

DEVELOPING AN ACQUISITION STRATEGY FOR THE RECORDS OF  
ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

by

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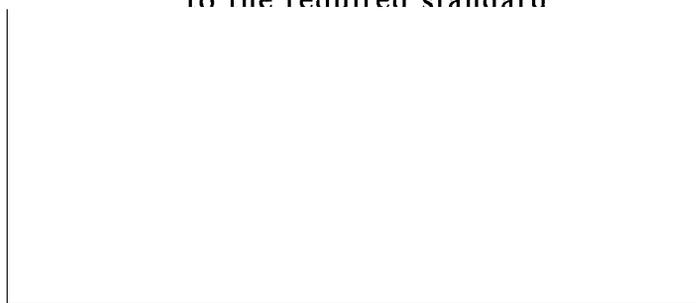
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## ABSTRACT

The acquisition of records from environmental non-governmental organizations will be of increasing interest to archivists over the next few years. The impact of these organizations on our society is only beginning to be felt. Their records will form an important facet of our documentary heritage. This thesis studies the approaches which might be taken for the strategic acquisition of these records by archival repositories and programs. Environmental non-government organizations are examined in light of the development of the movement, the general structure of the organizations, and in greater detail through a survey of organizations in British Columbia. The results of this survey indicate the possibilities for successful acquisition of these records through cooperative interinstitutional strategies, acquisition strategies, and documentation strategies.

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## INTRODUCTION

We in this "mediocre country" have actually been foremost in terms of ecological awareness and action. Greenpeace came out of this country. The International Fund for Animal Welfare came out of this country, as did Paul Watson [Sea Shepherd Conservation Society] and many others. There's been more ecological leadership coming out of Canada than there has been from any other comparable nation.<sup>1</sup>

Reflecting society's ever increasing concern for the state of the environment is the growing awareness among archivists that records bearing information about the natural environment form a valuable portion of our documentary heritage. Records of various kinds can be utilized to document the state of the environment, our stewardship of the environment, and societal debate about environmental policy. Archival literature has touched upon the first two of these three spheres through examining archival records as scientific resources on the state of past environments<sup>2</sup> and through examining the appraisal of scientific records "which reveal the age-old human desire to monitor, control and forecast (sometimes) unpredictable nature, including the actual data marshalled to

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<sup>1</sup>Farley Mowat, Rescue the Earth! (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990), 82.

<sup>2</sup>A.J.W. Catchpole and D.W. Moodie, "Archives and the Environmental Scientist" Archivaria 6 (Summer 1978): 113-136.

support these aims."<sup>3</sup> This thesis focuses on an aspect of the third sphere, organizations in what is usually called the environmental movement.

Environmentalists working in a plethora of organizations are responsible for creating a valuable part of our documentary heritage. As Candace Loewen puts it, "the scientific record will not be complete unless we document the activities and findings of alternative, protest groups — such as anti-nuclear groups — as well as all concerned parties: local, provincial, national and international."<sup>4</sup> While environmental groups were once on the fringe of contemporary society, their influence is already widespread. Canada's report to the Earth Summit in Brazil in 1992 speaks of this influence ranging "from the decision to abandon the planned Spadina Expressway in Toronto, to moratoriums on the development of uranium in British Columbia and Nova Scotia, to the establishment of important protected areas like South Moresby National Park in British Columbia and the Grasslands National Park in Saskatchewan."<sup>5</sup> As environmental organizations increase the range and influence of their activities, their records become a potentially more important segment of our documentary heritage. Before embarking on efforts to acquire environmental records, it is important to know more about the environmental movement and the environmentalists belonging to non-government organizations.

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<sup>3</sup>Candace Loewen, "From Human Neglect to Planetary Survival: New Approaches to the Appraisal of Environmental Records," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92), 95.

<sup>4</sup>Loewen, "Human Neglect," 100.

<sup>5</sup>Canada, Canada's National Report, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Brazil, June 1992, ([Ottawa], 1991), 98.

Many of these groups are voluntary organizations. Some arise from specific concerns and disappear when they are resolved. Others reach for the holistic healing of the earth, extending their influence into all corners of the globe. Canada sketched its picture of environmental groups for the Earth Summit as follows:

In 1991, there are approximately 1800 environmental groups in Canada. Most are small, local single-issue groups. They operate on small budgets and are usually staffed entirely by volunteers. Each province has at least one "major" group that has a focus on a broader range of issues. Their libraries and staff serve as important resources for the smaller groups. As well, there are over thirty national groups in Canada ... The national groups can generally be sub-divided into a number of major categories: parks, wilderness and wildlife groups, environmental advocacy groups dealing with issues like toxic chemicals and nuclear waste, as well as groups pursuing changes through the courts.<sup>6</sup>

These organizations and the acquisition of the records they generate are the subject of this study.

Chapter 1 examines archival acquisition programs and the elements that contribute to their success. Strategic plans for acquisition — documentation strategies, acquisition strategies, and cooperative interinstitutional strategies — are considered with an eye towards their application to the acquisition of records from environmental non-government organizations.

Chapters 2 and 3 aim to build the necessary foundation for developing a strategic approach to the acquisition of environmental non-government organizations' records. Chapter 2 reviews the development of the environmental movement and the general structure of environmental

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<sup>6</sup>Canada, Canada's National Report, 97.

organizations. Chapter 3 reports on the results of a survey of environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia.

There are several methods that might have been used for building baseline information about environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia in order to develop strategies for acquiring their records. Archival research has included functional analyses of creator groups, diplomatic analyses, ethnographic studies, and quantitative surveys.<sup>7</sup> Functional analyses focus on building knowledge about records creators, while diplomatic studies concentrate on the formative processes and forms of records. Ethnographic studies and quantitative surveys are methods of gathering information about any aspect of a subject with the precise focus varying from study to study.

The archivist developing an acquisition strategy for a targeted type of organization will receive more assistance from a methodology that accommodates gathering information about both records and creators. The methodology chosen for this thesis is that of the quantitative survey. Susan Hart has already demonstrated the value of the ethnographic approach to understanding records creators and their records keeping practices, but she concludes that "as a qualitative approach, it achieved a good depth of

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<sup>7</sup>Examples of each of these methodologies are as follows: functional analysis, Donna Humphries, "Canadian Universities: A Functional Analysis" (Master of Archival Studies thesis, University of British Columbia, 1991); diplomatic analysis, Janet Turner, "The Records of the United Church of Canada: A Study of Special Diplomats" (Working title of Master of Archival Studies thesis, University of British Columbia.); ethnographic study, Susan Hart, "Archival Acquisition of the Records of Voluntary Associations" (Master of Archival Studies thesis, University of British Columbia, 1989); quantitative survey, Valerie Billesberger, "Municipal Records Keeping in British Columbia: An Exploratory Survey" (Master of Archival Studies thesis, University of British Columbia, 1990).

understanding of these associations, although the breadth of data made possible by quantitative studies could not be achieved." She also observes that "it may be useful for the archival community to distribute a questionnaire to a sample of voluntary associations."<sup>8</sup> This thesis may be regarded as taking up her suggestion for further study in the determined realm of environmental non-government organizations.

In conclusion, Chapter 4 examines the results of the survey in light of the structure of the environmental movement and the different strategic approaches that archival repositories and programs might take towards the acquisition of these records.

Also included with this thesis are a selected bibliography and an appendix detailing the questionnaire sent to environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia.

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<sup>8</sup>Susan Hart, "Archival Acquisition of the Records of Voluntary Associations," (Master of Archival Studies thesis, University of British Columbia, 1989), 137.

## CHAPTER 1

### PLANNING ARCHIVAL ACQUISITION

Modern complex societies are overflowing with an abundance of information and records. Beyond government bureaucracy, the range of organized human activity generating records is staggering. From this vast potential, archivists are struggling to determine what to preserve and where and how best to preserve it in a world of limited resources for acquisition. Three methodological approaches are being developed by archivists to address the question of acquisition. These approaches overlap in some respects, but all attempt to address the problems of limited resources through careful planning of all acquisition activities. Documentation strategies focus on ensuring that adequate documentation on specified topics is created and preserved. Acquisition strategies concentrate on identifying the universe of existing records creators in a given sphere and targeting those which a specific repository will attempt to preserve. Cooperative interinstitutional strategies focus on a rationalization of institutional policies and programs to assist in the overall preservation of the documentary heritage by all archival institutions and programs in a given geographical area. Each of these strategic approaches might be applied to the acquisition of records related to the environmental movement of the late twentieth century.

The acquisition of records is the first function, at least temporally, of archival institutions or programs.<sup>1</sup> Acquisition determines the documentary heritage that is to be passed on to future generations. Acquisition by selection from among the records of a government or other organization which an archival institution serves is one method. Acquisition of archival fonds beyond such organizational scope is another. The latter type of acquisition, non-institutional acquisition, is the focus of this study.

An archival institution might acquire records through transfers from its sponsoring body and by various means from other organizations or persons. In most such situations, the primary responsibility of the archival institution is to the records of the parent body. These records need appraisal and arrangement and description to make them accessible. Time is spent appraising for selection from among the mass of records created by the sponsoring institution and bringing those accessioned under control. Given these responsibilities, it is necessary to work out very carefully what the sphere of acquisition will be beyond the parent body. There is a need for strategically planned acquisition to provide efficiency in non-institutional acquisition activities.

