



**Essex County Stewardship Network
Strategic Plan Summary Report
March 26th, 2010**



Submitted by
Kayak Consulting



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INTRODUCTION

Project Purpose

Build an ECSN roadmap that provides clear direction for the steering committee, staff and community members over the next 5 years

Project Objectives

- Implement Situation Analysis – considers success factors, opportunities, trends, challenges, competition
- Focus on opportunities for the future (e.g., governance, finances, targets/demographics, projects/program areas, marketing)
- Create clear strategic goals - the leading edges of the organization
- Develop specific strategic objectives to reach the goals
- Develop vision, mission, and core values

Criteria for Success

The best opportunities generated during the session will consider the following:

- Respects and builds on equity and legacy of past
- Addresses connection/investment with MNR - builds on leadership and steering from MNR
- Considers unique needs and possibilities for Essex County – utilizes available research data
- Maintains realistic and measurable approach
- Addresses sustainability
- Engages community in proud grassroots 'can do' way
- Increases awareness of other Stewardship Councils



Approach

The strategy approach was conducted in two phases:

Planning Meeting regarding the Overall Project:

February 8th 2010, MNR Office, Chatham

Two Strategy Sessions:

March 6th 2010, at Pelee Days Inn, Leamington

March 20th 2010, at Sanson Estate Winery, McGregor

During the planning meeting Kayak Consulting met with the Chairperson, Stewardship Coordinator and a number of council members of Essex County Stewardship Network (ECSN) to discuss the project background information, define the purpose of the project, and develop criteria for determining future opportunities. The sessions were developed to help move ECSN forward with strategic priorities. Collaborative techniques were used to meet the strategy session objectives.



Session Participants

Council Members:

Greg Skinner - Chair
Jason Fuerth - Vice Chair
Linda Menard-Watt - Treasurer
Sarah Rupert
Ken Hunter
Dan Reive
Dennis Sanson
Tom Hurst – Past Treasurer

Technical Advisors:

Rick Visser- Chatham MNR
Eric Chamberlain – Town of Lakeshore Drainage Superintendent
Natalie Green - Detroit River AOC Coordinator
Tammy Dobbie – Point Pelee National Park

Staff:

Brett Groves, ECSN Stewardship Coordinator
Brienne Fennema, ECSN Stewardship Assistant

Kayak Facilitators:

Steve Sauder
Cobi Sauder

SUMMARY OF KEY OUTPUT

Vision

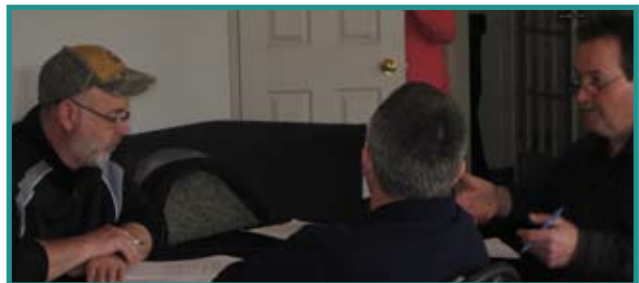
Essex County Stewardship Network creates opportunity for regional habitat conservation and restoration

Mission

Essex County Stewardship Network supports regional landowners to plan and implement their conservation goals

ECSN Values

- Trust and respect
- Landowner participation
- Positive community relations
- Effective and knowledgeable community based services
- Investor relations
- Organizations with common goals



Strategic Goals

1. Develop new projects, protect and monitor existing projects, keeping in mind property owners rights and personal objectives while expanding plant and wildlife natural habitat
2. Utilize traditional sources of funding and seek out new continuous and consistent sources of funding through partners, agencies, corporations, landowners and government including local, national and bi-national sources
3. Develop an evolving communication plan to be implemented within one year
4. Become a top of mind organization working with regional investors to promote and sustain a culture of conservation and restoration
5. Educate landowners in the community to encourage and promote stewardship of their local region
6. Develop a stronger stewardship council governance

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Habitat and Biodiversity

Develop new projects, protect and monitor existing projects, keeping in mind property owners rights and personal objectives while expanding plant and wildlife natural habitat

Objective A: Review Essex Region Biodiversity strategy to identify prioritized areas

Key Actions:

1. Obtain study for council presentation and review
Responsibility: Brett Completion Date: April 2010
2. Prioritize geographical areas on map, i.e., gaps, specifically corridor linkages
Responsibility: all members Completed Date: May 2010
3. Review tax rolls to identify property owners to approach regarding corridor projects
Responsibility: TBD Completed Date: October 2010

Objective B: Develop measurement/monitoring guidelines and specifications

Key Actions:

1. Create a checklist, questionnaire
2. Create a project application toolkit by researching and redesigning the existing tool to be useful and effective
Responsibility: all members Completed Date: October 2010



Funding

Utilize traditional sources of funding and seek out new continuous and consistent sources of funding through partners, agencies, corporations, landowners and government including local, national and bi-national sources

Objective A: Identify all funding sources

Key Actions:

1. Document past and existing funding sources and present to council
Responsibility: Brett Completion Date: July 2010
2. Acquire government 'granting organizations' document and review possibilities
Responsibility: Treasurer (Linda) Completion Date: September 2010
3. Investigate private/corporate donation possibilities from existing green donors
Responsibility: all members Completion Date: March 2011

Objective B: Develop priority projects to align with funding

Key Actions:

1. Utilize Essex Region Biodiversity Strategy to identify priorities/linkages
Responsibility: ECSN Completion Date: October 2010
2. Utilize Essex Conservation Action Plan to assist in prioritizing work areas
Responsibility: ECSN Completion Date: March 2011

Objective C: Establish a funding sub committee

Key Action:

1. ESCN Chair, vice chair, treasurer and MNR representative will meet quarterly to review status of funding and spending



Communications

Develop an evolving communication plan to be implemented within one year

Objective A: Establish a sub committee to develop communications plan

Key Actions:

1. Add establishment of sub committee as an agenda item for March meeting
Responsibility: Dennis Completion Date: March 22, 2010
2. Look for 'best practices', example of best templates
Responsibility: Sarah Completion Date: June 30, 2010
3. Draft communications plan completed for review
Responsibility: Sub committee chair Completion Date: September 30, 2010

Objective B: Implementation of Communications Plan

Key Actions:

1. Final plan completed
Responsibility: Sub committee chair Completion Date: October 31, 2010
2. Evaluation and performance to determine if it is meeting objectives of communication plan
Responsibility: Communications Sub committee
Completion Date: December 2010
3. Cluster advocacy elements of plan for implementation
Responsibility: Advocacy cell
Completion Date: February 28, 2011 (for launch)



Advocacy

Become a top of mind organization working with regional investors to promote and sustain a culture of conservation and restoration

Objective A: Define advocacy statement resulting from Communication Plan

Key Actions:

1. Create a sub committee, Advocacy cell, to define advocacy statement
Responsibility: Advocacy cell Completion Date: December 2010
2. Define advocacy goals and objectives and targets in well defined strong language
Responsibility: Advocacy cell Completion Date: January 31, 2011
3. Define advocacy tools
Responsibility: Advocacy cell Completion Date: January 31, 2011

Objective B: Define advocacy roles and responsibilities within council to support leadership

Key Actions:

1. Present advocacy plan to council and ask for allocation of resources
Responsibility: Advocacy cell Completion Date: February 2011
2. Create priority list for 2011\12 fiscal year advocacy
Responsibility: Advocacy cell Completion Date: February 2011
3. Seek council support/interest to become advocates
Responsibility: Advocacy cell Completion Date: March 2011



Education

Educate landowners in the community to encourage and promote stewardship of their local region

Objective A: Evaluate performance of historical and active projects

Key Actions:

1. Develop a list of all historical and active projects and also a performance evaluation protocol
Responsibility: Brett Completed Date: June 2010
2. Complete site visits and assess projects by performance evaluation
Responsibility: SEP assistant Completed Date: February 2011
3. Add results to GIS – produce maps and data sheets (create data standards, MNR district responsibility)
Responsibility: Brett Completed Date: October 2011
4. Determine new candidates to target connecting corridors
Responsibility: Brett Completed Date: November 2011
5. Actively promote to new target candidates utilizing educational approach
Responsibility: Brett Completed Date: January 2012

Objective B: Develop educational approach for messaging

Key Actions:

