Carolinian
Canada Coalition
Collaborating for a Healthy Ecoregion

Annual Report  2007 - 2008

May 2008
Fiscal Year: April 1, 2007 – March 31, 2008
## Carolinian Canada Coalition

### Annual Report 2007-2008

May 2008

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A Landmark Year

Dr. Gordon Nelson, Chair

This has been a landmark year for Carolinian Canada Coalition: We launched a five year strategic plan, held our first elections and published the first major book about the Carolinian Life Zone. It is an exciting time for the Coalition as we “follow our dream” of how we can make a significant difference in our environment by working together in a planned and thoughtful manner.

The goals of the Coalition are necessarily ambitious to meet growing landscape challenges. Our five year plan is well into implementation, thanks to hundreds of partner groups and individuals, who share a vision for healthy landscapes through coordinated action targeted at priority issues and sites. The Coalition board is reorganizing and formalizing its role in building a strong network.

As we discussed at our climate change forum in October, the Carolinian Life Zone is more than just a collection of species and habitats. It is a survival tool for our communities as we enter into an unknown future. By greening our landscape, we are improving our chances for a good quality of life for wild and human communities in southwestern Ontario and beyond.

At the heart of the Coalition is a diverse crowd of groups and individuals with a shared passion for the unique natural heritage of southwestern Ontario. With our increased knowledge and understanding of conservation and ecosystem functions, the members of the Coalition have a collective opportunity, now to make a significant positive impact on our natural landscape to benefit biodiversity, our communities and ourselves.

Tree Planting with Vision

Michelle Kanter, Executive Director

Greening the landscape of southwestern Ontario means more than digging a hole to plant a tree. As we discovered through our woodland recovery program, it matters how, who, what, where, when and why each habitat is restored. Increasingly, behind each picture of a youth planting a tree in the local newspaper, there are many stories of where the seed was collected, how it was grown, who guided the planting, what site was chosen, who planted it and what they learned, what genetics it sustains, what rare species it supports, which fish benefit from water it filters, how much carbon it will absorb, who will monitor it, what was planted beside it, and how everyone worked together to make it happen, appropriately and with vision for long-term landscape and biodiversity needs.

The success of the Coalition is built on the vision of its partners, supporters, volunteers, members and consultants. The Ontario Trillium Foundation has a vision for building the capacity of our community. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources has a vision for ecosystem recovery. Our local partners have a vision of engaging a broad community. Our board has a vision to create a strong hub for the conservation community of southwestern Ontario. Our consultants have a vision for raising conservation awareness and action. Our members have a vision for a greener landscape. Our youth have a vision for a healthy future.

It is where our visions intersect, that we can “plant the right tree” and make conservation happen with great impact. The vital role of the Coalition in networking between diverse visions is sometimes hard to define. When it is successful, unique conservation solutions start to grow.

The many people working within the Coalition, listed in these pages, have created a fertile space for conservation with vision and impact. I would like to thank our consultants, volunteers and supporters who put their time, energy, skills, commitment and vision into making the Coalition’s programs thrive and grow. Their care for southwestern Ontario, the Coalition and “planting the right tree” helps us all make a difference.
Collaborating for a Healthy Ecoregion
Greening the Future in Southwestern Ontario
Carolinian Canada Coalition Strategic Plan 2007 – 2012

With support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Coalition launched its five year strategic plan in fall 2007. It met with an extremely positive response. Lead projects for the Coalition’s strategic plan quickly became established, thanks to strong interest and support from Coalition partners, members and stakeholders that see strong links to their own goals.

Building A Viable Coalition
Evolving Mandate

The Coalition applied for charitable status in 2006. The Charities Directorate confirmed the Coalition’s activities as charitable in 2008 but requested a change in the Coalition’s objects. The new wording is closely aligned with the original objects that will continue to provide the basis of the vision for the Coalition. With the ratification of the new objects at our May AGM, charitable status is expected by mid-2008.

The proposed new objects are:

1. To preserve, protect and restore the flora and fauna of the Carolinian Life Zone in Southwestern Ontario, by organizing and participating in environmental projects.

