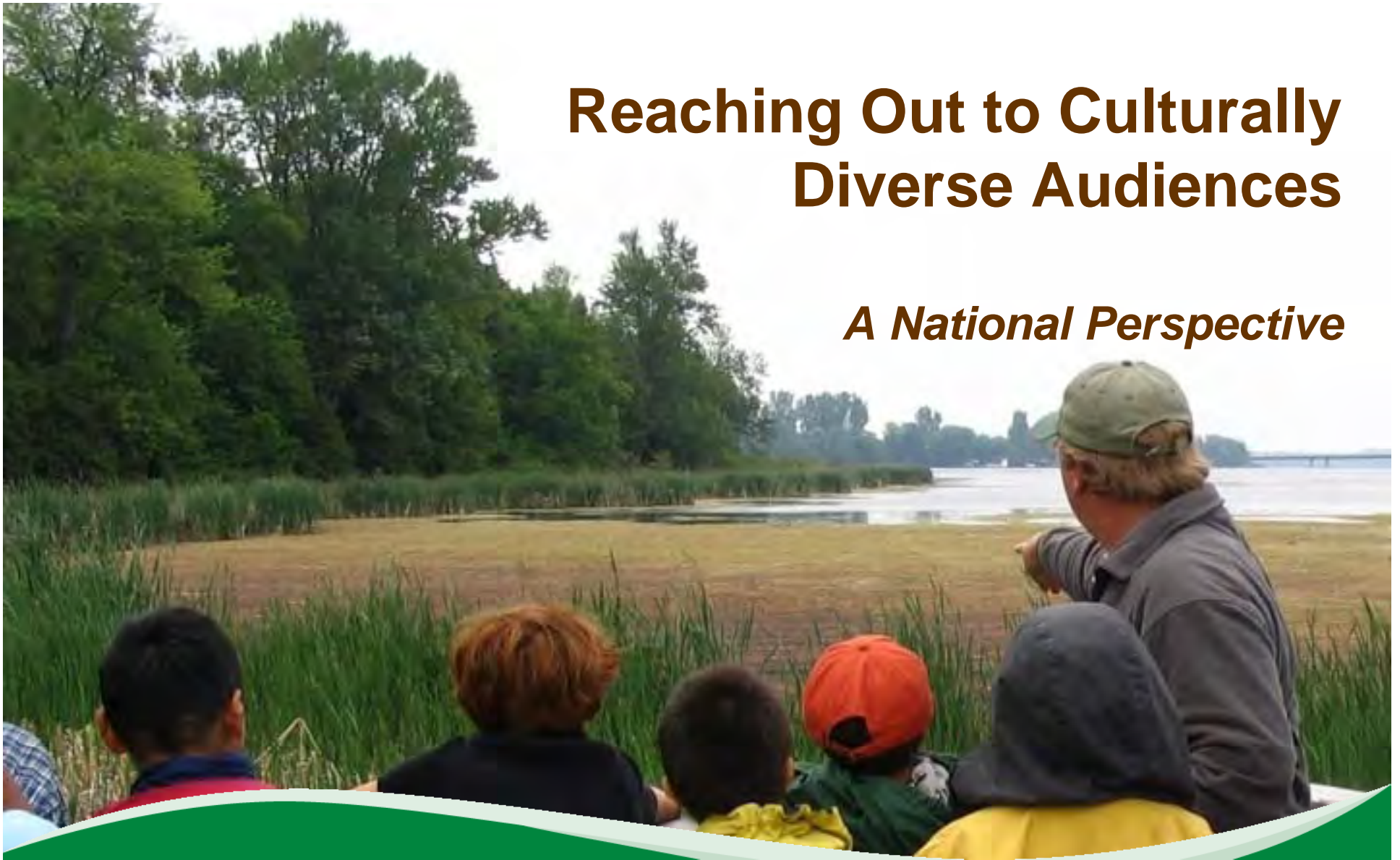


Reaching Out to Culturally Diverse Audiences

A National Perspective



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.

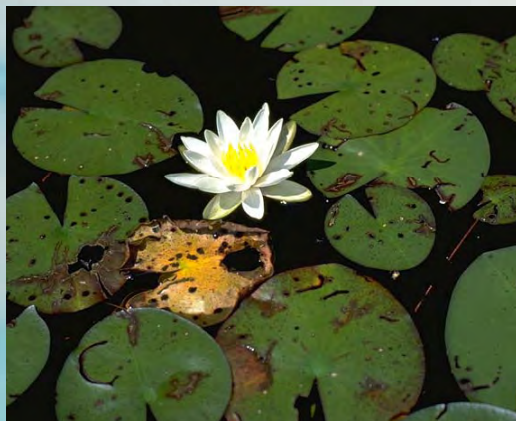
Merebeth Switzer, National Education Coordinator, DUC
Toronto, January 13, 2009

. . . not just ducks!