1. Identify and describe the various groups and sub groups in target market, e.g., farmers (cattle, vegetable, fruit) retirees, urban transients, rural land owners
2. Define the education material and develop clear messages for responsible stewardship
3. Determine and develop best approaches for delivering technical information to targeted landowners
4. Develop an annual action plan detailing how educational information gets to people, e.g., seminars, booth, flyer, newspaper, radio, partnerships, festivals
5. Create a formal referral and recognition process that enables landowners to actively seek and target more people to involve in stewardship understanding and projects

Objective C: Provide hands-on stewardship opportunities for Essex County youth

Key Actions:

1. Identify programs that youth can participate in and find niche areas, e.g., tree planting, monitoring, assistance in education programs
2. Identify environmental youth groups in the county and develop network forum between groups
3. Consider a youth component in all projects (assess tangible number of projects that could involve youth)



Governance

Develop a stronger stewardship council governance

Objective A: Review terms of reference and committee structure

Key Actions:

1. Solicit/review governance models from other councils, e.g., RLSN
Responsibility: Chair Completion date: November 30, 2010
2. Presentation of top ideas from review by ECSN
Responsibility: Chair Completion date: December 10, 2010
3. Develop governance structure for ECSN
Responsibility: Chair and committee Completion date: February 10, 2011
4. Review and refine the bylaws to facilitate developing a stronger council
Responsibility: Chair and committee Completion date: May 10, 2011

Objective B: Establish profiles for committee members

Key Actions:

1. Evaluate existing council skill sets
Responsibility: Council Completion date: December 10, 2010
2. Determine gaps in profiles
Responsibility: Council Completion date: March 10, 2011
3. Develop strategy/plan to target appropriate membership to fill the gaps within the council
Responsibility: Council Completion date: December 10, 2011
4. Develop a mentoring orientation process for new membership
Responsibility: Council Completion date: December 10, 2011



Next Steps

- Kayak report received in 10 days
- Report distributed to strategy participants
- Present plan to entire ECSN
- Ensure this strategy informs the council and becomes a working living document – alter at operational level , not the strategic level
- Create timelines
- Prioritize work plan from goals



SESSION NOTES

ECSN Participant Development

The group considered what motivates people to get involved with the stewardship council by identifying characteristics of the ECSN participant and why they chose ECSN.

Past Participant

Characteristics:

- Small/estate
- Small agricultural versus large agricultural
- Pre conservation focus
- Urban-rural background
- Newer land owners
- Focus on habitat for wildlife, i.e., attract wildlife (recreation, casual wildlife interest)

Why choose ECSN as their environmental leader/collaborator:

- Other choice to ERCA
- Not government
- Community focused
- Resource and money
- Greater multiplier
- Don't dictate
- Advice
- Recommended
- Can do attitude

Present Participant

Characteristics:

- Landowners
- Environment Canada
- Property owners
- DRCC
- Point Pelee National Park
- ECFCN
- Agricultural groups
- Canada South Land Trust
- Conservation authority

Why choose ECSN as their environmental leader/collaborator:

- Experience with restoration/naturalization
- Land owner driven organization
- Different alternative (to ERCA)
- Confident members
- Environmental stewards
- Care about environment

Future Participant

<i>Characteristics:</i>	<i>Why Choose ECSN as their environmental leader collaborator:</i>
Donations and bursaries	Ag business, moral values, business
Urban community groups	Natural aspects of their neighbourhoods and properties
Fire	Implement manage invasive species
Large NGO's	Implement management plans (NCC, CCC, FON)
Corporate health industry	Environment and human health, how to get people active outside
Canada environment law association	How to access the landscape – our contacts
It – technology	Ecological monitoring and reporting
Conservation clubs	Ways to get things done
Hunting fishing clubs	Advice on improvements

Opportunity Development

The group worked in teams to develop beginning ideas on trends, challenges, opportunities, and competitors.

Trends: Key environmental, demographic, lifestyle, worldwide trends relevant to ECSN?