2. To conduct research relating to environmental issues affecting the Carolinian Life Zone in Southwestern Ontario and to disseminate the results of such research to the public.

3. To educate and increase the public’s understanding of the importance of conserving the natural features of the Carolinian Life Zone in Southwestern Ontario by developing and offering educational materials and programs.
A Year of Growth

Revenue in 2007-08 almost doubled from the previous year with a large grant halfway through the year for the woodland recovery program. Consultant Don Gordon, completed a comprehensive fundraising plan for the organization in 2007. As an initial step in this plan, the board made a strong effort to attract sponsorship from the diverse range of groups that make up the Coalition itself. This resulted in increased group and government support, as well as, unrestricted funds, a step towards the long-term goal for a more sustainable funding base. The bulk of the funding was tied to the Coalition’s three strategic program areas, as shown below.

REVENUE 2007-8 ($290,875)

Does not include $30,645 brought forward from previous fiscal

EXPENSES 2007-8

FUNDRAISING GOAL for diversified sources

Lambton Wildlife Incorporated (LWI) again generously partnered with the Coalition on a number of projects to manage charitable donations in 2007-08. Thank-you LWI!

CCC Virtual Office

The Coalition Virtual Office includes people working across the zone from Toronto to Sarnia on multiple projects. This way we operate closely and efficiently with stakeholders. A small office is maintained in London at Grosvenor Lodge. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources continues to generously provide in-kind office needs.

General

Michelle Kanter - Executive Director
Don Gordon - Fundraising Plan
Nathan Garber - Organizational Development

Projects

Nikki May – Big Picture Outreach Coordinator
Virginia Lambdin – Forum, Student Research Prgm
Lorraine Johnson - Editor
Karen May – Communications Network
Jarmo Jalava, Peggy Mansur – Woodland Recovery
Nancy Robinson – Woodland Network
First Election

The Coalition’s first election as an incorporated organization was held October 26, 2007 installing a slate of 13 directors including 13 groups and 1 individual with staggered terms. The AGM was moved from fall to spring in 2008, resulting in a ‘short’ first year for Directors. Previous to this election, most of the elected directors made up an interim board to manage the Coalition through the first year of incorporation.

While each Director acts as an individual regarding trusteeship of the Coalition, each group representative is endorsed by their sponsoring group. Support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation provided for a series of Board workshops to establish the role of the board in the management of the freshly incorporated Coalition.

The new directors very quickly made a significant contribution to the Coalition through 100% participation in developing and implementing our strategic and fundraising plans.

Networking for Sustainability & Stewardship

Exploring the Nature of Climate Change

October 26, 2007

Will natural landscapes help us survive climate change in southwestern Ontario? That was the question posed at the annual forum in October, Exploring the Nature of Climate Change, at Stoneridge Inn in London, Ontario. Close to 100 experts from the Environment Commissioner of Ontario’s Office, Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction, Forest Gene Conservation Association, Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability and others focused on southwestern Ontario to identify the building blocks of a Climate Change Strategy for the natural landscapes of this region.

Virginia Lambdin coordinated the event and developed the proceedings with the assistance of an active forum committee that organized four sessions on Research, Stewardship, Planning & Policy and Community Action & Education. Participants gave the event high marks for content, organization, quality of speakers, networking opportunities and professional development.

This event was generously supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Parks Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Nature, Ontario Stewardship, Trees Ontario, Bird Studies Canada, Lambton Wildlife Inc., Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.
Proceedings are posted on the Coalition’s website
at www.carolinian.org.
Big Picture Neighbours

The Carolinian Canada Coalition hub connects our conservation community in southwestern Ontario through a variety of media: on-line, in-hand and from one back yard to the next.

The Big Picture Network is a new on-line resource highlighting conservation actions across Carolinian Canada and providing a ‘virtual stewardship demonstration tour’. It showcases the phenomenal amount of collective work being carried out.

Promoting a Researched Understanding

Woodland Recovery: Species at Risk & Biodiversity Hotspots

This was a year of growth for the Carolinian Woodland Recovery Strategy, co-chaired by the Coalition and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). With the completion of the Phase I Ecosystem Strategy by Jarmo Jalava, a Phase II Community Strategy (CWRSII) was initiated to link ecosystem with species recovery on the ground.

