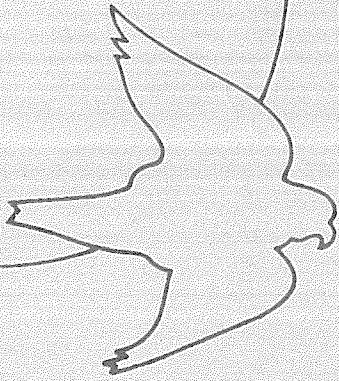


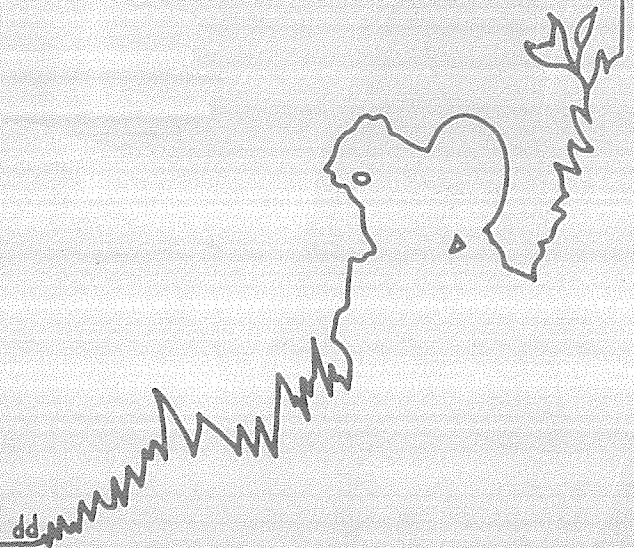
Interpretation Program

Canadian Wildlife Service

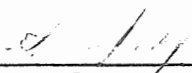


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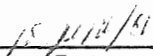
J.P. Foley & W.D. Barkley
Plan Coordinators
March, 1981



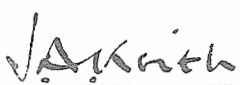
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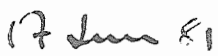
Director General
Canadian Wildlife Service



Date



Director
Wildlife Research & Interpretation



Date

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SUMMARY

Since 1967, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) has been implementing an interpretation program. The essence of interpretation is the "revealing of meanings and relationships" through "first hand experience". (Interpretation Canada, 1978)

The mandate for the program is found in the Canada Wildlife Act, (Government of Canada, 1973) and the Migratory Birds Convention Act of 1917, (Government of Canada, 1978). It has as its objective "to encourage and to provide opportunities for the development of awareness, enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of Canada's Wildlife heritage and its environment".

The theme of the program is the interaction of wildlife, man and the environment in seven "wildlife regions" (Foley, 1980) of Canada (Atlantic, Great Lakes - St. Lawrence, Boreal, Prairie, Mountain, Pacific and Arctic).

The main audience is urban adults who have little opportunity to come in contact with their wildlife heritage, and who have little awareness of the interaction of man, wildlife and environment. CWS Interpretation media employed include naturalists, self-guiding nature trails and exhibit halls. In selecting media, care has been taken not to allow it to become the major focus, and overshadow the real thing - the wildlife.

Feedback and evaluation are an integral part of effective and efficient interpretive programming. Feedback completes the communication process, and ensures the financial resources are wisely managed.

PLANNING POLICY

1. This plan is the vehicle for coordinating the continued development of a national CWS interpretation program.
2. The interpretive conceptual plans for each of the seven wildlife regions will be developed or revised, to fit with this national plan.
3. The implementation and management strategies for resource allocation will be developed by each of the five administrative regions.
4. Headquarters will be responsible for setting national policy, coordinating the implementation, and evaluating programs to ensure consistency with national policy and standards.
5. Regional offices will be responsible for developing and implementing regional and site plans.
6. Sites will be responsible for developing on-site media and operation of programs.
7. Sites will supply major input into the policy, planning and evaluation schemes at the regional and national levels.
8. Because of the current constraint program, and in the interest of using tax payers' dollars in the most effective and efficient manner possible, interpretive planners will:
 - a) consider using federally owned lands where existing support services can be shared.
 - b) consider high quality self-guiding activities whenever possible.
 - c) encourage other staff specialists to participate in programs.
 - d) avoid high fixed-cost facilities whenever possible.