- Economic structure – shift from manufacturing to creative, i.e., blackberry – social versus electronics – 7 votes
- More people rurally with less money to help – 6 votes
- Green energy, climate change – 5 votes
- Young generation – more awareness but greater disconnect from nature (don't want to get dirty) – 3 votes
- Green is socially acceptable – 3 votes
- Increased government regulations – drainage, fees, endangered species act, timing of projects – 3 votes
- Shift in environment thought with people, similar to early 1990's – 2 votes
- 'Urbanized' rural areas, sprawl – 2 votes
- New rural landowner – 1 vote
- Self sustaining properties, lifestyles (younger generation) – 1 vote
- Ethic make up – new projects with Muslim and Hindu community
- Carbon credit for industry
- Wealthy baby boomers coming to end of lifestyle cycle
- Wired society – social media
- ALUS type projects

Challenges: What limits ECSN from moving forward? What is disruptive to your success?

- Communities landowners economics, economic reality of Essex County – 7 votes
- Staffing/labour issues – 6 votes
- Financial resources – apply and wait game, application process, not flexible, reporting structure (methodology) – 5 votes
- Inter-groups cooperation – 5 votes
- SAR (Species at Risk) – government policies and landowner perception – 3 votes
- Recruiting/ volunteers – people very busy! – 2 votes
- Profile – few know about us – 2 votes
- Public perception – marketing weakness, lack of community awareness of ECSN – 1 vote
- Demographics/cultural differences – 1 vote
- Demographic changes, 'nature deficit syndrome' – 1 vote
- Large demand and small capacity to deliver
- Less funding because of economy
- Community polarity (pro union)
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
- Competitors projects and their results
- Direction of funding agencies
- Office location

Opportunities: What are the potential growth areas for ECSN, new possibilities, niche program areas?

- Niche – personal contact with private landowners (trust) – 6 votes
- Working with government: municipal, drainage, provincial (parks/recreation) – 6 votes
- Better NGO cooperation – formal association of joint, related NGO groups – 4 votes
- Communication – 4 votes
- Working with corporate landowners – 2 votes
- Fire – local resource and support fill gap – 1 vote
- Lobbying local government and other groups – 1 vote
- Formal education (students) – 1 vote
- Public /ERCA leadership change – 1 vote
- Niche habitat – 1 vote
- Donations – 1 vote
- Municipal development needs projects, ideas, gaps – 1 vote
- Bursaries – 1 vote
- Carbon credits, green energy – farm income – 1 vote
- Corporate sponsors – green initiatives – 1 vote
- Small property – missing services?, scale of projects
- Growth – large NGO's
- #3 and 401 corridor
- Health industry
- Growth
- Green energy

Competitors: Who are your main competitors?
What can they do better?
What unique programs are distinct to ECSN?

- ERCA (Essex Region conservation Authority) - more staff, equipment, resources, education program, staff team, timelines shorter – 12 votes
- Municipalities – control of land, draw from FIN pool, negative by-laws counter productive – 5 votes
- NCC (Nature Conservatory of Canada), CCC (Carolinian Canada Coalition), DUC (Ducks Unlimited Canada) -money, land securement, political strength – 4 votes
- Funding – DU, Wetland Habitat Fund, Delta Water Fowl, NWTF (National Wildlife Turkey Federation) – 4 votes
- RLSN (Rural Lambton Stewardship Network) - expanding outside of Lambton County – 3 votes
- Distinct – smaller scale restoration and forest operations, personal communications in touch with landowners – 2 votes
- NWTF - OFAH (Ontario Federation of Hunters and Anglers) offer similar projects, Friends of Watersheds, Field Naturalists – 1 vote
- Projects – DU – 1 vote
- Deliver better – DU wetlands, ERCA acquisitions and large scale forest operations – 1 vote
- Board of Education of youth – land management
- CSLT (Canada South Land Trust) – land securement , choose donation versus restoration

Opportunity Statement Development

The team considered the Situation Analysis to bring forward beginning goal statements that are challenging and achievable using the following language: In what way might we... How to... I wish... Imagine if...
The prioritized top opportunities were clustered into beginning theme areas.

