



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**STANDING COMMITTEE
on
PUBLIC UTILITIES
and
NATURAL RESOURCES**

40 Elizabeth II

*Chairman
Mr. Ben Sveinson
Constituency of La Verendrye*



VOL. XL No. 6 - 8 p.m., TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 1991



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	ND
DOER, Gary	Concordia	ND
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIB
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Cliff	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	ND
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIB
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	LIB
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALLOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
PUBLIC UTILITIES AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Tuesday, June 18, 1991

TIME — 8 p.m.

LOCATION — Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRMAN — Mr. Ben Sveinson (La Verendrye)

ATTENDANCE - 11 — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Enns, Praznik

Ms. Cerilli, Messrs. Cheema, Edwards, Evans (Interlake), Helwer, Laurendeau, Penner, Rose, Sveinson.

APPEARING:

Rosann Wowchuk, MLA for Swan River

WITNESSES:

Frank Baldwin, Private Citizen

Rick Wishart, Ducks Unlimited

Steven Lytwyn, Manitoba Cattle Producers Association

Dave Punter, Manitoba Environmental Council

Ray Fetterly, Private Citizen

Robert Potter, Town of Stonewall

Greg Dandewich, Neicom Developments

Ron Seymour, President, Stonewall & District Chamber of Commerce

Ian Greaves, Private Citizen

Written Presentations Submitted:

Bob Hysop, Private Citizen

Ken Halldorson, Superintendent of Schools, Lord Selkirk School Division No. 11

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

Bill 38—The Wildlife Amendment Act

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Mr. Chairman: Will the committee please come to order? This evening, The Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will resume consideration of Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act. When the committee sat last Thursday, it had

been hearing public presentations. There are still a number of presenters who have expressed an interest in making a presentation to Bill 38. Shall the committee continue with hearing public presentations? Agreed.

The committee has previously agreed last Thursday to hear from out-of-town presenters prior to considering presentations from Winnipeg residents. Is that still the desire of the committee? Agreed.

Prior to resuming public presentations, did the committee wish to indicate to members of the public how late the committee will be sitting this evening?

An Honourable Member: We will deal with that at eleven o'clock.

Mr. Chairman: Deal with it at eleven? Agreed?

An Honourable Member: What did you say?

Mr. Chairman: We will deal with it at eleven o'clock?

An Honourable Member: Let us see how it goes at eleven o'clock.

* (2005)

Mr. Chairman: Do we wish to consider it at eleven then? We will consider it at eleven o'clock. Agreed? Agreed.

I would also request that any members of the public who have a written copy of their presentation to pass along that presentation to the Committee Clerk so that she can ensure that photocopies are made for the committee members.

I will now read the names of the presenters remaining on the list. If there are any members of the public in attendance who would like to give a presentation this evening and are not on the list, please contact the Clerk of Committee, and your name will be added to the list of presenters.

(1) Mr. Roger Turenne, Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Manitoba Chapter; (2) Ms. Margaret Kapinga, private citizen; (3) Mr. Prasad Gowdar, private citizen; (4) Ms. Dianne Cox, private

citizen; (5) Ms. Mila Oh, U of M Recycling and Environmental Group; (6) Mr. Ian Greaves, private citizen; (7) Ms. Heather Henderson, private citizen; (8) Mr. Kenneth Emberley, Crossroads Resource Group; (9) Mr. Carl Moroz, private citizen; (10) Mr. Dave Punter, Manitoba Environmental Council; (11) Mr. Rob Altemeyer, private citizen; (12) Mr. Robert Potter, Town of Stonewall, who is replacing Mayor Dave Lethbridge; (13) Mr. Don Sullivan, Choices; (14) Mr. Neill Adhikari, private citizen; (15) Mr. Rick Wishart, Ducks Unlimited; (16) Mr. Frank Baldwin, private citizen; (17) Mr. Robert Wrigley, private citizen; (18) Mr. John Shearer, private citizen; (19) Mr. Brian Lucas, private citizen; (20) Mr. Greg Mickie, Triple S Business Development Corporation; (21) Mr. Norman Binkley, private citizen; (22) Mr. Ray Fetterly, private citizen; (23) Mr. Bob Gooding, private citizen; (24) Mr. Greg Dandewich, Neicom Developments; (25) Mr. Ray Marquette, The Interlake Development Corporation; (26) Mr. Harvey Williams, TREE; (27) Mr. Brian Pannell, private citizen; (28) Mr. Ron Seymour, President, Stonewall & District Chamber of Commerce; (29) Mr. Mark Gray, private citizen; (30) Mr. Steven Lytwyn, Manitoba Cattle Producers Association; (31) Ms. Linh Vu, private citizen; (32) Ms. Laura Reeves, private citizen.

I also wish to seek the committee's guidance on a matter. Mr. Frank Baldwin, a presenter from outside of Winnipeg, has indicated that he will have to leave shortly this evening on an out-of-town trip. Will the committee wish to accommodate Mr. Baldwin by hearing him first? Agreed.

We also have a Mr. Rick Wishart, who is unable to attend subsequent meetings. Did the committee wish to hear from him second? Agreed.

I would also like to indicate to the committee that two written presentations have been received, one from Mr. Bob Hysop, of Killarney and one from the Lord Selkirk School Division No. 11. These presentations will be circulated to the members of the committee.

I will now call upon Mr. Baldwin to give his public presentation. Please come forward. Mr. Baldwin's presentation is being circulated and he will be able to begin shortly.

Mr. Frank Baldwin (Private Citizen): Mr. Chairman, members of this committee, by way of introduction I am sympathetic to the amendment of the act Bill C-38. It has several components, all of

which are important improvements. The amendment of the act concerning wildlife management areas is particularly important to me because it concerns habitat conservation and affects education.

Ducks Unlimited Canada has already conducted habitat conservation work in numerous wildlife management areas in Manitoba. Without a change to The Wildlife Act, it is conceivable that challenges to the existing regulations might prevent future conservation initiatives or the maintenance of existing conservation products.

I do not propose to give a bush lawyer's interpretation of Bill C-38 but rather to state simply my case as it relates to the bill and to the Oak Hammock conservation centre which is vital to increased understanding of the wetlands and upland environment and its reliant species. Such understanding is crucial to the perpetuation of the wetland resource.

* (2010)

I was fortunate to grow up in marsh land country and have been lucky enough to live close to wetlands for much of my life. From my earliest experiences as a child I have had a passionate interest in waterfowl and other wildlife and have explored and become familiar with many, many wetlands in different parts of the world. In many instances, these wetlands face problems today as a consequence of lack of both human understanding and educated opinion.

The value of education concerning wildlife, which was presented to me as a youngster by various family members and their friends, made a lasting impression. Thus I have attempted to assist those interested to acquire an understanding of wild places and wild things and appreciate their value and, where possible, to help perpetuate wildlife in its habitat.

Since 1981 when we, that is me and my family, came from Saskatchewan to live in Manitoba, we have resided in the Oak Hammock district. In my spare time I have been actively involved in conservation and promoting understanding of the environment and its wildlife, in particular waterfowl and other species whose future depends on a plenitude of suitable habitat.

It was in the mid-1950s that I first became aware of the importance of prairie wetlands and the habitat conservation work being undertaken by Ducks

Unlimited Canada. In the ensuing years, I have been able to acquaint myself with its remarkable contributions to the preservation and enhancement of wetland habitats and its efforts to increase understanding of this wonderful resource.

The Oak Hammock conservation centre presents an opportunity to utilize the many years of proven habitat conservation expertise acquired by DU Canada in an effective environmental educational program in a setting which is emblematic of successful wetland reclamation and management conducted by a government agency and a private organization.

The St. Andrews Bog, as it is still known locally, was by the late 1960s reduced to a few hundred acres by drainage and agricultural encroachment. Local folk familiar with the bog recall the deterioration they saw over the years and the dramatic reversal brought about by the development of Oak Hammock Marsh in the early 1970s.

People in the area familiar with the bog earlier this century are of the view that the quantity of wildlife and numbers of some species are greater now than in earlier days. Without doubt, the development of the Oak Hammock permanent wetland and its maintenance has provided an important spring and fall staging area as well as habitat for a wide diversity of plants and animals.

This is all a consequence of a partnership between the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources and Ducks Unlimited Canada. More than \$2.4 million has been spent by DU Canada in developing the site, the 8,800 acre wetland and upland showpiece. By human intervention then, Oak Hammock Marsh, a provincial wildlife management area, is recognized internationally as a prime example of successful wetlands reclamation and is designated a World Heritage Marsh by the Ramsar Convention.

As anyone familiar with the history of the district knows, what is here now is a man-made, intensively managed wetland in the midst of farm land. The signs of human influence are everywhere and, with the exception of some residual upland habitat, the wildlife management area and its centrally located marsh bear little resemblance to the seasonal hayland wetland of the former St. Andrews bog.

There have been many major changes in the status of waterfowl around the globe during this

century. On all continents, wetlands are under increased pressure from agriculture and urbanization and are being degraded by pollution. The lack of understanding of the magnitude of these problems and their solutions are major contributory factors, and it must be understood that the future of waterfowl and habitat depends upon educated opinion.

* (2015)

To me it is remarkable that despite the undeniable importance of the Canadian Prairies and the province of Manitoba to waterfowl and their habitat, there exists no centre devoted to wetlands conservation and education.

The environment, as we all know very well, has become a catchword for the late 20th Century, but there has to be action if further disaster is to be averted.

What is proposed at Oak Hammock is action to provide a centre devoted to conservation and education in a place which exists as a consequence of the principles of wetland development.

It is clear to me that DU Canada, a private organization devoted to habitat conservation, is recognized as an experienced and knowledgeable leader in environmental protection and resource management. The existing role of DU Canada in education is expanding to meet the critical need for knowledge about our environment. The 1991 budget, for example, for education by DU Canada is in excess of \$1.187 million. There has been a steady increase in the dollars spent on education, for example, \$674,000-plus in 1989 and \$879,000-plus in 1990.

For more than 50 years, DU Canada has been at the forefront of restoration and management of habitat to benefit waterfowl and other wetland-reliant species. In that time, this nonprofit, charitable organization has developed the expertise to research and evaluate, design and construct and maintain habitat across this nation in conjunction with private land owners, other organizations, for example, provincial wildlife federations, rural municipalities, and provincial and federal governments.

The extent and scope of the work undertaken is well documented. Suffice to say, it has been colossal, and a great deal of habitat development and management have been undertaken in Manitoba, in this province. DU has developed,

improved or preserved over 17 million acres of wildlife habitat in Canada, expending over \$465 million in the process. Land valued in the hundreds of millions of dollars has been voluntarily set aside by government and private owners for DU projects.

In 1990, Canadians contributed more than \$14 million towards Ducks Unlimited Canada habitat conservation work. In Manitoba, where there are more than 13,000 subscription-paying DU contributors, in 1990, much more than \$1 million was raised for conservation.

The work of DU Canada has brought benefits to waterfowl and other wildlife whose survival depends on water. Man, another animal, is a beneficiary. DU Canada conservation work provides water for settlements, drought and flood controls for farmers and foresters, irrigation and stock water for ranch lands, and enjoyment for countless outdoor enthusiasts, both young and old. DU Canada has continued to grow into new and expanded roles, for example, its vital involvement in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Prairie Care Program, environmental research and education and extension services.

As I mentioned previously, my interest in the wetland environment and its species goes back many years. More recently, since I have been living in the Oak Hammock district, my interests have turned to how such places as Oak Hammock Marsh can contribute to increasing the understanding of habitat and its wildlife. For the past eight years, each spring, a group of us have conducted habitat and wildlife education events at the marsh, directed towards teams of youngsters from school and youth organizations. These successful educational events, within the Greenwing program of DU Canada, are run by volunteers and form a model for others across the country.

* (2020)

I believe fervently that environmental education is of extraordinary importance, and that is why I and many people like me, as well as DU Canada, have a commitment to the Greenwing program. This program for youngsters, which has been in place nationally for many years, has as its specific objectives the promotion, understanding and appreciation of habitat and wildlife, the management of resources and their rational and ethical use. This educational commitment is a story of success. There are close to 12,000 Greenwings across

Canada, for example. There are 123 Greenwing events, and the program continues to grow.

For example, in Edmonton the Greenwing program has teamed up with the school board to pilot a 10-week schedule directed at the importance of wetlands, their management and impact on wildlife and waterfowl resources, which is now in the school curriculum. DU Canada has contributed the \$16,000 necessary for this pilot study. It is likely the program will extend eventually to cover Alberta and perhaps even the rest of the Prairies.

I am delighted with the devotion of DU Canada and its staff and its volunteers to the educational course. For example, DU Canada is currently producing three new environmental education films at a cost of \$200,000 which will become a regular part of the library used extensively by schools, youth groups and others across this country. Additionally, approximately \$360,000 is expended annually by DU Canada in delivering presentations to such groups. For 1991, as I mentioned previously, the expenditure on education by DU Canada will be more than \$1.87 million. This does not include the enormous commitment of time, money and expertise by volunteers who organize and run Greenwing events, for example.

In Manitoba, these occasions range in scope from an educational camp, such as that organized and run by volunteers from the Turtle Mountain Greenwing Committee, the Provincial Greenwing Camp held at Marshy Point each year at East Meadows Ranch, to the Oak Hammock Wildlife Identification Competition held each spring, or the Riverton/Arborg Greenwing event held each summer.

I am convinced that DU Canada is determined to further the cause of conservation through education and is committed to the expansion of environmental education across the country. In 1990, \$132,000 alone was spent on Greenwing events. The Conservator Magazine, which carries conservation articles and a section devoted exclusively to Greenwings, to kids, is distributed to 12,000 youngsters three times yearly, whilst an additional 130,000 are sent to others across the country. This year, at a cost of \$69,000—something which is very close to my heart indeed—an up-to-date handbook of wetlands, wildlife and conservation will be published, both in English and in French, and distributed to all Greenwings. It will also be made available to adults and schools, and more

educational publications of this type are forthcoming.

I view the Oak Hammock conservation centre with the expertise of DU Canada staff in its operation's headquarters at Oak Hammock to be vital to the development of Oak Hammock as an educational centre. As I mentioned previously, the Oak Hammock conservation centre is an opportunity to do something about environmental education.

* (2025)

The soundness of the Oak Hammock conservation centre proposal from an environmental perspective has been proven following wide-ranging environmental impact analysis and public environmental hearings, and there is an ongoing monitoring program as well as scrutiny of the environmental aspects through the Citizens Advisory Committee established for this purpose. Construction will be undertaken in carefully chosen phases so that the disruption of the marsh ecology will be minimal and only temporary. It is true that a small area of land will be lost to the conservation centre, but the long-term benefits to conservation through education are, in my opinion, substantial and much greater than compensatory.

The low profile, two-story building designed to blend into the landscape will include an environmental education centre and the national operations headquarters of Ducks Unlimited. It is entirely logical to me that the biologists and other research staff, planners, designers, engineers and support personnel vital to conservation, should be located within a complex devoted to education and an understanding of environmental issues and that this multidisciplinary complex should be located in an environment which is, after all, a living workshop.

Education is crucial to understanding the environment, and I view the proposal for Oak Hammock as a major step towards problem solving. The environmental education component of the conservation centre will provide indoor and outdoor learning facilities. The centre will be open year round to the public, school classes and tour groups and will feature special events, short courses, natural science seminars and workshops.

The operations component will accommodate the expertise of the DU Canada conservation team. The operations and education components of the Oak Hammock conservation centre are inextricably intertwined.

Educational program staff will be able to draw upon the resources in the DU Canada national operation centre and the expertise of DU biologists and other staff. DU Canada operation services such as computerized accounting will be available to the education centre whilst maintenance, services and utilities will be shared.

There are those who feel strongly that conservation operations and educational facilities should be separate from one another and that the centre should not be located adjacent to a marsh. Conservation and education are too closely associated to be isolated, but in any event, the costs of constructing, developing and operating separate facilities are so great as to be unbearable in these times of financial shortage.

The proposed marshside location of this centre is entirely appropriate to its functions. The educational component must have the support and co-operation of its conservation counterpart, its administrative facilities, its staff and their expertise, for it to succeed. The development and operation of this centre, with major involvement of a privately-funded, nonprofit organization, will ensure that its future will not be subject to budgetary effects which frequently have had such dire consequences for government funded establishments.

What is proposed at Oak Hammock is not a high-rise monument to corporate business as some would maintain, but rather an unobtrusive centre dedicated to conservation and education. Elsewhere in the world, structures located at the edge of marshes have not had a negative effect on the surrounding habitat or wildlife, for example, the famed conservation, education and research headquarters of the Waterfowl and Wetland Trust on the marshes of the Severn River at Slimbridge in England, which receives 270,000 visitors a year. The Trust has seven centres in the United Kingdom which receive a total of more than 800,000 visitors annually. In Australia, the Shortlands Wetland Conservation Centre on the shores of a marsh near Newcastle, New South Wales has actually registered an increase in wildlife population since its development and use as a conservation, education centre in a managed wetland. Formerly, it was a football ground.

Concerns about wetlands and their conservation and education about the wetland environment are not exclusively Canadian or North American issues. All around this planet there are concerns about

wetlands and how education can help to combat the deterioration of the resource.

Last year at the general assembly of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, the World Conservation Union, I was a participant in the development of strategies for both wetlands and the global strategy for sustainable wildlife resources. I can tell you that there was a great deal of discussion among delegates from around the world on the important role education must play in conservation.

Education is being embraced as a solution to wetlands deterioration, and there now exists an organization named Wetland Link International, the aim of which is to promote both the quality of wetland educational centres and the establishment of more wetland educational centres throughout the world. The secretariat of Wetland Link International is at the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust Headquarters at Slimbridge in England.