HISTORY

The Canadian Wildlife Service can trace its beginnings to the signing of the Migratory Birds Convention between Canada and the United States in 1916. Since that time CWS has broadened its activities under the Canada Wildlife Act from solely administering the provisions of the Migratory Birds Convention Act to becoming involved in a variety of environmental concerns. These concerns range from administering the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species to advising committees of the House of Commons on the impact of developments in the Arctic on the wildlife resource. As a result of these broadened responsibilities, CWS personnel know well almost every habitat in Canada, and the range of problems confronting wildlife conservation.

CWS has also recognized the demand and right of Canadians to experience their wildlife heritage as much as any other part of their heritage. Indeed CWS has had to respond to the public demand to use various National Wildlife Areas and Migratory Bird Sanctuaries for recreational and educational purposes. It is also understood that it is only with understanding from the general public that the deterioration of the environment and the wildlife it supports can be slowed and stopped.

Interpretation is "Any communication process designed to reveal meanings and relationships of our cultural and natural heritage to the public through first hand experience with an object, artifact, landscape or site" (Interpretation Canada, 1978). In 1967 the Canadian Wildlife Service began an interpretation program to help the general public understand, appreciate

and enjoy the living resources of Canada (Munro 1968). This process, used successfully in parks, involved direct public contact with the resource. For example visitors were provided with the opportunity of viewing marsh animals from a boardwalk at Wye Marsh so that the life history of those species would be better appreciated.

However, parks generally acquire land with a spectacular natural feature or good recreational value, whereas the CWS emphasizes typical pieces of land and representative fauna. Typical means not virgin or original, but typical as it is used by man. A piece of prairie which has been farmed or grazed or a forest which has been logged could be a site for a CWS interpretation program. The rationale is that people would be better able to relate to this type of "non-special" landscape.

The original plan developed by CWS was to have programs in each of the "natural" (Barkley, 1977) regions of Canada (now called Wildlife Regions) near the Trans-Canada Highway or major tributary, on a typical (non-virgin) piece of land and near a population centre of 10,000 or more. The Trans-Canada Highway was selected because of its national significance as a tourist corridor. The nearby local population was designated to ensure the possibility of a year-round program and the availability of necessary support services for all aspects of the program (Edwards 1971, Barkley 1973).

The "Natural" or "Wildlife Regions" were based on the "Forest Regions of Canada" (Rowe, 1959). The Forest Regions were modified for three reasons:

1. to reflect wildlife habitat
2. to reduce the number of regions in order to make the scheme practical as a planning model
3. to simplify the scheme for easier comprehension by the general public

The first program began in 1968, at Wye Marsh, 150 kilometers north of Toronto. A building and other interpretive facilities were planned and constructed, and in July 1969 the first CWS interpretation program opened to the public.

While the wildlife region plan was being implemented, other interpretive needs were identified. Special wildlife populations on lands such as the newly acquired National Wildlife Areas (NWA) emerged as an obvious resource to be interpreted. The first program on a NWA commenced operation in 1972 at Cap Tourmente, 50 km east of Quebec City.

CURRENT STATUS

The program has now integrated the Wildlife Regions and the special populations elements into a single plan, that interprets Canada's Wildlife in each of seven Wildlife Regions; the Pacific, Mountain, Prairie, Boreal, Arctic, Great Lakes - St. Lawrence, and the Atlantic. The various land

holdings of CWS, and other opportune places in these regions are used as the windows through which the wildlife will be interpreted. For a summary of existing programs, including those under development see Table 1. There are, or will shortly be programs on 20 of the 125 Migratory Bird Sanctuaries (MBS), National Wildlife Areas (NWA) and Wildlife Interpretation Centres (WIC).

The program has, and continues to be planned on the basis of the "Sender-Message-Receiver" model of communications, (Peart and Woods, 1975).