- I wish for a regional advocacy strategy, 'one voice is a myth', to recognize diversity and provide a forum using 21st century communication tools, how do we:
 - Minimize political interface
 - Recognize differences in '..... of mandate'
 - Cultivate leadership opportunities
 - Become themakers! – 6 votes
- I wish we could involve the younger generation in hands-on stewardship activities because they are becoming disconnected from the natural world, agricultural world, etc. – 6 votes
- How do we educate or create awareness to the increasing number of rural landowners – I wish we had more money and resources to deal with them – 5 votes

- I wish
 - NGO's have coordinated common vision/goal within Essex County
 - Work with different levels of government – know roles, buy in, support
 - Keep personal contact with landowners
 - Bigger/broader communications = higher profile - 5 votes
- I wish there was continuous and consistent funding from sources and new funding sources – 4 votes
- I wish we had a formal association in the area for all competitors to give one voice, e.g., forums, workshops - 4 votes
- Is there an opportunity to 'green' former industrial sites due to changes in the local economy, e.g., brown zones – 4 votes
- What if we had a possible role to deal with stopping the spread of invasive species – education with citizens on the ground in their own backyard – 3 votes
- In a perfect world the gap between understand and appreciating the need to focus on nature and conservation on human health (social and mental) and the natural environment – to scared to get dirty or not aware of how to be part of the solution – access/engagement/experience/encourage – 3 votes
- What if we could share the tax income of ERCA to fund and staff ECSN – broader goal of sustainable source of funding based on assessments – 2 votes
- Can we integrate new trend to GREEN energy into present and future landscape stewardship activities – what is our potential role – 2 votes
- I wish for university/college research to create community involvement, citizen science opportunities, landowner interest, and youth/school group monitoring opportunities – 2 votes
- How to get more involved in pond and wetland management – storm water ideas, more ecology – 2 votes
- How to advocate to other partners – help landowners with conservation easements – 2 votes
- I wish we could make partners with competitors – 2 votes
- I wish we could presently help establish restoration - have a role in educating people on how to retain restored areas and make it economically valuable – 1 vote
- I wish to do invasive species remediation work using key habitat requirements and methods for species, develop community capacity, partner – 1 vote
- How to identify needs to enhance SAR and biodiversity to move past project to project work – 1 vote
- How to
 - Communicate strategy to join Essex County for bigger profile
 - Council commitment (time, skill sets, interest, down times) to lead/help
 - Implement and buy in support - 1 vote
- I wish we had better communication – exchange of ideas – 1 vote
- How to work with MNR to further the Cedar Creek Provincial Park to fruition – 1 vote
- How to provide snake education – 1 vote

- I wish we were involved in creation of local municipal policies and regulations
- What if we could make donation/bursaries/industry tax gifts, i.e., carbon credit, land donation, as a source of funding
- In what ways might we
 - Become more accountable
 - Grow with ENGO – work, communicate, money, resources
- What if
 - No buy in/support from partners, council
 - Becomes more than we can handle, victim of success – staffing, money, time
- I wish we could work with WMA to 'green' their areas both active and inactive – incorporate into wetlands and species at risk
- I wish for other types of work other than landowner based, i.e., shoreline softening
- How to address the ethnic diversity of the area and future ownership by non-present Canadians

Goal Statement Development

Beginning Education Goal

Clustered Opportunity Statements: – 10 total votes

- How do we educate or create awareness to the increasing number of rural landowners – I wish we had more money and resources to deal with them – 5 votes
- What if we had a possible role to deal with stopping the spread of invasive species – education with citizens on the ground in their own backyard – 3 votes
- How to get more involved in pond and wetland management – storm water ideas, more ecology – 2 votes

Goal Statement: To educate landowners, youth and the community in order to encourage and promote stewardship of their local region

Key Benefits:

- Provide landowners with a sense of accomplishment; legacy
- Involve youth in tree planting/habitat restoration projects, including monitoring
- Inform the community about local projects and describe how they can be applied at home

Key Targets:

- Landowners (rural/urban)
- School students
- Community groups
- Agricultural organizations

Group Beginning Objectives:

- Tally up projects (number of acres, type) and map
- Re-visit older and determine success on a performance scale
- Connect with environmental education network - existing and make new contacts
- Provide tours
- Develop outline of education package
- Involve youth in active restoration projects, 'get down and dirty'
- Target specific youth and community groups we wish to educate, i.e., can't be everything to everybody
- Enlist specific youth community groups in developing complimentary programs
- Develop non-traditional/alternative delivery models – more digging and less book learning
- Combine education goals with communication plan/strategy

