

**Friday, October 26, 2007
For Immediate Release**

**Taking on the Climate Change Challenge
Everyone Has To Do Their Part for Positive Environmental Change**

Imagine Southwestern Ontario without its forests, wetlands and grasslands. The Carolinian Life Zone is unique in Canada for its deciduous forest and rich wetlands, oak savannahs and tall grass prairies. So who protects our unique and precious natural places in Carolinian Canada? Who speaks for rare and endangered species? "The Carolinian Canada Coalition does." Michelle Kanter, Executive Director says, "and today's powerful messages will help steer the Coalition as it determines its course of action to preserve this national treasure."

The "Exploring the Nature of Climate Change" 2007 Forum was held on October 26th in London, Ontario. Carolinian Canada Coalition supporters listened, learned and discussed an organized response from the nature conservation community - a Carolinian Canada Big Picture strategy for the future. The one-day event brought together many voices and perspectives from local to international and challenged them to think about what they must do individually and collectively to sustain the Carolinian Life Zone's unique natural features in a warmer world.

As Coordinator of the Ministry of Natural Resources' Climate Change Program, Paul Gray provided an overview of some known and potential climate change impacts on Ontario's terrestrial biodiversity and ecosystems. Paul says that an adaptive approach will be a prerequisite for the successful management of impacts in the 21st Century. Knowing when to act, what actions to take and whether it is wiser to be proactive or to react to changes as they occur illustrate the types of decisions required in a world with a rapidly changing climate.

Mark Emery, CCC Board Director and an Ontario Stewardship representative, says that while we often look to and wait for our political and business leaders to take responsibility for actions to mitigate climate change, development of community inspired initiatives are equally important so everyone is doing their part for positive environmental change. Everyone can get involved in as big or as little role that they want. It just takes will, desire and being presented with the right vehicle for change.

The CCC Forum was generously sponsored by the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Parks Canada, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Nature, Ontario Stewardship, Trees Ontario, Bird Studies Canada, Lambton Wildlife Inc., Ontario Professional Planners Institute, Ontario Federation of Agriculture and Upper Thames River Conservation Authority.

Carolinian Canada is a coalition of the major non-government and government groups with a shared goal of conserving and restoring natural heritage for healthy and sustainable landscapes of the Carolinian Life Zone of southwestern Ontario.

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