- one of North America's largest conservation organizations
- not-for-profit; founded in 1938
- protect wetland habitat
- nearly 8,000 habitat projects
- invest approx. \$80+ million per year in wetland conservation



What is a wetland?



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.

Why are wetlands important?

- essential part of the natural world that sustains us (water, oxygen = LIFE)
- human health - naturally filter and purify water
- emergency & disaster prevention
 - reduce flooding; release water during droughts
 - reduce erosion; store carbon (climate change)
- quality of life
 - wildlife, nature
 - recreational + educational opportunities
- economic – food, “ecological goods & services” (cheaper to maintain nature than restore or try to duplicate it)

Why did DUC get involved?

- provides free field trips to learn about wetlands -
 - large number of new Canadians
 - significant cultural diversity

THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION



LA FONDATION
TRILLIUM
DE L'ONTARIO



Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.

Within Canada . . .



**25% of the
world's
freshwater**

71,500 species of plants and animals

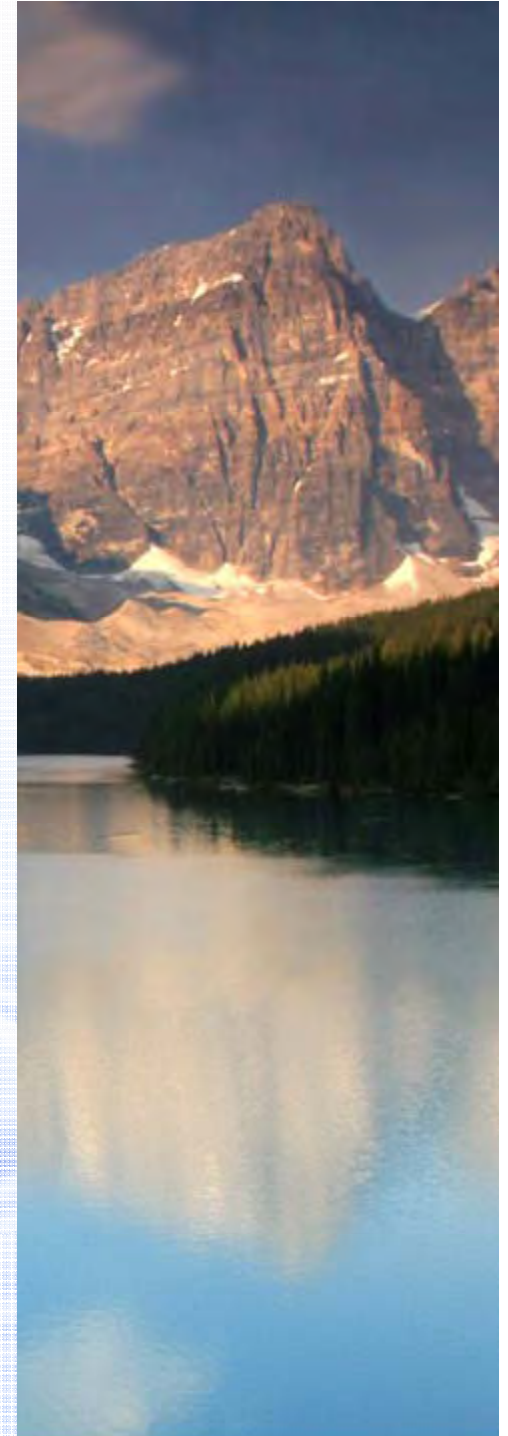


- 422 species “at risk”



- the future of millions of acres of protected natural areas

- National Parks – 46 parks - 55 million acres
- Nature Conservancy - 2 million acres
- NA Waterfowl Mgmt Plan – 2.3 million acres
- Federal protected areas – 30 million acres
- . . . provincially protected lands, conservation areas, land agreements, etc.