Because of institutional limitations on resources, non-institutional acquisition programs need clear formulation and careful implementation. An acquisition program as a whole consists of an institutional mandate statement, a complementary acquisition policy, and the development of

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<sup>1</sup>The other two being preservation and ensuring accessibility. Richard M. Kesner, "Archival Collection Development: Building a Successful Acquisitions Program," in A Modern Archives Reader: Basic Readings on Archival Theory and Practice, ed. Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1984), 114.

specific strategies to carry out the policy. Further involvement in cooperative interinstitutional strategies and documentation strategies may also benefit acquisition programs. The National Archives of Canada provides an illustration of the building of a complete acquisition program: legislated mandate, an acquisition policy, and the development of acquisition strategies.

Simply stated, a mandate is a statement of authority to administer a matter. The mandate of an archives may be part of legislation, as for public archives, or it may be a statement endorsed by the sponsoring institution. For example, the National Archives of Canada Act provides the authority for the National Archives to:

conserve private and public records of national significance and facilitate access thereto, to be the permanent repository of records of government institutions and of ministerial records, to facilitate the management of records of government institutions and of ministerial records, and to encourage archival activities and the archival community.<sup>2</sup>

This act provides the National Archives with the authority to preserve the records federal government agencies, and to acquire non-governmental records. Similarly, provincial and city archives often have combined responsibility to acquire, preserve, and make available records of the sponsoring government and non-governmental records falling within their acquisition policy.

This combination of government and non-governmental records in the mandates of Canadian public archives, to reflect "the total complexion of society" and "the total life cycle of institutional records," in all media

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<sup>2</sup>National Archives of Canada Act, 1987, 35-36 Eliz. 2, c. 1, s. 4(1).

possible, is called the "total archives" concept. In its most complete formulation, the concept includes a network of all archives cooperating to acquire and preserve the archival heritage of the country.<sup>3</sup> Wilfred Smith, in his characterization of total archives in Canada, summarized the four elements of the concept: "*all sources* of archival material appropriate to the jurisdiction of the archives are acquired from both public and private sources"; "*all types* of archival material may be acquired"; "*all subjects* of human endeavor should be covered by a repository in accordance with its territorial jurisdiction"; and "*life cycle* — there should be a commitment by both the creator of the records and the archivist to ensure efficient management of the records throughout the 'life cycle'".<sup>4</sup> The overall aim of total archives is to contribute to the building of as comprehensive a documentary heritage as possible in a given geographic framework.

There are many variations on the total archives concept. A recent one of note is the Nanaimo Community Archives of Nanaimo, British Columbia. It is sponsored by the City of Nanaimo, Malaspina College, Nanaimo Centennial Museum and Archives, and the Nanaimo Historical Society. The aim of the Nanaimo Community Archives is to preserve the archives of its sponsors and of organizations, persons, and families of the region of Nanaimo. This idea of developing initiatives to serve localized communities was supported by the Wilson Report in 1980.

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<sup>3</sup>Terry Cook, "The Tyranny of the Medium: A Comment on 'Total Archives'," Archivaria 9 (Winter 1979-1980), 141-142.

<sup>4</sup>Wilfred I. Smith, "'Total Archives': The Canadian Experience" Archives et Bibliothèques de Belgique 57, 1-2 (1986), 341.

In many communities across Canada, there are a number of local bodies with significant series of records. No one of those separate authorities might be able to justify a full-time archivist or a suitable archival facility. But rather than each of them depositing records with a remote archives, they might explore the possibility of a cooperative archives. The archives of a number of organizations — for example, university, municipality, business, union local, parish, association — might be housed together, sharing a good archival facility and the services of professional staff.<sup>5</sup>

Another local initiative along these lines has been proposed for the Regional Municipality of Waterloo in Ontario.<sup>6</sup>

Other archival programs preserve records of the sponsoring institution and other organizations and persons. For example, most university archives preserve the university's records and the records of other creators. Often, the non-institutional sphere is determined by the situation of the archival program. When it is in the library, as many are in English Canada,<sup>7</sup> the policy for non-institutional acquisition is affected by the mandate of the university and the role that the library fulfills. Essentially, the university mandate is to promote research and the library exists to serve the needs of the faculty. In these cases, the acquisition policy may focus on the research interests of the academic community in a thematic configuration of some kind. For example, the Special Collections Division of the Library of the

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<sup>5</sup>Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives: Report to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada by the Consultative Group on Canadian Archives (Ottawa: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, 1980), 92.

<sup>6</sup>Elizabeth Bloomfield, A Regional Archival System for Waterloo: Report of a Feasibility Study by Elizabeth Bloomfield for the Waterloo Regional Heritage Foundation, (Guelph, 1991).

<sup>7</sup>Ian E. Wilson, "Canadian University Archives" Archivaria 3 (1976-77), 17-27; Marcel Caya, ed., Canadian Archives in 1992 (Ottawa: Canadian Council of Archives, 1992), 41-44.

University of British Columbia has a special focus on the records of the labour movement in general and labour unions in particular. The University Archives is quite separate in its policies from other acquisition undertaken by the Special Collections Division. In the university setting, there is often no obvious connection between the acquisition of records from the parent body and non-institutional acquisition.

Even though many archival institutions and programs have expressed acquisition policies in terms of themes of concentration, there are relatively few purely thematic archives in Canada. One example is the Canadian Gay Archives located in Toronto. Its objective, as found in the Statement of Purpose, is "to aid in the recovery and preservation of [gay] history. It is a repository for all relevant, recordable information by and about gay men and lesbians, especially in Canada." The Canadian Gay Archives was initially established by The Body Politic, a national gay liberation journal. It incorporated as a separate entity in 1980 and is no longer sponsored by the journal, or Pink Triangle Press which offered some financial support before the incorporation of the Archives. The Archives continues to preserve the records of The Body Politic and Pink Triangle Press, in addition to many other records, but it has established itself clearly as a thematic archives.<sup>8</sup>

Whatever the structure of a repository, non-institutional acquisitions require a clear and concise acquisition policy for the archival program to avoid chaotic and ineffectual acquisitional activities. The acquisition policy

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<sup>8</sup>For a complete description of the establishment of the Canadian Gay Archives see James A. Fraser and Harold A. Averill, Organizing an Archives: The Canadian Gay Archives Experience, Canadian Gay Archives Publication No. 8 (Toronto: Canadian Gay Archives, 1983).

of any repository is the element that determines the character and cohesiveness of non-institutional acquisitions. An acquisition policy identifies the realm in which appraisal for selection is conducted. As Timothy L. Ericson points out, "the principles of appraisal help us to answer the question, '*Why* am I saving this?' — while acquisition policies force us to answer the equally important question, 'Why am *I* saving this?'"<sup>9</sup> By and large, the principles of institutional responsibility, complementarity, territoriality, and provenance rule the definition of acquisition policies.

Institutional responsibility is a factor seriously affecting the development and review of non-institutional acquisition policies for repositories that have followed the total archives concept. The British Columbia Archives and Records Service, for example, is responsible first to the government of British Columbia for the preservation of its records. While historians and others may lament the loss, the provincial archives can no longer afford to acquire many private records. In 1990, Reuben Ware, then Deputy Provincial Archivist, made it clear that the institutional responsibilities of the provincial archives must come before active efforts to acquire private fonds.<sup>10</sup> In 1993 John Bovey, Provincial Archivist, reported to British Columbian archivists the continuation of a passive non-

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<sup>9</sup>Timothy L. Ericson, "At the 'Rim of Creative Dissatisfaction': Archivists and Acquisition Development," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92), 68.

<sup>10</sup>Reuben Ware, in panel discussion with Guy Robertson and Kathleen Kyle, "Collecting Private Records: Present Policies and Future Directions," B.C. Studies Conference, University of British Columbia, 2-3 November, 1990.

institutional acquisition policy for the provincial archives.<sup>11</sup> The enactment of freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation is compounding the effect of institutional responsibility on the acquisition of non-institutional records. Large backlogs of unprocessed records are incompatible with the right of citizens to access records. Less time is, therefore, made available for non-institutional acquisitions.

Where institutional responsibilities can be met and the resources are available for non-institutional acquisitions, the principle of complementarity should prevail in the development of an acquisition policy. It is logical to acquire non-institutional records that complement those of the institution. Complementary fonds might be defined in an acquisition policy by subject, theme, historical period, or bodies with which the parent was related in some way. A complementary policy benefits both users and archivists. Users researching the institution will find their research expanded by related records housed in the same repository. Archivists will find that processing complementary fonds is assisted by contextual knowledge gained from previous accessions or accruals. In the university environment, complementary acquisition might include the personal papers of past university presidents as an enhancement to the administrative records from the president's office. Public archives tend to base complementarity on the national (or provincial or municipal) significance of the creator.

Complementarity can be reined in, if it ever loses its head to the interconnectedness of all archives, by considering territoriality.

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<sup>11</sup>John Bovey, reporting to the annual general meeting of the Archives Association of British Columbia, Vernon, British Columbia, April 24, 1993.

Territoriality refers to the geographical area from which acquisitions will be made. By defining the territory from which records will be acquired, archivists ensure that there are limits to acquisitions and conflicts with other repositories. In this way, two repositories in two different regions can have the same acquisition policies without competing for the same records by limiting the geographic territory from which they will make acquisitions. Territoriality is especially important when complementarity in a total archives is defined by significance, a term with "no sliderule that ensure[s] impartiality".<sup>12</sup> As the Wilson Report found:

the collecting mandates, self-imposed or legislated, of these archives overlap entirely, with federal interest absorbing provincial interest, and the latter absorbing local interests. Their mandates also overlap with the archives which simply attempt to document their own institutions.<sup>13</sup>

Overlapping territories create competition and the greater chance of split fonds. When developing acquisition policies, archivists require an awareness of not only other repositories' thematic or subject areas, but also their geographic focus, in order to demarcate a territory which will not create "the possibility of 'total war among total archives'."<sup>14</sup> The need for territorial awareness is culminating in the establishment of cooperative interinstitutional strategies in the field of acquisitions. These strategies are discussed in greater detail later.