The Big Picture Network is a new on-line resource highlighting conservation actions across Carolinian Canada and providing a ‘virtual stewardship demonstration tour’. It showcases the phenomenal amount of collective work being carried out.

Edited by Lorraine Johnson, 6,000 copies of Carolinian Canada News played an important role in reaching both traditional and new audiences. New design and content reflected the increasing diversity of conservation action across the zone, putting a human face on the science of conservation.

Webmaster Karen May developed enhanced on-line resources for the conservation in the region. The Carolinian Canada Eco-News provides a monthly snapshot of what is happening in the Big Picture across many sectors. With over 40,000 hits annually, the CCC website is an important resource to promote our collective conservation message.

Promoting a Researched Understanding

Woodland Recovery: Species at Risk & Biodiversity Hotspots

This was a year of growth for the Carolinian Woodland Recovery Strategy, co-chaired by the Coalition and the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). With the completion of the Phase I Ecosystem Strategy by Jarmo Jalava, a Phase II Community Strategy (CWRSII) was initiated to link ecosystem with species recovery on the ground.

The new Ontario Species at Risk Stewardship Fund provided support to launch CWRSII – an innovative ecosystem model for species and habitat recovery on working landscapes. By collaborating at several scales, coordinated action planning for multiple species at risk is addressed.

The Carolinian Woodlands Recovery Team endorsed a Conservation Action Planning approach for the hotspot community areas, based on a successful US model. The team was expanded to include implementation partners.

A draft community strategy and workbook were prepared by Jarmo Jalava and Peggy Mansur. Partnerships were initiated with the OMNR Stewardship Tracking System, The Nature Conservancy (US), Ausable Bayfield and

Ecoregion

- A Biodiversity Hotspot Analysis by the Nature Conservancy of Canada identified high priority community areas by bringing together terrestrial and aquatic data with support from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Environment Canada.

Community

- The Carolinian Woodlands Recovery Team endorsed a Conservation Action Planning approach for the hotspot community areas, based on a successful US model. The team was expanded to include implementation partners.

- A draft community strategy and workbook were prepared by Jarmo Jalava and Peggy Mansur. Partnerships were initiated with the OMNR Stewardship Tracking System, The Nature Conservancy (US), Ausable Bayfield and

- A Review of protected areas in Carolinian Canada was carried out by Tiffany Smith in partnership with the University of Waterloo to identify key players and tools for the community strategy.

- The Carolinian Woodland Network was launched at a meeting coordinated by Nancy Robinson to inform, engage and guide local groups, businesses and municipalities in woodland recovery.

- A Wanted Alive poster series was produced for several counties to increase participation in and awareness of species at risk conservation.

Property

- A pilot “Caring for Nature” landowner workshop was organized by Bernt Solymár in Essex County. The Essex County Stewardship Network, Tallgrass Ontario, The Naturalized Habitat Network, the Essex Region CA, Sanson Estate Winery and the University of Guelph collaborated to provide landowners with a hands-on and informative experience.

- Over 90% of participants requested further assistance for species at risk stewardship. Landowners attending the workshop will use knowledge, assistance and resources provided to plan habitat enhancement projects on over 100 hectares of land.
Carolinian Canada Student Research Program

The Carolinian Canada Student Research Program was launched in partnership with the University of Waterloo, Faculty of Environmental Studies Co-op Program. Aimed at linking on-ground stewardship needs to university research and student work experience, the program provides matching funding for student researchers.

Lauren Cymbaly was hired by rare Charitable Research Reserve in the summer and winter terms to research over 60 invasive alien plant species and develop a strategy for the Reserve.

Alex Hood was hired by the Nature Conservancy of Canada in the winter term to research alvar and savannah restoration in the Western Lake Erie Islands.

The first year of this program was a great success with a good response from employers and students. The program will be restructured to increase hiring opportunities for the 3 remaining positions.