The major interpretation centres are being redesigned to reflect a visitor flow pattern based on an Orientation-Experience-Reinforcement model, where a visitor is first given a brief orientation to what is available, what he/she can expect to experience and is directed outdoors. When outdoors the visitor then experiences the "real thing" (wildlife) - the essence of interpretation. Finally that experience is reinforced in the exhibit hall. This pattern allows the visitors maximum contact with the resource during their 'alloted' time at the centre.

PLANNING FRAMEWORK FOR CWS INTERPRETATION

A national view will be developed in this plan with the understanding that wildlife region and specific site plans will also be written. These regional and site plans must be consistent in content, philosophy and policy with the national plan if the Canadian Wildlife Service is to have a co-ordinated national interpretation program. Each Wildlife Region Plan will follow a similiar format in terms of the background, Sender-Message-

TABLE 1

CWS INTERPRETATION PROGRAMS

Wildlife Region	Interpretation Programs
Atlantic	Percé WIC *Amherst Point NWA Huntsman Marine Laboratory
Great Lakes - St. Lawrence	Wye Marsh WIC Cap Tourmente NWA Contrecoeur NWA Les Plaines d'Abraham Baie de l'Ile Verte NWA *Long Point NWA *Mississippi MBS *St. Clair NWA *Les Iles de Magdalian
Prairie	Prairie WIC Last Mountain Lake NWA *Blue Quills NWA
Mountain	Creston Valley WIC *Vaseux Bighorn NWA
Pacific	*Alaksen NWA *Qualicum NWA
Arctic	None

* Program being planned or under development

Receiver analysis, recommendations, etc.. Each Administrative Region will also have a document outlining the priorities, plans, implementation schedules, etc. for the parts of the various wildlife regions and sites within its jurisdiction.

Some Wildlife Regions over-lap Administrative Regions, while others do not. Wildlife Region plans will be developed by the Administrative Regions as follows (authorship is based on a combination of total area and interpretive opportunities):

Pacific and Yukon Administrative Region will be the sole author of the Pacific and Mountain Wildlife Regions Plans.

Western and Northern Administrative Region will be the sole author of the Prairie Wildlife Region Plan. It will be the principal author of the Arctic Plan, but will receive major input from the Quebec Region.

Ontario Administrative Region will author the Boreal Wildlife Region Plan with input from the Quebec, and Western and Northern Administrative Regions. Ontario will also co-author the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Wildlife Region Plan with Quebec.

Quebec Administrative Region will co-author the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Plan with Ontario and will also co-author the Atlantic Wildlife Region Plan. Quebec Region will also have major input into the Arctic and Boreal Wildlife Regions Plans.

Atlantic Administrative Region will co-author the Atlantic Wildlife Region Plan with the Quebec Administrative Region.

The national plan also functions to provide continuity so that changes in personnel will not result in the loss of important ideas, concepts, philosophies and plans. This minimizes the possibilities of inefficiency and duplication of effort in the on-going development and implementation of this program. Consequently each level of planning should have an approval page signed before final distribution as follows:

- The Corporate Policy should be signed by the Director General
- The National Plan should be signed by the Director General and the Director of Wildlife Research and Interpretation
- Regional Plans should be signed by the Regional Director and Headquarters Chief of Interpretation
- Site Plans should be signed by the Regional Director and Regional Interpretation Specialist.

MANDATE AND POLICIES OF CWS INTERPRETATION

This section deals with who sends the message and why it is sent. Clearly, the basic sender is the Government of Canada. Within the federal government, the component with which this task logically rests is the CWS. This responsibility is legally described in the terms of the Canada Wildlife Act (1973) as follows:

The Minister may

- undertake, promote or recommend measures for the encouragement of public co-operation in wildlife conservation and interpretation (Section 3,a);
- initiate conferences and meetings respecting wildlife research conservation and interpretation (Section 3,b);
- be assigned public lands for wildlife research, conservation or interpretation on which he may
 - provide advice relating to any wildlife research, conservation and interpretation being carried out on such lands;
 - establish facilities or construct, maintain and operate works for wildlife research, conservation and interpretation on such lands subject to such regulations as the Governor in Council may make in that behalf. (Section 4)
- purchase, acquire or lease any lands or interests therein for the purpose of research, conservation and interpretation in respect of;
 - (a) migratory birds; or
 - (b) with the agreement of the government of the province having an interest therein, other wildlife (Section 10,1,a).
- enter into an agreement with the government of any province or with any municipal authority, any organization or person, to provide for the undertaking of wildlife research, conservation and interpretation programs (Sections 7,1 and 5,a).