As institutional responsibility, complementarity, and territoriality set the boundaries for the acquisition policy, the principle of provenance, as it

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<sup>12</sup>Robert S. Gordon, "The Protocol of S.N.A.P. Demarcation of Acquisition Fields" Canadian Archivist 2, no.4 (1973), 53.

<sup>13</sup>Consultative Group on Canadian Archives, Canadian Archives, 89.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, 64.

relates to acquisition, determines the players. All non-institutional acquisition must eventually identify a class of creators that fits into the policy being defined. Given the unlikely possibility of the establishment of a thematic environmental archives and the significance of environmental non-government organizations, it is important for archivists for recognize that several configurations of acquisition policies might include these organizations as a class of creators from which records could be acquired. Following only territoriality and connecting it to provenance produces a policy for the acquisition of records from all classes of creators, including environmental non-government organizations, within the defined geographic area. The organizations targeted might operate from the territory defined or be operating to save that region. An archival institution or program preserving records from natural resource industries could apply the principle of complementarity to add the class of environmental organizations to its acquisition policy. These organizations also complement policies defined to preserve the records of social movements, voluntary associations, or if the parent body is itself involved in the environmental realm of activities. Many archival institutions or programs might be involved in approaching environmental non-government organizations depending on the specific configuration of their acquisition policy.

Regardless of the means for inclusion of environmental organizations in an acquisition policy, archival institutions and programs would have to then contact specific bodies within the acquisitional sphere. The next step in a successful acquisition program involves the development of strategies for the implementation of the policy. Each of the three approaches formulated for the preservation of society's documentary heritage —

documentation strategies, acquisition strategies, and cooperative interinstitutional strategies — might be successfully applied to the acquisition of records from environmental non-government organizations.

The focus in recent archival literature has primarily been on the development of documentation strategies. Documentation strategy has been defined as:

on-going, analytic, cooperative approach designed, promoted, and implemented by creators, administrators (including archivists), and users to ensure the archival retention of appropriate documentation in some area of human endeavor through the application of archival techniques, the creation of institutional archives and redefined acquisition policies, and the development of sufficient resources. The key elements in this approach are an analysis of the universe to be documented, an understanding of the inherent documentary problems, and the formulation of a plan to assure the adequate documentation of an issue, activity, or geographic area.<sup>15</sup>

Acquisition strategies, which are intra-institutional, and cooperative interinstitutional strategies involve a number of the ideas of the documentation strategists, but the role of the archivist in the overall approach to acquisition differs from that of the documentation strategist's.

In drawing the line between acquisition strategies — both repository specific and cooperative interinstitutional ones — and documentation strategies, the role of the archivist needs to be clearly defined. Discussions of the move from passive to pro-active archival acquisition and the development of strategies have had the tendency to redefine the archivist as the recorder of history. F. Gerald Ham suggests that the new archivist make use of various techniques: "He can create oral history, he can

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<sup>15</sup>Lewis J. Bellardo and Lynn Lady Bellardo, compilers, A Glossary for Archivists, Manuscript Curators, and Records Managers (Chicago: The Society of American Archivists, 1992), s.v. "Documentation strategy."

generate a photographic record, and he can collect survey data."<sup>16</sup> Does a move away from passive custodianship necessarily require the archivist's involvement in the creation of records?

The role of the archivist has often been defined as that of documenting society. Indeed, Richard Cox and Helen Samuels write that "to successfully document society" is "the profession's *first responsibility*."<sup>17</sup> Hans Booms similarly indicates: "It is the archivist alone who has the responsibility to create, out of this overabundance of information, a socially relevant documentary record."<sup>18</sup> The verb 'to document', the documentation of society, and the creation of a documentary heritage have all been interpreted differently by various archivists. To the documentation strategist, documenting society includes the creation of documentation:

Documentation strategies, however, do not start with surveys of available material. They begin with detailed investigations of the topic to be documented and the information required. The concern is less what does exist than what should exist.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>F. Gerald Ham, "The Archival Edge," in A Modern Archives Reader, ed. Maygene F. Daniels and Timothy Walch (Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Service, 1984), 330.

<sup>17</sup>Richard J. Cox and Helen W. Samuels, "The Archivist's First Responsibility: A Research Agenda to Improve the Identification and Retention of Records of Enduring Value," The American Archivist 51 (Winter and Spring 1988), 29. Italics in original.

<sup>18</sup>Hans Booms, "Society and the Formation of a Documentary Heritage: Issues in the Appraisal of Archival Sources," Archivaria 24 (Summer 1987), 77.

<sup>19</sup>Helen Willa Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," The American Archivist 49 (Spring 1986), 120.

Others view the role of documenting society as simply meaning the preservation of existing documents. Frank Boles presents the further argument that the archival responsibility to document society should be a second priority, after service to the archivist's employing institution.<sup>20</sup> Frank Burke also cautions against the interpretation of the archivist's role presented in Cox and Samuel's article. Burke sees their ideas for documentation strategies as a role in which "instead of picking up the pieces from the societal terminal moraine, archivists attempt to control the glacier."<sup>21</sup>

In addition to this difference in the role of the archivist in acquisition and documentation strategies is the scope of the planning. Documentation strategies, as they have been theoretically and ideally described, involve a joint analysis of the existing gaps in documentation. With a team of creators, administrators, archivists, and others, the issue to be documented is defined, all related types of documentation are assessed, and plans are set for the creation, collection, and retention of records. The scope of the strategy is as large a topic as can be managed comfortably to accommodate as many of the interrelationships of creators as possible.

A documentation strategy for the environmental movement would involve an analysis of environmental issues and the activities of environmentalists and those who would oppose them. In examining the movement, the strategists would determine which aspects should be

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<sup>20</sup>Frank Boles, "Commentary," The American Archivist 51 (Winter and Spring 1988), 43.

<sup>21</sup>Frank G. Burke, "Commentary," The American Archivist 51 (Winter and Spring 1988), 51.

documented and how best to preserve the documentation. Current documentation — books by and about environmentalists, newspaper articles, environmental impact assessments, research on particular environmental subjects — would be examined to discover the gaps. Records created by environmentalists, environmental non-government organizations, government agencies, scientists, native groups, forestry companies, and others would be needed to document the whole issue of the struggle over the state of the environment.

An acquisition strategy, on the other hand, is of more limited scope. It is generally limited to one repository's acquisition policy, tends to involve only archivists in contact with prospective donors, and concentrates only on the available archival documents. For example, an acquisition strategy might be developed to determine the best method for a university archives to acquire the records of the environmental non-government organizations in the city. The scope of this type of strategy need not be designed solely for the benefit of a single repository, in the spirit of competition rather than cooperation. As in documentation strategies, cooperation arises from the information gained from creators and the sharing of this information with appropriate repositories. This is the role of cooperative interinstitutional strategies: building upon the mandates, policies and strategies of individual repositories and ensuring the documentation of all facets of society without unnecessary competition.

An acquisition strategy developed by a single archival institution or program is a plan which turns a policy into specific records creators to be approached. The individuals and organizations are targeted through general research of the classes of creators defined in the acquisition policy. Once specific creators are identified, further research into these creators results

in plans for how to approach them and successfully acquire records. An acquisition strategy for the class of creators defined as environmental non-government organizations in Greater Vancouver would target Greenpeace, the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, and many others. Research into these organizations would then assist in the formulation of tactics to be used in approaching each one.

The National Archives of Canada is currently developing an acquisition strategy for non-institutional records similar to the concept discussed above.<sup>22</sup> A development plan was established in 1989, which aside from the necessary approaches to developing acceptable definitions for certain issues, delineated three basic steps: developing a strategic acquisition model, undertaking strategic acquisition research, and identifying the strategic acquisition targets.<sup>23</sup> Strategic acquisition research is taking place for both public and private records. Research into government functions has produced the Government-Wide Plan for the Disposition of Records, 1991-1996. The Private Sector Acquisition Research Strategy Working Group has also outlined a model for the

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<sup>22</sup>For a summary of the developments in strategies at the National Archives, see Richard Brown, "Records Acquisition Strategy and Its Theoretical Foundation: The Case for a Concept of Archival Hermeneutics," Archivaria 33 (Winter 1991-92): 34-56. The development plan is documented in National Archives of Canada Acquisition Strategy: A Development Plan, 1989-1993, (Ottawa: National Archives of Canada, 1989).

<sup>23</sup>National Archives of Canada Acquisition Strategy, 33-35.

"systematic and planned approach to the development of an acquisition strategy."<sup>24</sup>

Table 1, on the following page, summarizes the approach model of the Private Sector Working Group.<sup>25</sup> Careful examination shows this to be a National Archives of Canada configuration of the same factors outlined by the Canadian Council on Archives for defining non-institutional collecting fields within an acquisition policy: "fields may be defined by a combination of the following: institutional or geographical boundaries; language; chronological units; cultural groups; professional or occupational disciplines or themes."<sup>26</sup> The National Archives' strategy for private records must include such details as recommended for an acquisition policy since the essence of its policy is simply "to develop a broad and comprehensive collection by acquiring records of national significance in a planned and integrated manner, according to predetermined appraisal criteria."<sup>27</sup> Records of national significance are defined as "those which document the Canadian experience" in ways such as recording the national or international recognition of individuals or organizations, events and trends

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<sup>24</sup>"Report of the Private Sector Acquisition Research Strategy Working Group" in National Archives of Canada, Historical Resources Branch, Preliminary National Archives Acquisition Strategy, (Draft document, January 1992), 1.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid, Appendix A.

