NBDNRE
Habitat Protection	235,000	EHJV
Lowlevel Flying Impacts - Labrador	8,000	DND
Goose Surveys - Labrador - PEI	23,000 3,000	DND PEI Wildlife
Cape St. Mary's Interp Centre	800,000	Nfld Tourism Agt
Airport Bird Hazards	30,000	Transport Canada
Forestry Wildlife	25,000 20,000	Forestry Canada Fundy Model Forest

TOTAL APPROVED

2,204,455

#### CWS Atlantic Region

#### Issues and Initiatives (1992-93)

- \* Regulate the harvest of murres off Newfoundland to prevent population declines
- Approach: implement interim bag limits and shorter seasons to reduce annual harvest by 50%, beginning in 1993-94
  - amend Migratory Birds Convention to allow for long-term harvest regulations
  - continue education programs
  - direct enforcement to reduce selling of birds and ensuring compliance with interim restrictions
  - monitor population trends at Arctic breeding colonies
  - undertake research to support management strategies
- \* Ensure proper management of game bird species
- Approach: coordinate implementation of the Black Duck Joint Venture in Atlantic Canada
  - maintain improved breeding pair surveys of Black Ducks and other inland ducks
  - monitor population trends and distribution through surveys and banding programs
  - support population management research (e.g. distribution of species, impact of hunting mortality, etc.)
  - update and implement a cooperative Enforcement Strategy to address priority concerns in each province
  - modify hunting regulations as required
  - conduct and coordinate hunter awareness of lead shot poisoning and implement non-toxic shot hunting zones
  - implement provisions of provincial Waterfowl Management Plans
  - coordinate program to reintroduce eiders to Newfoundland in the context of the Newfoundland Eider Management Plan
  - implement specific policies to accommodate native harvesting rights and conservation programs
  - undertake conservation programs in Labrador
- \* 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
  - develop and maintain a comprehensive of wetlands and coastal habitats in the region
  - assist in implementation and monitoring of Atlantic Coastal Action Program

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

Approach:

- undertake research and surveys on seabird distribution and ecological interactions
- implement the Seabird Colony Registry in Atlantic Canada
- publish an Atlas showing distribution of seabirds at sea for use in responding to environmental emergencies
- 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 the Forest Wildlife program approved under the Green Plan, and integrate activities of other interests
- assist Forestry Canada in development of a regional forest-wildlife research program
- assist in implementation of the Fundy and Newfoundland Model Forests

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

Approach: -

- lead in the conservation of shorebirds in the Americas through chairmanship in the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (now called Wetlands for the Americas)
- represent Canada on International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Bureau
- lead in the development of an International Murre Conservation Strategy

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

Approach: -

- coordinate the implementation of regional recovery plans for Roseate Terns and the eastern population of the Harlequin Ducks, and Piping Plovers with all governments and interested NGOs
  - lead in the development of a recovery plan for the Eastern Cougar
- \* Implement programs to effectively monitor nongame bird species

Approach: -

- coordinate the Breeding Bird Survey in Atlantic Canada
- coordinate and expand the Maritime Shorebird Survey, and publish the <u>Calidris</u> newsletter for contributors
- identify the key habitats and species groups for which more information must be collected through monitoring and research programs
- develop and coordinate implementation of additional volunteer-based survey programs

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

Approach:

- designate the Portobello NWA in southeastern New Brunswick
- implement management plans for Newfoundland seabird sanctuaries with Parks Division of the Newfoundland Department of Tourism and Culture
- develop and implement management plans for key areas used by migrating shorebirds in the Southern Bight of Minas Basin and Shepody Bay of the Bay of Fundy
- manage a network of National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries in the region
- coordinate with provinces and other agencies the identification of important, critical and protected wildlife habitats
- develop and negotiate strategies to protect important and critical migratory bird habitats
- develop and maintain a communications network on protected areas in the region
- determine the habitat requirements of migratory bird species and develop improved management techniques
- Develop and implement inter-governmental agreements and other cooperative arrangements

- Approach: sign agreements with France and Denmark for management of migratory birds in St. Pierre et Miquelon, and Greenland
  - develop an Atlantic Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Network with Memorial University, Acadia University and the University of New Brunswick
  - implement the Newfoundland/Labrador Migratory Bird Habitat Protection Plan
  - develop Migratory Bird Habitat Conservation Plans for the Maritimes
- Monitor persistent toxic chemicals in the environment and provide research related to CEPA priority chemicals designated under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA)