In addition, the CWS has a mandate under the Migratory Birds Convention Act (1978), to save from indiscriminate slaughter and to ensure the preservation of certain migratory birds. Interpretation plays an important role in meeting this responsibility.

INTERPRETATION OBJECTIVE AND POLICIES

The CWS interpretation program operates primarily under the authority of the Canada Wildlife Act and has as its major objective:

"To encourage and to provide opportunities for the development of awareness, enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of Canada's wildlife heritage and its environment." (Foley, 1980)

Under this objective, three basic policies have been established;

1. The Canadian Wildlife Service will interpret to the public Canada's Wildlife Regions in their present condition as influenced by man, and in terms of an ecological perspective on wildlife;
2. The Canadian Wildlife Service will interpret to the public specific wildlife populations and their habitats, including those on National Wildlife Areas and in other situations of significant wildlife interest.
3. The Canadian Wildlife Service will encourage and assist other agencies, organizations, or individuals to become involved in nature interpretation and to co-operate with them particularly in the aspects of their program that relate to wildlife and wildlife habitat.

In terms of priority, policies one and two are of equal importance. The third policy is second in priority.

Underlying any discussion of objectives and policies, is the question of why these actions are being contemplated. The answer to this question provides the basic philosophy and key to the mode of operation of an organization. A paper by Foley and Keith (1979) discusses "Interpretation - To What End" by examining first the reasons for interpretation in any organization, and second, the reasons emphasized by the Canadian Wildlife Service.

"Interpretation is viewed as being either a tool for attitude change, resource management, or education. It can also be viewed as a method of providing a recreational/inspirational experience of natural or cultural heritage. Most organizations' interpretation programs are a blending of all the above, but with a particular emphasis which provides a distinctive flavour. The CWS tends toward providing a recreational/inspirational experience except in specific instances such as school programs or discussions of marsh management projects."

DETERMINING THE MESSAGE

Based on the CWS interpretation objective given earlier, the central message must be related to "Canada's wildlife heritage and its environment".

This is obviously a broad and complex subject both to send a message about, and to receive. To deal with this problem, the following is a system planning scheme which;

1. allows CWS (the sender) to organize this complex message in a meaningful way and
2. allows the clients (receivers) to understand the context of the particular story they are hearing.

The planning scheme is based on the fact that the subject (wildlife) is living and that it adapts to its environment and man, depending on the major characteristics of the habitat. Consequently

Rowe's Forest Regions of Canada were chosen as the basic model and modified to meet the needs of CWS. The regions were simplified considerably both to streamline the planning process and to make the overall message more easily understood by the audience (See Figure I).

In addition to dividing the overall message of Canada's wildlife and its habitat into more digestible pieces (the wildlife regions) a central theme is required to tie all the individual messages together to tell a unified story. The central theme for the CWS interpretation program is the interaction of man, wildlife and the environment.