<sup>26</sup>Canadian Council of Archives, Guidelines for Developing an Acquisition Policy (Ottawa: Canadian Council of Archives, 1990), 1.

<sup>27</sup>National Archives of Canada, Acquisition Policy/Politique d'Aquisition, (Ottawa, 1988), s.2.

Table 1.— The approach model of the Private Sector Acquisition Research Strategy Working Group

SOURCE/CREATOR	<p>Who are the sources/creators?</p> <p>What are their interrelationships?</p> <p>What are their inherent biases or perspectives?</p>
FUNCTIONS/ACTIVITIES	<p>What functions and activities do we want to document?</p> <p>How do these relate to the functions and activities of Canadian Civil Society?</p> <p>How do they relate to the functions and activities of the Canadian Federal Government?</p>
SUBJECTS/THEMES	<p>What are the broad subjects and themes of Canadian Society?</p> <p>What subjects and themes of Canadian Society do we want to document?</p>
SUB-THEMES/ISSUES	<p>What issues and events within these subjects/themes do we want to document?</p>
GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS	<p>What is the relationship between geographical focus and national significance?</p>
PERIOD	<p>What is the relationship between period and national significance?</p> <p>What chronological frameworks can be used to view the development of Canadian Society?</p>
GOVERNMENT LINKAGES	<p>What is the relationship between the federal government and the private sector in Canadian Society?</p> <p>What aspects of Canadian Society are best documented in private as opposed to public archives?</p>
MEDIUM	<p>What is the relationship among media in documenting Canadian Society?</p> <p>What aspects of Canadian Society are best documented from a multi-media perspective?</p>

of broad, national scope, and documentation of the physical environment.<sup>28</sup> Since the National Archives of Canada acquisition policy becomes no more specific than this, it is necessary for the first steps of the acquisition strategy to clearly determine where the records of national significance are and then to use that strategic acquisition research to target specific classes of creators for acquisition. Environmental organizations working to preserve nationally significant areas of Canada could be targeted by the strategy of the Private Sector Working Group. Further research would assist in developing plans for actually acquiring these records.

The idea of a national acquisition strategy as described by the Canadian Council of Archives Acquisition Committee is different from the National Archives' acquisition strategy and might be better termed a cooperative interinstitutional strategy. In defining the concept, Chris Hives writes that "a national acquisition strategy would allow us to reduce the areas of overlapping institutional collections policies ... [and] help identify material currently 'falling through the cracks' in our collective acquisition program." He lists a number of elements that the Committee's vision of a national acquisition strategy might include:

concluding agreements on the repatriation or reproduction of certain holdings; distributing information on the value of archives and public education; improving and developing legislation in the areas of taxation, copyright, cultural property, access to information, etc., to help preserve archives; planning regional acquisition programs; developing a national publicity campaign; creating a bank of consultants; establishing a financial assistance program; use of foundations and other new sources of funding; publishing various brochures on topics such as creating acquisition networks, formulating an acquisition policy, etc.

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<sup>28</sup>Ibid, s.4.2.

This lengthy list of ideas clearly illustrates that the Canadian Council of Archives intends a cooperative interinstitutional strategy when using the phrase "national acquisition strategy". This is recognized at the end of Hives' article when he calls the CCA's strategy a "national cooperative acquisition strategy."<sup>29</sup>

Whatever its name, this type of archival strategy attempts to reduce competition and increase cooperation among archival repositories in the formation of society's documentary heritage. When only one repository has a policy directing interest in a fonds, donors are less likely to split their archives and donate to several repositories. The integrity of the fonds is preserved. Without overlapping policies, newer repositories will be required to examine other possible collecting areas, filling in the gaps of the documentary heritage. The ultimate goal of a national cooperative interinstitutional acquisition strategy is to strengthen the infrastructure of archival acquisition.

A cooperative interinstitutional strategy for the records of the environmental movement would require a careful consideration of the geographical influences on the creators. Environmentalists might work out of one location, but all of their activities might be focused upon another. For example, one of the driving forces behind saving the Tatshenshini area in the northwest corner of British Columbia is the Vancouver organization, Tatshenshini Wild. If a Toronto group fights to save British Columbian forests, should the records be acquired by a Toronto repository or one in

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<sup>29</sup>Chris Hives, "The Canadian Council of Archives and the Development of a National Acquisition Strategy," AABC Newsletter 2, no. 2 (Spring 1992), 3-6.

British Columbia? Other possibilities to consider are organizations that might first gain local significance for their activities, but the momentum of the issue carries the organization to a level of national or international significance. Some organizations have branches across the country and around the world. Cooperation among repositories is needed to determine where best to preserve the records of these organizations, without institutions fighting to acquire them and meanwhile losing them altogether should the organization disband and its volunteers disappear with the records. An interinstitutional strategy would ensure the documentation of the environmental movement by preserving environmental archives in the most appropriate locations.

The key to the implementation of any strategy is knowledge. Documentation strategists gather information on the topic to be documented and the level of documentation that currently exists. As Samuels writes: "With a knowledge of the phenomenon and an understanding of the documentary problems, goals can be formulated to ensure the documentation of the topic."<sup>30</sup> An acquisition strategy, on the other hand, requires knowledge of creators and their records. Richard Brown summarizes his view of the distinction between documentation strategies and what he calls records acquisition strategies along these same lines:

"The former concentrates on a selection process determined by the capacity of records to recall or reflect certain pre-ordained subjective categories and qualities; the latter concentrates on a objective determination of archival value emerging from an analysis of records

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<sup>30</sup>Helen W. Samuels, "Improving Our Disposition: Documentation Strategy," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-92), 126.

creators and indigenous patterns of records organization and administration."<sup>31</sup>

Cooperative interinstitutional strategies require a knowledge of other acquisition policies, what has been acquired, or where a sphere of contacts is being made by various institutions.

Without an awareness of creators and record keeping practices, acquisition can be "a selection process so random, so fragmented, so uncoordinated, and even so often accidental."<sup>32</sup> All acquisition involves appraisal considerations. Victoria Blinkhorn, in her thesis on appraising artists' records, discusses the "education" of the archivist in the four phases of appraisal.<sup>33</sup> Her analysis regarding appraisal education and non-institutional records applies to all acquisition. The first phase concerns an education "about the society in which the records to be appraised were generated."<sup>34</sup> When defining an acquisition policy and developing strategies for the acquisition of non-institutional records, an archival institution or program must next learn about the classes of records creators falling within the scope of the policy: "The life, activities, ideas, spirit, and any other element that may shed light on the personality and work of the person who

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<sup>31</sup>Brown, "Records Acquisition Strategy," 36.

<sup>32</sup>Ham, "Archival Edge," 326.

<sup>33</sup>Victoria Blinkhorn, "The Records of Visual Artists: Appraising for Acquisition and Selection," (Master of Archival Studies thesis, University of British Columbia, 1988), 42-46.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid, 43. Blinkhorn is in agreement with Hans Booms who writes about "measuring the societal significance of past facts by analysing the value which their contemporaries attached to them" in "Society and the Formation of a Documentary Heritage," Archivaria 24 (Summer 1987), 104.

created the records."<sup>35</sup> When the creator concerned is an organization, the education extends to mandates, organizational structures, and functions. The third phase of appraisal outlined by Blinkhorn involves the development of an understanding of "the activities which generated the records and the types of records these activities produce."<sup>36</sup> These first three phases run in concert with the knowledge and understanding that need to be acquired before any records are. Knowledge in these areas is the blueprint for developing an acquisition strategy. This study aims to provide the knowledge needed to acquire records from environmental non-government organizations.

The end of acquisition education is the acquisition of archival records. The knowledge that is acquired about society, creators, and records is translated into the receipt of materials in the repository. The development of a strategic approach to the acquisition of records from environmental organizations needs a stronger base of knowledge upon which to stand. Despite the importance of these organizations to today's society, few records have been acquired by archival repositories.<sup>37</sup> As the environmental movement continues to gain political and social momentum, archivists will want to acquire records which document the organizations behind it. Patrick M. Quinn notes that acquisition policies change only after "significant shifts in prevailing societal values." He continues,

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<sup>35</sup>Blinkhorn, "Visual Artists," 43-44.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid, 44.

<sup>37</sup>British Columbia Archives and Records Service, for example, holds records from only one environmental non-government organization of the last twenty years of environmental concerns.

in a period of nascent political or societal ferment, documentation generated by individual or organizational agents of change tends to be ignored by general archives. When the movements for change reach a 'threshold' and have sufficiently loosened the pervasive grip of prevailing ideology and forcefully called attention to the importance of previously scorned or neglected documentation, collecting often begins."<sup>38</sup>

When archival institutions and programs reach this point and prepare to document the activities of environmental organizations, they will need to educate themselves about the creators and their records. Through a survey of literature on the environmental movement and environmental organizations, and through strategic acquisition research in the form of a survey of organizations in British Columbia, we may gain an understanding of strategic approaches to the acquisition of these records.