Beginning Youth Goal

Clustered Opportunity Statements: – 9 total votes

- In a perfect world the gap between understand and appreciating the need to focus on nature and conservation on human health (social and mental) and the natural environment – to scared to get dirty or not aware of how to be part of the solution – access/engagement/experience/encourage – 3 votes
- I wish we could involve the younger generation in hands-on stewardship activities because they are becoming disconnected from the natural world, agricultural world, etc. – 6 votes

Goal Statement: Provide hands-on opportunities for Essex County Youth

Key Benefits:

- Plan - Environmental education and engagement – cause/effect/health
- Result - volunteer base
- Scan – learn curriculum, learn what groups, learn gaps, where do we fit with existing programs

Key Targets:

- School kids, high school, e-cubs, home school, youth hunters, naturalists, boy scouts, girl guides, 4-H
- Slogan – Nature – get dirty – get involved!

Group Beginning Objectives:

- Identify target youth groups
- Identify types or specific projects to involve youth in
- Develop project outlines
- Get youth member for council (1 to 2) and identify their needs
- Determine age of youth groups to target, e.g., grade 4 – 8, grade 9 – 12, college and university
- Identify existing programs/gaps and potential niches/opportunities

Beginning Habitat and Biodiversity Goal

Clustered Opportunity Statements: – 8 total votes

- What if we had a possible role to deal with stopping the spread of invasive species – education with citizens on the ground in their own backyard – 3 votes
- How to advocate to other partners – help landowners with conservation easements – 2 votes
- I wish we could presently help establish restoration - have a role in educating people on how to retain restored areas and make it economically valuable – 1 vote
- I wish to do invasive species remediation work using key habitat requirements and methods for species, develop community capacity, partner – 1 vote
- How to identify needs to enhance SAR and biodiversity to move past project to project work – 1 vote

Goal Statement: Develop new projects to protect and monitor existing projects, keeping in mind property owners rights and personal objectives, while expanding plant and wildlife natural habitat

Key Benefits:

- Continues improvement (habitat)
- Prove results to partners and futures stakeholders

Key Targets:

- Monitor for the future and the diversity and improvements into the future
- Reduce invasive species

Group Beginning Objectives:

- Find existing citizen science program that could be used for monitoring programs
- Research easy, basic monitoring programs, that provide the results/information we need, for habitats which already exist
- Identify and use principles for restoration and diversity as established by existing international biodiversity conference/agreements
- Use landowners as habitat monitors when possible – develop guidelines for them
- Involve landowners in drawing out plans
- Target sites based on landscape strategies – fill gaps – more impact for the dollar
- Multi species, limit non-natives
- Realistic goals (not lakes)

Beginning Advocacy Goal

Clustered Opportunity Statements: – 8 total votes

- I wish for a regional advocacy strategy, 'one voice is a myth', to recognize diversity and provide a forum using current communication tools - how do we:
 - Minimize political interface
 - Recognize differences in mandate
 - Cultivate leadership opportunities
 - Become the harness makers! – 6 votes
- How to advocate to other partners – help landowners with conservation easements – 2 votes

Goal Statement: Top of mind organizations working with regional investors to promote and sustain a culture of conservation

Key Benefits:

- Recognize that one voice is a myth
- Provide a forum where diverging opinions can translate into measurable conservation activities
- Provide a framework to foster and develop leadership
- Maintain a structure of governance to ensure trust through accountability

Key Targets:

- Define 'culture of conservation'
- Target know allies
- Identify and develop potential allies
- Strategy to develop habitat in 'known areas'

Group Beginning Objectives:

- Identify existing advocates – consistent with strategy
- Enlist advocates – define/list areas of expertise
- Build/develop a forum – needs related
- Use forum for annual intergroup statement of accomplishments and future goals
- Develop list of needs for ECSN that should be addressed by advocacy
- Maybe research how other organizations like Carolinian Canada do this
 - already bringing together groups for advocacy – why re-invent the wheel

Beginning Communication Goal

Clustered Opportunity Statements: – 7 total votes

- I wish
 - NGO's have coordinated common vision/goal within Essex County
 - Work with different levels of government and know roles, buy in, support
 - Keep personal contact with landowners
 - Bigger/broader communications = higher profile - 5 votes
- How to
 - Communicate strategy to join Essex County for bigger profile
 - Council commitment (time, skill sets, interest, down times) to lead/help
 - Implement and buy in support - 1 vote
- I wish we had better communication and exchange of ideas – 1 vote