What must be understood by all is that the future of habitat depends upon educated opinion, not hearsay and inflexibility. The young people of today will eventually make the important decisions impacting upon habitat and wildlife resources. It is not yet too late, I believe, to inform people of all ages.

What is proposed for Oak Hammock is a centre of national and international importance. There will exist for the first time in Canada a centre for wetland conservation operations and education. Its importance to Manitoba lies beyond conservation and education because it will also be a focus for tourist interest. Because of its location and proposed amenities, it will function effectively for year-round education and recreation.

* (2030)

It is clear that the Oak Hammock conservation centre will be of great value to schools and other groups. For example, educators from the Lord Selkirk School Division, who already use Oak Hammock Marsh for educational purposes, are hopeful that the conservation centre becomes a reality so that they can expand their curriculum and not be restricted to visits dictated by climatic conditions. Of course, the conservation centre will also provide much needed educational opportunities for young and old from southern Manitoba and beyond.

It is my hope that parochial and self-interest and political considerations will be set aside and that

Ducks Unlimited Canada, whose operations headquarters have been in Manitoba since the foundation of the organization more than 50 years ago, and the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources proceed with establishing the centre at Oak Hammock as proposed.

The venture is of extraordinary importance from the perspective of wetlands and wildlife. It is logical a wetland conservation centre should be located in the Prairies. To me, as a Manitoban and as a Canadian, it is important that it be in Manitoba, and it is my hope that the centre and the expertise necessary for its function will be secured for Manitoba.

It is evident that the remarkable and continued growth of Ducks Unlimited Canada makes a conservation operations headquarters for DU Canada inevitable. It is clear to me that DU Canada has well-defined educational objectives.

If the proposal to place the conservation centre at Oak Hammock is unsuccessful, there is, of course, no certainty as to an alternative location in Manitoba. It is my hope, for the sake of habitat and wildlife and Manitobans both young and old, that the Oak Hammock conservation centre, with both operations and educational components, proceeds without further delay. In my opinion, which is corroborated by many others provincially, nationally and internationally, this is a wonderful and unique opportunity to do something of long-lasting importance for habitat and wildlife conservation.

One further thing, I heard this evening a report on CBC Radio that DU Canada is not interested in the preservation of Canadian wetlands. To that I say, balderdash. Ample evidence is provided, as I have indicated here, by 17 million acres of wildlife habitat developed, improved, and preserved by DU Canada. In 1990, more than \$14 million were donated by Canadians, and all of this can be substantiated, I might add.

I heard also this evening from the same redoubtable person on the CBC that DU Canada is a duck hunters' organization. To that I also say, balderdash. Much less than 50 percent of Ducks Unlimited Canada subscription-paying contributors who donated over \$14 million, are not hunters of waterfowl. These are facts which can be substantiated, and so is what I have presented to this committee this evening.

It seems to me and many other people that there are those who are not interested in facts, who will do virtually anything to discredit and tarnish the reputations of those with a fervent belief in conservation who are prepared to actually do something to ensure that wetland resources are perpetuated by action and education as opposed to the unending rhetoric of the theoretical environmentalist.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Baldwin, thank you very much for your presentation. We will entertain questions from the committee now. Mr. Minister is first.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Baldwin, I simply want to thank you for your presentation. I have one question. I perhaps want to thank you more for the opportunity that you have given this committee and myself to appreciate the work of the volunteer education program, known as the Greenwing program, that you, sir, have obviously been involved with.

I, too, have to deal with facts, Mr. Baldwin. The simple fact is, it troubles me that some members in the public perhaps fail to appreciate and understand, but I have to face that fact. When I first became the Minister of Natural Resources for the Province of Manitoba, 7 percent of the fiscal resources of the province were made available to that department to carry out its mandate. Today, because of the pressures and priorities of other government services demanded of us by many people, certainly members of the opposition, organizations like the Choices; social services have taken away a great deal of that. Today, Natural Resources only has 2 percent of the provincial resources to carry out its mandate.

My simple question to you—I believe it is evident from your brief. I look to the centre to enable organizations, volunteer organizations, of whatever description—and certainly the one that you are involved with in the Greenwing program—to carry on nonetheless the volunteer and the very needed public education programs, particularly for our young.

Mr. Baldwin: Well, you have an assurance from me, because I am currently involved and have been for many years with the Greenwing program. I believe that whatever we can do to educate people both young and old is of extraordinary importance, and from a personal point of view, I intend to not only

see this expand as far as the Greenwing program is concerned, but hopefully influence others from other organizations to participate in the sort of educational programs which are absolutely vital.

Whether they run them or whether it is run by somebody else does not matter. The important thing is the value of education, and that really is what I am talking about this evening.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Edwards is next.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Baldwin, as you know, we are here considering Bill 38. I understand and hear your support for the Ducks Unlimited project at Oak Hammock Marsh. What I would appreciate your comments on as a conservationist, as someone with obvious interest and experience in the area, is Section 3(1) of that bill, which indicates that the minister may make such regulations as he considers appropriate respecting the use, control and management of an area; authorizing, regulating or prohibiting any use, activity or thing in an area; authorizing the construction, operation and maintenance of any building, structure or thing in a wildlife management area.

I appreciate what you have said, as I have indicated, about your support for this particular project. How do you feel, as a conservationist, about that level of ministerial discretion?

Mr. Baldwin: Well, as I have already said in my introduction, which you have a copy of in front of you, I am sympathetic to the amendment of the act. I have said it has several components, all of which are important improvements.

* (2040)

I see this as an important improvement, because no matter what we may think, many, many things have been done which we would all say are probably for the good of conservation in wildlife management areas and other areas under the jurisdiction of The Wildlife Act which in fact has been bending the legality slightly, because there are all sorts of things which, over the years, have been done for very good purposes but could conceivably, at least some of them, I believe, be challenged.

Is it not sensible to have legislation to ensure that what is in the regulations at the present time is included in the act so that there is some sort of jurisdiction over it? As I have indicated, I am not claiming to be an expert, legally or otherwise, related to The Wildlife Act, but it seems to me that my

understanding of the amendment to the act is that it embraces a number of things which need to be embraced.

Mr. Edwards: Just one further question—and do not take my question wrong, I do not defend that same provision being in the regulations for the last decade, which it has been, which is the ability of a minister to override the tenets of the regulation, but my question is, and I take it your answer—I just want to be clear—is that in your view it is advisable and at the very least acceptable to have a ministerial override over all of those things that I have mentioned, which is essentially anything and everything that might go on or be built in a wildlife conservation area.

Mr. Baldwin: I would have to seek a legal opinion on it, because I cannot really express whether the pros and cons can be supported legally. I do not know.

Mr. Edwards: Just one further question then. If in fact this section gave the minister an override—

Mr. Baldwin: Excuse me, override over what?

Mr. Edwards: Well, let me just refresh you. I read it once. As you know, there are regulations in place. There is a regulation governing activities in wildlife management areas, and I assume you are familiar with some of the things which that regulation sets out in terms of what you can and cannot do in wildlife management areas. If the minister and the minister alone were entitled to override any and all of that at his discretion, would that be a positive move in your view?

Mr. Baldwin: I think it would be important, taking into account that there are other controls, and—I have not finished yet—there are other controls. There is The Environment Act, and The Environment Act, I believe, has very distinct jurisdiction as it relates to environmental matters. So, as far as I understand, ministerial jurisdiction would certainly be in place, but would it not be a case of having this in the correct environmental perspective?

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radlsson): Just to pick up on this point, Mr. Baldwin, would you not think, given history aside—and I would agree that there have been things done in wildlife management areas in the past when we did not have the environmental awareness that we have, when there was not the need or awareness that wetlands are disappearing—given that, would you not think that

wildlife management area legislation now should be curtailing development in wildlife management areas, or limiting developing in wildlife management areas?

Mr. Baldwin: Well, let me say two things. Firstly, there are many of us who have had awareness of the environment for a very long period of time, so what you are saying is that amongst many people this is a very recent phenomenon. I can assure you, as I have already indicated, that this is not a recent phenomenon for many of us. Furthermore, what you seem to be asking is whether wildlife management areas are areas which should have absolutely nothing done in them at all.

If that is what you are asking, this means that furthermore no work of any conservation type whatsoever could be conducted in a wildlife management area and, indeed, I think we are already beginning to see the difficulties which could be encountered in wanting to put in place conservation work in areas that come within the act.

You may be aware of the Lake Francis marsh, for example, and the fact that the Metis regard this as a heritage marsh and the fact that any conservation work in there is actually stalled at the present time, until such time as there is some mechanism which will permit it to take place through the environmental channels or through the ministerial channels.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the other things that you mentioned when answering Mr. Edwards' question was—

Mr. Baldwin: Sorry, I cannot hear you.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the other things that you said in answer to Mr. Edwards' question had to do with The Environment Act. Is there a part of Bill 38 that you can specify that lead you to believe that The Environment Act would override this piece of legislation?

Mr. Baldwin: Are there not two sets, two pieces of legislation? Is The Environment Act not The Environment Act and The Wildlife Act, The Wildlife Act? Is The Wildlife Act not provincial and The Environment Act is by federal and provincial—is that not right?

Ms. Cerilli: What I am trying to get at is, is it your intention that any development in a wildlife management area would be subject to The Environment Act?

Mr. Baldwin: No, I did not. It is not my intention. What I said was, it is my perception, it is my understanding that that is the case but, as I said, I would have to seek legal counsel on that, because I do not know. It is my perception, but it could be wrong.

Ms. Cerilli: Would that be a recommendation that you would make?

Mr. Baldwin: No. I am not here to make recommendations. I am here to present a brief in support, not make recommendations for amendment, for a change. I understand, for example, that they can make no amendments to this act. Is that right?

Ms. Cerilli: Just to clarify, Mr. Baldwin, this is an opportunity for the public to make presentations and make suggestions for how we could improve the legislation, and we will have an opportunity, after we have heard all the briefs, to make amendments to the bill. That is my intention, to be here and to listen to presentations so that I can propose the best amendments possible that are going to protect wildlife management areas and develop wildlife management areas in a way that is going to be preserving the environment.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions for Mr. Baldwin?

Ms. Cerilli: Taking from the last page in the brief, there is a sentence: "If the proposal to place the Conservation Centre at Oak Hammock is unsuccessful there is no certainty as to an alternative location in Manitoba." My question is, why not?

Mr. Baldwin: Perhaps somebody knows better than I do of a marsh land site relatively close to a major population centre which would achieve this purpose. I know of none.

Ms. Cerilli: That leads to the question, what research or other programs are going to be done at the office complex? You seem to have a fairly good knowledge of Ducks Unlimited.

Mr. Baldwin: Hang on. Let us just clarify this business of office complex. I have difficulty with this. I thought I had made it very clear in my brief what my perception was of the operations component, wherein there are the biologists, planners, designers, agrologists and so on and so forth. Most of the research that takes place within the, in my understanding at any rate, Ducks Unlimited organization, takes place in either the

field, the collation of results elsewhere, or indeed in an institution which has recently been established for those purposes.

* (2050)

Now the precise research that would take place—as a scientist, for example, I could no more tell you the precise research that I would be doing in two years time, so I could not possibly tell you what other people will be doing.

Ms. Cerilli: With respect to the proposal that has been made public lately which would include a number of, to use the term "museum," kind of exhibits, I am wondering, what do you think of that proposal? Maybe in another sense, you could tell the committee, what is your vision for developing interpretive programs at Oak Hammock Marsh or in other wetland areas?

Mr. Baldwin: Firstly, I am not quite sure of the proposal you are talking about. If what you are thinking of is a plan for an integrated type of learning facility which would exemplify wetland environment and reliant species and so on in that particular centre, I wholeheartedly support that.

To me, if one is looking at waterfowl wetland biology, one cannot restrict oneself to exclusively what happens in my back paddock at Oak Hammock, because virtually every bird that we have here is a migratory bird that moves an enormous distance into the southern part of the United States, for example, or into Central America, so we are looking at a multitude of different types of environment. Others who know much more about this undoubtedly will be presenting briefs on this subject anyway.

Ms. Cerilli: You seem to have a lot of experience and, certainly, knowledge about the Ducks Unlimited education programs. I am wondering if you can tell me what kind of programs you think are important to have in wildlife management, especially wetland areas, what kind of educational programs?

Mr. Baldwin: Virtually any educational program that provides an educational experience so that people can understand how wetlands work, what the problems of wetland-reliant species are, what the solutions are, and so on and so forth. There is a broad range of botanical and zoological component parts, for example, as well as geographic influences, which can all play a very important role.

Ms. Cerilli: One more question: You have listed the amount of money that Ducks Unlimited has invested into this marsh and wants to invest more money. Why not put that amount of money into other marshes throughout the province or other areas that need to be refurbished or reclaimed as wetland?

Mr. Baldwin: Firstly, from a personal point of view I view this conservation education component as being of extraordinary importance from the point of view of long-term understanding. The funds that are used by Ducks Unlimited to do this are not funds that are going to be subtracted from the funds that we already spent. For example, the budget for this year includes, say, \$14 million raised within Canada, and I am talking now about DU's conservation work as a whole plus monies which come from the U.S., but there is no suggestion that any of that money is actually going to be used to undertake and to pay for the conservation centre at Oak Hammock. That is going to be done with new dollars.

Ms. Cerilli: Are you aware of how much money Ducks Unlimited is going to put into the redevelopment of marsh land in other areas in Manitoba?

Mr. Baldwin: This year? No, I could not tell you a dollar figure, but I think one has to look at this from the long-term point of view.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I think perhaps the next presenter could give us that accurate information for Ms. Cerilli, but it is my understanding that it is in the order of—it fluctuates between \$5 million and \$7 million annually that Ducks Unlimited of Canada has invested in wetland restoration here in Manitoba.

Ms. Cerilli: I guess what I would be interested in finding is the percentage of the DU money coming into Manitoba for wetlands that is going to the Oak Hammock marsh site.

Mr. Baldwin: None of it. As I said just now, the funds that are going to be used by DU to build the conservation centre are new dollars. These are dollars that are going to be raised entirely independently, as well as from the sale of existing assets, because Ducks Unlimited owns a building in Winnipeg, for example.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Yes, if I could just ask a couple of questions of Mr. Baldwin. You indicate that you are interested in education and preserving the marsh and conservation, and I

am also interested in preserving and also in job creation in the rural area. My question is: Could we not preserve the environment and still have the ability to view nature at Oak Hammock and have the office buildings in some other town, for example, at Stonewall? Why do we have to have the office building in the marsh in order to have the ability to view nature and enjoy it?

Mr. Baldwin: The cost of building and maintaining a conservation centre includes not just costs in dollars but costs in expertise, and surely the expertise which is available—and the expertise is proven over a great period of time—is located in the Ducks Unlimited operations component. For example, if you went to the existing DU offices in Winnipeg, of which there are two, you would find in those offices a great deal of expertise relative to all types of aspects of conservation. The precise rationale for a unified approach, that is, the conservation centre which includes both the educational/interpretive component plus the operations component, is because those two are inextricably intertwined from the functional point of view but also from the funding point of view as well.

Now, if you start off from scratch and build one place here and one place there, you have to increase enormously just the costs of construction and disruption and so on and so forth as well as all the interrelationship between the expertise which is required in one place that will feed on another.

Ms. Wowchuk: Sorry, I guess I have a little bit of difficulty with the necessity to have the office building right there in the natural setting, what is supposed to be an educational centre. My next question is: Can we not have a North American educational centre without having all the extras of alligators and all of the other animals that are being brought in? Can we not have the education centre without all the other extras?

* (2100)

Mr. Baldwin: I see now the proposal that was being mentioned earlier. This was, in my understanding, a draft proposal of some years ago which, like many proposals, includes for the sake of completeness all sorts of ideas which are flown in committees and so on and then shot down or withdrawn. There is absolutely no intention whatsoever, as far as I have ever been aware, to turn Oak Hammock into an everglades marsh. That in itself, if one applied a little bit of logic to this particular component—I

wonder how expensive it would be to maintain a replica of an everglades marsh. I think one has to be a little sensible about this.

Ms. Wowchuk: I think that is what we are trying to be, is a little bit sensible and just see how far this idea is going. I am asking you about whether you have any concerns, whether you think these other extras are necessary, as was part of the earlier proposal as you indicate, or whether what you want is a natural setting with Manitoba species to be viewed there?

Mr. Baldwin: I think the intention always is for Oak Hammock to be maintained as a prairie wetland. The fact that there may be additional things there like computer systems and so on and so forth to exemplify things, is neither here nor there.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just one further question, on the last page as Ms. Cerilli had mentioned, you had said that if Oak Hammock was not successful, we may not know with certainty of other alternative locations in Manitoba. Have you had any—

Mr. Baldwin: Hold on, hold on. Sorry, may I now respond to that?

Mr. Chairman: One second, please. Let her finish.

Ms. Wowchuk: Can I ask my question, please?

My question to you is: In that comment it sounds sort of threatenful I would almost think, and I want to ask you if you have had any communication with Ducks Unlimited or are aware that they will not be interested in setting up projects or contributing into Manitoba, going on with their work, if this project is not allowed to go ahead?

Mr. Baldwin: Let me correct you on the facts. The facts which are on that piece of paper in front of you are not what you just said. What you just said was if this was not completed by the end of June—

Ms. Wowchuk: No, I did not say June.

Mr. Baldwin: Yes, can we have it from the record, please?

Mr. Chairman: I do not think that we will have it that quickly.

Mr. Baldwin: Because that is not what I said, but moreover I understand what you are getting at.

