



HABITAT
CONSERVATION TRUST
FOUNDATION

HCTF Project Evaluation Workshop 2013

STEWARDSHIP

October 17-18, 2013
Richmond, BC

Summary Report

Introduction

The HCTF is committed to evaluate the outcomes of investments in its conservation projects. HCTF Evaluation workshops are one method used, and provide a format for project leaders to present their results for peer review.

To date, HCTF has held five project evaluation workshops; the most recent is the HCTF Stewardship Evaluation Workshop, held in Richmond, October 17-18, 2013. This report summarizes the workshop. (For further detail on the workshop design and objectives, please see [Workshop Methods](#) report on www.hctf.hctf.ca)

Stewardship Evaluation Workshop (2013) Participants

HCTF staff selected 10 projects and invited their project leaders to make presentations on their projects at a 2-day workshop. Of the 10 presentations, 1 was from the provincial government, and 9 were from non-government organizations (Table 1).

Table1. Presentations at the October 2013 Stewardship Evaluation Workshop

Organization	Presentor	Project Description
MOE	Purnima Govindarajulu	British Columbia Bat Habitat Conservation & Management (0-351) Half of all BC bat species are of conservation concern due to existing threats and new emerging threats such as White Nose Syndrome. This project will provide a series of resource sector-specific best-management practice (BMP) documents to proactively improve management of habitats to conserve bats.
Young Naturalists' Club of BC Society	Kristine Webber	Young Naturalists' Club of BC: Nature Clubs Project (0-398) The Young Naturalists' Club of BC's Nature Clubs Project encourages more green time and less screen time through a network of volunteer-led Nature Clubs and organized Explorer Days to help engage children and their families in outdoor activities and learning about the natural world.
Salt Spring Island Conservancy	Robin Annschild	Wildlife Habitat Conservation Projects on Salt Spring Island (1-490) The project will expedite the permanent conservation of up to 6 private land acquisition projects (totalling 362 ha) with particularly high ecosystem and wildlife habitat values on Salt Spring Island. Widespread publicity about successfully completed projects will motivate other landowners to protect their land.
Wetland Stewards for Clayoquot & Barkley Sounds	Barb Beasley	Conserving Amphibian Populations & Connecting Habitats Across Roads (1-497) This project is testing the effectiveness of a road underpass system and guiding barrier fences for five species of coastal amphibians. The system was designed and installed near a breeding "hotspot" for Red-legged Frogs on Vancouver Island. The effect of highway traffic on the survival rates and population dynamics of Red-legged Frogs will be assessed.

Organization	Presenter	Project Description
Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust	Christine Terpsma	Provision of Waterfowl & Raptor Habitat within Managed Grasslands on Lower Fraser River Farmland (2-349) Under this project over 1,200 ha of agricultural grassland habitat on the Fraser River delta will be enhanced on private or leased lands through land stewardship agreements with farmers thereby benefiting internationally significant concentrations of waterfowl and raptors in the area.
BCWF	Neil Fletcher	Wetlands Institute of BC (3-272) The Wetlands Institute workshop provides hands-on training to individuals and groups committed to wetland stewardship projects across the province. Following the Institute, participants are offered ongoing support to successfully complete their projects.
Biolinx Environmental Research Ltd.	Kristiina Ovaska	Community-based amphibian monitoring program in multi-use landscapes in south-central B.C. (3-313) A collaborative amphibian monitoring program will be developed among volunteer community members, landowners, and scientists. Important wetland habitats will be identified, and stewardship activities will be initiated to promote practices that facilitate coexistence in multi-use landscapes.
Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (on behalf of SOSCP)	Alyson Skinner	SOS Stewardship Program: delivering private land stewardship in the SOSCP (8-90) This project will build on the success of the past 17 years of the SOS Stewardship Program. We will focus on the Wildlife Habitat Stewards aspect of the SOS Stewardship Program, maintaining contact with and assisting landowners who have committed to conservation for wildlife on their property, and contacting new landowners based on the same premise.
Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Alliance	Bryn White	South Okanagan Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (8-329) A biodiversity conservation strategy will provide a plan for protecting the health and resiliency of important wildlife habitat areas within the South Okanagan and Similkameen and a strategy for decision-makers to work together to enhance and preserve the wildlife legacy of this region.
Regional District of Okanagan Similkameen (on behalf of SOSCP)	Bryn White	South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program (SOSCP) Habitat Conservation Delivery (8-349) Fish and wildlife habitat conservation and protection through a collaborative partnership model focused on implementation of the Regional Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, key local and regional government environmental planning initiatives and leveraging of resources within the South Okanagan Similkameen Region.

