



ANNOUNCEMENT: W. GARFIELD WESTON FOUNDATION FELLOWSHIPS FOR NORTHERN CONSERVATION

Purpose: To advance Wildlife Conservation Society Canada's conservation goals at two long-term sites: Northern Boreal Mountains (Yukon/British Columbia) and Ontario's Northern Boreal.

Application deadline: February 21, 2012

With generous support from The W. Garfield Weston Foundation, Wildlife Conservation Society Canada (WCS Canada) is pleased to offer research fellowships in the field of applied conservation science to established or new graduate-level students working at our two long-term sites where WCS is pursuing various science-based conservation efforts. These fellowships are intended to provide all or partial funding of graduate level field research-related activities for students to carry out their thesis-related research and are not intended for salaries. The research undertaken by these students will be relevant to WCS Canada's conservation objectives at our two long-term sites in the boreal region of northern Ontario and the northern boreal mountains of Yukon and British Columbia¹.

Fellowships

WCS Canada will award fellowships of between \$5,000 and \$20,000 each. The amount of funding awarded will be determined in part by the applicants' financial needs balanced with other applicants. These fellowships are available beginning April 15, 2012 and last for one year.

The candidates must be pursuing a graduate degree in conservation science, or in a related field such as landscape ecology, natural resources management/conservation, conservation planning, conservation biology, environmental studies, wildlife/plant/fisheries ecology or socio-ecological studies. The research project must help advance WCS Canada's long-term conservation objectives and knowledge for each region and thus may include, but not be limited to, study of: aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems; wetland, riparian, and peatland ecosystems; species

¹ While the work does not have to take place directly at our field sites, it should be directly relevant to WCS Canada conservation objectives in these regions.

management/conservation; ecosystem connectivity; ecological changes resulting from climate change; sustainable harvesting of fish and/or wildlife; socio-ecological effects of natural resource development or management, especially cumulative effects.

Application deadline: February 21, 2012

Applicants should send:

1. A cover letter clearly outlining how the proposed research addresses WCS site-based conservation objectives;
2. Curriculum Vitae;
3. Description of research project of 3-5 pp. including goals/objectives, methods, conservation relevance);
4. Complete project budget which must include requested component within overall budget and committed or pending support from other sources;
5. Letter of support from their academic supervisor and names and contact information for two other references.

Applicants are strongly advised to ensure that their proposed research follows accepted ethical guidelines for research in the North before submitting proposals. Examples include the ACUNS Principles for Conduct of Research in the North (<http://www.acuns.ca/ethical.html>) and the Inuit Tapiirit Kanatimi Guide for Researchers (<http://www.itk.ca/publications/env-negotiating-research-relationships.pdf>). Fellowship awards will be conditional upon applicants providing copies of approved permits for research and evidence of compliance with necessary animal and/or human ethics and welfare protocols.

Send all application materials to: Office Manager at mkatsabas@wcs.org , 720 Spadina Avenue, #600, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 2T9. Electronic submissions are preferred. Electronic submissions greatly facilitate peer review and management of your proposal. Acceptable format is a pdf document file. Questions about specific sites can be directed toward Dr. Cheryl Chetkiewicz (Northern Ontario Boreal) at: cchetkiewicz@wcs.org and Dr. Don Reid (Northern Boreal Mountains) at dreid@wcs.org.

Long-term site descriptions and WCS Canada's conservation agenda

Ontario's Northern Boreal (ONB) Long-term Site

This region contains the largest ecologically intact boreal forest, the third largest wetland and the globally significant peatland complexes. The sheer size (450,000 sq. km), remoteness, low human population density, lack of a permanent transportation network, and as-yet small industrial footprint make it a stronghold for a number of species that have experienced range reductions in the rest of Canada including caribou, wolverine, and lake sturgeon as well as the most southern population of polar bears. It

is also a homeland to approximately 24,000 Cree and Ojibway First Nations. In the last two decades, they have experienced a mineral commodity boom in staking, exploration, and mining, intensifying in the past several years with the discovery of a world-class nickel-chromium deposit (the “Ring of Fire”). In 2010, the Government of Ontario formally committed to protecting at least 50 per cent of the landscape and creating a new relationship with First Nations to support sustainable development through a significant role in community and regional scale land-use planning processes.

Our vision is that Ontario’s Northern Boreal Landscape remains the largest ecologically intact boreal landscape in the world with thriving populations of iconic fish and wildlife species within a dynamic landscape, supporting healthy and resilient communities of First Nations pursuing traditional resource use with development.

Objectives

- Conservation principles inform regional and community land-use planning processes created under the Far North Act
- Scientific information informs management and use of fish and wildlife in northern Ontario
- First Nations communities have access to cutting edge management tools and scientific information for land-use planning practices
- Best practices in industrial development support conservation and traditional resource use
- Advance the science necessary to support place-based climate change adaptation and mitigation in Ontario’s northern boreal

Northern Boreal Mountains (NBM)

This region encompasses approximately 855,000 km² in north-western Canada, incorporating diverse boreal, taiga and tundra ecosystems. Resident aboriginal peoples rely on their harvests of wildlife and fish, including the longest distance migration of salmon in the world. Much of the region is still wilderness supporting robust populations of barren-ground and mountain caribou, grizzly bears, wolverine, and lynx and significant breeding populations of many boreal bird species. Much of the region was part of the Beringian refugium during the Wisconsin glaciation, and that geographic isolation led to significant speciation and endemic wildlife. Lowland forest and riparian habitats support the majority of the region’s biodiversity but these habitats are poorly covered by existing conservation lands. WCS Canada is focusing on the NBM because of the mix of conservation opportunity and threat the region currently faces.

Our vision is that the full suite of wildlife species continues to thrive, with robust populations conserved across the diversity of ecosystems, throughout the boreal mountains of northwest Canada.

Objectives

- To contribute to the identification and development of a full suite of ecological benchmarks or protected areas in the Northern Boreal Mountains.
- To contribute new science or scientific interpretations to enhance conservation of fish and wildlife in the Northern Boreal Mountains.
- To develop best management practices for the integration of wildlife and ecosystem conservation into natural resource management and human use of wild places.
- To strengthen the technical and scientific capacity of government agencies and other organizations which have a conservation mandate.
- To develop assessments of the risks to wildlife inherent in climate change and pursue suitable adaptation strategies in concert with various partners.

About WCS Canada

WCS Canada (www.wcscanada.org) was established as a Canadian conservation organization in July 2004. Our mission is to conserve wildlife and wild lands by improving our understanding of and seeking solutions to critical problems that threaten key species and large wild ecosystems throughout Canada.

We implement and support comprehensive field studies that gather information on wildlife needs and then seek to resolve key conservation problems by working with a broad array of stakeholders. We also provide technical assistance and biological expertise to local groups and agencies that lack the resources to tackle conservation concerns. WCS Canada is independently registered and managed, while retaining a strong collaborative working relationship with sister WCS programs in more than 55 nations, including an integrated North America Program.

The Wildlife Conservation Society (www.wcs.org) is a recognized global leader in conservation and for more than a century has worked in North America promoting actions such as bison reintroduction, pioneering field studies, parks creation, and legislation to protect endangered wildlife.