No, this is not a threat. What I have indicated here is as I have indicated before. What I said was exactly the same both to the Environment hearings and to the Stonewall hearing, that there is no

guarantee. There are no guarantees in this world about anything. For example, one member of the committee has already asked me about whether we would be able to do this sort of thing in a marsh elsewhere in Manitoba. I have already replied to that. I have said that there is only one marsh of any consequence within close distance of Winnipeg. All the others have been drained. This one was drained also, but it happens to have been turned back into a man-made, managed wetland. This is not a threat as far as I am concerned. This is common sense.

There may be a decision made. I do not know. There may be a decision made that—well, if this is not possible, if this is denied, who knows? I do not know.

Ms. Wowchuk: I would like to say, if I did say June that was not my intention, although I do not think I did say it. We will wait till we have checked the records. If I did, I apologize. That was not my intention at all.

Just one further question. As you had indicated, there are many people in Manitoba who contribute to Ducks Unlimited who are interested in preserving wildlife habitat throughout the province. Do you have any concern that, by concentrating all their efforts in one area of the province, other areas throughout the province are going to suffer? This has been something that was raised to me in my constituency this weekend, where there are many small projects, wild goose nesting areas, and they are concerned that their other projects throughout the province are going to suffer because of this concentration. Do you have any concern about that?

Mr. Baldwin: No, I do not have any real concern about that, because I do have an inkling of what is in the future as far as educational and other facilities in Manitoba falling within the jurisdiction, for example, of the Greenwing program. This is a province-wide and in fact nation-wide program which is expanding now and will be substantially expanded in the future. As far as it detracting from conservation work elsewhere, the answer to that is no, it will not.

The long-term strategy—and others who know more about this than I do—for Ducks Unlimited work in Canada is mapped out sometime hence, not just from the point of view of local projects, but overall plans. A great deal of emphasis at the present time

is being focused on the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the Prairie Care plan and so on and so forth. There are many, many projects which are either underway now or are proposed for the future, some of which are awaiting for environmental approval, for example, Lake Francis.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am sorry, Mr. Baldwin has mentioned one particular project twice now, and I believe it is Lake Francis. Can you tell me—I am just not sure what that project is. Is that another Ducks Unlimited project? Where is it and what is the—

Mr. Baldwin: Lake Francis is a wetland area which is at the easternmost end of the Delta Marsh at the southern end of Lake Manitoba. The Lake Francis Marsh extends from the St. Ambrose Marsh to St. Laurent. As you probably know, there is a Metis community at St. Laurent. The Metis community have always regarded the Lake Francis Marsh as their marsh, and they have been very enthusiastic to see this lake rehabilitated.

Since the implementation of Hydro programs on Lake Manitoba and since the high water levels in the '50s, there has been an enormous alteration in the fortunes of the Delta Marsh of which the Lake Francis Marsh and Lake Francis is at the northeastern end of it. There has been no work possible on the Delta Marsh as such. The proposal to work in the Lake Francis Marsh is of inordinate importance as far as that particular wetland is concerned, and if anything is going to be done to rehabilitate, for example, the Delta Marsh or several other major wetlands which are megaprojects in Manitoba, the start has to be made somewhere.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Ms. Cerlill: I would like to go back to one of the questions I was asking before. I do not think that many people opposing the complex are opposed to environment education that could be done in co-operation with a variety of organizations. The issue of how to develop interpretive programs, environment education programs, in wildlife management areas is important to be discussed, and I am sure that there will be a variety of opinions on how to do this.

My question is: Are you aware of the number of Ducks Unlimited staff who would be involved in direct education programs, taking people out into the marsh?

Mr. Baldwin: I cannot give you numbers, but other people can. I can give that information to you at a future time or you will likely hear more about it later on, but suffice it to say that the expertise of those persons in the operations centre and its facilities will be available for educational and interpretive programs. There are, I believe, numbers with regard to people who will be directly involved in interpretive programs, but those numbers, I would have to get those on advisement.

* (2110)

Ms. Cerlill: Are there currently Ducks Unlimited staff who tour people through the marsh?

Mr. Baldwin: The Oak Hammock Marsh, as you know, is managed by the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Natural Resources provides staff for interpretive programs, but for anything that is done there, it is fairly restricted. At the present time, I can only speak for what I do in a voluntary capacity along with numerous other people.

Ms. Cerlill: So in your paper you described a number of programs that Ducks Unlimited offers. Are those programs offered by staff? Are those programs offered in Manitoba wetlands where people are actually taking groups or individuals on a wilderness experience?

Mr. Baldwin: I have restricted my comments exclusively to the role of volunteers. Because I am not a Ducks Unlimited employee, anything I do is in a voluntary capacity. So those 123 events are organized and run and invariably paid for, to a certain extent, by volunteers who may themselves be biologists and so on and so forth in good standing.

Ms. Cerlill: We just came from a budget where Natural Resources staff were decimated—over 240 Natural Resources staff. We are in a situation where we are wanting to create employment and wanting to protect the environment and educate people about the environment. Is what you are proposing—this is what I was getting at when I was asking about your vision in terms of developing interpretive programs—does it not make sense to you to try and employ people directly in the role or into the job of providing interpretive tours or interpretive programs in the marsh itself?

Mr. Baldwin: I cannot give you numbers off the top of my head, but the intention is for there to be interpretive guided programs which will be partially

funded by Ducks Unlimited and, in addition to this, the volunteer or the part-time component. Others will have to give you that information, because I do not carry that sort of stuff around in my head.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions? Mr. Baldwin, thank you very much for your presentation.

Mr. Baldwin: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Would Mr. Rick Wishart come forward, please. Mr. Wishart's presentation is being circulated now. Mr. Wishart, would you please proceed.

Mr. Rick Wishart (Manitoba Provincial Manager, Ducks Unlimited Canada): Thank you for providing me the opportunity to address this committee with regard to Bill 38 proposing amendments to The Wildlife Act. I am here because without these amendments put in place, valuable habitat restoration and enhancement work being done now in wildlife management areas may not be possible in the future.

I come before you representing Ducks Unlimited Canada, a conservation institution headquartered in Manitoba for 53 years since its inception in 1938. Ducks Unlimited Canada is a nonprofit organization whose goals are to actively preserve, restore, develop and manage wetlands and associated waterfowl habitat.

We are a nonpartisan watchdog for wetlands and work with governments of all jurisdictions and all political stripes to ensure the protection of wetlands. Our work consists of developing habitat projects on the ground, but also of promoting positive legislative and policy alternatives that will benefit habitat.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

The habitat projects we do, putting our money where our mouth is, so to speak, gives us the credibility to help influence such changes. Ask this or any other government if they do not hear from us on a regular basis about protecting habitat. We make no apologies for this operating philosophy, because under its banner we have accomplished a great deal for wildlife on this continent, more than most other groups and through private-source funding.

Ducks Unlimited Canada is financed largely by contributions from individual supporters throughout North America. Our strength over the last half century has been in hundreds of thousands of

dedicated people who worked tirelessly to assist us. In Manitoba, there are over 13,000 members supporting us; and in 1990 alone over \$1 million was raised at 89 community events organized by scores of volunteers across this province.

Contrary to what we have heard by a few of the presenters to this panel, we are not a commercial organization out to make money off of marshes to pay out to shareholders or to finance our work. Our shareholders are the province's marshes, and we are investing our hard-earned donated dollars to protect and enhance them for the wildlife that live there.

Over the past 50 years—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please.

Ms. Cerilli: Sorry to interrupt you, but there is some confusion with your brief. It is starting on page four.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): It starts on page two. You are missing a page. We will just get you another copy, Ms. Cerilli. You have it now.

Mr. Wishart: Sorry for the inconvenience.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): Carry on, please.

Mr. Wishart: Over the past 50 years, were we to rely on others to do this work, one of three things would have happened: (1) either the work would not have been done and we would have fewer wetlands and less wildlife as a result; (2) other social and service programs delivered by government would be reduced to pay for wetland protection; or (3) the taxes of those in and outside of this room would be higher in order to accomplish this work.

The membership of this committee could speculate better than I about which of the options would have been followed. Other nongovernment groups represented in this room and elsewhere did not and do not have the wherewithal to accomplish this work.

Ducks Unlimited is a big organization these days because there is much work for habitat that has to be done. The job seems to be getting bigger rather than smaller despite our enlightened environmental society. Most people and organizations still really are ignorant of the tremendous losses in habitat occurring as a result of agricultural clearing and road construction, to name but two of the most important impactors. Such losses occur quietly and without much fanfare, and you rarely, if ever, see much

protest or practical suggestions for alternatives coming from those who live within the perimeters of our larger cities. It is not because they do not have a sincere love for their environment, but, unfortunately, it is because they are not aware of its deterioration at their doorstep.

Across Manitoba there are 10 Ducks Unlimited offices employing 140 regular staff. Over the past year DU expenditures by these Manitoba offices was \$23.8 million, and since our inception this total is now up to over \$130 million in the province. DU Manitoba has developed 1,180 active wetland projects in this province totalling over one million acres of habitat. These projects provide tremendous economic and environmental benefits to the people of Manitoba well beyond those simply accruing to waterfowl and other wildlife. Flood protection, erosion control, groundwater recharge, water purification, provision of stockwater and sources of irrigation are but a few of these benefits. Each of these projects attempts to enhance the biodiversity of our environment and are good examples of how to go about the process of achieving sustainable development.

Recently Ducks Unlimited has played a key role along with other government agencies and NGOs across the continent in implementing the Manitoba Prairie CARE Program, a key conservation component of the \$1.5 billion North American Waterfowl Management Plan. This program, which is a tremendous example of how diverse interest groups can combine into a much more powerful and positive force for environmental conservation, will see \$134 million invested in southern Manitoba over the next decade.

Wildlife habitat will be significantly improved as a result of this program. In addition, farmers who own most of our best wildlife lands will make direct gains economically while at the same time improving the long-term productivity of their existing agricultural operations. This unparalleled combination of revenues, determination and skilled people will see the implementation of a winning environmental program, and DU is proud to be a major partner in it.

Over its long history in Manitoba, DU has worked closely with all provincial governments in developing and improving many of their wildlife management areas administered under The Wildlife Act. To date, DU has completed 17 such projects encompassing 592,000 acres at a cost of almost \$5

million. An additional three projects are underway, as we speak, encompassing another 240,000 acres. To date, these projects have cost Ducks Unlimited \$10.8 million with another \$1.6 million required to see them through to completion. In the near future there are plans to initiate two new such habitat projects totalling 6,000 acres and improve two older existing projects. To date, over \$250,000 has been expended in designing these habitat enhancement projects which will call for the investment of an additional \$6.9 million to complete them all by 1995.

* (2120)

In total, then, by 1995, DU will have developed 22 wetland habitat projects in Manitoba's WMAs encompassing 839,000 acres at a total cost of \$24 million. This work has consisted of improving or creating wetland habitats and associated uplands as well as ongoing operations, repairs and management to maintain the productivity of these areas. Such projects provide direct benefits to a wide variety of indigenous plants and animals and tremendous recreational and economic value to Manitobans who use them.

In some cases these projects have created new habitat or improved natural areas. However, in a number of cases, such as at Grant's Lake, Oak Hammock and at Saskeram, works have been emplaced to restore areas that had been impacted by agriculture, drainage or by flooding.

This then is what DU is accomplishing in Manitoba's WMAs. Often just naming an area a wildlife management area is not enough. Few of our areas are natural anymore, and most have been impacted in some way.

For example, most of the marshes around Lakes Dauphin, Winnipeg and Manitoba, and there are many of them, are still there, but they are there in a terribly degraded state due to the construction of large water control dams on the big lakes and due to the artificial influx of carp, a fish that does a tremendous amount of damage to marsh habitats.

We have still many thousands of potholes in southwestern Manitoba, but again, up to 90 percent of them are impacted and degraded according to Canadian Wildlife Service surveys. With this degradation of habitat, DU has recognized the need to restore and enhance the productivity of all that we can to make up for the loss. Oak Hammock Marsh as it is today is but one example of this work.

Contrary to some of the expressions made before this committee, DU does not own or lease WMAs and other Crown land upon which we conduct our work. We are there at the invitation of the government to help improve or restore these areas for all Manitobans. We are bound by legal agreements and must follow the normal water and environmental licensing process in our activities in these areas. DU's wetland developments and project operations have greatly enhanced local wildlife populations.

For example, at The Pas, fur trapping within these multiuse WMAs in that part of the province provide a major source of traditional income for native residents. The number and quality of muskrats coming as a spin-off from those wetlands developed and managed by Ducks Unlimited is extremely high. Recent surveys have indicated that while managed basins only make up 28 percent of the survey area, they produce 59 percent of the muskrats for these people. In the Saskeram WMA 81 percent of the muskrat come from just one marsh that has to date benefited from management.

Native groups at The Pas and elsewhere are extremely supportive of our works and we co-operate closely with them in these developments.

Our projects also benefit waterbirds, shorebirds, fish, moose, turtles, invertebrates and plants of many varieties. Some of these species are hunted, fished or trapped by Manitobans, either for recreation or income at particular times of the year. Most, of course, are not and provide nonconsumptive benefits for recreationists, birdwatchers, hikers or canoeists. Again, such activities promote an appreciation for the environment, educational opportunities and economic benefits.

Over half of DU's membership are nonhunters of waterfowl, and most of what we do is with the consent of private landowners. We have the mandate of attempting to achieve the widest variety of wildlife and environmental benefits from our projects.

All of this work over the years in Manitoba's WMAs has taken place only as a result of co-operation and approvals DU has received from the provincial government of the day under the auspices of The Wildlife Act and its regulations. This has been very beneficial for Manitoba, and we

feel its continuance will be assured as a result of proposed amendments to The Wildlife Act under Section 3(1). We understand that the amendment simply brings forward existing regulations into the act and it is these regulations which have allowed us to construct the dams, dikes and other works necessary to restore wetlands in WMAs.

In addition to all of the direct habitat work DU has and will continue to undertake in Manitoba, we have identified a need for more involvement in public conservation education if the destruction of our valuable wetlands is to be halted. Contrary to the views of some, the conservation education facilities and programs that presently exist in this province are not sufficient. Facilities that provide year round programs for all sectors of society, both indoors and out, are needed. The Oak Hammock Marsh proposal was made to provide such a program.

(Mr. Chairman, in the Chair)

The proposed program is one that is in an early concept phase and Dr. Wrigley, the acting director, can provide the committee with facts about it in his presentation later on in the hearings. The distorted and nonfactual outline of this proposal given by some of those addressing this group is rather disturbing but I trust this committee will sort the wheat from the chaff in what has been said. DU has been instrumental in the restoration of wildlife habitat in the Oak Hammock WMA since 1972 and to date, we have invested heavily in this marsh. DU's involvement in the area actually dates back to the 1940s when restoration developments for the area were first proposed and designed by Ducks Unlimited.

Surprising though it may seem now, there were many who spoke out against the restoration of Oak Hammock back those many years ago. At least it is encouraging to now see these same people agree that, after all, the concept was a good one and the project was more than a success. This wildlife mecca, close to several large towns and the city of Winnipeg, is an ideal location for a conservation education centre. In fact, such a centre was part of the plan initiated 20 years ago to restore the marsh before the area had even become a WMA. We feel strongly that both components, the DU administrative facilities or the offices and the interpretive facility must go together and that combined, they constitute the conservation centre.

DU, as has been said several times, is a nonprofit organization and everything taking place in the administrative component of this centre will be channelled either directly or indirectly toward habitat conservation initiatives of the types that I have described. Many have spoken out against this project but many, many more can see the logic behind it and the conservation benefits that it will provide. We feel the concept is correct. We are encouraged by the tremendous support that we have received from many quarters for it and we look forward to its realization in the months and years ahead.

Again DU speaks strongly in favour of Section 3(1) as a proposed amendment to The Wildlife Act which we feel will facilitate approval to allow this important and beneficial project to proceed. We also feel that such an amendment will foster the ongoing establishment and enhancement of wildlife management areas across the province in future years.

We urge this committee and the government to approve the proposed legislation.

Thank you.

I have provided the committee in their handouts some tables at the back of the presentation outlining in more detail the work that we have done in WMAs.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you.

Mr. Enns: Dr. Wishart, just one particular question. I wish to thank you, of course, for your presentation here this evening. I am also aware that Ducks Unlimited Canada has done business with the province of Manitoba and, in particular, the Department of Natural Resources for many years with the governments of the day since your inception.

* (2130)

I am aware there are those who have suggested that due process or not sufficient opportunities for public input or examination surround this particular project. I am aware that you, yourself, participated in a substantial number of informational hearings, public hearings, at the local level and then, of course, the formal extensive environmental hearings which took place some time ago, and now, of course, these meetings here.

My particular question to you, Dr. Wishart—is I am also aware that, not that long ago, you signed another contract with the then government of

Manitoba which was formalized by Order-in-Council 1377. The actual contract that was agreed to at that time by your organization and the Manitoba government was done for the consideration of that interesting \$1 again that seemed to be important in the presentation here last night. It was formalized on January 10.

Among other things, the Province of Manitoba—the Order-in-Council being signed by the then Premier Howard Pawley and Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Mackling, and I believe Mr. Stewart Morrison, vice-president, who is still your immediate superior—agreed that the province grants Ducks Unlimited the right to construct dams and/or other works on the aforesaid lands as shown on the attached Plan A prepared by Ducks Unlimited Canada; that the province grants to Ducks Unlimited the right to excavate, construct, place, inspect, alter, add to, remove on, under, across, along, over, through or from the aforesaid lands any structure that forms part of the project. That is a formal contract that was signed by the Howard Pawley administration in 1985.