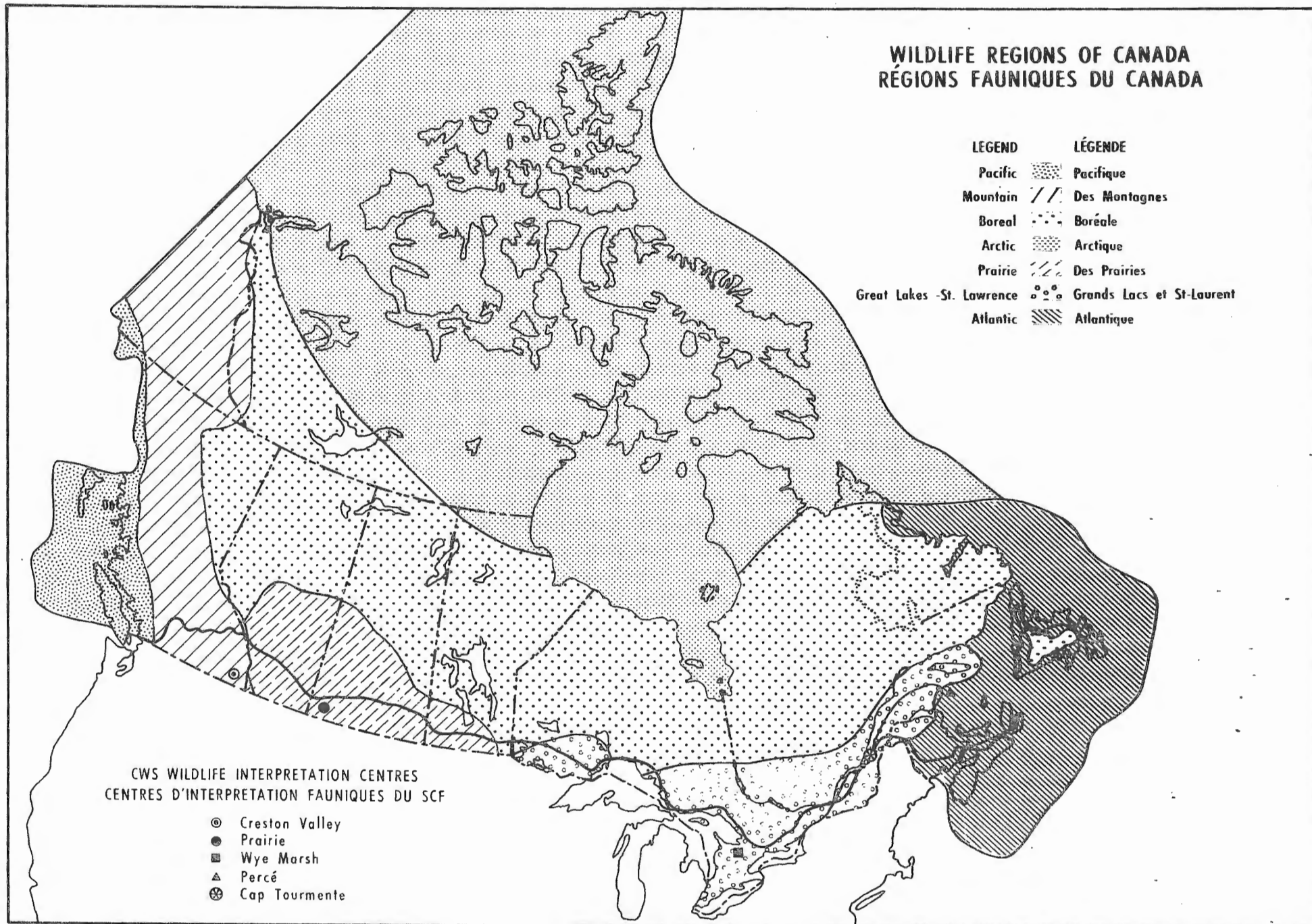
Each region and site will pick up this theme and develop it in terms of the major characteristics, both natural and cultural, of the area.

DETERMINING THE CLIENTS

The potential receiver groups for CWS interpretation programs are everybody living in, and visiting Canada. The objective of the receiver analysis is to identify discrete groupings that will affect how we plan and deliver the program. Examples of the major factors that affect programming are:

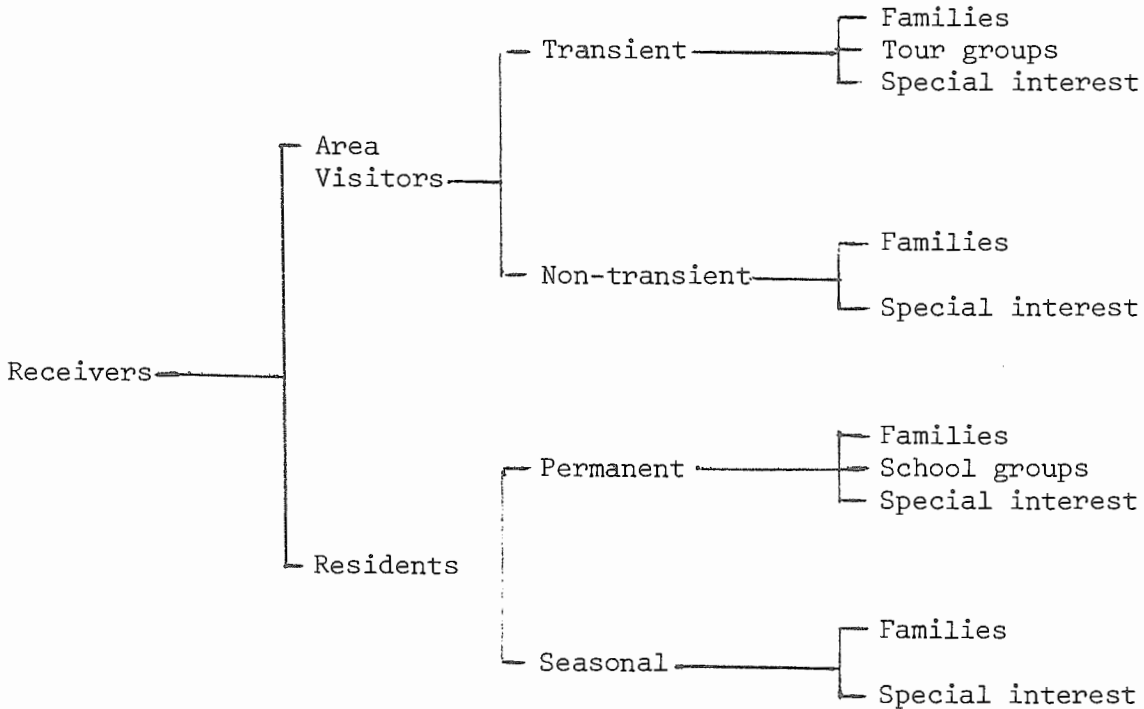
- frequency of visits
- age
- level of knowledge
- reasons for visiting (motivation)
- social group composition

FIGURE 1



The following visitor analysis hopefully reflects these variables, and also includes the relative importance of the group in terms of resources to be spent on them. The following receiver analysis chart indicates the major groupings to be considered at the national level. Finer distinctions will be made at the site plan level. For example "special interest" can be divided into Kiwanis Club, Boy Scouts, etc. or families can be divided into adults and children.

There will also be some variation in emphasis placed on the different receiver groups from centre to centre. For example, seasonal residents might be a much more important group at Wye Marsh than Percé.



DESCRIPTION OF RECEIVER GROUPS

Area Visitors refers to any individual or group visiting the area around a CWS interpretation program. In most cases they do not have the opportunity for repeat visits, and are usually there during the summer season. They are further divided into:

- Transients who are either passing through that day or stopping overnight. They have limited time and visit only once. They in turn can be divided into:

Families - which includes all small social groups such as couples or close friends. Most of these people are on "vacation".

Tour groups - includes primarily charter bus tours. Those groups often do not have a focus other than travel, but may have some common characteristics such as age.

Special interest - this could include anything from a travelling naturalist group to business travelers.

- Non-transients are people staying in the area for a few days. The non-transient family and special interest groups differ from transient family and special interest groups in that they can stay longer, have repeat visits and take part in different elements of the program.

Residents are people who live in the area. However in certain areas like Georgian Bay there is a very large summer resident population. Therefore residents are divided into two groups:

- Permanent who have access to "off season" programs. In addition to the family and special interest groups this also includes the school program.
- This type of special interest group will also be different from the visitor special interest groups. For example, here you will be dealing with the "Rotary Club".
- Seasonal these are similiar to the non-transient visitors but have a much greater opportunity for repeated visits.

PLACING THE EMPHASIS

Dividing the potential receiver groups into various categories is the first step. The second is to decide which groups will receive most of our efforts (dollars and time). For this decision we must examine our major objective "to encourage and provide opportunities for the development of awareness, enjoyment, understanding and appreciation of Canada's wildlife heritage and its environment".