Approach: -

- sample seabird levels of toxic chemicals in eggs every four years
- conduct spot checks and other surveys of potential trouble sites
- improve overall monitoring capability
- undertake and coordinate research on the biological effects of CEPA priority chemicals
- coordinate regional CEPA research by chairing the inter-departmental RAMSCO committee
- \* Minimize the negative impacts on wildlife from the use of pesticides to control forest and agricultural pests

experimentally monitor the impact on wildlife of pesticides proposed for Approach: registration

- provide advice to Agriculture Canada, the provinces, and industry, and participate in the assessment of fenitrothion
- study the impacts of Bt on aquatic ecosystems
- \* Assess the impact of acid rain on wildlife and Atlantic ecosystems
- <u>Approach</u>: participate in multi-disciplinary study on the Kejimkujik Watershed to provide information and effects on the biota
- \* Assist in the implementation of Sustainable Development Agreements in Atlantic Canada
- Approach: provide support to the Nova Scotia Sustainable Development Agreement
  - assist in implementing the Labrador Development Agreement
- \* Regulate the impact of expanding gull populations on human activities and other bird species
- Approach: implement the Atlantic Gull Management Plan setting out approaches to gull management
  - carefully monitor impacts of gulls on other species and human activities
  - undertake public consultations and communications
  - implement the Atlantic Tern Management Plan to ensure the conservation of Common and Arctic Terns in Atlantic Canada
- \* Minimize the negative impacts of major developments on wildlife and wildlife habitats
- <u>Approach</u>: provide information and advice to C&P, other government agencies and industry on potential impacts and mitigative measures of proposed developments
  - provide information on the distribution of important wildlife and habitats to potential developers and land managers
  - participate on regional impact assessment advisory committees and programs to review and assess proposed developments

#### CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE

#### 1992-93 Year-End Highlights

#### SPECIAL SPACES AND SPECIES

#### Migratory Bird Conservation

Enforcement staff continued to improve participation of cooperating agencies through the implementation of the provincial enforcement strategies and the development of agreements with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and Canada Coast Guard to assist with MBCA enforcement. An MOU was signed with the Canadian Parks Service on the sharing of reserves for wildlife-related enforcement.

The first non-toxic shot zones in Atlantic Canada were established in 1992, at Pisquid Pond in PEI, and Wallace Bay NWA in Nova Scotia. In cooperation with the provinces, a target of limiting all duck hunting in the Maritime provinces to non-toxic shot by 1997 was adopted in response to supporting data on the incidence of lead shot in waterfowl collected using a unique portable fluoroscope and traditional sampling techniques.

With the cooperation of DFO, CWS continued its investigations of the potential conflicts between seaducks and the rapidly developing aquaculture industry in Newfoundland, to provide a basis for developing strategies to reduce or eliminate those problems.

Agreement was reached with Memorial University, Acadia University and University of New Brunswick, to establish the Atlantic Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Network, with additional funding support from NSERC. The network will address research needs related to migratory birds and other wildlife in fields of pelagic ecology, forestry-wildlife impacts and coastal systems.

#### Wildlife Habitat Conservation

A list of priority migratory bird habitats was prepared for each province, and recommended site protection plans were developed, including extensions to National Wildlife Areas. Cooperative habitat management plans will be negotiated with each province in 1993.

The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) has continued to develop as a leading organization in international wildlife habitat conservation. Their board, with George Finney as chairman, approved a corporate reorganization and a name change to Wetlands of the Americas.

The launching of the Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (EHJV) as a fully operational program in 1990 necessitated a substantial commitment by this region to program management and coordination, including chairmanship of the steering committee. Many new programs and cooperative projects have arisen from the EHJV requiring substantial CWS regional involvement. To date the EHJV has contributed \$7.8M to the region which has been used to secure 23600 ha of habitat and enhance 6000 ha. The EHJV wetland research focused on enhancement techniques for managed areas.

CWS continued to assist the province of Newfoundland in the development of management plans for their ecological reserves which include significant seabird colonies.

#### Forest Wildlife Conservation

CWS played an important leadership role in the development of ecological research programs in the Maritime and Newfoundland Model Forests. Research on the impacts of forestry on the riparian zone has been initiated in New Brunswick.

