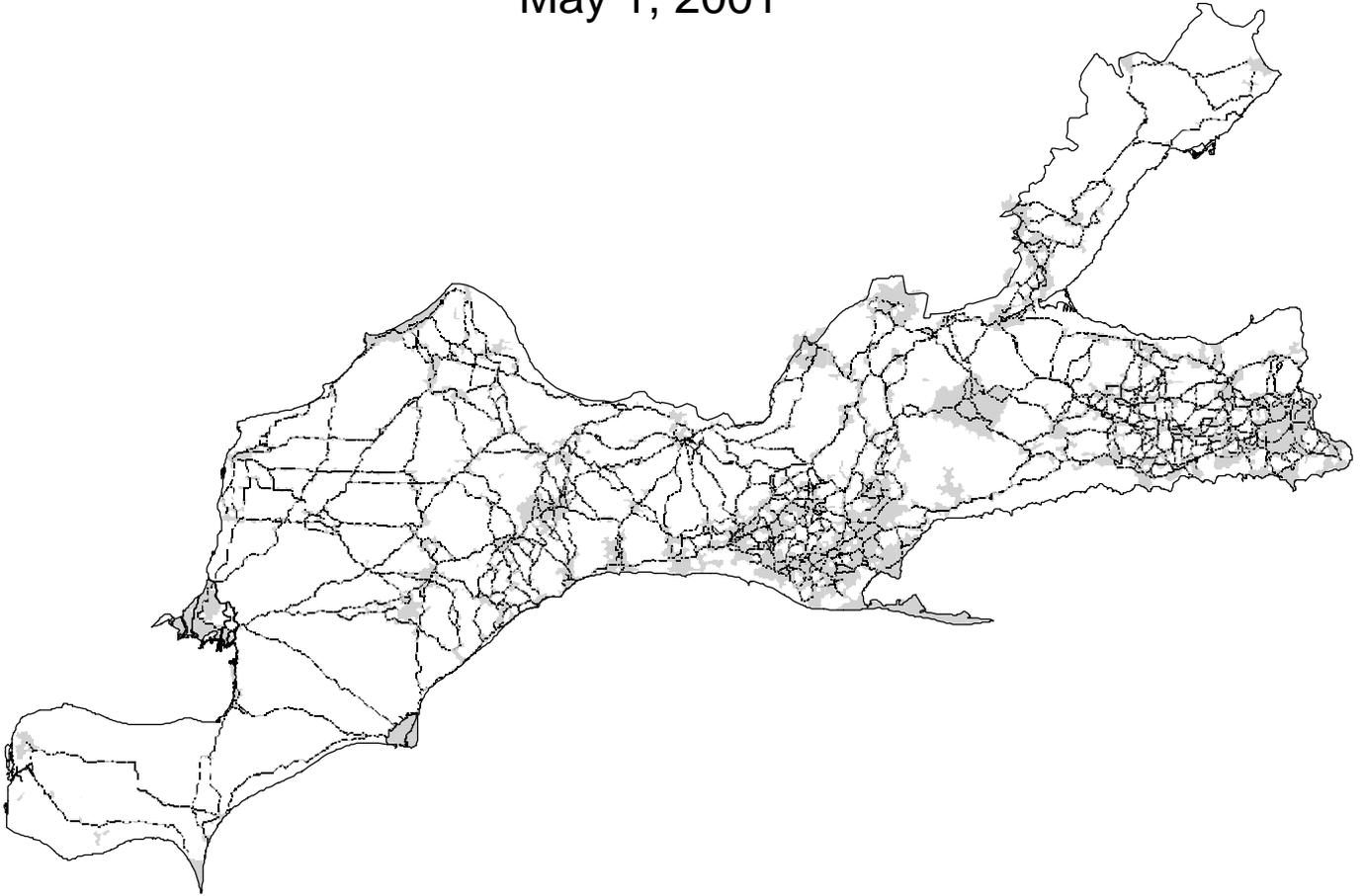


Proceedings of  
**Natural Heritage Planning Conference**

held at King's College, London, Ontario  
May 1, 2001



*Carolinian Canada*





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*Carolinian Canada*

659 Exeter Road, London, Ontario, N6E 1L3  
Phone: (519)873-4631 Fax: (519)873-4645  
info@carolinian.org www.carolinian.org



# Our Sponsors

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# Preface

This conference provided many valuable and stimulating ideas that contribute to successful planning for a viable and sustainable natural heritage system. These proceedings will remind conference participants of those ideas and also will extend the collective wisdom from the day to others who can make use of this transcription.