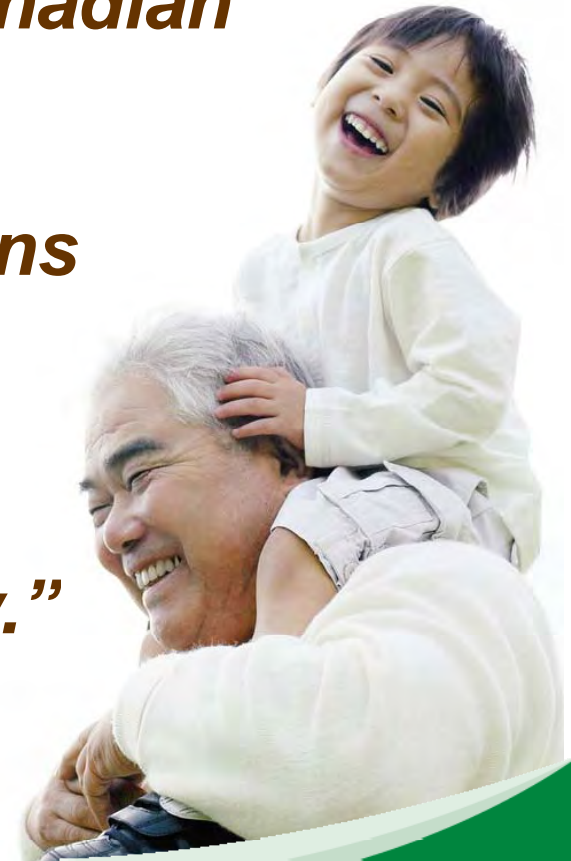
Dynamic population -

- every 4 years nearly 1 million immigrants arrive in Canada
- U.N. - Toronto - most culturally diverse city in the world
- TDSB – nearly 25% of its students are born outside of Canada in one of 175 different countries



“ Ducks Unlimited Canada recognizes that conservation must cross cultural boundaries to remain a core Canadian value.”

“Most conservation organizations have not made significant in-roads in reaching out to this ever-increasing part of our Population in a sustainable way.”



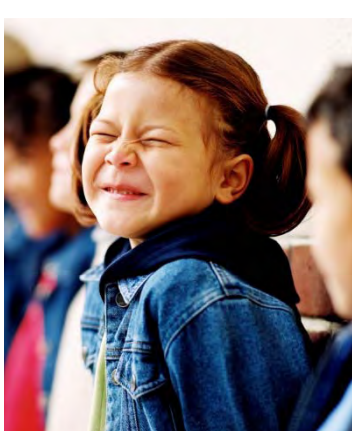
Ducks Unlimited Canada
Conserving Canada's Wetlands

Active by nature.



Challenges – cultural groups

- **diversity** – diverse in language, culture, education, interests, etc.
- **settlement issues** - struggling with language, money, employment, transportation, etc.
 - environmental issues are not critical
 - may not have time, money, transportation
- **cultural barriers** – what is appropriate or desirable (re: genders, multigenerational/family versus “segregation of ages”, etc.)
- “**biophobia**” – fear of natural world or culture shock (new Canadians but also urban)
- **access** - what is available? where to begin?





“It is never easy to come into a new school where everyone already seems to have friends, know the teachers, and understand the routine. But when that new school is in a new country, then the problems can be even more formidable.”