If this objective were to be achieved two things would happen;

1. visitors would have had a chance to experience their wildlife heritage first hand.
2. citizens would be in a better position to make intelligent choices regarding wildlife conservation.

In general, nature buffs already have an idea of the rationale of various conservation practices and ecological principles. They also have the opportunity to experience wildlife.

It is that large segment of our urban population who have little understanding of ecological principles, and few opportunities to experience their natural heritage, who can benefit the most from interpretation. It is for this latter group that the centres are situated near a major highway or a large population area. This group is a major clientele for the interpretation program.

The school program is an important activity in spring, fall and winter. However, CWS naturalists should not become school teachers, and personally guide all the groups. Rather, CWS should be a resource by providing teacher training, school kits and the facilities.

DEVELOPING THEMES AND MEDIA

Determining the approaches involves integrating the information about the sender, message and receiver. It is the determination of the theme, and precisely how, where, and when the messages are to be transmitted.

Developing the Theme

How often have we heard a dynamic speaker go on at some length yet feel we did not get anything out of the talk. More often than not, the reason

is that the speaker did not pull all his bits of information (individual messages) together. There was no thread running through the talk - there was no theme.

It is essential in taking that step between defining the messages and selecting the approaches to develop a theme.

The over-all theme of the CWS interpretation program is the interaction of man, wildlife and the environment. The themes of the wildlife regions and site plans should flow from this national theme. For example, men and wildlife have adapted to each other, and the dry prairie environment in several ways.

Selecting the Media

The selection of techniques must always consider first those techniques which would fit within the definition of the interpretation process. The person being interpreted to must have the opportunity to experience through a "first hand experience" (Interpretation Canada 1978). The best media to use for ensuring that the public is receiving the correct message is a trained interpreter. The interpreter can react to the response of the people and check to ensure that the message has been received. In practice, it is impossible to have enough interpreters to contact every person coming to a program. Nevertheless, the aim should be to maximize personal contacts with the public. Certain media, such

as self-guiding trails and involvement exhibits, can be very effective under some circumstances.

The use of other media can supplement personal contact. Every effort should be made to make these techniques interpretive by ensuring that a conscious attempt is made to link the presentation to a specific outdoor phenomenon or object. As examples, a slide show should tell people where they could go to experience the subject and a display should offer directions for experiencing the phenomena.

There will be occasions when experiencing a particular message is not possible or desirable. It might be because a particular situation is inaccessible or because of fragility and thus potential for damage to a subject. In that case information only about the subject must be given. The distinction of an informational technique is that there is no direct link to the real situation. It should be clear that if too many approaches become informational the program will cease to be interpretive.

Approaches applicable to one program are not necessarily appropriate for another program. A major approach to which this applies is with interpretation centre buildings. It must not be assumed that every program requires a building. The approaches should be developed and if a building is required to execute the approaches then it should be planned. The first decision is not where the building should go, but

what general approaches will be used, and then decide if a building is required. The building thus becomes either an aid, in ensuring certain approaches can be pursued, or an approach in and of itself.

Media vs Interpretation

A very potent danger in using any media for interpretation is that the media becomes more important than the message. If the media becomes so engrossing and time consuming that people do not get outside, it has failed. Similarly, if certain techniques make the message more exciting than it is in reality and people become disappointed when they confront the real thing, the media has had a negative effect. Media must become the "slave of interpretation" and function to get people outside having positive experiences with the environment. This means putting constraints and limitations on the application of certain media for interpretation.

Co-ordinating Approaches

Program priorities will have to be set for the continued orderly development of the interpretation program. The program requires national co-ordination to ensure an equitable geographical distribution of these programs.

Regionally, priorities will be established, based on a thorough interpretive assessment of the special areas held within that region

(national wildlife areas, sanctuaries, etc.). Some national co-ordination will be necessary but the primary responsibility will be within the region.