I extend my thanks to Don Gordon, the Program Co-ordinator for Carolinian Canada. Don did the essential startup work of engaging the support of Ministry of Natural Resources and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing. As well, Don provided effective guidance and encouragement to make this event and these proceedings happen.

The panelists and workshop facilitators guided us through the day with their expertise. Evidence of the high calibre of that expertise is found in the notes presented at the plenary and which are presented herein.

On the technical side, I extend thanks and appreciation to Tom Jory and his staff at King's College who provided tape recordings of sufficient quality for transcription and to Mike Sukava for the dubbing. A very special acknowledgement is owed to Kellie Ross for her transcription of the tape recordings. Transcription of voices speaking at some distance from the microphone muffled by the sounds of others in the room is a challenge that deserves recognition.

I hope that you will be able to use this book as a reference and source for good ideas to assist you and your municipality to maintain and promote a functional natural heritage system implemented by policy and sustained by a community that values it.

*- Bill DeYoung*

**Natural Heritage Planning Conference**  
Policy, Implementation and Monitoring

**1 May 2001**  
**King's College, London, Ontario**

**Agenda**

8:30 to 9:00 **Registration and Display Booths**

9:00 to 9:30 **Welcome and Introductions**

**Overview of the Conference Plan and Goal**

**Bill DeYoung**, Event Chair

**Harold Usher**, Councillor, City of London

**Don Gordon**, Program Co-ordinator, Carolinian Canada

9:30 to 10:15 **Round Robin Reports: What's happening in Carolinian Canada**

10:15 to 10:30 *Refreshment Break*

10:30 to 11:15 **Technical Manual on Natural Heritage Planning**

**Brian Potter**, Ministry of Natural Resources, Peterborough

11:15 to 12:00 **Panel of Experts in Policy, Implementation, Monitoring**

**Case Study: Development application adjacent to Natural Heritage System**

- **William Pol**, Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing

- **Gary Epp**, EarthTech (Canada) Ltd., Kitchener

- **Ken Ursic**, Dougan and Associates, Guelph

12:00 to 1:15 *Luncheon and Fresh Air*

1:15 to 2:45 **Workshops: Policy, Implementation, Monitoring sessions on the Case Study**

2:45 to 3:00 *Refreshment Break*

3:00 to 4:00 **Plenary: Synopsis of Policy, Implementation and Monitoring Workshops**  
**What lessons and tools do we take from the day**

# Introduction

## Purpose of the Conference

*Bill:* Welcome to everyone, it is time to begin today's conference on Natural Heritage Planning.

You all have your own reasons for being here. My poll of planning practitioners reveals that less than two-thirds of municipalities in southwestern Ontario has completed a sub-watershed study; that less than two-thirds have policies in their Official Plan which pertain to the natural heritage system; and, that less than two-thirds have guidance documents for the preparation and evaluation of environmental impact studies. Also, the poll reveals that fewer than two-thirds of consultants and municipal staff routinely make reference to the Natural Heritage Reference Manual. This conference desires to assist you in closing those gaps in compliance with Provincial Policy and to help you understand how you can make use of the planning and evaluation tools that are available.

First, I would like to extend a welcome on behalf of Gerald Killan of King's College. Gerald Killan is the Principal of King's College and he asked me to express his welcome to you and his support for this conference. He is active in Parks Canada and the Thames River Heritage Designation Project. He has generously made the facilities of King's College available to us once again.