My simple question to you, Dr. Wishart, at the time that you undertook that agreement, was there any interest expressed on the part of those who are currently expressing this concern about violating the sanctity of Oak Hammock Marsh? Were you brought before any committee of government to explain what it is that you were going to construct in and on and about Oak Hammock Marsh; or did you, in fact, act in good faith with the government of the day and carry out those works to the benefit of the marsh which has steadily grown under the joint auspices of your assistance and that of the Department of Natural Resources?

Mr. Wishart: That is absolutely right. We go through that process at any time where we are proposing works or have been invited to undertake works on Crown land. It is the process that has to be followed. In some cases, environmental licensing, since the new act was established, is required. Water rights licensing is required. Block planning agreement is required. Municipal resolutions need to support our projects. Landowner agreements—any private landowners involved in the project must approve of the project. So there are all manner of agreements and processes to go through in developing any of our projects.

Mr. Enns: Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: I would just like to make one comment to the committee members, that being that if you choose to make a comment—and you can do this—however, follow it lastly with your question. It was noted just a while back that, in fact, there was a comment, a question and then about another minute of a comment, and it was somewhat mixed up.

If we could just follow that comment and then lastly the question, we will continue.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): I noticed throughout your presentation, the dollar figures that you are presenting that are being spent here in the province of Manitoba by DU. Could you tell me what percentage of those dollars are raised in Manitoba or come from outside of the country?

Mr. Wishart: Our budget this year and in the last five years is averaged on the order of between \$6 and \$7 million, and last year we raised about a million dollars in this province, so about one-seventh, one-sixth.

Mr. Laurendeau: So the rest of those dollars were like a transfer payment from the United States then?

Mr. Wishart: Yes.

Mr. Laurendeau: When you are relating these dollars spent within the province of Manitoba, are you relating any volunteer hours being put forward in that presentation or is this strictly the dollars that are being put forward? There are a number of volunteer hours that could be accumulated and added if the province were to have undertaken this and spent the dollars to do these projects.

Mr. Wishart: No, this was strictly staff time and direct cost to the corporation. No volunteer dollars or values are represented in those numbers.

Mr. Laurendeau: Would you have a breakdown of how many volunteer hours go into the presentations and the educational programs that DU brings forward in this province at this time?

Mr. Wishart: The Greenwing program is primarily volunteer operated. We have, like I said, 87 volunteer committees across the province. It was the objective of our national organization to see each of these committees undertake at least one Greenwing event for the youngsters in that community. So there are a substantial number of events, a substantial number of volunteers. There is also a substantial amount of staff time that goes into helping these committees put on these events.

I have not got a figure in estimate of what it is, but it is a fair bit.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you very much, doctor. I appreciate that.

Ms. Cerilli: The point the minister raised with all the other construction that was okayed by previous governments in developing in marsh, was any of that development to put up an office building?

Mr. Wishart: Did you see destruction or disruption?

Ms. Cerilli: Was any of the bulldozing and the construction in Oak Hammock Marsh to put up an office building?

Mr. Wishart: It was to develop the dams, dikes and control structures which are also indicated in The Wildlife Act.

Ms. Cerilli: What was the purpose of all the other construction that was done at Oak Hammock?

Ms. Wishart: I guess you have not been to Oak Hammock or seen these projects, but the idea of restoring these areas is to try to establish a water level that will support aquatic plants and upland plants that will provide the habitat necessary for the wildlife that we want to promote there.

Ms. Cerilli: I think that the point that I am trying to make is that—I understand that there has been other development in the marsh but no other development has been to put up an office building, and that there is a dramatic difference between having construction to reclaim or refurbish the marsh and construction to put up an office building. Can you see the difference?

Mr. Wishart: Oh, I see the difference, but those other features that we just talked about and described would also potentially be prohibited unless this amendment were allowed. They are covered under the regulations at present. If those regulations are not formalized as part of the act, they would also potentially be subject to nonapproval or illegality.

Ms. Cerilli: Can you explain that further? I am not following what you are saying.

Mr. Wishart: I am not sure how to say it again. I can repeat it. Those activities—the dams, dikes and water control structures—are covered under the regulations as allowable by the government. Without those regulations brought forward into the act, those activities could also be called into question; that is the point I am trying to make.

Ms. Cerlill: With respect to Bill 38, do you think that the authority that is given to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) in Bill 38 is necessary to allow the development of anything, in wildlife management, so that we can have the refurbishment of wetlands?

Mr. Wishart: Those are covered under the regulations at the moment. This is what the attempt seems to be to get those abilities to make those decisions out of the regulations and into the act.

* (2140)

Ms. Cerlill: Do you not think though that we should be limiting development in wildlife management areas, specifically to things that are going to help reclaim wetlands or other natural habitat and to eliminate or limit other kind of industry or development?

Mr. Wishart: Certainly. We are not looking for industry commercial ventures to be allowable in these areas. That is not the intention.

Ms. Cerlill: Mr. Wishart, that is what is allowed by the current legislation that we have.

Mr. Wishart: I think the minister is responsible to the people; the government is responsible to the people. The minister should have a little bit of authority to make these kinds of decisions, and if he makes wrong decisions he is accountable to the people of Manitoba.

Ms. Cerlill: Maybe you can clarify then for me, why do we need Bill 38?

Ms. Wishart: As I have said, without these amendments to bring the present regulations into the act, we feel the works that I have just described to you, that we have accomplished, to restore 17 existing WMAs could be called into question.

Ms. Cerlill: I think that the point is to make the act more specific, and I would ask you, do you not think that we need to limit industrial use and development in wildlife management areas?

Mr. Wishart: I think that is laudable and we would agree with that, of course.

Ms. Cerlill: Is that specified in Bill 38?

Mr. Wishart: I do not know. You tell me. I am telling you why it is important to us that this amendment go through.

Ms. Cerlill: I would tell you, Mr. Wishart, the reason we have all these people here tonight is because that is not specified in Bill 38; that right now

construction, industry in wildlife management areas are open for business under this legislation. I would ask you, as a representative of Ducks Unlimited who has put millions of dollars into wildlife management areas, can you support that?

Mr. Wishart: We would not be putting potentially a dime into these areas unless this amendment is made is the point that I am trying to get across as well. Even the maintenance of the works that we have done to date could be called into question, and I do not think that is acceptable.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions for Mr. Wishart?

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Having been born and raised in the Red River Valley, especially the lower part of the Red River Valley, and having witnessed the recovery of the white-tailed deer population in the Red River Valley to the extent of where they are actually becoming somewhat of a nuisance in some areas and having seen also the dramatic increase in waterfowl and many other bird species in the Red River Valley, that being, of course, seen as a significant flyway for many of the species. It is somewhat encouraging that one can take one's grandson out to the aux Marais river—which is just a very little creek which happens to store some water because of beaver dams and a few other things and raises a significant number of ducks locally—to sit there with your grandson and actually witness the young deer fawns wandering through the creek and also the young ducks and geese now hatching there, which never used to be the case before.

I wonder whether you could tell us of your plans to have some involvement in the restoration of some of the marshes in that part of the province that I come from, the southeastern part of the province, that has witnessed deterioration due to drainage which was done previously, and whether there is some local support there to actually increase and enhance those kinds of projects.

Mr. Wishart: You are right. In localized areas we do see a resurgence of waterfowl populations and wildlife, but the Red River Valley, as we see it today, is really just a remnant of what marsh habitat used to be in this area. We are far short of what historically we have seen in Manitoba or even the Red River Valley. In fact, the populations of waterfowl in Manitoba this year, based on recent CWS surveys, are 20 percent below numbers even

seen last year. We have had about 10 years of drought. We are into our second decade of drought, and the waterfowl populations are not doing very well as a result continent-wide.

As far as the southeast part of the province, we have a number of projects in that part of the province. We have a concept or proposal that was developed jointly with a task force of other agencies within Manitoba to develop a fairly large potential marsh on the Rat River south of St. Malo. That project is still in the concept stage, but it provides for a lot of optimism that another Oak Hammock-type marsh could be established in that part of the province. It is an area with that type of productivity inherent in it. It is a very productive part of the province, and I think it could be quite an addition to the province's marshes, if one day the money could be amassed to undertake that project.

We have had some commitments from the federal government, an interest in them in participating. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan potentially could provide up to half the funds to undertake a project there. Ducks Unlimited itself has committed up to \$250,000 for that project if it were to proceed. We are still at the concept stage. There are lots of things to look at.

Mr. Penner: The reason, Mr. Chairman, I raised those issues and I asked those questions is because I believe it is extremely important to note that the population, in general, has increased in the Red River Valley. I mean the human population has increased fairly dramatically in the Red River Valley. The intensive farming that goes on in the Red River Valley, I do not think will be or could be surpassed anywhere else in the province, yet we have seen a dramatic increase in the waterfowl as well as other wildlife in that area.

I believe partially that is due to the conservation mentality that exists now to a much greater degree than what used to exist. I think we rather did away with some wildlife that we did not want to see around for the longest period of time, and we are now very cognizant of the fact that wildlife in fact can live cohabitatively with human population.

Because I believe it has largely been through education, whether through some formal education process or by learning as we go along, the question I have for you is: How many staff are you as Ducks Unlimited going to be employing at this new centre who will in fact be dedicated to training and

educating our young people in Manitoba to in fact encourage and enhance further their ability to accept the fact that we can live together with wildlife in this province?

Mr. Wishart: Well, the conservation concept is a joint concept between ourselves and the Department of Natural Resources. The staff who would be hired to man that facility and develop the programs that eventually would be a part of that facility, we think that in the neighbourhood of about 11 full-time staff, new staff, on the order of 10 or 12 summer, casual staff, people to take the load when the visitations are highest, and hopefully a core of up to 50 volunteers who would be trained by the permanent staff to assist in the interpretation programs that would be conducted there.

Mr. Penner: I have one final question, Mr. Chairman, to the minister. Can you tell us how many staff you currently employ at the Oak Hammock Marsh to give guided tours or who would in fact be involved in the educational process at Oak Hammock that will in fact be taken over by Ducks Unlimited and some of their staff?

Mr. Enns: We currently employ four seasonal staff to try to do our best with the 85,000 visitors who are coming to Oak Hammock. They are helped with additional volunteers, of course, and I do not have an accurate number of the volunteer forces that are there at any given time, but I appreciate that they are a big part, component of the current interpretive program that is being carried out at Oak Hammock. The department itself funds four seasonal people.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Wishart, what will Ducks Unlimited do if this amendment to The Wildlife Act is defeated?

Mr. Wishart: What will we do?

Ms. Cerilli: What will you do?

Mr. Wishart: I do not think there is much that we can do. We cannot undertake legislation ourselves. This is something that legislators have to deal with. In what context do you mean, what would we do?

Ms. Cerilli: Well, what would happen to development of interpretive programs at Oak Hammock Marsh involving Ducks Unlimited if this amendment is not passed?

Mr. Wishart: You know, I guess that remains to be seen. I cannot predict the future. We want to see what the process is here. We hope that it is successful, and we hope that our proposal,

obviously, is accepted and can go ahead. That is our intention.

* (2150)

Ms. Cerilli: Could you repeat that, please?

Mr. Wishart: I cannot visualize the future. We hope that things will proceed. What is the point in answering "what if" type questions?

Ms. Cerilli: It is somewhat speculative, but there has been a lot of involvement of Ducks Unlimited co-operating with the Department of Natural Resources in this area, and I would hope that would continue and there would be co-operation that would include a variety of environment groups. I hope that Ducks Unlimited would still consider other interpretive plans.

Mr. Wishart: . . . that we will and this is not the only thing we would like to see happen as far as education. We are a national-international company. We would like to see these kinds of programs developed all throughout North America where wetlands are under tremendous peril. We have organizations in Mexico, in New Zealand, in Australia, worldwide. We would think it is very appropriate that Ducks Unlimited includes us in its programs wherever we are.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions? Okay. Before we go on with the questions, could you in fact wait to be recognized, both committee members and presenters, so that we can get it all on the Hansard, please? Thank you.

Ms. Cerilli: Unfortunately, I do not have a copy of the agreement between Ducks Unlimited, the department and the Western Diversification Fund in front of me. I asked for that in Question Period recently. -(interjection)- Oh, here we go. Thank you.

I understand that there are a number of conditions and—well, there is an agreement between Ducks Unlimited based on money coming from the Western Diversification Fund. Can you clarify for us, Mr. Wishart, the nature of the plan that was or the proposal that was the basis for the funding or the agreement with the Western Diversification Fund?

Mr. Wishart: The basis for—could you repeat that. I am sorry.

Ms. Cerilli: What plan or what proposal? The minister said, after the committee hearing last Thursday, that the proposal that was highlighted in the newspaper over the weekend was just a proposal and was not the proposal that was part of

the agreement with the Western Diversification Fund that ensured there was federal money coming to the province or coming to the project.

Can you clarify? Was that the plan or the proposal, or was it not?

Mr. Wishart: I am not sure not being a party to and involved in that agreement what attachments were part of the agreement. You have a copy of it there, maybe you could—

Ms. Cerilli: I will not be able to find, given the short notice.

Mr. Wishart: Well, I do not have a copy of it either.

Ms. Cerilli: Who in Ducks Unlimited would be able to answer these questions? I am surprised. You are here as the representative from Ducks Unlimited, and you are not aware of what is in the agreement.

Mr. Wishart: I was not on the negotiating team. I am here representing Ducks Unlimited and Ducks Unlimited Manitoba operations to tell you why we feel that this amendment is important. That is why I am here.

Ms. Cerilli: I am of the understanding the proposal that was discussed at the committee hearings on Thursday night is, in fact part of the agreement, alligators and all included, is part of the agreement that was made with the Western Diversification Fund.

Mr. Wishart: The plan that was cited out of context at this committee hearing last week is in draft stage. It is a draft interpretive plan; it is still not completed. A lot of the information in that plan are ideas. It is a starting point for the staff once they are hired to develop the details of that plan.

Point of Order

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, perhaps just on a point of order for clarification. The information that Ms. Cerilli is alluding to was referred to last night in the presentations, part of the information that was attached to material that was obtained, that was delivered to the Western Diversification Fund in terms of general information as to the application for the proponents request for funding.

I am familiar with the agreement. I signed the agreement on behalf of the Province of Manitoba, and I want to assure committee members that none of that material has any standing of any sort within the contract that we have entered into with Ducks

Unlimited Canada. It was first draft, second draft proposals on the part of some concepts of what might be entertained in a future interpretive centre, including exhibits, but has absolutely no binding contractual standing with respect to the contract that Ms. Cerilli and Mr. Edwards now have and I invite them to examine the contents of that agreement. I appreciate that they have only received that agreement now, but for the record, I want to make that very clear.

* * *

Ms. Cerilli: Well, part of the problem then with the project is we have building permits that have been issued. We have had a clean environment commission that has issued a licence. We are not sure what we are building. We do not know if it is—how much of the marsh it is going to impact on. I would ask you, Mr. Wishart, what is the proposal that has been approved by the Department of Natural Resources and by the Western Diversification Fund?

Mr. Wishart: There is a draft interpretive plan. What we are building is a building to house the conservation centre aspect of that interpretive plan. There was a draft interpretive plan for the marsh, the wildlife management area, that was developed by Department of Natural Resources staff that is the basis for the outdoor interpretive programs that will be established at the marsh. There is a presenter from Ducks Unlimited, the interim director of the centre, who would be very prepared to tell you all of the details of what that draft plan is, both for the building and for the WMA.

Ms. Cerilli: So the nature or the extent of development at the marsh is still open for public input?

Mr. Wishart: It is in draft stage. I think we will be looking for input from a variety of informed sources.

* (2200)

Ms. Cerilli: So what is this structure? How do other environmental groups or individuals make their concerns known with their vision of interpretive programs for Oak Hammock Marsh?

Mr. Wishart: Once the interpretive plan is completed it will be a public document and there will be all kinds of opportunities for making ideas and reactions known at that time.

Ms. Wowchuk: If I could just make a couple of comments. As I look at your presentation, Mr.

Wishart, I would—first of all I am a farmer and I take a bit of exception to the comments that seem to say that farmers are quietly destroying the land while city people do not know what is going on. I would like to put on the record that, yes, there has been a lot of land taken up for farming but there are also a lot of farmers who are concerned about the environment and also involved in wildlife management and preserving the environment. It is not only farmers who are destroying it. I just wanted to get that comment on the record.

Mr. Wishart: I do not think I said that, but I agree with your comments.

Ms. Wowchuk: It is implied. I just wanted a bit of clarification, Mr. Wishart. Ducks Unlimited has operated in Manitoba, as you said, for 53 years, has had many projects, has negotiated all these projects with government and has always been able to come up with agreements on where the projects would be, and have been able to negotiate land. I do not quite understand why we have to have a change in regulation now, or a change in the act to proceed with this project. If you have been able to work with the Manitoba government and other governments all these years, it does not make any sense that you should now not be able to work with government and need new amendments to proceed.

Mr. Chairman: Was there a question there?

Ms. Wowchuk: No, it was just a comment. I will have my question now. My question is with offices. You are planning to build office buildings and have quite a few jobs out there. I want to ask you why you feel it is necessary to have your office buildings right on the marsh when you have had your offices here in Winnipeg? If you want them out in the rural area, which I am not opposed to, I am quite in favour of jobs in the rural area, why do the jobs have to be located right on the marsh? Can they not be located in a town nearby?

Mr. Wishart: We have many offices in the rural setting. I mentioned that we had 10 offices in Manitoba, and most of those are in communities like Virden and Brandon and around the province, The Pas. I think you got a very good answer from Dr. Baldwin about the reasons why we would like to have, and need to have, the office or administrative component of Ducks Unlimited as attached and an integral part of the conservation-education centre. I think that has been answered many times.