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<sup>38</sup>Patrick M. Quinn, "Archivists Against the Current: For a Fair and Truly Representative Record of Our Times" Provenance 5, no.1 (Spring 1987), 3.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Part of the success of the movement has been due to its skilful division of labour between different groups with different talents and interests, serving different functions on different levels with different techniques and in different tones of voice.<sup>1</sup>

To facilitate an understanding of the records of environmental organizations for the development of strategic plans for the acquisition of these records, it is useful to examine the historical development of the movement, its ideological or philosophical orientations, and its organizational makeup.

The environmental movement can be viewed as another part of the ongoing philosophical relationship of Homo Sapiens with the planet, an outgrowth of the conservation movement of the late nineteenth century, or something new given birth to by a combination of events in the 1960s. The height of the movement is often declared to have been Earth Day 1970. Whichever history is ultimately attached to the current proliferation of environmental organizations, they all bear examination for the development of an understanding of today's environmentalists.

The relationship between mankind and nature has been evolving for several millennia and has been under the examination of scholars in several

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<sup>1</sup>Max Nicholson, The New Environmental Age (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 73.

disciplines.<sup>2</sup> The current environmental movement is one of the many responses to wilderness along the spectrum of wilderness as a resource under our control, to being one with wilderness. Many of the stages through which the relationship between mankind and nature have passed throughout history remain as beliefs for various segments of modern society.

The beliefs of radical environmentalists, removing the boundaries between humans and the natural world built by influences such as Judeo-Christian thought and the scientific revolution, harken back to the anthropological understanding of mankind's earliest relationship with the natural world. Before the dawn of agriculture, nature was revered as the Great Mother who nurtures all life. The Earth Mother was later transformed into earth and vegetation goddesses of various pantheons. She continues to exist in modern folklore as Mother Nature. Many environmentalists have recaptured this sense of the planet as a living being. The Gaia Hypothesis, first discussed by James Lovelock, is evident in environmental literature through phrases such as "raping" the planet.<sup>3</sup>

With the move from hunter/gatherer societies into agricultural communities, mankind's relationship with nature changed dramatically. Instead of a personified earth providing humans with food, mankind could

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<sup>2</sup>One of these examinations, and from which this discussion is primarily drawn, is that of Max Oelschlaeger, The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991).

<sup>3</sup>Lovelock's works include Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), The Ages of Gaia: A Biography of Our Living Earth (New York: Norton, 1988), Healing Gaia: Practical Medicine for the Planet (New York: Harmony Books, 1991).

now force the earth to produce his necessary resources. From a wandering of the sacred earth, mankind settled into a home which was distinct from wilderness. Fields were planted which had been cleared by man for his purposes.

Mankind's relationship with nature continued in its development with an increasing dualism. No longer one with the earth, Western civilization was built upon beliefs that mankind was created as lord of the beasts to rule and subdue them. Humans became further separated from nature by early Christian thought, which preached a fallen world with God and heaven beyond it. Nature became a wilderness which required conquering. Modernism, arising in the Renaissance, built upon this Judeo-Christian foundation. Max Oelschlaeger describes modernism as "analogous to alchemy, for through science, technology, and liberal democracy modern people hoped to transform a base and worthless wilderness into industrialized, democratic civilization."<sup>4</sup>

At the end of this long line of thought regarding mankind's relationship with nature and wilderness stands representatives of its stages, even within the scope of the environmental movement viewed as a whole. "Resource conservationists" view wilderness as a collection of parts in an ecomachine. Under proper human control, resources will always be available to meet our needs. "Preservationists" approach nature holistically with the realization that human action can cause irreversible damage and that wilderness areas "ought to be preserved because future generations will enjoy it." Beyond these two groups lie "ecocentrists", "deep

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<sup>4</sup>Oelschlaeger, Idea of Wilderness, 68.

ecologists", and "ecofeminists". Each circles back to early thought, humans as part of the natural world, not ruling over it, and the earth as fundamentally feminine.<sup>5</sup>

This cosmological spectrum of the environmental movement ranges from a primarily anthropocentric view of the world to an ecocentric view of nature. Anthropocentrism is a world view centred on mankind. Nature exists for his use and is seen in terms of resources and economic benefits. Biocentrism views all life, not just that of Homo Sapiens, as the central fact of existence. Ecocentrism takes biocentrism one step further and centres its world view on natural systems, which contain both organic and inorganic components.

Environmental organizations have been set up to meet the goals of all of these views. Resource conservationists are anthropocentric. The natural environment is valuable and must be managed carefully to get the highest return possible for mankind. The phrase "sustainable development" is important to resource conservationists since development is a key factor in modern industrial society.<sup>6</sup> Biocentric organizations tend to focus on the preservation of endangered species without concern for habitat preservation. Ecocentrically shaped organizations aim to preserve entire natural systems and not just the species within them. What is being preserved through efforts supported by these world views, however, is not always a clear indication of the beliefs involved. For example, one might interpret the preservation of the wetlands by Ducks Unlimited not as the

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid, 286-316.

<sup>6</sup>Others have noted that "sustainable development" is an oxymoron. They believe that one cannot sustain and develop simultaneously.

preservation of a holistic, natural system, nor the protection of endangered waterfowl, but rather as the preservation of duck hunting season for mankind's pleasure.

The environmental movement expanded and fragmented into a variety of organizations throughout its development over the last century. It is commonly believed that the current environmental movement is "simply an extension of the 70-year-old conservation movement by another and broader name," but Richard Andrews, a professor in natural resource policy and management, maintains that this is not so.<sup>7</sup>

The conservation movement began with the closing of the western frontier in the United States. A concern developed for the preservation of land which still held the wild spirit of the frontier. Early conservationists wanted to keep some land for hikes and retreats from the busy world. The move to establish national parks dates from this same time period. The end of the nineteenth century, however, already saw the movement fragmenting "into warring factions of utilitarians and preservationists."<sup>8</sup> In the United States, the utilitarians were represented by the founder of the Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot, who saw conservation as "a comprehensive and well-planned management of natural resources of every character, based on

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<sup>7</sup>Richard N.L. Andrews, "Class Politics or Demographic Reform: Environmentalism and American Political Institutions," Natural Resources Journal 20 (April 1980), 225.

<sup>8</sup>Stephen Fox, The American Conservation Movement: John Muir and His Legacy (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), 115.

sound ethical and economic grounds."<sup>9</sup> The preservationists were represented by people such as John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club.

The modern environmental movement, by contrast, arose from concerns about pollution. The publication of Rachel Carson's Silent Spring in 1962 heightened awareness of the damage being done to the planet and fueled a response in the shape of the environmental movement.<sup>10</sup> The notion of preserving wilderness was expanded upon with the understanding that humans were in the process of actively destroying wilderness. Long-standing conservation organizations, like the Sierra Club, transformed themselves into environmental organizations with new concerns to address.

The differences between these two movements is best seen through their approaches to solving their particular problems. The conservation movement in the United States worked with the government on nature issues and saw new government agencies established, one after the other, to take care of arising concerns. The environmental movement, with its new set of concerns, sought "changes in (and coordination of) the behavior of existing agencies rather than merely the creation of a new one."<sup>11</sup> Differences with the established and ongoing conservation movement included changes in the way in which the relationship between mankind and nature was to be viewed:

The environmental movement's leaders differentiated themselves from traditional conservationists as being more concerned with the total environment than with single issues, with the human environment

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<sup>9</sup>Nicholson, Environmental Age, 34.

<sup>10</sup>Rachel Carson, Silent Spring (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962).

<sup>11</sup>Andrews, "Class Politics," 231.

(including health and urban issues) than with strictly outdoor and back country preservation, with grassroots organizing than with national interest groups, and with challenging centralized business and governmental power than with working through that power system to achieve elitist goals.<sup>12</sup>

This last of the differences, challenging the system rather than working with it, is a theme which arises again and again in the literature on environmentalists.

Environmentalists of all stripes are asking society to change various aspects of its behaviour. The intensity of change requested varies and has led to the notions of deep and shallow ecology. Shallow ecology, sometimes called reformist environmentalism, has been defined as "several social movements which are related in that the goal of all of them is to change society for 'better living' without attacking the premises of the dominant social paradigm."<sup>13</sup> The term "deep ecology" originates in Norway with Arne Naess. It has also been called "eco-philosophy", "foundational ecology", and "new natural philosophy".<sup>14</sup> Deep ecology is not a "pragmatic, short-term social movement" since it "seeks transformation of values and social organization."<sup>15</sup> Deep ecologists place those they view as anthropocentric environmentalists — the parks movement, the city beautiful movement, resource conservation and development, zero population growth advocates, and others — on the shallow side of environmentalism. Deep ecologists maintain that people who try to solve

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid, 232.

<sup>13</sup>Bill Devall, "The Deep Ecology Movement," Natural Resources Journal 20 (April 1980), 302.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid, 299.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid, 303.

environmental problems by working within the current system are ultimately only further contributing to the problem. For deep ecologists, the current system, which is the source of the problem, is shaped by the duality of modernism. Drawing upon elements of Zen Buddhism, Native American thought, and philosophers of nature such as Thoreau and Muir, deep ecologists challenge the very basis of the current social system by "seeking a new metaphysics, epistemology, cosmology, and environmental ethics of person/planet."<sup>16</sup>

The separation of radical environmentalism, whose participants embody the spirit of deep ecology, from the larger environmental movement occurred at the end of the 1970s. The same decade which began with Earth Day and the push for responsible actions towards the environment, ended with the birth of Earth First! and increasing acts of ecotage, sabotage for the preservation of wilderness. Radical environmentalists view their counterparts as the reform environmental movement which "entered the seventies as a vague critic of our society and exited as an institution, wrapped in the consumerism and political ambitions it once condemned."<sup>17</sup>

Radical environmentalists separated themselves from reform environmentalists by spiking trees, destroying logging equipment, and pulling up survey stakes. Inspired by characters in Edward Abbey's novel

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<sup>16</sup>Ibid, 299.