*(Porter, 1991
Many Roots, Many Voices)*

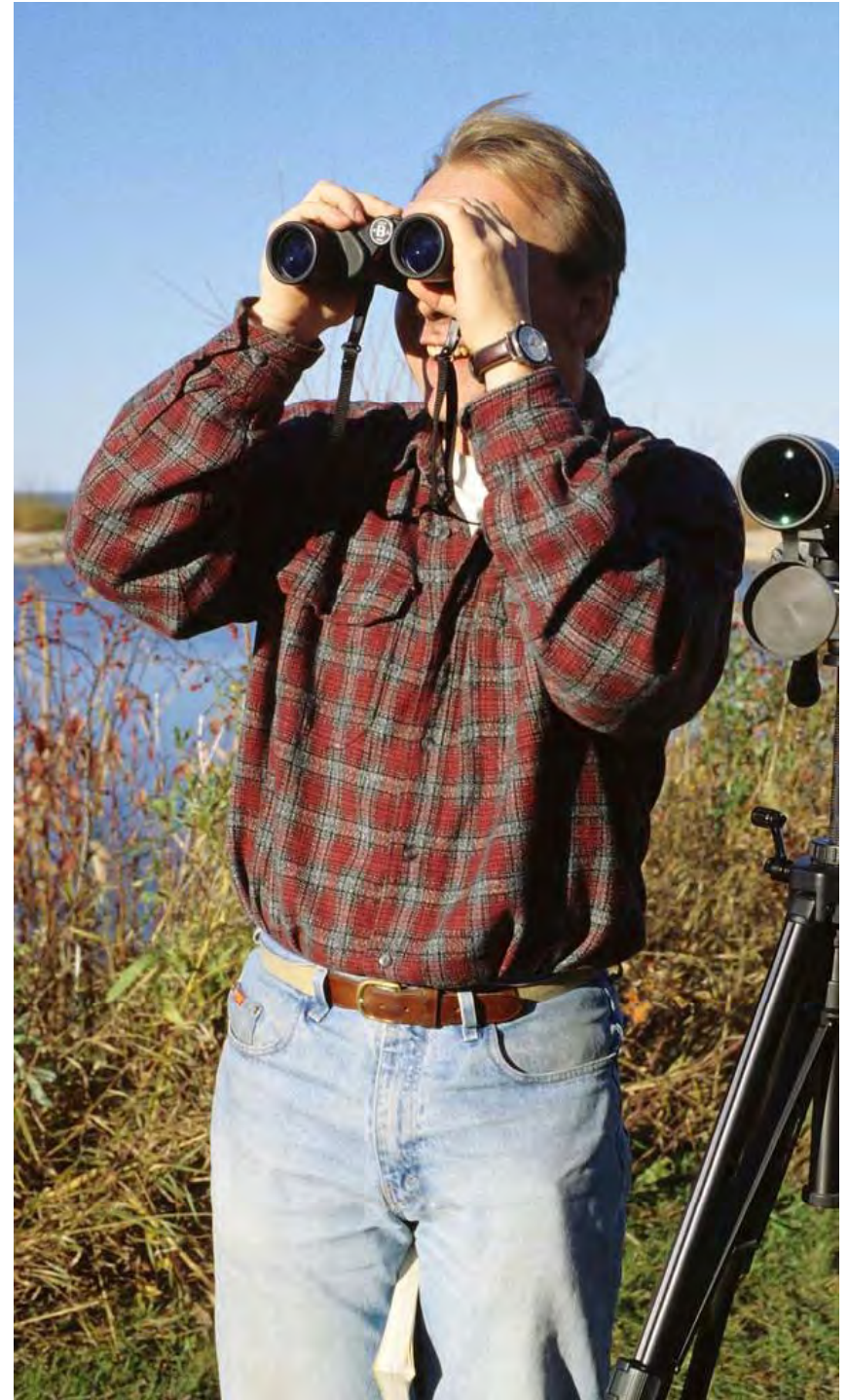
- coping with same anxieties as other children
- learning a new language
- dealing with new culture
- may be dealing with being “different” – desire to fit in and not be segregated
- conflict between home & peer values
- may be dealing with more serious issues too



Challenges

- environment groups

- homogenous
- unintentional barriers - jargon, established roles, “culture”
- lack experience/comfort to deal cross-culturally
- assumptions and cultural bias
- many – NGOs, underfunded, overworked, volunteer driven
- already stretched dealing with existing priorities & audiences especially with surging interest in environment





How do we . . .

- draw on this incredible human resource
- reach out and engage people
- reach across cultures – to draw upon the knowledge of our own aboriginal communities and to learn from the experience and enlist the creativity of people who come to us from around the globe.





Toronto & Region Conservation

- since 1997 have worked on this with community groups, faith groups, cultural organizations, ESL/LINC schools, settlement agencies
- **PAIE** (*Professional Access & Integration Enhancement*)
- **MESP** (*Multicultural Environmental Stewardship Program*)
- www.trca.on.ca



Sustainability
Network

- Research – *Ethno-Cultural Organizations and the Environment (2001)*
- Boreal Initiative – *ENGOS, aboriginal communities*
www.sustainabilitynetwork.ca



www.utoronto.ca/envstudy/sustainabletoronto/ (above)



- EEON – “Greening the Way Ontario Learns”
www.eeon.org



- Website - Conservation Council of Ontario
www.greenontario.org

New Places to Go – New Places to Grow

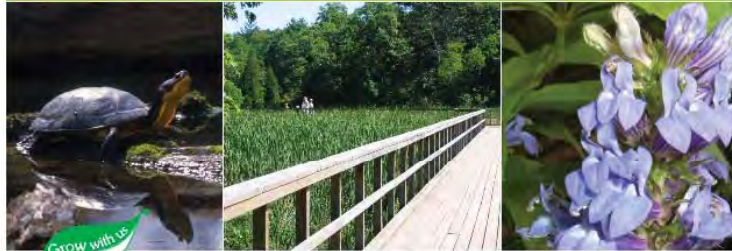
- Guelph University, TRCA, Farm Start, Multicultural Inter-Agency Group of Peel (MIAG)
- pilot to introduce new Canadians to the Greenbelt
- bus trip, bring own lunch, visit conservation area and a farm
- surveyed “what does nature mean to you?” connections, etc.
- Next steps: 10 more trips planned for 2009
- Contact: Peter Mitchell, Guelph U. - claws@uoguelph.ca



the New Farmers Project

Eco**le**aders

ROYAL
BOTANICAL
GARDENS
www.rbg.ca



To register, call or email Simin Abbasi, 289-244-5294; sabbasi@sisoohamilton.org. You must book your seats in advance (registration deadline five days before each program).