Catalyzing Effective Action: Capacity-Building Outreach

Caring for Nature Factsheets

With support from Environment Canada’s EcoAction Community Funding Program, the Landowner Links Big Picture Outreach project expanded across rural Carolinian Canada this year. Stakeholder networks and meetings in each county and watershed developed shared messages for habitat and rare species conservation customized to local areas.

Using a social marketing approach to highlight local champions, leading landowners and innovative communities, the Caring for Nature factsheets are being proudly promoted by a wide range of sectors including agriculture, municipal, stewardship, tourism and recreation, resulting in peer-to-peer encouragement for habitat stewardship.

Nikki May is coordinating this project with the assistance of Karen May and a lengthy list of local partners to reach every rural landowner in Carolinian Canada. To date, over 50,000 factsheets have been distributed in Chatham-Kent, Lambton, Essex, Elgin and Halton. Factsheets are in development for Norfolk, Middlesex, Brant, Oxford, Haldimand, Niagara and Hamilton.

Media launches celebrate local stewardship action by landowners and community presentations reinforce the shared message of conservation. A key aspect of this program is linking landowners to habitat partners.

Big Picture Partnerships

Carolinian Canada Coalition participated on Ontario’s Natural Spaces Leadership Alliance to advise the Minister of Natural Resources on developing a strong greenspace program for Southern Ontario. The group put together a draft report to outline priorities, possible policies, partnerships, programs and activities related to natural heritage systems development, protection and restoration in Southern Ontario. The Coalition also works with local partners to provide input into municipal strategies.

The Big Picture Roadshow provides opportunities to seed and grow partnerships with a wide variety of sectors to develop innovative solutions to broad-based landscape challenges. Coalitions volunteers and consultants participated in these and other initiatives:

- Natural Spaces Leadership Alliance
- Stewardship Network of Ontario
- Parks Research Forum of Ontario
- Invasive Species Strategy for Ontario
- Endangered Species Act consultation
- The Ontario Aggregate Resources Corporation
- SOLRIS mapping workshop
- David Suzuki Foundation
- Friends of Old Ausable
- Woodstock Field Naturalists
- Windsor Horticultural Society
- Thames Heritage River Forum
- Middlesex Woodland Advisory Committee
This became a landmark year for the Carolinian Canada Coalition when the first major book about the region was published by Lorimer Publishing in fall 2007. A monumental task and labour of love for editor Lorraine Johnson and over 60 contributors, this book will inspire, encourage and support the work of conserving this unique landscape.

The publishing of the book is only the first step in promoting its message. Volunteer contributors participated in signings in major bookstores throughout the region. Lorraine, CCC board and staff continue to promote the book in presentations across the zone.

The Coalition continued this year to place bronze heritage plaques at our 38 Signature Sites through our Community Marking Project supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. This project has built local pride in important natural areas and provided a ‘good news’ focus for local municipalities and the conservation community.

On Friday, April 6th plaques recognizing Grimsby-Winona Escarpment and Beamer Valley, and the Willoughby Clay Plain were unveiled in partnership with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, recognizing hundreds of private landowners who protect and steward these natural gems covering over 600 hectares.

On sad note, the Rouge Valley bronze plaque was stolen. Rouge Park replaced it with a similar looking plaque made of other material.

On Friday, October 26th, Carolinian Canada recognized the hard work and dedication of the 2007 conservation award nominees and recipients. From Lambton to Essex and as far east as Mississauga, these caring people have been quietly dedicating most of their spare time, and in some cases their careers, to the conservation and restoration of natural habitat and rare species. The Carolinian Canada Awards are one small way of recognizing and promoting their work. These conservation heroes have made their marks in many different ways. Their accomplishments have ranged from critical land purchases and significant habitat protection to comprehensive plants inventories, public education and political advocacy.

**Lifetime Achievement**

Peter Banks

**Individual**

Dorothy and John Tiedje

Gloria McGinn-McTier

**Youth**

Stephanie Crocker
Carolinian Canada Supporters

Endless volunteer hours, skilled expertise and dedicated funding are the hallmarks of our contributors. With their passion, conservation in southwestern Ontario is taking a step forward.