Next, I call upon Councillor Harold Usher of the City of London to bring greetings from the City and Mayor DiCicco.

*- Bill DeYoung*



# Welcome at this very moment

**Harold Usher, Councillor  
on behalf of the Mayor of the City of London**

Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

It is a great pleasure for me to be here. It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to this auspicious, thought provoking, essential and downright wise conference. I believe those words very much so. You know much more about the subject than I do. I'm just learning a little bit about it.

On behalf of our Major Anne-Marie DeCicco, our Council, and the residents of London, I bid you a great big welcome and a million congratulations and thanks to the organization and to you. A special welcome to those of you who are not from London itself and who have traveled from other cities to be here today. My colleague Councillor Joni Baechler couldn't be here because at this very moment she is flying above the skies observing what London looks like. I expect that she will have a lot to say about that later on.

It seems to me that you are here because you recognize the importance of natural heritage: our wetlands, our woodlands, rivers, streams and the creatures, plants and animals that inhabit them. As urbanization spreads across the land, we are coming to understand more and more about the importance of protecting and preserving nature heritage for our children and our children's children, and for the natural heritage itself.

*sow a thought and you  
reap an act...sow an act  
and you reap a habit...sow  
a habit and you reap a  
character...sow a  
character and you reap a  
destiny*

Any time we can learn more about it, we learn more for the benefit of all. Zig Ziglar has said you sow a thought and you reap an act. You sow an act and you reap a habit. You sow a habit and you reap a character. You sow a character and you reap a destiny. I urge you to continue sowing those thoughts and then they become habits and then they become character and ultimately they will save the world. For me, I work on the premise that if you can save one life through your efforts, you might be able to save the world.

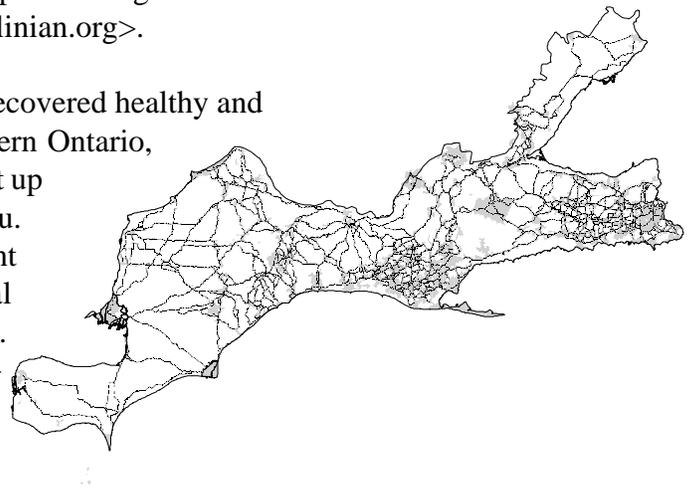
*- Harold Usher*

# A Thousand Cuts

Don Gordon, Carolinian Canada

Good morning, thanks for coming. I'm glad to see a lot of familiar faces and also glad to see many new ones too. This is the third conference on planning issues that Carolinian Canada has hosted. The first, in 1998, introduced a model strategy for community-driven management of Dorchester Swamp. The Dorchester Swamp is a Carolinian Canada site and the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority took on a community-based approach to the Natural Heritage Planning. A display copy of the report is out by our display in the foyer for you to look at. Let me know if you wish your own copy. Last year, many of you were here for the conference on Natural Heritage Buffers. The proceedings of that conference are available at our website <[www.carolinian.org](http://www.carolinian.org)>.

Carolinian Canada has developed a vision of a recovered healthy and sustainable natural heritage system for South Western Ontario, which we call the Big Picture. We have a display set up and materials available for you to take away with you. For those of you who are in a planning environment where you have the equipment, we have a digital version available in an ArcView format on request. Just send me an eMail <[dgordon@carolinian.org](mailto:dgordon@carolinian.org)> and we'll send you a diskette of the maps so that you can have a closer look and make use of it in your planning.