Ms. Wowchuk: My question is: Could you not have an interpretive centre and protect the marsh and have everything else there without having the office building there? Is it vital to your operation to have the offices there, or could they be located in a nearby community but not in the marsh area?

Mr. Wishart: Anything is possible if there is enough money and enough resources. Using donated dollars, we want to use them as efficiently and wisely as possible. There is a tremendous cost saving by having the facilities connected and together—on the order of \$250,000 of savings by having these facilities together.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just one further question, and that is related to the donated dollars. These dollars come from throughout the province, as you had indicated, and it is the same question that I asked the previous presenter. Do you have any concerns that Ducks Unlimited will not carry on with wildlife habitats projects throughout the province? As you said, you only have limited dollars. Are other projects going to suffer because of concentrating all your efforts into one centre? Is that a concern at all to you?

Mr. Wishart: It is a good question, but it is not a concern. It is not a realistic fear. We have, as I mentioned, offices—we just opened up four new small suboffices in small rural communities to be able to deliver the Manitoba Prairie Care program right at the farmgate. We have a million dollar budget at The Pas. We have major offices in Dauphin and Brandon. We have a tremendous habitat program that is not going to suffer; in fact, it is expanding. The money that we raise in the United States to come up to Canada is not coming up as its own dollars. It is actually leveraging as many dollars from the U.S. fish and wildlife service to implement the North American plan. So our dollars are actually doubling as they come across the border to implement this habitat program primarily in southwestern Manitoba, but it allows us to use our base budget Ducks Unlimited dollars in The Pas and the Dauphin area and the Interlake.

Mr. Laurendeau: I just have a question about that last comment you made about the doubling effect on the dollar. Could you please go a little deeper into that?

Mr. Wishart: The monies available from the U.S. sources for the North American plan in Canada under U.S. legislation cannot come across the

border unless they are matched equally by a non-federal government entity, either a state government and a private organization. At the moment, it is primarily Ducks Unlimited Inc. dollars or our DU American counterpart who is undertaking that matching dollar activity. So those DU Inc. dollars before they come across the border are being matched by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services dollars. That is the only way that they can come across.

Mr. Laurendeau: So these are American tax dollars that are coming up here that are being matched with your funds that you are raising then?

Mr. Wishart: That is where we come up with the \$1.5 billion program over the next decade; 75 percent of those dollars are U.S. dollars.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you.

Mr. Chalman: Are there any other questions?

Ms. Wowchuk: Yes, just in another area of Ducks Unlimited, you mentioned fisheries. In my constituency, a large amount of the population that depends on fisheries, and there is some concern on Lake Winnipegosis about a number of smaller areas that have been taken over by Ducks Unlimited or where there are dams built for Ducks Unlimited. As a result, some of the spawning grounds are not as effective as they used to be. Are you aware of this concern and are you addressing it?

Mr. Wishart: We have developed many co-operative projects with the department of Fisheries all around the major lakes in Manitoba, and actually we are improving these areas as spawning areas. We are attempting in these marsh developments to—and one of the activities we are trying to do is keep carp, which are an introduced European species, out of these marshes. They are in the big lakes now. They come to spawn in the marshes peripheral to the big lakes, and what they do is they rot around in the marshes; they uproot the aquatic vegetation; they disturb the sediments and make it very unproductive for other fish, for all wildlife.

These carp do provide some economic income to fishermen in some areas. The carp, as they spawn, are harvested and primarily used for pet food, I think, but on these peripheral marshes we are attempting to keep carp out. In some cases, there are fish ways or temporal management of the wetlands to allow some of the more economically important species

like walleye and pike into the marshes at certain specific times.

The provincial government is also using these managed marshes to introduce walleye fry into these areas and then flush them out with the water control that we do or net them out and release them into the big lakes. So I think it is a fairly productive working relationship that we have, and I think you will find the support of the fishermen in Manitoba for these projects.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. Could we try to keep our questions relevant to Bill 38, so in fact we can hear as many presenters as possible.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, but if we are hearing a presentation on Ducks Unlimited's activities, are not their activities related to Natural Resources relevant, if it is wildlife management?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, if I can be of any help. I have no objections if members of the committee wish to take this opportunity to question Dr. Wishart on the various activities, worthwhile activities, that his organization carries on in the province of Manitoba. It may not be particularly germane to Bill 38, but I have no objections if committee wishes to.

* (2210)

Mr. Chairman: Is this the wish of the committee?

Floor Comment: Agreed.

Ms. Wowchuk: If the Chairman feels it is not relevant to the committee, then I will pass that opportunity now and perhaps raise it at another time, but I will perhaps have a discussion with Mr. Wishart on a couple of spawning grounds on Lake Winnipegosis that are of concern.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Ms. Cerilli: I do have a number of questions, but I would like to stay on the issue of the agreement between Ducks Unlimited and the Western Diversification Fund. I have, I think, located the section that does indicate that the western diversification funds are tied to the agreement that is known as the response to the Bovey report, and I think it is in Section 8 that refers to the entire contract, which outlines a number of attachments and one of the attachments is Section E, which outlines the wetland exhibit hall, which includes the television monitoring, closed circuit television and Part 6, which includes the courtyard, which has the infamous alligator enclosure. So there seems to be a dispute here. It seems that in the agreement with

the Western Diversification Fund all of these things in the plan or the proposal are a requirement for the western diversification funds.

Mr. Wishart: That is not my understanding. The response to the Bovey report provided information to try and provide a little bit more information about what was being proposed and Mr. Bovey in his report asked to see some of this information and pointed out that he was not aware of it. So there was a formal response to the Bovey report, a very long document—I am not sure if you have that or not—with some attachments, one of which was the draft interpretive plan as it was at that point. It is not an attachment to the agreement, as I understand with the Western Diversification Fund; it is a response to the Bovey report.

Ms. Cerilli: So we would understand then that, as I said earlier, plans for the marsh are still open. We do not know for sure what kind of interpretive centre/museums that Ducks Unlimited is planning for the area.

Mr. Wishart: There is a whole presentation on this topic, if you would be able to wait for it.

Point of Order

Mr. Enns: Just on a point of order, because I think it is important for committee members to realize that very precise detailed information that was presented to and approved and licensed by the Environment department is what is being considered by the proponents, both the Department of Natural Resources and Ducks Unlimited Canada, to build at Oak Hammock.

What the honourable member, or Ms. Cerilli, is now trying to divine is what the nature of the interpretive and education program will be. That will be decided by the management board, as I indicated to her in the House under questioning, by a management board that is just being set up, that will in fact develop and no doubt take advantage of any form of public, you know, information gathering as to the kind of programming that will take place in the interpretive centre.

At issue is not what has been licensed by the Clean Environment Commission and what it is that the partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada and the Department of Natural Resources of Manitoba are, in fact, licensed to build at Oak Hammock.

Mr. Chairman: The minister does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Ms. CerlIII: I want to go back to a point that was raised earlier with respect to the funding that Ducks Unlimited receives. Can you give an explanation of where Ducks Unlimited receives its funding? The previous presenter said that some 50 percent was related to hunting purposes. Can you clarify this for us?

Mr. Wishart: I do not think he said that at all. Our funds are raised through volunteer committees that sponsor events at communities all over North America. These funds are raised by private individuals. That is where our money comes from, not from some lobby group or group of hunters. It comes from individuals all over North America, several hundred thousand of them.

Mr. Chairman: Do we have any more questions?

Ms. CerlIII: One of the concerns from people who had been involved with the management of Oak Hammock Marsh, a number of other environmentalists are concerned that they have been excluded from the development of this proposal. Can you explain who has been on the committee that has designed the plan or the proposal for the interpretive programs at Oak Hammock Marsh?

Mr. Wishart: As I said, there is a whole presentation about that, but I do not think anybody has been excluded. I think a lot of people—and a real effort has been made to involve people, tell people about what was intended for that area and try to get input. So I find it surprising that people feel that they are excluded when, I think, night after night there were presentations made to every imaginable group that was interested in listening around the province.

Ms. CerlIII: There has been, as I understand it, an Oak Hammock Marsh management committee that did involve a number of other environmental groups and that they were not involved in the development of the proposal for the expansion at Oak Hammock Marsh but they had been involved up to that point in a very active way with any programming that was done at the marsh.

I would like to ask, when was the plan that we have been dealing with most recently first conceived?

Mr. Wishart: This specific plan has been evolving for, I believe, about a year and in draft stages, very

many draft stages at this point. It is not a completed document but it has been an evolving document.

Ms. CerlIII: Can you give us a date of when Ducks Unlimited and Natural Resources first started to talk about an office building and an interpretive centre together at Oak Hammock Marsh?

Mr. Wishart: I do not recall the exact date, but it is several years ago.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Ms. CerlIII: I noticed in your report you said that the plan for Oak Hammock Marsh was in keeping with the principles of sustainable development. I fail to see that. I fail to see how putting an office building in a wildlife management area is in keeping with principles of sustainable development. Can you explain to the committee how this is so?

Mr. Wishart: What I said in the report is the 1,180 projects that we have in Manitoba and the 5,000 projects that we have across Canada, habitat projects—that was the context in which I was talking about the sustainable development examples that we have done for the last 50 years. Did I misunderstand your question? That is what I said in the paper.

Ms. CerlIII: Clarify that for me again.

Mr. Wishart: The context in which I made that statement was the 1,180 projects that we developed in Manitoba in the last decade. The Oak Hammock Marsh project is one of those over a thousand projects. It is, I think, a tremendous example of sustainable development. It is a restored area that was drained and an attempt to put very marginal land into agriculture that could not sustain agriculture.

* (2220)

Ms. CerlIII: I realize that Ducks Unlimited has put a lot of money into wildlife management areas and, as I understand it, there have been some successes and there have been some failures. I guess the question related to this would be, what kind of research or programs are going to be done at Oak Hammock Marsh in the office building that cannot be done in the city? What kind of research or programs are going to be done in the marsh that are going to be new?

Mr. Wishart: You are asking the same question, I think, that has been answered, why the office building there and not in the city?

Ms. Cerilli: More specifically, what kind of research is going to be done that would require 140 staff, including clerical staff, to be housed in an office building in the marsh? What is it going to be about the programs or the research that require it to be in the marsh?

Mr. Wishart: I do not think it was ever stated that there would be research programs and that used as the reason why the complex is being proposed for Oak Hammock. We are talking about a combination of resources, the staff and infrastructure, that the office part of the complex can provide services to enhance the efficiency of the educational part of the facility.

Ms. Cerilli: How many staff that are going to be working at the marsh are going to be involved in research that would require them to get their hands dirty and be in the marsh or be involved in interpretive programs with the public that would require them to be in the marsh?

Mr. Wishart: That is not the only aspect of the staff that we have there. We have computer facilities, accounting facilities, infrastructure that can supply very important services to make this conservation education centre work efficiently.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Wishart, that is precisely, I think, the point that I and a number of other people are trying to make. The only staff necessary to be in the marsh are staff that are directly involved in interpretive programs or research in the natural habitat.

Mr. Wishart: I do not think you have heard what I have said. It is the infrastructure and the administrative facilities that we can provide to support the education staff who are going to be in that facility. Twenty percent of those staff are agronomists, professional biologists. Another proportion of those staff are professional engineers who can provide services and information and help, provide part of the program that can be interpreted in that area.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Wishart, you can sell me on this if you can tell me that there is going to be a lab, that there are going to be more programs that are going to do research in natural habitat, where there is going to be more done in the marsh that would require scientists to be at the marsh than having the facility in Winnipeg.

I have not heard yet that there are going to be more staff doing that kind of work in the marsh, and

I have not been told how many more educational, interpretive or science staff are going to be working in the marsh.

Mr. Wishart: I did tell you the number of staff involved in the interpretive program. Research is not what is needed in this marsh. Information and interpretation of what is there and telling people about marshes and the importance of them, information that is already known through years of research by all kinds of facilities—it is not research that is going to reverse the loss of wetlands. That is not what is needed. It is interpretation and education.

Ms. Cerilli: I think that there are a number of people who are sitting behind you who would take issue with that, who would think that there is not enough research that has been done in wetlands.

I would ask you, what research has Ducks Unlimited done in Oak Hammock Marsh in the number of years that it has been there to become aware of the relationship between the number of species that are there, the relationship that those species have with the natural habitat that they live in?

Mr. Wishart: Ducks Unlimited has had a research and evaluation staff and program since the 1970s. There has just been an announcement in the last few months announcing the International Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Institute, which is an international organization involving existing and new staff and new facilities throughout Mexico, the United States and Canada.

There is a tremendous initiative not only in education in Ducks Unlimited, but in wetland research as well, wetland and wildlife research, not necessarily specifically only in Oak Hammock Marsh, but at facilities either permanent or transitory facilities across North America and Mexico.

Ms. Cerilli: Does Ducks Unlimited consider itself an environmental organization?

Mr. Wishart: Yes.

Ms. Cerilli: Has it been involved with—it has a lot of money—funding any of the groups or individuals who made presentations at Clean Environment Commission hearings?

Mr. Wishart: I am not aware of that.

Ms. Cerilli: Has it taken a position on any other environmental issues that are in the news or have been the attention of other environment groups?

Mr. Wishart: I am not aware about being in the news. That is not our objective, to be in the news. What we do do is we, on a regular basis, interact with departments, including the gas pipeline agencies, the hydro agencies responsible for putting transmission lines and gas pipelines across the province. On a regular basis we review proposals from these people and express opinions on the applicability of what they are proposing.

Ms. CerlIII: Has Ducks Unlimited made presentations at any Clean Environment Commission hearings in the last number of years?

Mr. Wishart: We regularly make briefs and have made briefs to government committees and hearings, some of the committees that have sat, deliberating over establishing policies on water, wildlife, on a regular basis.

Ms. CerlIII: Can you be a bit more specific and give me an idea of what kind of public hearings or on what kinds of issues Ducks Unlimited has participated in, environment impact assessments or those kinds of hearings?

Mr. Wishart: Issues related to wetlands and wildlife. We have made our views known on a variety of environmental development questions.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Ms. CerlIII: I was asking questions of the previous presenter about Ducks Unlimited's plans in putting so much money into Oak Hammock Marsh with this office complex and interpretive centre. Why is not the money being spread over a larger number of wetlands in Manitoba?

Mr. Wishart: I think that the point of my whole presentation is just to try to convince you that is exactly what we are doing. We have a \$6 million to \$7 million budget annually that is devoted entirely to habitat projects throughout the province, and have done so for 50 years.

Ms. CerlIII: So you are saying that the money that is going into the office building is being better spent on an office building rather than into a variety of other marshes, or not even marshes, areas that are dried up, that could be redeveloped. You are saying that it is better for an organization like yourself to put money into this kind of a building rather than into the actual refurbishment of wilderness areas.

Mr. Wishart: I think we are doing both. We are trying to develop an educational program that will help us secure wetlands so we will not have to in the

future invest as much time and resources and energy restoring marshes that should not be lost in the first place.

Ms. CerlIII: Have you done research at other centres that shows that there is a relationship between the kinds of programs that you are wanting to have at Oak Hammock Marsh and the objective that you say that you have?

Mr. Wishart: A review committee has visited a number of educational environmental interpretation centres around Canada, and that is the basis for what we have as a draft plan at this stage, a learning process, what we have learned from the successes and failures at other institutions, yes.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions? Mr. Rose, did you have a question?

* (2230)

Mr. Wishart, I thank you very much for your presentation. We have two more presenters who will not be able to come back. There is a Mr. Steve Lytwyn, No. 30. Mr. Lytwyn, could you come forward, please. There is one more, and that is Mr. David Punter, Manitoba Environmental Council, No. 10.

Mr. Steven Lytwyn (Manitoba Cattle Producers Association): Good evening.

Mr. Chairman: Mr. Lytwyn does not have a—pardon me, he does have. It is being circulated now. Mr. Lytwyn, you can proceed.

Mr. Lytwyn: Thank you. The Manitoba Cattle Producers Association, which represents over 12,000 producers is in support of Bill 38, The Wildlife Amendment Act. We are interested in the use of wildlife management areas for the time-controlled haying and grazing management for cattle. This holistic approach would be to the benefit of waterfowl, upland game, and wild ungulates.

Cattle sales are the second largest contributors to the agricultural revenue in Manitoba and inject over \$285 million directly and a further \$51 million of value-added spinoffs into the provincial economy. Over 17,000 people depend directly on the cattle industry for their livelihood or employment. Expansion can still occur in Manitoba's livestock industry without impacting on the price paid to producers.

Livestock is one of Manitoba's major net exporting industries. Since Manitoba cattle producers are competing on a global market, we must look at every

aspect of our operations and strive to become as competitive as possible. Grazing and haying of Crown lands and wildlife management areas provide us with the opportunities to become more efficient.

It seems that today's society has reached a consensus that agriculture in general is bad for wildlife. This, of course, is an untruth. The ranching industry of Manitoba has kept marginal lands in forages and left wetlands alone because of the benefits they supply to ranch operations. The cost-benefit relationship for land improvements are marginal at best. Undoubtedly it is apparent that wildlife benefit and thrive on Manitoba ranches. Geese, deer, elk are spending more time grazing on ranch land than in wildlife habitats.

Cattle provide the same balance as buffalo did in their ecosystem over 100 years ago. Time-controlled grazing or holistic range management and haying provide young nutritious plants for wildlife consumption. Timing is essential for successful grazing and haying management. Ground nesting birds must be allowed ample time in the spring and early summer for hatching and rearing of young offspring. Past this point, grazing and haying should be allowed.