<sup>17</sup>Christopher Manes, Green Rage: Radical Environmentalism and the Unmaking of Civilization (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1990), 65.

The Monkey Wrench Gang,<sup>18</sup> Earth First! caught the attention of the public by symbolically cracking the Glen Canyon Dam in Arizona in 1981. Around the same time in Canada, Paul Watson established the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society to "take direct action in defense of threatened marine mammals around the world without the bureaucratic restraints of Greenpeace and the mainstream environmental movement."<sup>19</sup> Direct action, known as ecotage to its proponents and vandalism to its opponents, is defended as a form of self-defense:

If our selves belong to a larger self that encompasses the whole biological community in which we dwell, then an attack on the trees, the wolves, the rivers, is an attack upon all of us. Defense of place becomes a form of self-defense, which in most ethical and legal systems would be ample grounds for spiking a tree or ruining a tire.<sup>20</sup>

One of the potential benefits of the ecotage controversy for the environmental movement as a whole is that organizations like Earth First! "make the mainstream environmental groups operate more effectively by making them appear reasonable in comparison."<sup>21</sup>

The environmental movement, as has been shown, is really composed of off-shoots which have grown in slightly different directions within the overall context of preserving wilderness. These fragments, particularly the direct action branch, have had an impact on the internal development of environmental organizations.

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<sup>18</sup>Edward Abbey, The Monkey Wrench Gang (New York: Avon Books, 1976).

<sup>19</sup>Manes, Green Rage, 109.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid, 177.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, 70.

The development of the internal structural dimension of environmental organizations is similar to that found in previous archival research on voluntary associations. The general pattern of development has been the same as the life cycle of many voluntary organizations.<sup>22</sup> Environmental organizations tend to begin at the voluntary, activist, grassroots level. Like other voluntary associations, they gradually become more formalized, some reaching a stage of institutionalization where almost all of their voluntary nature has been lost.

The ongoing bureaucratization of the environmental movement has become a growing concern for some of its participants. Greenpeace is often touted as a prime example of an environmental organization which has lost touch with its activist roots. Over the twenty years of its existence, Greenpeace has transformed from a voluntary, primarily activist organization into "a multinational eco-corporation."<sup>23</sup> Greenpeace supporters have countered these accusations:

Direct action remains the central theme of Greenpeace operations. This needs to be stated clearly because there is a current media cliché that Greenpeace is turning its back on such tactics and is becoming a more bureaucratic, softer version of its earlier radical self. This is demonstrably untrue; the number of direct actions continues in an upwards spiral. What is true is that, in recent years, such actions have been backed up by sophisticated political lobbying and scientific enquiry that have added strength to the organization's dramatic calls for change.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations," 22-25.

<sup>23</sup>Paul Watson, as cited in Martin Dunphy, "The Greenpeace Giant," The Georgia Strait (Vancouver, B.C.), 13-20 September 1990, 7.

<sup>24</sup>Michael Brown and John May, The Greenpeace Story (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada, 1989), 5.

This development of voluntary organizations into formal bureaucracies is not always considered beneficial by members of environmental organizations for one prime reason. Paul Watson, founder of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, a direct action organization that has rammed whaling ships, maintains that "his organization — and many others — gets more results for less money" than the giant bureaucracy called Greenpeace.<sup>25</sup>

Similar transformations have occurred in other Canadian environmental organizations, as membership lists grew and handling budgets required more administrative skills. Monte Hummel, co-founder of Pollution Probe in Toronto, current president of World Wildlife Fund Canada, recalls an example of the bureaucratic development of environmental organizations:

I got more and more involved in organizational thinking; raising the money; the budgeting; working with people; realizing that so-and-so is a nice person but is totally ineffective; that Probe wasn't just a club, we had some sort of responsibility to our supporters to make progress on the issues.<sup>26</sup>

As voluntary organizations grow, some degree of formalization is inevitable.

The load of administrative tasks which develop with the formalization of small organizations has led to at least three different responses for Canadian environmental organizations. The first of these is the collapse of the organization. Members see all of the money and time pouring into

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<sup>25</sup>Martin Dunphy, "The Greenpeace Giant," The Georgia Strait (Vancouver, B.C.), 13-20 September 1990, 8.

<sup>26</sup>Monte Hummel, interview by Farley Mowat, Rescue the Earth!, 34.

administrative tasks rather than saving wildlife and/or habitat. In the shift from a voluntary nature to a formal structure, many groups lose their support base because of increasing administrative costs, and consequently fold.

Concern over administrative loads led to the formation of the International Wildlife Coalition (IWC), an effort to diminish the problem of collapsing organizations. Stephen Best of IWC in Canada summarizes the predicament facing environmental organizations: "Small organizations just get overwhelmed with the administration. That's what kills them."<sup>27</sup> IWC was formed as an umbrella group to take the strain of administration off the shoulders of struggling environmentalists, giving them the opportunity to promote their goals while IWC does the paperwork.

The third response to bureaucratization which has been noted in Canada is exemplified by ARK II, a Toronto based animal rights organization. Like many other organizations which begin to grow, it had to put more time into "becoming a Canadian environmental institution" while the work for animals "lessened in direct proportion to the growing size of the institution."<sup>28</sup> The response of ARK II was not that of simply falling by the wayside. Vicki Miller summarizes how ARK II survived bureaucratization:

Eventually the really committed people began to drift away and ARK II started to break down. In order to revive it we had to abandon the office and spread things out among volunteers. Within three months the action level was going up again. We were not sitting in the office trading mailing lists and processing coupons and doing all that stuff.

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<sup>27</sup>Stephen Best, interview by Farley Mowat, Rescue the Earth!, 242.

<sup>28</sup>Vicki Miller, interview by Farley Mowat, Rescue the Earth!, 123.

We were doing direct action. So we decided we would abandon the bureaucracy entirely.<sup>29</sup>

Rather than letting the evolution from grass roots activism to formalization stifle it, ARK II chose to revert to its voluntary nature.

The above examples illustrate a polarization which Eyerman and Jamison noted developing in the environmental movement as it progressed from the 1970s into the 1980s.<sup>30</sup> As the movement grew and more organizations were formed to deal with environmental issues, they became more specialized in their concerns. With a growth in the political dimension of environmentalism, the movement split apart. Eyerman and Jamison describe this dichotomy as a split between "value" oriented environmentalists and "success" oriented environmentalists. The former includes the deep ecologists and those whose concern is over a change in the cosmology of society, away from the dominant social paradigm. The latter type of environmentalist is generally more interested in alternate technologies and stopping environmentally harmful activities than in alternate value systems.

Eyerman and Jamison illustrate this split in the environmental movement through its effect at the organizational level. Environmental organizations can be divided into the "value" oriented environmentalists who have amateur groups with a "grass roots epistemology" and the "success" oriented environmentalists who have "taken on the mantle of

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<sup>29</sup>Ibid, 123-124.

<sup>30</sup>Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, "Environmental Knowledge as an Organizational Weapon: The Case of Greenpeace," Social Science Information 28, no.1 (1989), 102-103.

professionalism."<sup>31</sup> Greenpeace, for example, evolved from its grass roots into a highly professional organization that will not use volunteers in the key positions of business, advertising, and media, or in the office.<sup>32</sup> ARK II, on the other hand, chose to retain the value direction and direct action activities not possible for them in a professional bureaucracy.

A similar dichotomy among environmental organizations has been described as a split between "institutional groups" and "issue-oriented groups." Like the success-oriented environmentalists described above, institutional groups have "elaborate organizational structures, possess a stable membership and have an extensive knowledge of the branches of government which affect their interests."<sup>33</sup> Issue-oriented groups, recognized by names such as "Friends of ..." when the issue is site specific,<sup>34</sup> deal only with one or two specific issues and tend to be voluntary. Being "generally not as well organized" such groups tend not to be permanent and expire when the key issue does.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>31</sup>Ibid, 103.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid, 105.

<sup>33</sup>W.R. Sewell, Philip Dearden, and John Dumbrell, "Wilderness Decisionmaking and the Role of Environmental Interest Groups: A Comparison of the Franklin Dam, Tasmania and South Moresby, British Columbia Cases," Natural Resources Journal 29 (Winter 1989), 150-151.

<sup>34</sup>Paul Griss, "A Forester's Guide to the Environmental Movement" The Forestry Chronicle 68, no.2 (April 1992), 241. Griss is executive director of the Canadian Nature Federation.

<sup>35</sup>Sewell, Dearden and Dumbrell, "Wilderness Decisionmaking," 151.

The above discussion illustrates many of the complexities of the environmental movement and the organizations involved. Environmental organizations are both voluntary and professional. They are involved in such a wide range of activities that, even at the voluntary level, it is difficult to associate them with any one of Susan Hart's functional categories of voluntary associations.<sup>36</sup> While archivists may be inclined to approach all of the organizations as one segment of society, they need to remember the context from which individual organizations arose. It has been said that "part of the success of the movement has been due to its skilful division of labour between different groups with different talents and interests, serving different functions on different levels with different techniques and in different tones of voice."<sup>37</sup> Nonetheless, all of these differences comprise what is generally considered to be one large movement to preserve the natural environment. When considering the acquisition of their records, archivists need to remember that each organization has its own history, philosophy, and organizational structure. Awareness of these dimensions can increase understanding of the circumstances in which records are created and maintained. This knowledge, when coupled with baseline data regarding the records keeping habits of environmental organizations and their understanding of archives, can aid archivists in the formulation of acquisition strategies.

