

# Delegation shares information on stewardship at national conference

The Leading Edge Stewardship and Conservation conference erupted in whoops and claps when it was announced Newfoundland and Labrador will host the next gathering in 2006.

This year's conference, held last month in Victoria, British Columbia, brought together more than 500 Canadians from conservation, resource industry, farming, government and First Nations groups to share their stewardship activities and to brainstorm the future of Canadian environmental stewardship.

"I'm coming home with new ideas and aspirations," says Dulcie House of River of Ponds, who represented the Limestone Barrens Habitat Stewardship program as part of the Newfoundland and Labrador team. "I feel challenged to contribute in a greater way to the social, economic and environmental progress of my province."

The Limestone Barrens Habitat Stewardship program — which works on conserving the coastal limestone barrens from Port au Choix to Burnt Cape near Raleigh — was represented at the 'Stewardship Newfoundland and Labrador' booth alongside projects from across Canada

"The Leading Edge Conference provided an opportunity for the Newfoundland and Labrador team to contribute our valuable stewardship experiences, ideas and success stories with individuals and groups from the stewardship community on

a national level," says Ms. House.

Conservationists brought hundreds of stewardship examples of wilderness protection and restoration from across the country: From Vancouver Island, where only small percentages of native Garry Oak meadows, old-growth forests and fish resources remain; from Toronto, where a rare dry black Oak tallgrass savannah thrives in downtown Hyde Park, and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the

Western Arctic where a cutting edge biodiversity data collection project relies on the expertise of local residents.

Representatives from the fur trade, agrichemical, seafood processors and other industries described a slightly different view of stewardship, echoed by farmers and ranchers, in which the land and water are used sustainably, environmental health is part of continuing to do business, and business profits aren't necessarily the bottom-line.

Both industry personal and

conservationists agree that a stewardship project's success relies on the grassroots level of co-operation by all local resource users working on a specific problem and assisted by the government funding and expertise.

"The sharing and collaboration of this conference will have a long-term effect on stewardship and conservation in Canada," says Ms. House.

"I'm proud to be part of an emerging and vibrant stewardship movement."



JESSICA ALFORD PHOTO

Members of the Newfoundland and Labrador team who attended the Leading Edge Stewardship and Conservation conference last month in Victoria, British Columbia were: Front (l-r) — Edward Hollett and Dulcie House; second row — Allan McNeill, Diane Eastman, Tammy Baldwin and Corinne Wilkerson; back — Hayward Young, Gerry Yetman, Jason Foster and Robert Schmedendorf. Missing from photo are Douglas Ballam and Paul Antle.

*Northern Pen, Monday, Aug. 4, 2003*