Summary

In summary, the general approach of the Canadian Wildlife Service interpretation program should be to maximize contact between the public and the resource in order to maximize the educational and recreational benefits. It should also allow the public the opportunity of experiencing wildlife in its environment; to develop direct linkages between displays, leaflets, etc., and the real thing; to ensure the media becomes the "slave" of the interpretive process and not the reverse; and to ensure that special areas are not destroyed by interpretive programs.

FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

General

The effect of a national interpretation program on the public of Canada is difficult to measure. However to ensure that the program is achieving its objectives it is essential that some effort be made to collect usable feedback. While many of the techniques available for measuring the effects of interpretive programs on the public are crude some feedback is better than none.

Programs at all levels within the Canadian Wildlife Service Interpretation Division will be required to systematically monitor the effects of interpretive programs on the public. Some information will be collected at the field level in order to measure the effects on the public regionally and nationally. To ensure the required information is being collected across Canada certain national standards for collecting and reporting data will be developed.

Statistics on Use

Empirical data, on the use of programs, infer acceptance of programs by the public. These data could also identify characteristics in relation to the national program such as, areas where program demand in general, or the seasonal use of programs, is high. Statistics on public use will be maintained in Headquarters. Field offices will be required to submit statistics in a standard format on a monthly basis. This information will be analyzed and incorporated in the annual reports of each responsibility centre.

Pre-testing

Many interpretation techniques such as exhibits or trails involve considerable financial investment, and so it is the policy of CWS to pre-test major media wherever possible. Results from pre-testing are a special, but very important, form of feedback.

Subjective User Feedback

Letters, unsolicited newspaper articles, verbal remarks, etc., are a source of feedback, but their lack of objectivity makes it difficult to analyze. However, this information should be recorded and filed for annual review to identify trends, or highlight significant comments.

Expert Evaluation

A common mistake, in exhibit evaluation, is to assume that only the advice from a design expert is required. In fact because he is an expert, by definition, his view is different from that of the audience. However, the evaluation of outside experts, e.g. a designer from the provincial museum, should not be over-looked as an important source of feedback.

Special Studies

The purposeful collection of information from the public by means of questionnaires, interview schedules, behavior observation etc., constitutes a special study. This approach to collecting feedback is time-consuming but worthwhile in resolving specific questions in relation to the program. Studies of this nature should have the guidance of a research specialist.

Special studies are feasible at all levels in the program. These levels include the national program, regional program, field

program and specific event. The purpose of all studies will be to provide information for the improvement of programs.

Summary

Feedback originates from four general sources, statistics on visitor use, subjective client feedback, special studies and expert evaluation. All of these sources will provide information on program effectiveness, and assist in the planning of future programs.

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

1. All Wildlife Region Plans except for the Arctic and Boreal will be completed or revised by the end of fiscal year 1981/82. The latter two will be completed in 1982/83.
2. Updating of Creston and Wye Marsh, to reflect the orientation, experience reinforcement flow will begin in fiscal year 1979/80. Wye Marsh will be completed in 1981/82, and Creston as funds become available.
3. Updating of Cap Tourmente and Percé will begin in fiscal year 1981/82. Cap Tourmente will be completed in 1981/82, and Percé will be completed as funds become available.
4. Smaller projects that will be planned in 1981/82 include Alaksen NWA, Marshall Stevenson Unit of the Qualicum NWA, and one NWA yet to be determined in the Atlantic Region.
5. Because of the current restraint program and the fact that not all the plans have been completed it is impossible to predict beyond the above dates.

COST ANALYSIS

There is a distinct difference between the optimum and that which is possible under the current government restraint program. The following table provides both the existing and optimum figures.

1. Cost analysis

	<u>\$ Thousands</u>					
	PYs		Capital		O & M	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Optimum</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Optimum</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Optimum</u>
Headquarters	2	4	5	5	45	151
†Regional Offices	.6	1	0	0	3.2	15
†Interpretation Centres	3.2	7	0	5	*69	*65

*1 1981 dollars

†2 Average for all regional offices and centres

*3 The 65K optimum assumes 7 PYs excluding salaries. The actual 69K per centre is currently having to, in effect, pay the salary of 3.8 PYs through contract. There is clearly a serious short fall.

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de la faune