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<sup>36</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations," 25-26. The overlapping categories are (1) political action associations, (2) professional or occupational associations, (3) research associations, (4) economic associations, (5) religious associations, (6) service associations, (7) self-help associations, and (8) social associations.

<sup>37</sup>Nicholson, Environmental Age, 73.

## CHAPTER 3

### ENVIRONMENTAL NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THEIR RECORDS

A survey was conducted in the spring of 1992 of environmental non-government organizations (ENGOS) in British Columbia to assist in the development of strategic plans for the acquisition of their records. By examining baseline data,<sup>1</sup> it was hoped that the foundational knowledge would be captured for the development of acquisition strategies, documentation strategies, and cooperative interinstitutional strategies, and that the possibilities for the implementation of these plans might be realized.

The theoretical population for this study is ENGOS in Canada.<sup>2</sup> The study population involves environmental organizations that are members of the B.C. Environmental Network. The Network, which has operated for more than ten years, is a network of "public interest, non-profit organizations in B.C. concerned with environmental integrity."<sup>3</sup> The B.C.

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<sup>1</sup>Baseline data is data gathered at a basic standard level to gain familiarity with a phenomenon and to accurately describe characteristics of a phenomenon. Baseline data becomes the foundation for further studies.

<sup>2</sup>Theoretical population is the broader collection of things that constitute the focus of a study. A study population is a subset of the theoretical population. It comprises the actual population from which the sample is drawn and from which data are gathered.

<sup>3</sup>The British Columbia Environmental Directory, (Vancouver: British Columbia Environment Network, 1990), ii.

Environmental Network maintains a database of information about environmental non-government organizations, government departments and agencies responsible for administering aspects of the environment, native organizations, and labour and industry associations. The study population consists of only the non-government organizations within the Network's database as of March 1992.

In selecting the study population, the assumption is that only organizations well enough established to have generated some records qualify. Being well established cannot be defined in terms of number of years, but rather is a factor of the organizational strength of the group. Some groups may become well organized within a few months and have available a contact person and mailing address for the B.C. Environmental Network database. Roughly estimated, there are some six hundred environmental organizations in British Columbia. Of this number, approximately four hundred are known by the B.C. Environmental Network and included in their database of ENGOs, government agencies, and other associations; 196 of these are considered, for present purposes, to be ENGOs. Not in the database are organizations slower to develop to a more formal stage, or choosing not to develop in such a manner, and without a mailing address or contact person. Groups excluded might be those which are very short-lived working primarily on ad hoc direct action in response to very specific short-term issues, small environmental committees connected to businesses, neighbourhood groups, and groups preferring a loose and informal structure with the belief that more will be accomplished

with such a setup.<sup>4</sup> These organizations may generate some valuable records, but they are difficult to locate.

A questionnaire was designed to ask about the structure and activities of each organization, their record keeping practices, and their receptivity to archival preservation. It was felt that this set of questions would provide selected baseline data on environmental organizations in British Columbia, as well as an indication of the possibilities for the archival acquisition of their records. The questions used in this survey can be found in Appendix A.

The questionnaire was mailed to all 196 environmental non-government organizations found in the B.C. Environmental Network database. A follow-up mailing to the non-respondents was performed once to attempt to increase the number of returns. Of the 196 questionnaires mailed, 107 of those returned were acceptable for inclusion in this study and are referred to as the respondents. This 54.6 percent response rate provided an overall sampling error of  $\pm 6.5$  percent at a confidence level of 95 percent. For comparisons of two variables it was decided not to perform a test of statistical significance on the available data because of the relatively small sample size and the large number of attributes for each combination of variables.

The discussion that follows, therefore, is held with the awareness that the nature of the study does not permit the generalization of the results to a larger theoretical population, although it is possible to generalize from the sample to the study population. Further studies with larger sample

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<sup>4</sup>Telephone conversation with Anne-Marie Sleeman, B.C. Environmental Network Coordinator, June 7, 1993.

populations are needed to arrive at statistically reliable conclusions applicable to the general population. Nonetheless, the study is valuable for the development of conceptual acquisition strategies for the records of ENGOs. The results are considered in light of the analysis of environmental organizations presented in chapter two and the implications for acquisition are discussed in greater detail in chapter four.

### **Environmental Organizations**

The results of the questionnaire provide a thumbnail sketch of the typical ENGO in British Columbia. Data analysis shows that the structural development of the organizations is largely in the voluntary stage, indicating a greater presence of Eyerman and Jamison's value-oriented environmentalists and Sewell's issue-oriented groups.<sup>5</sup> An examination of the functions and activities of the respondents verifies the prominence of these types of organizations in the province.

The voluntary nature of most environmental organizations in British Columbia is clearly shown by the variables determining the number of paid employees and the location from which the organization operates. Of the respondents, 70.2 percent have no paid employees and operate solely by the grace of volunteers; 61.2 percent of the ENGOs have no formal office and operate out of a member's home (see figures 1 and 2). Only a small number have evolved from a volunteer format into a formal, more

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<sup>5</sup>See pp.41-42 for a discussion of these terms.

professional organization of "success" oriented environmentalists wearing "the mantle of professionalism".<sup>6</sup>

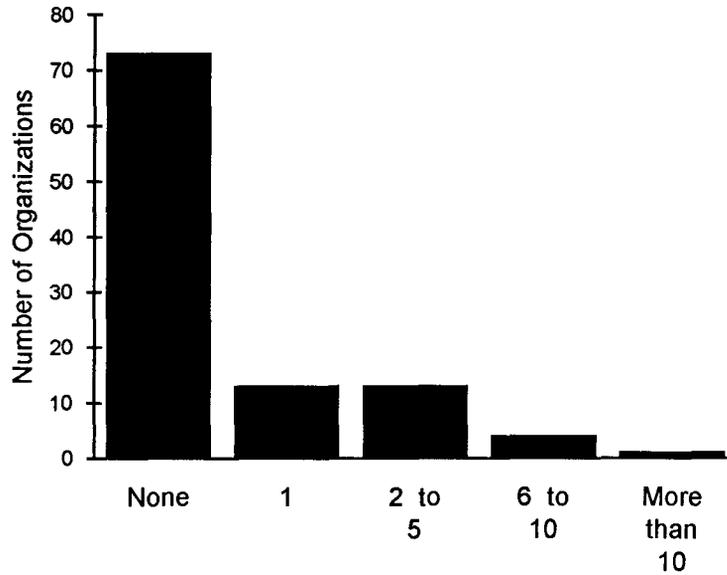


Figure 1. Number of paid employees

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<sup>6</sup>Eyerman and Jamison, "Environmental Knowledge," 103.

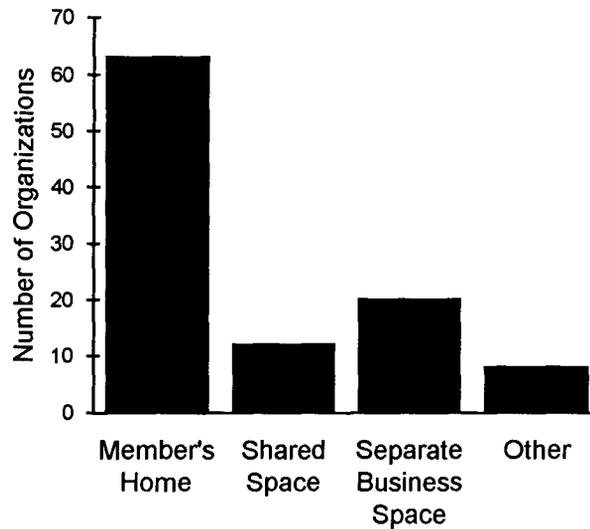


Figure 2. Location of "office"

Some of the reasons for the high voluntary composition reported for the environmental organizations might be the age of British Columbian groups and the number of members in the typical group. Approximately three-quarters of the organizations are fewer than ten years old. About one in five of the organizations originated during the 1960s and 1970s in the early days of the environmental movement. Only 4.7 percent are over 25 years of age, and can be classified as arising from the older conservation movement, although they may now hold the philosophical orientation of radical or reform environmentalism. Figure 3 illustrates the ages of the office responding to the questionnaire and the age of the organization to which it belongs.

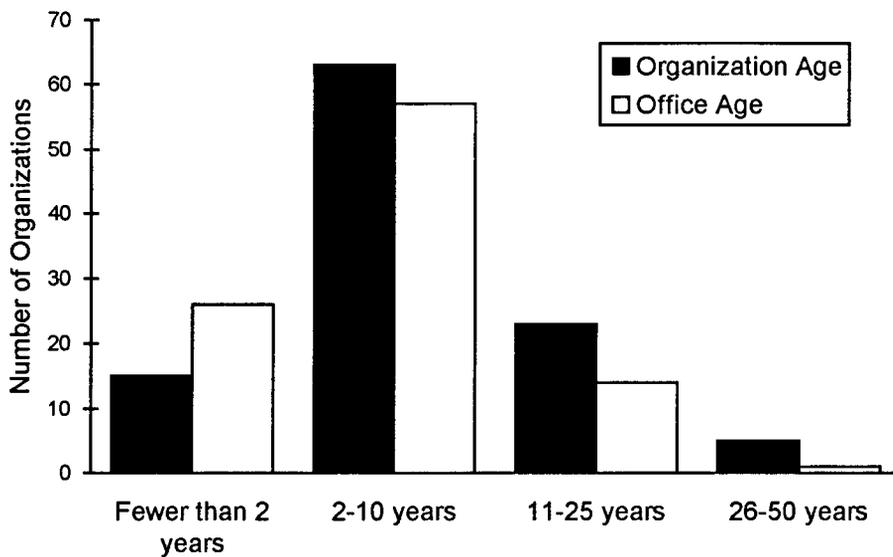


Figure 3. Age of environmental non-government organizations and of responding offices

Because most of the organizations are relatively young, it is understandable that the number of members belonging to each is rather small. Figure 4 illustrates the responses given for membership size. Over half of the respondents, 56.2 percent, serve fewer than 200 members. Another 21.0 percent of the respondents have between 200 and 500 members. Only 5.7 percent have a membership greater than 5000. The membership of some of the environmental organizations is composed of other organizations. These types of membership technically involve many more individuals than indicated by the number of members. For example, one respondent reported a membership of 501-1000, but indicated that the membership includes 77 organizations which represent over 100,000 individuals. For records management purposes it is the number of members, whether individuals or collective bodies, that has direct effects on records keeping. The organization mentioned above would not keep a roster of

over 100,000 members; it would only keep information about its membership in the range of 501-1000.