Cattle bring with them their own abilities to ward off predators which again is to the benefit of upland game, fowl and wild ungulates. Research in North Dakota at the Audubon Wildlife Refuge done by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service has consistently documented year after year that waterfowl populations increased with time-controlled grazing. They have also proven that upland game thrive in the same situation. Tame forage stands have become one of the major food sources for elk and deer. This is attributed to larger populations for both species. Reproduction and survival rates have both increased because of improved quality of their diet.

If the public is truly dedicated to the long-term sustainability of Manitoba's wildlife resource, we must attempt to mimic their environment prior to the introduction of civilization. It is almost impossible to copy the prairie fires that removed underused forages and shrubbery, but we can easily duplicate the buffalo by supplementing cattle in their place. During this discussion, we must never lose sight of what is going to be beneficial for the wildlife. Only through a holistic approach can we hope to achieve long-term sustainability. The Manitoba cattle

industry is offering a hand in the management of wildlife resources of Manitoba. Thank you.

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Lytwyn, thank you very much for your presentation. It is important that the people of Manitoba realize how important the cattlemen are for the Interlake area and how they have improved the grazing area for the elk and the deer and the other populations up there in the North. Without having you up there, I think there would have been a lot of different things happening that would not have occurred today.

Were there a lot of concerns brought forward when some of the ministers in the past have allocated some of the fields to hay and to grazing?

Mr. Lytwyn: I am not personally aware of any problems although I am sure that abuse could happen and has to be watched by all the departments.

Mr. Laurendeau: Under the regulations of today, that are in the act today, the minister has the authority, which could be challenged, to allow you to have these lands, I understand, for grazing. This is why Bill 38 is being brought forward. I guess this is the reason you are supporting Bill 38.

Mr. Lytwyn: That is correct.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you.

Ms. Cerilli: I would like you to explain a little bit more, in more detail, how this is a holistic approach that would benefit waterfowl, upland game and wildlife.

Mr. Lytwyn: I am sorry, could you repeat that?

Ms. Cerilli: How is having cattle grazing in these areas a holistic approach? You have used that term a number of times in the brief. I would like you to explain more the relationship between having cattle grazing in these areas and—

Mr. Lytwyn: At one time there were approximately 60 million buffalo wandering North America and through interference by civilization those numbers were drastically changed. That began to change again as the beef industry increased its numbers of cattle and basically there is a balance now, basically the same number of cattle and buffalo. So we feel that is as close as we can get to helping Mother Nature out as well as feed North Americans and make a living.

Ms. Cerilli: I am trying to get a better understanding of how that relates to waterfowl.

Mr. Lytwyn: Well, I think civilization, if you want to be technical, is harmful to wildlife. Just the very fact that we are increasing in numbers year by year is harmful to all the wildlife. At least some sectors of the agriculture industry are not harming wildlife; we are actually increasing populations where cities are sprawling and swallowing up the natural environment.

Ms. Cerilli: No further questions, that is fine.

Mr. Lytwyn: I am just glad it is twenty to 11. I know that you have to quit at 11.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions for Mr. Lytwyn? Order, please.

* (2240)

Mr. Enns: Just one question. I am aware that The Wildlife Act as it is structured is written in a prohibitive sense. There shall be no grazing, there shall be no this, there shall be none of that activity.

I think to underline what I believe the cattle producers' concerns are: Particularly, it is the discretion given to the department, to the minister—notwithstanding those clauses in the act—that allows under controlled circumstances some grazing, some haying to take place. It is the kind of discretion that Ministers of Natural Resources since 1961, when the first wildlife management act was passed, was created in Manitoba that used that discretionary authority to provide that grazing. It can always be argued that it ought not to be used. I know that always occasioned debate within wildlife managers, but I think the position of the cattle producers of Manitoba is that at least their opportunity, and their assurance that the department continues, to have that right be maintained. Is that right?

Mr. Lytwyn: Yes, that was what I agreed.

Ms. Cerilli: Just to clarify. The reason I was asking the question was to see if there is some ecological relationship between having some grazing in wildlife management areas and development of natural habitat. I was asking the question because I could learn something, legitimately. I would think that there is a dramatic difference between having some land used in Crown land or wildlife management area for cattle grazing and to have a corporation have its office building in a wildlife management area. Would you agree with me?

Mr. Lytwyn: I would just like to say that I am glad that there are a lot of people concerned about this

type of thing just to make sure something bad is not being done. But as far as what Ducks Unlimited is doing, I guess, I do not see it as a building or as an office complex. I just see it as basically a system of delivering—well, of getting people exposed to an area and doing the least amount of damage while doing it. Those people, once they have had some exposure, it is going to help wildlife tremendously throughout the province not just in the Oak Hammock area.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions? Thank you, Mr. Lytwyn.

Would Mr. Dave Punter step forward please, that is Manitoba Environmental Council, No. 10. The brief is being passed around.

Is there a will by the committee to go past eleven o'clock? Agreed?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Ms. Cerilli: Why do we not hear this brief and then decide?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. I asked a question here. Is it the will of the committee to proceed past eleven o'clock?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Ms. Cerilli: I would like to have a more specific agreement than that.

Mr. Chairman: Let me hear from the committee then. Would you put something forward, what time you do wish to proceed to?

Ms. Cerilli: I propose that we hear the brief from the Manitoba Environment Council, and then we will decide how much longer we want to sit.

Mr. Chairman: Just as a point here, the fact is if this brief in fact goes past 11, we have been authorized until eleven o'clock. Now what do you wish?

Mr. Enns: We accept Ms. Cerilli's amendment to that, that we hear the brief and then decide.

Mr. Chairman: Proceed.

Mr. Dave Punter (Manitoba Environment Council): Thank you for your indulgence, Mr. Chairman. I bring you a brief from the Manitoba Environmental Council concerning Bill 38, a subject which seems to have been getting rather short shrift.

The Manitoba Environmental Council is extremely concerned about some of these proposed amendments to The Wildlife Act. Bill 38 represents a serious, probably unprecedented weakening of

The Wildlife Act, and its passage in the present form would threaten the future for all Manitoba's wildlife management areas.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Specifically the wording of the proposed subsection 2(1) requires only that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council be satisfied that the wildlife resource would be better managed in order to designate areas of the province. This is weaker than the existing wording in that it removes any need for cabinet to apply objective standards to the decision. It is important that governments and ministers be subject to the law as well as ordinary citizens. These amendments would remove the checks and balances that good legislation should provide by making it impossible for courts to overrule any government action relating to wildlife areas, no matter how bad by objective or expert judgment, as long as that action is to the satisfaction of the cabinet, or, in the case of Section 3(1), of the minister.

Anyone familiar with the history of wildlife and ecosystem conservation knows that the main threats to conservation of natural areas have come at least as often from bad planning or political pressures as from external or nongovernment activities. This situation is not unique to Manitoba nor to this government, but one does not have to look far to see examples of such threats here.

Cabinets are not noted for their expertise in biological matters, and may be easily satisfied if the political pressures are sufficiently strong. It is therefore very important that Sections 2 and 3 of the present Wildlife Act be retained. There is a need to consider the designation of areas within a broader definition of wildlife as well as the overall present and future needs of the province. Without such a rider, areas may be designated for reasons that are unduly specific or parochial.

The council considers the proposed subsection 3(1) objectionable on a number of grounds. Under Sections 89 and 90 of The Wildlife Act, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and the minister respectively, may make such regulations as are ancillary to, and not inconsistent with, the intent of the act. This proposed subsection, together with Section 5 of the Bill would give significant new powers to the minister alone, such that he could authorize uses and activities that might be totally at

variance with the purpose for which an area was designated if he considered them appropriate.

For example, Regulation 46/90, which has been mentioned before, presently prohibits inter alia, haying, grazing, clearing, bulldozing, burning, fencing, logging, cultivation, mineral exploration and extraction, application of insecticides or herbicides, and construction or occupation of a building in a wildlife management area. If these amendments pass, a minister could authorize extraction of gravel, logging, haying, or even construction of a highrise in a wildlife management area, if he or she considered it appropriate.

Moreover, Mr. Acting Chairman, this could be done in response to a private request without reference to cabinet and with little or no public scrutiny. It is the position of council that once an area is designated on the authority of the Crown, i.e., by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, for a particular purpose that no lesser entity, for example a minister, should have the power to authorize uses or activities, including the construction of buildings, that are inconsistent with that purpose.

* (2250)

Council finds it anomalous that a minister—who, as recently as last year made a Regulation 46/90, gazetted the 10th of March 1990, that no person shall, in a wildlife management area, among other things construct, place, occupy or use a building structure or tent—now proposes that the act be amended to allow him to make regulations to authorize the construction, operation and maintenance of any building, structure or thing in a wildlife management area.

Council is disturbed that this abrupt reversal of policy is apparently the response to the threat of legal challenge to the proposal by Ducks Unlimited and Manitoba Natural Resources to construct an office complex and conservation centre in Oak Hammock Marsh Wildlife Management Area, to which the council's objections are already on record.

Does the present minister really wish to confer such sweeping powers on his successors simply to gain a present advantage? And I might mention, as an aside, that when Mr. Enns signed the regulation in question he, or his department, had already been negotiating with Ducks Unlimited for several months. Was he forgetful? Was he poorly briefed by his staff? Did he simply not read or think about what he was signing then?

Given the new powers noted above, council respectfully asked the Minister of Natural Resources to define for the public, as precisely as he can, what he understands to be the purpose and function of a wildlife management area as designated under Section 2(2) of Bill 38.

Since the act has been opened to amendments, and this bill, clearly in the view of council needs further amendment before it is passed, council wishes to suggest two additional amendments which could greatly improve The Wildlife Act.

The first of these is that unlike some other Manitoba laws, for example The Endangered Species Act and The Ecological Reserves Act, both of which have been put into effect relatively recently, The Wildlife Act contains no specific statement of purpose either in preamble or in later text. Interpretation of the act would be a good deal easier if its intent were clearly stated.

However, based on the present Section 2, its purpose is presumed to be to promote the effective management, conservation, and enhancement of the wildlife resource of this province, which brings us to our second point. The act takes an extremely narrow view of wildlife. By defining wildlife as a vertebrate animal of any species or type that is wild by nature in the province, but does not include fish, it confines itself to mammals, birds, amphibians and reptiles. It ignores fish, invertebrates, plants and micro-organisms, all of which occur in the wild, undoubtedly have life, and play integral roles in the ecosystems upon which the vertebrates depend for their existence.

This narrow approach is at variance with the Wildlife Policy for Canada prepared by a task force struck by the 1987 Federal-Provincial Territorial Wildlife Conference and adopted by the Wildlife Ministers' Council of Canada, of which our present minister was a member, in September 1990, which states as its Principle No. 1.1: Governments should broaden their definitions of wildlife to include any species of wild organism. Moreover, this is likely to encourage a correspondingly narrow focus in management and to work against the ecosystem approach that is increasingly gaining favour among wildlife managers.

The remaining sections of this bill, except 2 and 6(2) appear to be innocuous or beneficial. Council supports the Section 3, that which amends Section

30, Section 6(1), Section 6(3) and Section 7 of Bill 38.

In summary, we recommend that Bill 38 be amended as follows before its passage:

(1) that Sections 2 and 3 of the present Wildlife Act be retained, i.e., that Section 2 of Bill 38 be amended to read Sections 4 and 5 are repealed;

(2) that subsections 2(1), 3(1), 3(2), 5 and 6(2) be deleted from Bill 38;

(3) that a statement of purpose be added as a preamble or early section of the act; and

(4) that wildlife be given a broader definition more in keeping with current usage.

In conclusion, council considers that this bill as proposed represents to threat that goes far beyond the proposal for Oak Hammock Marsh that it is apparently intended to legalize. We urge you to turn it into a positive measure for the wildlife of this province by making the above amendments. If at least recommendations 1 and 2 cannot be accepted, the bill should be defeated as it would do far more harm than good. Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairman.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): Thank you, Mr. Punter, I believe there are a number of questions for you.

Order, please. I would like to advise the audience that there will be no applause allowed, or I will have to have the room cleared, and it is as simple as that.

Mr. Punter, if you will just wait. I believe we have some questions.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Punter, the recent regulations that I caused to be gazetted and entered into that has been referred to in your brief, and I must say by others, I do wish to take a moment and clear up. I would like to be charitable and not suggest that you have any other motives for suggesting that the action on the part of this minister is any different from any other ministers, certainly since the lifetime of the Environment Advisory Council.

That is the section that deals with, you correctly stated, the prohibition clause. No person shall grade, gravel, install or modify, bulldoze, grazing, haying, fencing, and all that. Of course, in the same gazette then there is the permissive clause in Section 10, except that the minister may grant a permit to a person authorizing any activity that is otherwise prohibited in this action. That is my action that you have referred to, somewhat disparagingly I

might say, Dr. Punter, as though this was a departure on the part of action of previous ministers.

I wish to read to you the regulation that was passed by Mr. Mackling of the administration of a previous government, that of Mr. Ed Schreyer. It says the same thing. Subject to Section 3(3), no person shall participate in or undertake the same prohibitive sections—no haying, no grazing, no unnatural waterways, no bridging, no cultivation, no herbicides, no occupying, except, of course, then his clause: notwithstanding anything contained in this regulation, the minister may grant, subject to such terms and conditions, he may prescribe a permit to undertake certain activities across, within, or into any wildlife management area.

Now I can read you that same regulation passed by successive predecessors of mine of different administrations—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member we were going to try and keep our brief remarks short, and I hope the honourable minister is coming to a question.

Mr. Enns: I am indeed coming to a question, Mr. Acting Chairman, and I, quite frankly, do not need your help at this moment.

* (2300)

The fact is that this has been pointed out as some weakening of the act, some dangerous change in the regulation, when Mr. Mackling, Mr. Evans and Mr. Plohman as late as 1988 passed identical, word for word regulations with exemptions. Now why is it that it was not considered by the Advisory Council to be a weakening of The Wildlife Act, a weakening of the wildlife management act under those circumstances, but is considered to be a gross weakening of the act under these circumstances?

Mr. Punter: Mr. Acting Chairman, I believe that, in general, when regulations are put into force, they are not made especially public; and unless there is some issue such as the present one to bring them to public notice, it is unlikely that anybody will respond to them.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Chairman, I would accept that answer from most people, certainly from the representative of the cattle producers or somebody else. But you, sir, represent an organization that watches government, that reads the Gazette; or else how would you know that I passed that

regulation on March 3 of last year, '90? It is made public. All regulations are made public.

Furthermore, your organization knows that it is the regulations that are the operative part of any act. The act is a general statement of principle, the regulations are the power in any act. That is also known by your organization. It cannot be claimed, in my judgment, fairly and accurately by a spokesperson for your organization, that the regulations that were good enough for Mr. Mackling, good enough for Mr. Evans, good enough for Mr. Plohman are somehow all of a sudden injurious and outrageous on the part of this little Minister of Natural Resources.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): There was no question there, I take it.

Mr. Punter: May I respond? The Manitoba Environmental Council is not especially well supplied with staff. It operates very largely on a volunteer basis, and it is not in a position to follow in detail every regulation which is passed by every Minister of Natural Resources, or any other department.

In this particular instance, I became aware of that regulation only when I made a comparison between the bill that we are considering and the existing Wildlife Act. Had I known about the other events previously, it might well be that I would have raised it with the wildlife committee of the Environmental Council; but I was not aware of those things.

I wonder, bringing the situation more up to present time, why it is not sufficient for the Minister of Natural Resources simply to dispense with the existing regulations; but rather he has to enshrine those regulations in the act itself.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable members that this is a time for clarification of the representations being brought forward and not the time for debate, or we will be here until six o'clock in the morning.

Mr. Enns: I accept your wisdom, Mr. Acting Chairman.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Laurendeau): Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Punter, was the council, the wildlife committee of the council, consulted on Bill 38?

Mr. Punter: I am not sure that it was. I could not tell you for certain. We certainly received

information about it and took it upon ourselves to react to it, but we likely would not have been asked to respond to it by our minister.

Ms. CerlIII: The other regulation that was mentioned, 46/90. Is that the one? Was there some involvement from members of the council in the development of that regulation, or are you aware of how that more progressive regulation came to be or was put forward?

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

Mr. Punter: No, I am not aware of how it had been put forward. I am just pleased that it was.

Ms. CerlIII: So I am to understand, you have made it quite clear, that currently the proposed building for the Oak Hammock Marsh is illegal under The Wildlife Act that we have currently.

Mr. Punter: I am not a lawyer.

Ms. CerlIII: My final question is, do you have some specific amendments for this legislation that would deal with the designation of wildlife management areas?

Mr. Punter: The position of the council, I think, is that the existing situation in The Wildlife Act is satisfactory as far as designation is concerned except that we would like to see some rather more specific description of what is required of a wildlife management area, what is its purpose and a more precise definition of it.

Mr. Edwards: Thank you, Mr. Punter, for your presentation, and I agree totally with you that, in particular, on Section 3(1), I think that either you provide some security and assuredness in an act and in regulations, or you do not.

I, for one, do not understand how you purport to set out in great detail, which I admire, and if you look through the regulations you will see that, as you have, you cannot canoe between sundown and sunrise in some of these areas. We get into that level of detail and at the same time provide an absolute carte blanche ministerial override over the whole system. It boggles my mind.

I also must admit and acknowledge that the minister is right. That has been there for a long time, and perhaps the one thing that can be said about this minister is that he has at least come out of the closet on this issue. He is putting it in the act. It has been in the regulations for 10 years in any event.

My question is based on what I know of the activities of the Manitoba Environmental Council.

You have appeared before many, many committees and I have been on those committees that you, not you personally but representatives, Mr. Neily and others, have come before us on all of these things. You participate in public debate all the time, conferences, committee hearings, the Environment Commission hearings. What do you think of a minister who says, heading into public debate, the committee stage of this bill, and is quoted as saying, May 15, that the new act will undergo public hearings to allow people to appear before a legislative committee to express their concerns, but added he will not consider amendments?