MOE – Ministry of Environment
BCWF – BC Wildlife Federation

Additional Participants:

HCTF Board Members:

Harvey Andrusak

Ken Ashley

Mike Green

Other:

Orville Dyer – Ecosystem Biologist, Penticton (FLNRO)

Liz Stanlake – Consultant

HCTF staff:

Brian Springinotic

Lynne Bonner

Jane Algard

Shannon West

Methods

Projects

Participants were required to make a 20-minute presentation on their projects, with emphasis on “What difference did this project make to fish, wildlife or habitat conservation in BC?” After the presentation and discussion, all participants had a chance to make written comments on an evaluation form, and rate the conservation outcomes as “significant”, somewhat significant” or “not sure”. From these responses, a conservation significance rating was developed for each project.

Additional Session

A special workshop session was held the second day to focus on the issues involved in evaluating and quantifying the social outcomes inherent in many Stewardship projects. Orville Dyer, Ecosystems Biologist, Penticton (FLNRO) provided a presentation on the importance of evaluating projects, illustrated with lessons learned throughout a career of wildlife management. Participants then discussed issues regarding the evaluation of Stewardship projects, and the challenges in reporting on social outcomes.

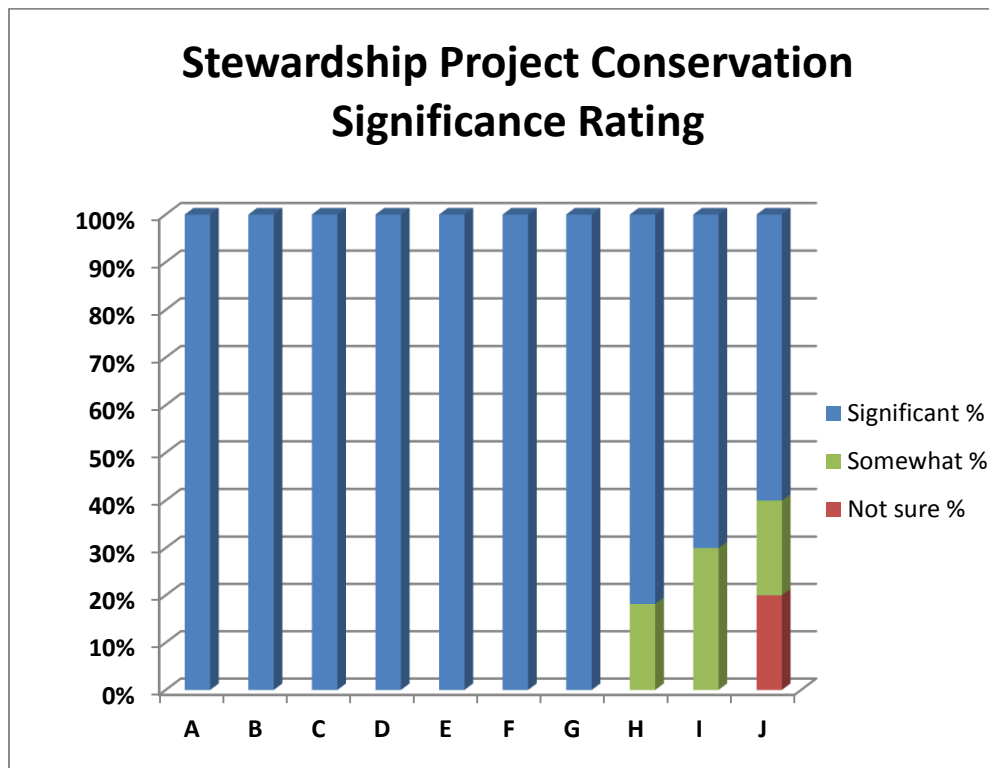
Results

Projects

Figure 1 shows the conservation significance rating for each of the projects presented at the October 2013 Workshop. The projects that were rated as “significantly” contributing were then grouped into high (80 - 100%), moderate (50 -79%) or low (0 - 49%) to provide an overall picture of how well these HCTF projects contributed to fish, wildlife and habitat conservation according to the expertise in this workshop.

All but two projects had a high rating.

Figure 1. Conservation significance rating of each of the 10 projects presented at the October 2013 HCTF Stewardship Evaluation Workshop



# Project	Significant	Somewhat	Not sure	Responses	Overall Rating
	%	%	%		
A	100%	0%	0%	11	High
B	100%	0%	0%	10	High
C	100%	0%	0%	10	High
D	100%	0%	0%	10	High
E	100%	0%	0%	11	High
F	100%	0%	0%	13	High
G	100%	0%	0%	12	High
H	82%	18%	0%	11	High
I	70%	30%	0%	10	Moderate
J	60%	20%	20%	10	Moderate

Data for Figure 1.

The evaluation comments collected for each project were collated. Comments on individual projects were later provided to the project leader only. The HCTF Board received comments for all projects.

Several attributes of outstanding projects included:

- Collaboration with diverse and often competing stake-holders ;