#### Wildlife Regulation & Enforcement

Enforcement staff have continued to improve participation of cooperating agencies through the implementation of the provincial enforcement strategies, and the agreements with DFO and Canada Coast Guard to assist with MBCA enforcement. A new cooperative enforcement agreement was signed with Canadian Parks Service in March. Extra enforcement efforts in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland funded by CWS have resulted in large increases in convictions, and improved public awareness.

High local harvests of murres in southern Newfoundland lead to temporary closures of the hunt in March, for the second year in a row. The implementation of bag limits and shorter seasons was authorized for 1993-94 and a draft regulatory approach was developed to provide for a continued hunt that the effected thick-billed murre populations could sustain.

An electronic database to track enforcement actions was designed and implemented in the region and has been subsequently adopted by CWS as the basis for a national system.

The first non-toxic shot hunting zones were implemented in Nova Scotia and P.E.I. in 1992. Close cooperation with provincial officials and hunters has resulted in broad acceptance of this new regulation although compliance dropped off through the season. Agreement was reached by regional technical and management committees to develop plans to require non-toxic shot for all by 1997.

#### Special Spaces

Significant progress has been made towards the establishment of a regional Protected Areas Network linking land protection agencies and organizations. All regional protected areas have now been identified, described and added to the national protected areas database.

#### Endangered Species Conservation

Recovery plans were finalized and approved by RENEW for the Roseate Tern, and the endangered eastern population of the Harlequin Duck. Initial surveys were conducted to assess population levels of these species, classified as threatened and endangered, respectively. Support was provided by a volunteer based guardianship program to reduce the impact of human activity on sandy beaches where endangered Piping Plover were nesting.

#### International Wildlife Resources

Under the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), work continued towards involving more countries in shorebird conservation. A new Shorebird Reserve was dedicated in Peru. Joint research and conservation programs were planned with Surinam and Mexico, in support of WHSRN and other initiatives under the Latin American Program. A draft Migratory Bird Conservation agreement for cooperative research and conservation programs has been developed with St. Pierre et Miquelon and is now under review in France.

#### GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY

#### Air and Water Emissions

An integrated water and wildlife resource monitoring program was established, cooperatively with Inland Waters, Canadian Parks Service, Atmospheric Environment Service and other partners, at a site in Kejimkujik National Park, to assess the effects of climate change and acid precipitation on wildlife and its habitats.

#### CLEAN AIR, LAND AND WATER

#### **Toxics**

The CEPA Research and Monitoring Sub-Committee (RAMSCO) surveyed regional stakeholders for their interest and involvement in toxic chemicals research and monitoring. A report on Sources and Releases of Toxic Substances in the Atlantic Region was completed. A regional PAH data summary and review was produced. Criteria for a C&P Technical Report Series were developed.

#### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

#### Oil Spill Response

Operation Clean Feather was discontinued after two successful years, but cooperation with other agencies continued. Penalties on charges under the Canada Shipping Act have increased and fewer oil spills seemed to have occurred.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

#### Environmental Impacts of New Initiatives

Wildlife input was provided for the proposed Northumberland Strait Crossing Project, the New Brunswick end of which passes through the Cape Jourimain National Wildlife Area.

#### SOE Reporting

Efforts to publish the 1991 Atlantic Region SOE Report were again delayed, this time due to concerns by DFO. These were addressed and printing is now targetted for September 1992-93. Regional environmental monitoring and research programs were reviewed in 1992-3 to ensure a more integrated, ecologically oriented approach. Two regional SOE Fact Sheets were published. A workshop was held with partners to develop the Atlantic Maritime ecosystem monitoring and research program. The initial Ecological Science Centre for the Atlantic Maritime Ecozone was formally established at Kejimkujik National Park.

#### Integrated Ecosystem Research and Monitoring

A Regional Monitoring and Research Coordinating Committee (REMARCC) was established, involving C&P, Canadian Parks Service, and Atmospheric Environment Service and a regional Integrated Monitoring Business Plan was completed.

#### MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

#### Management and Administration Support

Construction of the new Canadian Wildlife Service Regional Headquarters took place at a site adjacent to the Sackville Waterfowl Park, with the design, construction methods and operation aimed to be environmentally friendly.

Restructuring and staffing of new positions resulted in several new programs being implemented in the region to address Green Plan priorities, including Wildlife Trade Enforcement, Newfoundland Habitat Conservation and Forest-Wildlife Research.

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