Mr. Punter: I am not sure if it is for me to say what I think of a minister who does that.

Mr. Edwards: Go ahead.

Mr. Punter: I would suppose that this is a political question, and I would imagine that the minister will succeed or fail politically on the basis of such statements.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairperson, let me suggest to the presenter that what that does, what that approach does, is turn this hearing process into very much of a farce. It means that we sit here night after night listening to people like you who have put together briefs intelligently, with thoroughness, with research involved, all the while knowing that we are in fact playing a political game at the behest of the minister, because we have no power ostensibly to put amendments forward.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please; order, Mr. Edwards.

Point of Order

Mr. Laurendeau: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, I do believe that we are attempting to get through some of this and that we are trying to see if there is any clarification within this statement. So I would hope that the honourable members will clarify that.

Mr. Chairman: The member does not have a point of order.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairperson, my point is, why exactly does the presenter think we are doing this? I cannot find a reason, given that the minister has told us he will consider no amendments. Why are we here if not to consider amendments which people like Mr. Punter in good faith put forward to us?

* (2310)

Mr. Chairman: Order, order, Mr. Edwards. Do you have a question for clarification of the presenter?

Floor Comment: That is my question.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Chairman, I want to indicate to Mr. Punter that, in having listened to and viewed his brief, I believe that he makes from the Environmental Council some very valid points, and I respect the fact that he deals specifically with the bill, as some other presenters probably have not. However, I have some concerns in what he implies and a question for some clarification about what the implications of the recommendations and the amendments would in fact mean that he is proposing.

On the third paragraph in his presentation—on your presentation on page 1, you indicate: "Anyone familiar with the history of wildlife and ecosystem conservation knows that the main threats to conservation of natural areas have come at least as often from bad planning or political pressures as from external or nongovernmental activities."

Then, at the bottom of the first page and the top of the second page, you refer to "an area was designated if he considered them appropriate. For example, Regulation 46/90 presently prohibits, inter alia, haying, grazing, clearing, bulldozing, burning, fencing, logging, cultivation, mineral exploration and extraction, application of insecticides or herbicides, and construction or occupation of buildings in a Wildlife Management Area."

Now, having spent some time at the Oak Hammock Marsh and some of the other developed—or marshes that are currently being developed in this province, it is interesting to note that in a specific marsh area next to Lake Manitoba, a large ranching operation is, in fact, taking place and that there are large numbers of geese nesting in the pasture where these cattle are grazing. Similarly, we have other situations where agriculture is existent either in co-operation with the wildlife or in areas that are, at least, bordering agricultural areas, and Oak Hammock is one of them.

Having been the minister of this department for a year and having had the opportunity to have some involvement in observing how the Oak Hammock Marsh operates and having also witnessed the severe weed infestation that is currently in existence at the Oak Hammock area and having discussed this with some of the farmers in the area, I wonder,

whether you make recognition of the fact that there are times when there should be pesticides applied if other activities such as haying or mowing and whatever can not take place.

The concern I have with the old act, and we have had some significant discussions in that department about the old act, which, as the department suggests, prohibited many of these activities.

I wonder whether you could shed some light on what your views are on how to, in fact, encourage the co-operation that is needed between the agricultural community in this province and the retention of some of these wildlife areas and the development of these wetland areas in co-operation that will allow for both of them to take place in a more co-operative manner than has been, in fact, the case up to now.

Mr. Punter: Mr. Chairman, how long do I have? How many weeks?

I fully concede that there are occasions in which wildlife management areas and the wildlife in those areas can best be managed by allowing some of the activities that are presently prohibited by Regulation 4690.

The problem that the Council has with the amendment to the Act is more in that it gives authority to the minister to essentially overrule what has been designated by cabinet. We would very much prefer that since cabinet has made the designation that cabinet has the final authority in whether or not these things should be allowed.

There certainly are, as I said, cases in which some of these activities may be necessary to successfully manage wildlife management areas. I rather doubt whether the use of herbicides is one of those. If I get on to The Noxious Weeds Act I might be here for a very long time and you probably would not enjoy it, but we have an Act there which I happen to consider is totally ridiculous and should be radically changed, but I do not think you want to get into that at this point.

If there is anything else I can clarify, I would be happy to do so.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Chairman, I would be glad to debate the merits of The Noxious Weeds Act and/or whether we should in fact allow the infestation of Canadian thistle or leafy spurge or any one of those kinds of weeds that are simply virtually impossible to eradicate once they become established to occur and be maintained.

The only reason I raise this, because I realize, having been the minister in that department, that there are times when the ministerial authority is needed fairly quickly to deal with certain situations such as weeds and other issues, or flooding or not to allow flooding in some of these areas, to in fact encourage and maintain that wildlife habitat in those specific areas. Sometimes those actions need to be taken fairly quickly, and the only person that can in fact deal with those situations as quickly as they need to be dealt with is, of course, at that time the minister. Having usurped the authority of the minister, the whole process has to in fact take place, which can, of course, take weeks and sometimes even months.

* (2320)

Therefore, I think this act is not only a good act, but should have been enacted long ago, and I would rather suspect that we would all agree that it is through the normal process. We normally elect fairly responsible people and they act fairly responsibly in their portfolios, and they normally receive some pretty fair advice from their respective departments in the operation of that portfolio. So from that perspective, I would suggest that the act as being proposed is probably needed and needed sooner than later.

Mr. Punter: I would agree that there are activities of the kind that you mention, Mr. Minister, that perhaps need to be put into effect quite quickly if they are to have the desired effect. I cannot see that the construction of buildings, especially large buildings, construction of roads and things of that kind come in this category, and it might be appropriate if the amendments were amended to separate those sorts of functions from those that might conceivably be needed to take place rapidly, but I cannot, frankly, see that anybody needs to put up a building more rapidly than they can get cabinet together.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions from Mr. Punter? Thank you, Mr. Punter.

Mr. Punter: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman: Does the committee wish to continue?

An Honourable Member: Continue.

Mr. Laurendeau: I would like to make one recommendation before we continue though, Mr. Chairman, and that is that we ask the House Leader to reconvene a meeting for 10 a.m. on Thursday so

that we can get some more of these presentations done or we will not get caught up.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairperson, the initial discussion was that we would go till eleven o'clock. We have still got a room full of presenters. We are certainly not going to get through all of the list or even a substantial portion of it tonight. It is my suggestion that we have Thursday night designated. Mr. Laurendeau has made a suggestion which seems reasonable, that we convene to find other times when we could meet, but I do not think we serve any purpose in taking this through inordinately tonight. I would therefore suggest that we break at this time, with a view to having that meeting and finding alternative times that we can discuss this matter on reasonable terms and during reasonable hours.

Mr. Chairman: Is it agreed then by the committee that we ask the House Leader to set another meeting for 10 on Thursday morning?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Chairman: Agreed? Will we also wish to sit Thursday night?

An Honourable Members: We are in any event.

Mr. Chairman: I was told that it had not been set at this point.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I would like to just add this: There may be some presenters that may or may not be able to make it for 10 a.m. Thursday or indeed the evening.

I would certainly be prepared to allow them to make further presentations before we adjourn tonight, if that is the will of the committee.

Mr. Chairman: Is that the will of the committee to proceed then?

Mr. Edwards: Perhaps we could canvass those at this time in the audience to find out how many we are talking about before we make that commitment.

Mr. Chairman: Let us take a two-minute break here while the Clerk checks. Thank you.

* * *

The committee took recess at 11:22 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 11:27 p.m.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. We have four people who would like to present tonight, the first

being Mr. Ray Fetterly. Would you please come forward.

Mr. Ray Fetterly (Private Citizen): Mr. Minister,—

Mr. Chairman: One moment, please, till the—

For the benefit of the audience, those of us who would like to go home and catch some sleep and come back another day, is it the intention of the committee to hear the four people and then adjourn?

An Honourable Member: Will we convene at 10 a.m. Thursday morning?

Mr. Fetterly: Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, my lifetime of work has been 21 years as a conservation officer in the province of Manitoba and 10 years with the agricultural Crown lands in the province of Manitoba. I am now retired. I know that I speak for well over 200 people in the area, but as far as this representation here today, I speak as a taxpayer and a concerned local citizen.

* (2330)

I have been a hunter all my life, but I have now reached the stage where I would rather watch the birds and animals than take them for food. I speak strongly in favour of the Oak Hammock project. I believe The Wildlife Act should be changed to accommodate this development. Yes, this change will give the honourable minister more power and, yes, at a glance, it appears to give the minister too much power, but this is the only way such a progressive and educational venture can be brought about.

As far as setting a precedent for development elsewhere, this argument is only that; it is just an argument. As you can be assured, if and when any other development comes about, it will have to stand on its own the same as Oak Hammock has. Everybody knows this.

Let me say that Oak Hammock has been of interest to me since Day One. During the 1980 drought the marsh was opened up for hay. I was in charge of issuing the permits at that time; consequently, there is hardly a square yard of the entire marsh that I have not set foot on at some time or other.

On behalf of Ducks Unlimited, let me say that for over 35 years I have worked with and observed their work in many of their—as I understand it there are over a thousand projects, I thought it was only 600 within the province. I have never known them to be wrong with their planning or their development. I

understand that they have been wrong a few times, but not to my knowledge. I have no first-hand knowledge of this. Based on this track record, it speaks for itself. They are a most trustworthy organization. I am not a member of Ducks Unlimited, but maybe I should be.

So much energy and money has been spent by those opposed to the project. This small handful of protestors seems to have reached the stage where proven fact and reason and good common sense means nothing. They go on and on about ecology and what enemies of society are Ducks Unlimited and Natural Resources management.

According to people like Mr. Syrett and Hilary Versavel, almost everything is wrong. I wonder how many hours they have spent with Ducks Unlimited or Natural Resources and tried to find out what they are all about and exactly what they intend to do in the marsh. My guess is they have not been there at all or at least very little. These self-appointed saviours of the universe can cause untold damage to a worthy project, and I wish they would direct their energies in trying to help instead of to tear down.

I think of all the great advantages to be gained by the Ducks Unlimited development in the Oak Hammock Marsh. Tourism is a very large industry in the province and these facilities will enhance this for this part of the province. For example, bus tours from Winnipeg can then spend two early-morning hours at Lower Fort Garry, an hour or so at Selkirk Marine Museum, then travel to Oak Hammock for lunch, with a return trip to the quarry in Stonewall, Quarry Park, and then return home by 4 p.m. A more exciting and educational trip could not be imagined.

After I retired I worked as a tour guide, an interpreter, for Parks Canada at Lower Fort Garry for two and a half summers. We had over a thousand to 1,800 people through there every day. One morning when I arrived at work there were 18 busloads of seniors waiting to enter the park. After a two-hour tour they went on to Selkirk Marine Museum and then returned back to Winnipeg.

It was quickly evident that there is a dire need for an additional facility such as we have under review, a facility in which people can receive the proper education and instruction, but at the same time can be controlled and not be allowed to roam at will and trample everything in sight, but be directed to the high points, so as to receive the maximum benefit

without causing irreparable damage to the facility. Believe you me, if people are allowed to roam at will, as they are now, for the most part, they will eventually trample everything in sight. People are just like that.

This project will not be perfect. Some will take it upon themselves to throw garbage in the water and this will probably cause some problem, but it should not stop it from going ahead.

The present facility at Oak Hammock is hard-pressed to handle the people who come, and there will a sharp increase because of the publicity gained from these current proposals. Oak Hammock cannot stand much more use without great sums of money being spent on improvements to the facility to accommodate these visitors.

Does Mr. Syrett and his following wish to see an increase in taxes to do this work? I do not, when there is a highly respected private organization ready and willing to do the job. They will take care of the future and provide the much needed education, as well as guard the natural environment for us.

At Lower Fort Garry, for the most part, visitors can be accommodated under a roof should it be raining. At the present time, bus and carloads of people arrive at Oak Hammock and, should it be raining, they quite simply are forced to turn around and leave.

When developed, there will be room to look after these people inside, if they wish, or, for the hardy, plenty of outdoors are there. I recently spent a few months in Florida. I was fortunate enough to be able to do that, and they have even a greater problem than we in handling more people in such places as Everglades National Park and, speaking of alligators, that is where they are.

They have a tram for transportation and a building where one can go to see a video during inclement weather or tour on foot or by bicycle. The animals have gotten so used to humans, they quite simply hatch or bear their young right along the roadways.

By an act of providence, we have been given Oak Hammock Marsh to use and enjoy, but to use wisely and not cause unnecessary damage. I believe we are on the right track, and I say, let us get behind Ducks Unlimited and help them do the necessary work to develop this worthy project to the extent and in the way that we would all like it to be.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to add, for the benefit of the former presenter, there are no polar bears or alligators in Oak Hammock Marsh and there will not be in my lifetime or his. Also, he seems to be worried that Ducks Unlimited might bring in an agricultural demonstration. Well, I certainly hope so, for agriculture and the compatibility of wildlife and agriculture is the very essence from which this project came.

In the Free Press today, just for clarification, I note there is a story blaming Ducks Unlimited for the failure to hold sandhill cranes in the British Columbia wildlife area. It should be made known that the sandhill cranes tend to change their migratory habits from year to year and cannot be counted upon to come back to the same area year after year. They are unlike other species of birds.

In May, I cannot be sure of the year, but I believe it was 1970, in the small country school called Edward Best School at the corner of No. 7 Highway and Stonewall corner, a public meeting was held to discuss the purchase of the land which was known as the St. Andrews bog at that time—it is now Oak Hammock Marsh. The place was packed and the only complaint was the government was not paying enough money for the land they were purchasing for the wildlife management area.

The bog, at that time, was considered useless land and good for nothing. Where were all these complainers at that time? As a result of that meeting Dr. Hugh Crosby, secretary to the Secretary of the Interior of the United States government was requested to review the bog and give his opinion. I, along with several other department people, spent some time with this gentleman. His reply was: The bog is the very best wetland project I have ever seen for wildlife management and for a wetland educational area for the future learning of our young people.

We have reached a stage where this educational dream can come about. Let us get on with the job. I urge the authorities to bring about the necessary Wildlife Act changes and get on with this extremely educational and futuristic project. Development of the marsh is necessary to accommodate the increased need for education in the future use of our wildlife and of our wetlands.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to try and answer any questions.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any questions for Mr. Fetterly? Mr. Fetterly, I thank you for your presentation.

* (2340)

The next presenter we have is a Mr. Robert Potter, No. 12 on your list. Mr. Potter, would you please come forward. Mr. Potter, please proceed.

Mr. Robert Potter (Town of Stonewall): I extend my apologies for Mayor Lethbridge, who was called to another meeting tonight.

The Council of the Town of Stonewall wishes to indicate its support for Bill 38, being an act to amend The Wildlife Act. This amendment to The Wildlife Act will provide for better management, conservation and enhancement of the wildlife resource of the province by allowing the minister to make such regulations as are appropriate respecting the use, control and management of an area, as well as authorizing, regulating or prohibiting any use, activity or thing in an area.

More specifically, this amendment allows the minister to make such regulation as the minister considers appropriate, authorizing the construction, operation and maintenance of any building, structure or thing in a wildlife management area. This portion of Bill 38 is the most decisive to the town of Stonewall with respect to the proposed development of an office facility and interpretive centre by Ducks Unlimited and the Department of Natural Resources in the Oak Hammock Marsh Wildlife Management Area.

The Oak Hammock Marsh is one of the most impressive wetlands in the world. Through the previous efforts of Ducks Unlimited and the Department of Natural Resources, not only have various species of waterfowl and wildlife enjoyed the marsh, but also the thousands of people who have visited the marsh to view and learn more of these wetlands and its inhabitants.

The proposed interpretive centre will only further encourage and educate people on the importance of wetlands and the preservation of all species of wildlife. The proposed development will also enhance local tourism in the area and provide an excellent educational opportunity to school children of the province.

It is the opinion of the Council of the Town of Stonewall that the proposed development of the office facility in the interpretive centre at Oak Hammock Marsh by Ducks Unlimited and the

Department of Natural Resources will be undertaken in a manner that would be responsible and complimentary to the sensitive nature of the wetlands and its inhabitants.

The council believes Ducks Unlimited and the Department of Natural Resources to be two organizations that truly represent preservation and enhancement of wetlands and wildlife for the betterment of all. Therefore, the Council of the Town of Stonewall gives its full support to the Oak Hammock project and to this amendment. Thank you.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Potter, I just want to thank you, and I would ask you to pass on my appreciation to your mayor and council members for your presentation today.

I have one question that I would like to ask you, a similar question that I asked when we heard a representative from the R.M. of Rockwood, which, of course, is the local municipality involved in the area. He was able to indicate to my colleagues on the committee that he in fact was speaking in support of the project. In doing so, he was expressing the total unanimous support of the R.M. of Rockwood. I wonder if you have any information that could indicate to members of the committee the degree of support from the mayor and the council that you are presenting today. Is it full support on the council?

Mr. Potter: It is my belief, yes. The project and the amendment to the act have the full support of council. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Edwards: Thank you for your presentation. I want to just be clear on what you said. Let me run this past you. As I hear you, you would support the minister or cabinet being able to prescribe uses for the better management, conservation and enhancement of the wildlife resource of the province. Is that a test that you would agree with?

Mr. Potter: Yes, I believe I would.

Mr. Edwards: Perhaps you would just communicate to the fellow councillors in the town of Stonewall that test presently exists in Section 2 of The Wildlife Act, and there is no need for these amendments to have that test apply.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Ms. Cerilli: Yes. Just to make the point that under the current act the thing that is illegal, the thing that is referred to in the act is an office building, that there

is a provision for other development. There certainly is the provision to have construction in wildlife management areas that are going to enhance wildlife habitat.