April 1, 2007 - March 31, 2008 (cash)

**Ecoregion Guardian ( $50,000+)**
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

**Big Picture Protectors ( $10,000+)**
- Environment Canada / EcoAction Community Funding Program
- TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

**Landscape Benefactors ( $1,000+)**
- Environment Canada / Canadian Wildlife Service / Parks Canada
- Essex County Stewardship Network
- Municipality of Halton
- Shell Environmental Fund
- Dr. Gordon Nelson
- Ontario Power Generation
- Tallgrass Ontario
- Hamilton Naturalists Club

**Ecosystem Stewards ( $500+)**
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- Peter Banks
- OMNR Ontario Stewardship
- Ontario Nature

**Unique Nature Supporters ( $100+)**
- Doris Kanter
- Nikki May
- Lambton Wildlife Incorporated
- Ontario Professional Planners Institute
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Trees Ontario
- Bird Studies Canada
- Craig Campbell
- Peter Carson

**Donors**

The Carolinian Canada board showed strong leadership in supporting core programs such as the forum. They attracted other contributors, including new allies and long-standing friends of the Coalition, many supporting more than one project. All share a vision for enhanced natural heritage in southwestern Ontario.

**Coalition Members**

The Coalition’s strength lies in its diverse membership. In 2007-08, the Coalition included:

- Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority
- Bird Studies Canada
- Conservation Ontario
- Forest Gene Conservation Association / OMNR
- Greater Windsor Horticultural Society
- Hamilton Naturalists Club
- Ian Seddon Planning Services
- Lambton Wildlife Inc.
- Ontario Federation of Agriculture
- Ontario Forestry Association
- Ontario Stewardship Society for Ecological Restoration-Ontario
- St. Clair Region Conservation Authority
- The McIlwraith Field Naturalists
- University of Waterloo
- Upper Thames River C. A.
- Woodstock Field Naturalists Club

- Peter & Joan Banks
- Kyle Billey
- Olivia Burdett-Coutts
- Peter Carson
- Alice Casselman
- Eva Chaplin
- Tom Chatterton
- James Duncan
- Selena Flood
- Don Gordon
- Doris Kanter
- Michelle Kanter / Robinson
- Darla Kosciniski
- Virginia Lambdin
- Fred Lex
- William J. Lyons
- Nikki May
- Glenn McKelvey
- David N. Morris
- Gordon Nelson
- John D. Nolan
- Marjorie Payne
- Scott Peck
- Alan Robinson
- Walter Sayers
- Dean Sheppard
- Shauna Solomon
- Catherine St. James
- Christie Stewart
- Andrew Stewart
- Ric Symmes
- Scott Teasell
- Greg Thorn
- David Tilsford
- Doug True
- Kari Van Allen
- Dave & Winifred Wake
- Kyle Woolley
- Sonya & Ron Wu-Winter
- Michelle Zurbrigg
**Volunteers & In-kind**

Close to 250 volunteers donated their time and talents to the work of the Coalition this past fiscal year, representing over $60,000 of skilled and professional labour. The Coalition was built on the spirit of collaboration and remains effective due to the generous nature of our volunteers and partners. Thank-you to all.

Some Coalition partners and in-kind contributors that donated generously with time and talents:

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<td>Other projects</td>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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| Nature Conservancy of Canada | David Morris |
| Niagra Falls Nature Club | Dawn Bazely |
| Niagara Parks Commission | Deborah Melsger |
| Niagara Peninsula CA | Dena Lewis |
| Niagara Restoration Council | Don Gordon |
| Niagra South Fed. of Agriculture | Don Lafontaine |
| Niagra Woodlot Association | Don MacKenzie |
| Norfolk Field Naturalists | Don Sutherland |
| Norfolk Stewardship Council | Donald Kirk |
| Northwest Gateway Community Group | Doris Kanter |
| Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources | Dorothy Tiedje |
| Ontario Power Generation | Doug van Hemessen |
| ON Soil & Crop Improvement | Dr. A. L. Martel |
| Asin Halton | Ed Czerwinski |
| Ontario Stewardship Tracking System | Ed Wolting |
| Point Pelee National Park | Ellen Schwarzel |
| Rouge Park | Gerry Clements |
| Royal Botanical Gardens | Gerry Waldron |
| Rural Lambton Stewardship Network | Gordon McBean |
| Sanson Estate Winery | Gregor Beck |
| Six Nations Eco-Centre | Heather Arnold |
| St. Clair National Wildlife Area | Heather Webb |
| St. Clair Region Conservation Authority | Ian Carmichael |
| Tailgrass Ontario | Jane Bowles |
| Thames Talbot Land Trust | Janice Smith |
| The Naturalized Habitat Network of Essex | Jim Pynn |
| University of Guelph | Jo-Anne Rzadki |
| University of Waterloo | John Ambrose |
| University of Western Ontario | John & Jo-Anne Twinem |
| Upper Thames River CA | John Haggeman |
| AI Woodhouse | John Schwindt |
| Alan Dextrose | Jon McCracken |