Goal Statement:

To establish a sub-committee to develop a dynamic communication plan to be implemented within one year

Key Benefits:

- Identify key audiences and how to communicate with them
- Means of communication to get the message out that has potential for higher profile

Key Targets:

- Partners
- Local government
- Like minded groups
- Landowners
- Youth
- Public at large

Group Beginning Objectives:

- Establish a subcommittee responsible for a communication plan (resource committee people, not us)
- Identify target audiences
- Type of communication (media) for each audience, e.g., facebook, demonstration, brochure, website, TV, newspaper, events)
- Incorporate an education component
- Partner with organizations with capacity, i.e., smart community portal
- Identify what we want to communicate

Beginning Funding Goal

Clustered Opportunity Statements: – 6 total votes

- I wish there was continuous and consistent funding from sources and new funding sources – 4 votes
- What if we could share the tax income of ERCA to fund and staff ECSN – broader goal of sustainable source of funding based on assessments – 2 votes

Goal Statement: Utilize traditional sources of funding and seek out new continuous and consistent sources of funding through partners, agencies, corporations, landowners and government including local, national and bi-national sources

Key Benefits:

- To free up coordinator time for on ground work
- Stabilize long term planning and operation
- Project more equally distributed amount in assessed basis
- Reduction of competition for project funding
- Will increase partner base – funding, education

Key Targets:

- Increase awareness through fundraising
- Identify all possible funding sources
- Set up fundraising subcommittee to explore sources

Group Builds:

- What gaps do we see in our funding model and how to fill these gaps
- Can we secure traditional funding on an annual basis
- Explore possibility of arranging multi-year applications
- Align with other funding strategies so we are in funding favour

Group Beginning Objectives:

- Investigate possible government taxation possibilities
- Start to lay out our projects consistently as 'multi-year' so that we can align them with funding
- Identify gaps in funding model
- Identify incremental funding sources
- Create sub-committee and good discussion/meeting location
- If private confirm if multi-year applications can be engaged
- Create source list – compare/contrast
- Develop priorities for funding, i.e., which project should be funded over another

Goal Statement Review and Refinement

Before developing objectives the group reviewed the beginning goals. Each goal statement was presented and the group provided refinement ideas relating to challenges for implementation, questions, gaps, or specific data.

- Is their duplication with education and communication goals, both are awareness - education is what we are doing and communications is the how and who
- Consider deleting the word youth from education goal
- Need to present how to promote and provide messaging
- Communication goal – dynamic refers to changing, reviewing, embracing social networks
- MNR connection – also bottom up transfer of information, need to access services of MNR that are offered
- Link projects
- Research targets, e.g., retirees
- Need a governance goal
- Review governance to become a stronger council
- Consider an educator on council or partner with agencies with these skills
- 'Culture of conservation' wording , perhaps restoration
- What are we messaging needs to be addressed

Working in small teams the group created objectives for each goal statement including a governance goal. After each team completed their presentation, the group provided input on likes and any builds (meaning - in what ways might we make the goal better).

Habitat and Biodiversity

Group Likes:

- Identifies where we are, gaps, and defines where to go
- Creates priorities and tool kit for sustainability but still allows others to play the game/get involved in stewardship

Group Builds:

- Research and bring existing tool up to standards, i.e., redesign tool to be useful and effective
- Toolkit needs consultative advice, 'what can we do', what are the possibilities
- How do we guide (technology) the people who can do projects, i.e., are in priority areas
- Look for high traffic visible areas
- Assist us in getting the best commitment

Funding

Group Likes:

- Respectful of past and history of funders
- Encourages stewardship donors

Group Builds:

- Track our projects
- Identify funding spent
- Have handle on discretionary money
- Recognize funders potentially with signage
- Consider membership funding – this creates too much expectation
- Consider 'Friends of ECSN'
- Solicit funding from target groups, e.g., seek out lawyers with information on philanthropic individuals

Communications

Group Likes:

- Other people involved in leadership and expertise
- Like timelines
- Review timelines over 5 years
- Bring it alive with timelines of 3, 6 and 9 months, 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 years
- Provides opportunity to engage and enlist stronger resources (partners/investors)
- Utilizes experience on council

Group Builds:

- Who are the possible people/targets to communicate to:
 - Identify audiences
 - Establish best methods
 - Determine media plans
- Utilize new papers being established in the area

Advocacy

Group Likes:

- Helps in linking goals together
- Strong and on track to becoming known and having influence
- Provides self promotion and identifies a gap

Group Builds:

- Firmly identified as new focus
- Provides different approaches at local level
- New area for stewardship council and MNR

Governance

Group Likes:

- Aligns well with MNR stewardship tools for bringing in new members

Education

Group Likes:

- Builds on ongoing business, e.g., annual reporting, graphic GIS work, targeting groups
- Working internally to build external communications
- Develop referral idea

Group Builds:

- Mentoring included in governance goal
- Link educational resources to MNR connection – need to access materials valuable to our messaging package, e.g., LRC

Youth

Group Likes:

- Advocate with other youth organizations doing hands on stewardship
- Youth specific projects that work

Group Builds:

- Provide spot on council for youth – Grade 12
- Encourage succession of leadership in this council
- Determine which market is best to approach
- Find niche area for youth delivery
- Municipality has a youth council to possibly review
- Meet with science teachers and initiate high school clubs
- Potential with formal education and community youth informal education
- Environmental education network in Essex – how to complement each other

Prioritized and Grouped Goals

The group prioritized the goals and combined goals after reviewing group likes and builds.

- Habitat and Biodiversity - 6 votes
- Funding - 6 votes
- Communications - 5 votes
- Advocacy - 4 votes
- Education - 3 votes
- Governance - 1 vote
- Youth

The education and youth goal were combined.

Vision Development

The group worked in 3 teams each developing a vision statement based on key words and ideas from discussions on future direction. Key words in each vision were highlighted and the whole group worked together creating the final vision statement.

Key Prioritized Words:

- Connected
- Facilitate
- Current
- Habitat growth
- Easy and fun
- Longevity
- Adaptable

Beginning Vision Statements:

- The ECSN creatively enables and facilitates habitat growth and restoration
- Committed to long term improvements in regional habitat
- ECSN enables and facilitates long term regional habitat conservation, growth and restoration for the stewards of the landscape.
- ECSN creates opportunities.....coordinates...is committed.....strives
- The ECSN creates opportunity for a legacy of regional habitat conservation and restoration

Mission Development

The group worked in small teams to develop priority areas around ECSN's key distinction, benefits and target clients. The group developed a beginning statement using the priority words and continued to work towards a mission statement.

Priority Benefits:

- Local
- Assessable
- Supportive
- Funding sources
- Effective
- Provider of labour/materials
- Incremental habitat
- Improvements to sustainable uses of habitat
- Enables and facilitates

Priority Distinction:

- Trusted
- Landowner relationships
- Help landowner meet goals
- History of success
- Listen
- Landowner driven
- Expertise of MNR
- Nimble

Priority Targets:

- Rural community

Beginning Mission:

- We strive to provide an assessable and effective habitat restoration program which builds on the landowner relationship for the benefit of the rural community
- Essex County Stewardship Network supports regional landowners in planning and implementing their conservation/habitat goals

Values Development

Values were developed based on the following prioritized words:

- Trust - 12 votes
- Respect – 4 votes
- Involved – 3 votes
- Passionate – 3 votes
- Landowner driven – 3 votes
- Efficient – 2 votes
- Practical and realistic – 2 votes
- Knowledgeable – 2 votes
- Community based – 2 votes
- Grassroots – 2 votes
- Accountability – 1 vote
- Sustainable – 1 vote
- Optimistic – 1 vote
- Integrity
- Fair
- Open minded
- Conservation versus consternation
- Biodiversity council
- Inclusive
- Supportive
- 'we walk the talk'
- Reliability
- Honesty and trust

The prioritized words were detailed in this format for review and refinement.

ECSN Values:

- Trust and respect
- Landowner driven involvement
- Efficient and practical services
- Passionate and knowledgeable community based solutions

CONTACT INFORMATION

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