- Participation of multiple municipal governments;
- Use of local knowledge and relationships to create unique solutions for the benefit of conservation;
- Encouraging people, especially young people, to get outdoors and engaged in nature;
- Collection of baseline information to provide a foundation for future conservation.

Workshop

Feedback from the participants was very positive.

Benefits of the workshop included:

- Discussing conservation issues with HCTF staff and Board members in attendance.
- Sharing experience and expertise with other proponents.
- Examining the issues regarding the evaluation of Stewardship projects and reporting on social outcomes was timely and important.

Discussion and Conclusion

Projects

The projects presented at this workshop were all considered successful. The presentations were delivered well, and comments from the group were very positive and insightful. The proponents appreciated hearing difficulties as well as successes experienced by others. For long term projects, it was suggested that “seeing a history of success and barriers that were overcome & how they were overcome...would help others with a passion for stewardship”.

Workshop

This is the fifth HCTF Evaluation workshop. The workshop followed the same successful format established in the HCTF 2012 Fisheries Evaluation Workshop; both presenters and reviewers focused on the conservation benefits of the projects.

Recommendations from proponents

The workshop participants made a number of suggestions to HCTF:

- Consider including a reviewer on the Technical Review Committee with social marketing and social innovation expertise.
- Change the Terms of Reference of the Committee to reflect the values of public engagement and evaluative processes.
- Develop a language for measuring communications: i.e. regularity of contact, building critical relationships, diplomacy, and engagement.
- Clarify how proponents may incorporate evaluation into their project and project budgets.
- Post examples of well written proposals to serve as models for HCTF proponents.

Participants also made recommendations towards the development of HCTF stewardship evaluation and monitoring guidelines. A separate HCTF report will elaborate on these results and recommendations.

Recommendations from HCTF staff

Based on the results of this workshop, HCTF makes the following recommendations:

- Continue holding project evaluation workshops annually (1 per year), adhering to

the successful 1 ½ day workshop model.

- Develop guidelines for monitoring and evaluating HCTF stewardship projects, and projects in other categories with strong stewardship elements.