& others

Ausable Bayfield CA
Brant Federation of Agriculture
Brant Field Naturalists’ Club
Brant Resource Stewardship Network
Bruce Trail Conservancy
Canada South Land Trust
Catfish Creek CA
City of Burlington
City of Hamilton
City of London
City of Windsor
Conservation Halton
Conservation Ontario
County of Brant
Credit Valley CA
David Suzuki Foundation
Dorchester Mill Pond Committee
Earth Tramper Consulting Inc.
Elgin Stewardship Council
Environmental Farm Plan
Essex County Federation of Agriculture
Essex Region Conservation Authority
Essex Stewardship Network
Friends of the Coves Subwatershed Inc.
Grand River Conservation Authority
Haldimand Stewardship Council
Halton Federation of Agriculture
Halton-Peel Woodland & Wildlife Stewardship
Hamilton Conservation Authority
Hamilton Halton Watershed Stewardship Pgm.
Hamilton Naturalists Club
Hamilton-Wentworth Fed. of Agriculture
Hamilton-Wentworth Stewardship Council
Hapav Inc
Kettle Creek Conservation Authority
Land Care Niagara
Long Point Region Conservation Authority
Lower Thames Valley CA
McIlwraith Field Naturalists
Middlesex 4H
The Cider Keg
Middlesex Stewardship Council
Municipality of Halton

Volunteers & In-kind contributors

Julie Rosenthal
Dr. Paul Stamets
Kara Vlasman
Kate Hayes
Kale Monk
Ken Elliott
Kevin Kavanagh
Larry Lamb
Linda Mortsch
Lorraine Johnson
Mary Gartshore
Matthew Child
Michael J. Oldham
Michael Patrikeev
Nick Mandrak
Patricia Rhodes
Paul Armstrong
Paul General
Paul O’Hara
Paul Pratt
Peter Carson
Peta Uhlig
Rachel Piotkin
Ric Symmes
Robert Tremain
Ron Caster
Ron Gould
Ron Ridout
Ron Tasker
Sandy Dobbny
Scott Gillingwater
Shawn Stanton
Silvia Strobel
Steve Hounsell
Steven Price
Tim Marchand
Todd Morris
Tom Beechey
Vicki McKay
Wayel Bakwasy
Will Wilson
William DeYoung

& others
Looking Forward

Upcoming Coalition initiatives for 2008-09:
- October 24 – 25, 2008 Conference: Engaging Passion & Partnerships to Protect the Land We Love
- 2nd Carolinian Woodland Recovery Update (Oct 23, 2008)
- Woodland Recovery Conservation Action Planning Pilot Projects
- Woodland Recovery Restoration Guidelines
- Carolinian Canada Youth Helping Species at Risk
- Caring for Nature Factsheet Launches in Norfolk, Middlesex, Brant, Oxford, Hamilton, Haldimand, Niagara

Greening the Future of southwestern Ontario

Stretching from Toronto to Windsor, the Carolinian Life Zone of southwestern Ontario is among North America’s most vibrant natural regions and productive working landscapes. With more wild and rare species than most other places in Canada, it ranks as a true national treasure. The non-profit Carolinian Canada Coalition connects diverse groups, both public and private, with a strong landowner movement to cooperatively steward the region’s unique habitat network, green infrastructure to support thriving wild and human communities in harmony for generations.

Explore Carolinian Canada at www.carolinian.org

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