The Big Picture flows from a realization that so much of the natural heritage had been cleared off of the landscape that we have reached the point that our natural heritage system is, in fact, unsustainable. We are past the point at which we can just look at conservation alone. We have to look more along the lines of restoration.

Without corrective measures, the natural heritage system will continue to decline to a point where we begin to have very serious consequences to human health and the economic viability of our region. It is not simply a matter of bugs and birds, but it's going to have a lingering and lasting effect on both the human population and the economy that we depend on here. What we have, at the moment, is that our natural infrastructure of air and water are at risk, and we need to do something about it. Now, consider a few statistics. Twenty-five percent of Canada's population lives in Carolinian Canada and that is less than one quarter of one percent of the Country's land area. There are more species at risk in Carolinian Canada

*our natural  
infrastructure of air  
and water are at risk*

than anywhere else in the Country. There is a greater diversity of both species and habitats than anywhere else in the Country, and many of them are found only here in southwestern Ontario. Less than two percent of the landscape is in public ownership. Seventy-three percent of the landscape is in highly productive agriculture. The forest cover in the region has been reduced from an estimated 80% in pre-settlement times down to around 11% now. Forest interior, which is so vital to so many species, is now less than 2% and wetlands have been reduced from approximately 28% to 5%. There is some overlap between forest and wetlands.

*it is going to take  
several generations  
and considerable  
community effort to  
attain these goals*

In order to restore the equilibrium to our system, we need to increase natural cover in Carolinian Canada to approximately 30% of the landscape. Some parts of our region are actually quite close to that figure now, while others are far from it. In any case, it is going to take several generations and considerable community effort to attain these goals. In order to promote the Big Picture vision, Carolinian Canada is taking its message to a variety of audiences. One of the most influential of these audiences are the local planning authorities and those who work with them in the process that we call land use planning. We are a diverse group here today. We have students and planners, scientists, concerned citizens, developers, and representatives of non-government organizations, government agencies, municipalities, and the Conservation Authorities.

*foster new mechanisms  
to support the land  
stewardship by rural  
landowners*

The land use planning is just one piece of the puzzle when it comes to making the Big Picture a reality, but it is a very important piece nonetheless, because it is really at this local level of land use planning that the rubber hits the road and that the Planning Act and the Policy Statements are all implemented and become real. It's relatively easy to see how real land use planning fits into the Big Picture. After all, that's where most of our natural cover exists today. In Carolinian Canada, this is a largely agricultural landscape, and the success or failure of conservation efforts will likely depend on our ability to foster new mechanisms to support the land stewardship by rural landowners. That's a topic worthy of a conference of its own and, in fact, we hope to hold just such an event early in 2002, so stay tuned.

But what about the contribution that cities and near-urban areas can make to the Big Picture? Should we just write them off as concrete jungles? It's true that we are not going to develop any natural core areas within urban regions, but there is a huge potential that we can not overlook for

protecting and enhancing connecting links that are so vital to the functioning of a natural heritage network. Without connections, we've got only islands of green and these are not sustainable. It is the connectivity that gives the system its dynamism. On the other hand, if we fail to make provision for natural corridors, through and around our urban areas, then we will have irrevocably fragmented the system by creating un-crossable barriers. Occasionally, a natural corridor is destroyed all at once; for instance the 402 highway, the Don Valley Parkway and recent proposals for a Red Hill Expressway in Hamilton or London's Ring Road. These are examples of engineered mayhem.

Very often, though, our natural areas die a death of a thousand small cuts as we chip away at them lot by lot. Today, we are going to be examining some of the tools that are available to help planners to protect natural heritage. As we work through the case study, I would ask that you keep in mind the idea of cumulative impacts—the cumulative impacts that we are creating through piece-meal planning. Our planning process is understandably bound up with the legal description of parcels of land, but our natural systems cut across these lines. When considering any land use application, we need to look at it in a variety of contexts, in other words, we need to look at the Big Picture.

*our natural areas die a  
death of a thousand  
small cuts as we chip  
away at them lot by lot*

- Don Gordon