Numbers are limited to the first 50 who sign up, and the program location varies from month to month. Dress for the weather. Proper footwear advised as the trails are rough in spots. Transportation provided — the bus leaves SISO at 1 p.m.

PROGRAM PARTNERS

Ecoleaders is an environmental education program for newcomers offered by Royal Botanical Gardens in partnership with Settlement and Integration Services Organization and the Parks Canada Discovery Centre. Ecoleaders is also supported by the Hamilton Naturalists' Club and Bay Area Restoration Council. Funding for this program is provided by the Hamilton Community Foundation.

SUMMER, 2008

Newcomer Explorers of Nature

These free afternoon programs are for newcomers of all ages. Come with your family and learn more about the special nature of our area. Spend quality time with your children and visit the nature sanctuaries of Royal Botanical Gardens, learn about the UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve that runs through our city, hike on the Bruce Trail and even try a truly Canadian activity — paddle a canoe!

Saturday, July 19, 1 to 4 p.m.; Arboretum and Nature Interpretive Centre. Come, explore the Arboretum and enjoy a woodland walk. Learn about Canadian trees, and see Royal Botanical Gardens' world famous collection of lilacs. REGISTER BY JULY 14.

Saturday, August 9, 1 to 4 p.m.; Cootes Paradise Marsh
Enjoy paddling a canoe in our wetland, and find out about our work to restore this special nature area. REGISTER BY AUGUST 4.

Sunday, September 7, 1 to 4 p.m.; Nature Interpretive Centre
Join us in celebrating the Nature Interpretive Centre's 40th anniversary. Enjoy games, crafts and guided walks. REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 2.

Saturday, October 18, 1 to 4 p.m.; Rock Chapel Nature Sanctuary
Enjoy an autumn afternoon outdoors. See migrating birds and butterflies, hike along the Bruce Trail and learn about the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve.
REGISTER BY OCTOBER 13.



RBG - Ecoleaders

- Royal Botanical Gardens, Parks Canada, SSIS (Settlement Services)
- Saturday children's program and teen mentors
- family outings
- www.rbg.ca

ROYAL
BOTANICAL
GARDENS

Toronto Zoo

- African Cultural Committee – partnership in the redevelopment of African savannah exhibits; community cares for traditional garden; Black History Month activities
- partnerships with other cultural groups – for example:



- Turtle Island Conservation Project – to draw on TEK (Traditional Ecological Knowledge)
- school outreach, materials
- National Aboriginal Day at Zoo

www.torontozoo.com





T-CEL – www.tcel.ca

- promote ecological living to GTA Chinese Community (Cantonese/ Mandarin speaking)
- media, outreach, workshops, information booth, website, and special events
- Contact: William To

Centre for Environmental Education (CEE India) - www.ceeindia.org

- Since 1984 – links to Indian populations in other countries (Australia, hoping to establish Canadian connections) - Canadian contact: Brijpaul Patel

DUC – Wetlands & the World

- school audience
- multilingual, cross-cultural, English Language Literacy





Who else. . .

- Earth Day Canada
- Clean Air Foundation
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Citizenship and Immigration
- Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF)



Others? (last info from these 2005)

- Environmental Centre for New Canadians (*Yuga Zuma Onziga*)
- CIEARAD



Nature Canada - www.naturecanada.ca

- 350 naturalists clubs across Canada
- Nature Canada Network
- have done research but not yet moving ahead
- co-facilitating a group of NGO representatives from across Canada in a strategic planning session (March/09)



TO FIND OTHER ENVIRONMENT GROUPS:

- Ontario Environment Directory (OEN) (700+ listed)

Ultimate goal – cultural diversity and cross-links become common place.

Discussion:

(Any feedback? Please email: m_switzer@ducks.ca)

- Interested in knowing about other groups or other notable projects relating to cultural diversity/ environment, etc.
- For discussion - why so many one time only activities?
 - Funding? Viability? Lack of Interest?
 - Is diversity already becoming main stream?
 - Issues of segregated versus integrated approach (e.g. an activity for “new Canadians” which keeps them separate versus bringing in diversity to your board, attendance at regular events, etc.)