The thing that people are objecting to is to have an office building in a wildlife management area, which sets a precedent not only for Oak Hammock Marsh but for every other wildlife area in the province.

An Honourable Member: Is that a statement or a question?

Mr. Chairman: Order, please. Are there any other questions? Thank you, Mr. Potter.

Order, please. Mr. Greg Dandewich, would you please come forward. It is No. 24 on your list. Order, please. Mr. Dandewich, would you please proceed.

Mr. Greg Dandewich (Neicom Developments): I am the community development co-ordinator for the Northeast Interlake Community Futures Corporation. We are a Community Futures organization which has set up a community-based, decision-making board which attempts to identify specific types of initiatives that will stimulate employment and help diversify our region's economic base.

Our region consists of the rural municipalities of Gimli, Rockwood, Bifrost and the LGDs of Fisher and Armstrong. I am here this evening on behalf of my board of directors to reaffirm its previous position of March 26, 1990, to fully support the Ducks Unlimited conservation centre at the Oak Hammock Marsh.

The Neicom Developments board considers this to be a desirable economic development, one which would improve the area's prosperity while sustaining the environment. Similarly, the establishment of a first-class interpretive centre in Oak Hammock will educate people on the necessity of nature conservancy, which ultimately may lead to the development of wetlands and potential wetlands now neglected.

Finally, Ducks Unlimited is legendary for its conservancy and restoration of wetlands and maintains an international reputation as a nature conservancy leader. Careful site selection, ingenious building design, stringent controls on sight, sound, air, soil and water pollution all provide for development which will co-exist with the nature

it seeks to restore and conserve. That is the Community Futures organization.

We can visualize direct economic benefits, the boost to tourist development and the intelligent management of natural resources in the long term which a development such as Oak Hammock centre would provide.

Neicom Developments feels a community with a future is one which must work in concert with nature, restoring habitats and safeguarding our wildlife. Therefore, based on the points raised in this presentation, Neicom Developments would like to reaffirm its position of full support for the Ducks Unlimited conservation centre proposal at the Oak Hammock Marsh.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any questions for Mr. Dandewich?

Ms. Cerilli: What kind of an organization do you represent?

Mr. Dandewich: Community Futures organization. It is set up and funded by the CEIC, the federal department.

An Honourable Member: Community based?

Mr. Dandewich: Community based, yes.

Ms. Cerilli: Can you describe for me some of the activities of your organization?

Mr. Dandewich: Some of the activities up to this point that have been undertaken by our organization, or corporation: one is the Gimli hotel that has been developed; the other one is, we are working with respect to the Narcisse snake pits, taking a look at that natural resource, or natural amenity.

Some of the other different projects that we are looking at is the forage plant study for the Interlake area, and these are some of the main ones that are underway right now as specific initiatives.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions?

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Dandewich, can you tell me how many people your group would be representing?

Mr. Dandewich: Basically, our board of directors has about 12 representatives who are community-based representatives that sit on our board. They represent not only the municipality and LGDs but also the communities involved. Our region has a population of about 23,000 people;

therefore, that would probably be the amount of people that our board would represent.

Mr. Laurendeau: Thank you very much.

Ms. Cerlill: The Narcisse snake pits are another wildlife management area, are they not?

Mr. Dandewich: Yes.

Ms. Cerlill: What is your involvement there with development?

Mr. Dandewich: At this point, basically what we are looking at is the facility itself—or I should not actually call it facility, but the natural amenity that the snake dens are. What is happening is that there are not any specific outlines for people to follow, and what is happening is that inadvertently they are trampling in areas which perhaps they should not be trampling on. Therefore, with co-operation with the LGD of Armstrong and Natural Resources, what we are trying to do is to be able to develop the area in such a way as not to have people trample the area down.

* (2350)

There was recently in the paper—I am sure everybody is aware of the theft of about 800 garter snakes; a couple of individuals were apprehended at the border. They fetch a fairly decent price. Basically, what has happened is that there is not any prevention of this at this time. Therefore, it is a bit of a concern, and since the LGD is within our specific region, we are at this point looking into creating something that will prevent this in the future.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions for Mr. Dandewich? Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Dandewich.

Would Mr. Ron Seymour please come forward? He is No. 28 on your list. Mr. Seymour, would you please proceed.

Mr. Ron Seymour (President, Stonewall & District Chamber of Commerce): Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, essentially, I want to draw your attention to the letter from the Stonewall and District Chamber of Commerce, dated June 5. You must have that I believe.

We, the Chamber of Commerce in Stonewall and District, represent more than 60 businesses in the area and would like to commit our support to these much needed improvements to The Wildlife Act.

We share the opinion that the best specialists in the wildlife area are naturally those who work to carry out the mandate of the Department of Natural

Resources, and therefore, they should have the ability to authorize activities within a managed area.

In having such an authority, if the Department of Natural Resources gives the okay to Ducks Unlimited after concluding a comprehensive agreement, then the business community of Stonewall and area support that project totally.

Generally we are satisfied that negative impact to the environment will be minimized. There is no doubt that having such a project in our area will impact very favourably on our local economies by reducing unemployment, stimulating housing sales and boosting sales and income for many. More important for the long term, having a very extensive educational and interpretive centre at the marsh will help ensure that our awareness as to the importance and beauty of the wildlife that make this marsh their home continues to grow.

For generations to come, the sensitivity to this aspect of our environment can be broadened in a way much faster and better than government can do on its own. We understand that when the existing centre was first placed in the marsh, it was anticipated that only a very few thousand visitors would be expected. Now some 80,000 to 90,000 visitors enjoy that centre and what it has to offer.

Does this not tell us something, that there is perhaps a great interest and an enthusiasm for this kind of education and exposure? Of course it does. We believe this project will be good for all of Manitoba. We also believe that our government, with its economic realities in the foreground, cannot afford such an undertaking alone, and perhaps it should not in any event as long as there are private sources of capital available to accomplish the same mandate.

In closing, we want you to know that the business community and the individual citizens of Stonewall and area wish to thank the leaders and members of this committee for taking the time to hear our point of view. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any questions for Mr. Seymour?

Mr. Enns: I would ask Mr. Seymour to pass on my appreciation to members of the Stonewall chamber for the presentation here today. Thank you.

Mr. Seymour: Thank you. I will.

Mr. Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seymour.

Would Mr. Ian Greaves come forward please, No. 6 on your list. Mr. Greaves, would you please proceed.

Mr. Ian Greaves (Private Citizen): Good evening, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Minister, fellow committee members. My name is Ian Greaves.

As a concerned citizen with a love for the outdoors and a deep concern for the environment and protection of wildlife, I want to express my strong opposition to the Ducks Unlimited Canada national headquarters and conservation complex scheduled to be built in Oak Hammock Wildlife Management Area and the Manitoba government's very biased view on this matter.

Since I first heard about this in January, 1990, I found it hard to believe what I thought was a leading conservation group, Ducks Unlimited, would want to build this 54,000 square foot building in the marsh. For many months I thought about this and I believe now that I have in part come to my own conclusion. Ducks Unlimited, despite its high profile nature and the public's poor vision on the benefits of its work, is a private corporation which lobbies for action favourable to its membership.

It is very inappropriate to allow them to locate on public land regardless of the fact that they had a part in converting this marsh from St. Andrews Bog to Oak Hammock Marsh. The people of Manitoba are the proprietors of this marsh and private organizations should not be permitted to compromise this fundamental relationship. Permitting Ducks Unlimited to operate on this marsh, which is a very high traffic area, with 83,000 visitors last year, would be used to raise money for this private organization, cashing in on the visitors using public lands.

In the last provincial election, the Tories' television ads showed Premier Gary Filmon paddling down the LaSalle River in a canoe. If elected, the environment would naturally be a top priority in the Progressive Conservative Party. This government is environmentally fraudulent.

I now ask Mr. Enns, why are we here? Are we wasting our time? You are quoted in the Winnipeg Free Press, May 15, 1991, as saying: The new act will undergo public hearings to allow people to appear before a legislative committee to express their concerns, but, he added, he will not consider amendments.

Mr. Enns, we are merely going through the motions, and you will not listen to the people who elected you.

This government has been in favour of this complex long before there was a Clean Environment Commission hearing or even a complete environmental assessment done. This was shown in a letter written to the Stonewall Argus, March 9, 1990 by the Minister of Natural Resources.

Amending this act pains me in what I read in Section 3(1): "Unless otherwise provided by this Act and the regulations, the designation of an area for the better management, conservation and enhancement of the wildlife resource of the province in accordance with section 2 does not limit or affect the uses . . . , and the minister may make such regulations as the minister considers appropriate." Part (c) "authorizing the construction, operation and maintenance of any building, structure or thing in a wildlife management area."

I understand what a building is, or a structure, but a thing? I pondered what a thing might be. The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines "thing": whatever is or may be thought about or perceived.

This minister, or future ministers far worse than this present one, may have a thought or perceive an idea and start the building of a structure and call it the thing. A five-star environmentally sound hotel with balconies doubling as shooting blinds is a thing. A twenty-five foot bronze statue of the Right Honourable Harry Enns in the middle of the Oak Hammock Marsh is a thing. This wording is as loose as a goose. As ridiculous as this sounds, the amending of parts of this act is to satisfy Mr. Enns' friends in Ducks Unlimited and to thwart any legal challenge to his plans of allowing Ducks Unlimited to build this office complex at Oak Hammock Marsh.

In a recent Winnipeg Free Press article, May 8, 1991, entitled Marsh Opposition Called Hypocrisy, Mr. Enns accused the New Democratic Party of hypocrisy by stating the fact that the NDP allowed Home Oil Company Limited of Calgary to drill in the Pierson Wildlife Management Area. Perhaps the NDP made a poor choice by allowing oil companies to drill for oil there. This government should be strengthening and correcting this act and not weakening it. Mr. Enns, you should be righting the wrongs of past governments and not making more wrongs.

This government has said many times in the past that the environment impact report might demonstrate little or no impact on this marsh.

* (0000)

This is exactly what a farmer will say when he tells you he wants to drain a small area or build a dwelling near a wetland. What many of us know and fight to save at first is not always threatened in a big way but gradually and incrementally. First this office complex. What next? These actions are in violation of the spirit under which lands were established as wildlife management area. Ducks Unlimited and Mr. Enns have lost sight of this in these effects to build in Oak Hammock Marsh.

The goal of all of us, and I speak to the public behind me, must be to influence our politicians on the question of wilderness protection. All of us must think like the Iroquois or aboriginal people. When they hunted on the land and cut down the trees, they always thought ahead seven generations. Like the Iroquois, we as Canadians need to focus on safeguarding our irreplaceable natural features. This should be our wilderness crusade. We need to retain the wild end of the spectrum rather than be pushed towards the other end. Let us keep the wild in wildlife management area. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any questions for Mr. Greaves? Mr. Minister?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Chairman, I just want to ask the presenter, Mr. Greaves, that on page one he does make the observation that would certainly be of concern to me, as indeed to all other Manitobans, when he suggests that in any way we are transferring ownership or losing proprietorship of the Oak Hammock Marsh.

What the agreement calls for is joint management of the specific site, interpretive centre that will come under the jurisdiction of Ducks Unlimited, and the interpretive centre that will come under the joint jurisdiction of the management board. The Department of Natural Resources, the people of Manitoba retain full and complete management responsibilities of the marsh property proper.

I would ask, where did he read in any of the information that he has obviously received about the project that would indicate otherwise?

Mr. Greaves: Hopefully I am not beating around the bush, but I believe that you should not be building out there and a private organization, like I

said in the brief, should not be permitted to be out there. That is what—

Mr. Enns: That is fine, Mr. Greaves. I just wanted to put on the record though that the Department of Natural Resources will continue to maintain control, management of the Oak Hammock Marsh proper.

On another matter that you, sir, and a few others have raised on the question of amendments, I fully expect amendments will be coming from this committee to alter, change, or somewhat change the bill that is currently before us. I will use my influence as one member of this committee to try to argue against those amendments. If I am successful, the amendments will fall; if I am not successful, the amendments will pass. It is as simple as that. That how this committee, that is how the democratic committee operates. Thank you.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairperson, let me say how much I agree with Mr. Greaves about his comment about the concerns about why we are here. You, sir, have waited until almost midnight on a week night, and I am sure you have many other things you could be doing; we all do. We are here very late, early into the next morning. We were so last week, we will be again. It depresses me to no end, and I want to express my agreement with you, that the minister would indicate not that he cannot commit to passing any amendments, but that he will not consider amendments. That to me makes a mockery of this entire public hearing process.

Let me simply indicate in response to the minister that the very fact that he who drafted the bill would not even consider amendments to me suggests that he views this as largely a waste of your effort, our time, and we are just going through the motions until he can get this into law. That, sir, depresses me, and I want you to know that that feeling is shared by me. I will be here on many more nights than you will be, I am afraid. I will be putting forward amendments, as the minister expects, but I have absolutely no hope that they will not just not be passed, but that they will be even considered by the minister.

Mr. Chairman: Are there any other questions for Mr. Greaves? Thank you very much for your presentation, Mr. Greaves.

I would like to inform the presenters that still have to come on the list that the committee will recommend to the government House leader that the committee meet again on Thursday morning at

10 and Thursday evening at eight. Once the formal announcement has been made, all presenters will be contacted and notified by the Committee Clerk.

The time being twelve o'clock, this committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 12:05 a.m.

**WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS PRESENTED
BUT NOT READ**

Dear Sir:

I would like to record my support for the Oak Hammock conservation centre and the amendment to The Wildlife Act, Bill C-38.

There is no organization in North America more qualified than Ducks Unlimited Canada. They have proven their commitment to wildlife in Canada for over 50 years. I find it incredible that anyone could question their conservation and environmental integrity. Thank you.

Bob Hysop

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To Whom It May Concern:

Please find enclosed documents which have been submitted to the Minister of the Environment by our school division.

Our position remains in favour of the project for reasons enclosed.

Yours truly,

Ken Halldorson
Superintendent of Schools
Lord Selkirk School Division No. 11

Dear Minister:

The Board of Trustees of the Lord Selkirk School Division wish to record their support for the Ducks Unlimited proposed project in the Oak Hammock Marsh. The board feels that this project will enhance the educational opportunities of our students in this unique natural setting and will also focus attention on Manitoba as a leading centre in environmental education. In studying the proposal we feel that the design will complement and enhance the existing setting at the site and at the same time will be aimed at protecting wildlife and other natural resources of Oak Hammock Marsh.

Our students and staff will be anxiously awaiting the opportunity to use these facilities in the near future.

Yours truly,

George B. Schreyer
Chairman of the Board

A BRIEF IN SUPPORT OF THE PROPOSED
OAK HAMMOCK CONSERVATION CENTRE
by the
LORD SELKIRK SCHOOL DIVISION NO. 11
PRESENTED BY BRUCE MCPHAIL
SCHOOL TRUSTEE

The Lord Selkirk School Division Board of Trustees are in full support of the proposed Oak Hammock conservation centre. Our division is located around the southern part of Lake Winnipeg. We have approximately 5,000 students in Grades K-12 attending fourteen schools in the communities of Selkirk, Clandeboye, Lockport, St. Andrews, East Selkirk, Gonor, Libau, Grand Marais, Victoria Beach and the Brokenhead Ojibway Nation. We have approximately 700 employees of which 300 are teachers.

Our board had an opportunity to study the proposal for the Oak Hammock conservation centre. As this proposed centre is adjacent to our school division's western boundary, we are well acquainted with this area. Our first reaction was to the unique design of the structure which will obviously blend in beautifully in this natural setting.

I am personally well acquainted with the Oak Hammock Marsh as I have had the opportunity to participate in Greenwing activities that are sponsored by the local Ducks Unlimited volunteers. The aim of the Greenwing program for youth is to promote understanding of the environment and its wildlife, in particular, waterfowl and other species whose future is dependent on a plenitude of suitable wetland and upland habitat and wise management decisions.

The educational opportunities for all students Grades K-12 would be outstanding. This would be a world-class conservation centre that will provide enhanced studies of nature and also serve as a biological resource centre. This centre would provide educational opportunities for adults as well.

Our Lord Selkirk Regional Comprehensive School graduates approximately 350 students annually. We hope that a centre of this type will provide some employment opportunities for our

graduates of various programs from Computer Science, Business, Marketing, Food Services and many other programs.

Our enrollment is in a slight decline; therefore, we would have sufficient room to accommodate the expected increase of student population from families of employees moving to our area. Our town, villages and municipalities would welcome new residents and look forward to meeting the needs of the employees at this centre. Here is one of the few opportunities for our area to experience some growth.

Therefore, our support for this project is based on the following:

The economic factor which will help the Interlake area. This will come from increased tourist and visitor traffic plus the establishing of employees for this centre.

Our school division will experience some enrollment growth as well.

Our area will be known for having a world-class national conservation centre.

The opportunities for students to experience educational field trips to this centre. The facilities will demonstrate to students that learning about wetland ecology and conservation can be rewarding and fun. It is the young people of today who will eventually influence decisions impacting upon habitat and wildlife resources.

The planned extension program can be utilized in most of our classrooms. Our high school biology class will be highly motivated in seeing research first-hand and they will be able to make use of this biological resource centre.

These are just a few of the benefits that our students and citizens may enjoy from this project. It would indeed be a loss if a project such as this would be stopped or transferred to another area of the province or country. The environmental factors are minimal and, in fact, this project will provide the necessary research for making wise decisions in the future.

I thank you for the opportunity to present this brief.