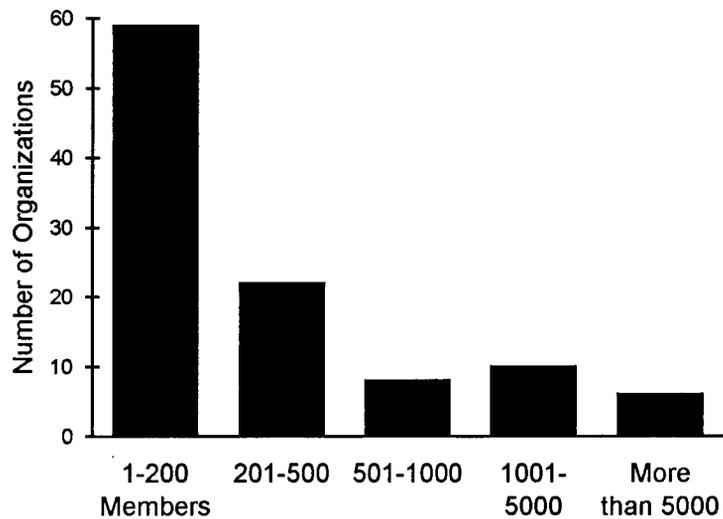


Figure 4. Membership size of B.C. organizations

The relatively small number of members belonging to most of the organizations is probably explained by their location in small communities, as shown by the data analysis. Of the environmental organizations responding to the questionnaire, 69.1 percent focus their attention on local or regional issues, 18.6 percent work provincially, and only 12.4 percent reach beyond British Columbia as part of their efforts. These figures reflect the actual geographic locations of the organizations. Only 25.2 percent of them have a mailing address in the Lower Mainland area of British

Columbia. A further 7.5 percent operate from a Greater Victoria address.<sup>7</sup> Organizations in these urban areas of the province have a greater potential to grow and raise more money to support activities ranging farther afield. Table 2 supports the notion that organizations in larger urban centres have the ability to act outside the local arena. Of the two-thirds of the respondents which are located in the northern and interior regions of the province, most are acting locally.

Table 2.—Relationship between geographic areas of operation and geographic location of organizations (percentage of organizations)

Location	Local Activities	Provincial Activities	Inter-provincial	National Activities	Inter-national
Lower Mainland	7.2	11.3	0	2.1	4.1
Victoria	4.1	2.1	1.0	0	0
Other	57.7	5.2	1.0	0	4.1

N=97 respondents

A further indication of the number of site-specific issue-oriented groups in British Columbia is the number of respondents with a geographic delimiter in the organization's name. At least half of the environmental

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<sup>7</sup>The Lower Mainland includes Vancouver, Burnaby, New Westminster, Coquitlam, North Vancouver, West Vancouver, Richmond, Surrey, Delta, and White Rock. The population of the census metropolitan area of Vancouver in June 1992 was 1,626,800. Greater Victoria includes Oak Bay, Saanich, Sidney, Esquimalt, Colwood, Langford, and Sooke. The population of this census metropolitan area was 288,700 in June 1992. Canadian markets 1992: Complete Demographics for Canadian Urban Markets, 66th ed. (Toronto: The Financial Post Publications, [1992]).

organizations responding use the name of a river, watershed, or other geographic area in their name to indicate the focus of their activities.

As might be expected given the large percentage of small, locally oriented organizations, very few have more than one office location. Only 23.1 percent of the study population indicated that their organization has other office locations. However, a number of those indicated that the additional offices are in members' homes. Multiple locations, as shown by these instances, are not necessarily an indication of the formalization of the organization's structure or of increasing professionalism in operations.

While the majority of respondents are small organizations in rural British Columbia involved in local issues, they are involved in a wide range of activities. Respondents were asked to select as many principal activities as applied to their organization from a list of eleven and to add any other principal activity not covered by those provided. Figure 5 illustrates the number of ENGOs responding positively to each category of activity. The activities most frequently selected are environmental education and habitat and wildlife preservation. Activities not specifically on the list but mentioned by the respondents included recycling, pollution control, and watershed protection and management.

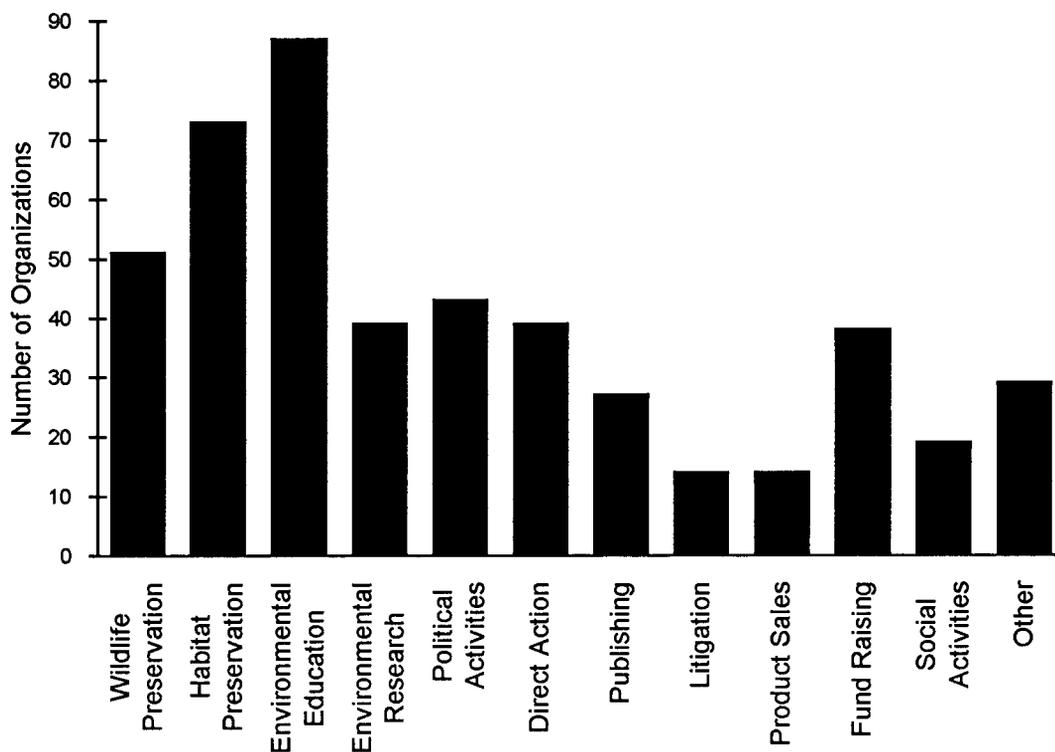


Figure 5. Number of organizations involved in principal activities

Some respondents selected only one category; one checked all twelve. Just over half, 53.8 percent, of the ENGOs reported involvement in four or fewer activities. A further 40.5 percent undertake 5-8 of the activities listed. The final 5.7 percent are involved in 9-12 of the activities. This produces a mean of 4.5 activities. It should be noted that respondents might have interpreted the descriptions of activities in different ways. Wildlife and habitat preservation were intended to mean actually preserving wildlife and habitats, not simply being concerned about these issues. It is possible, however, for an organization involved in educating the public about the decline of raptor populations to have selected both wildlife

preservation and environmental education. The mean of 4.5 activities from those provided may be slightly higher than it should be.

In summarizing the structural and functional elements, data analysis shows that environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia are primarily small, issue-oriented voluntary associations operating in the smaller communities of the province. These factors will influence the procedures most likely to result in the successful acquisition of an environmental organization's records.

### **Records Keeping Practices**

An examination of the records keeping practices of the environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia shows some interesting results regarding the extent of records and recycling practices.

Even though 72.1 percent of the respondents are using computer disks as a storage medium for their records, they all continue to use paper records despite their concerns about recycling and the preservation of forest resources. Environmental organizations in British Columbia use a high percentage of recycled paper; 65.1 percent of the respondents indicated that more than 75 percent of the paper in use was made from recycled stock. They are also busy recycling the paper records that they create and receive. All the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that by reducing, reusing, and recycling they are achieving some of their goals. Figure 6 shows the extent of each of these activities in more specific terms. The results show that the majority of the environmental organizations polled are reducing the number of documents being created, reusing the materials on which previous documents were created, and recycling the paper containing documents no longer actively needed by the office. In

other words, only those documents absolutely necessary are created, and once they are no longer needed it appears that they are reused and recycled where possible.

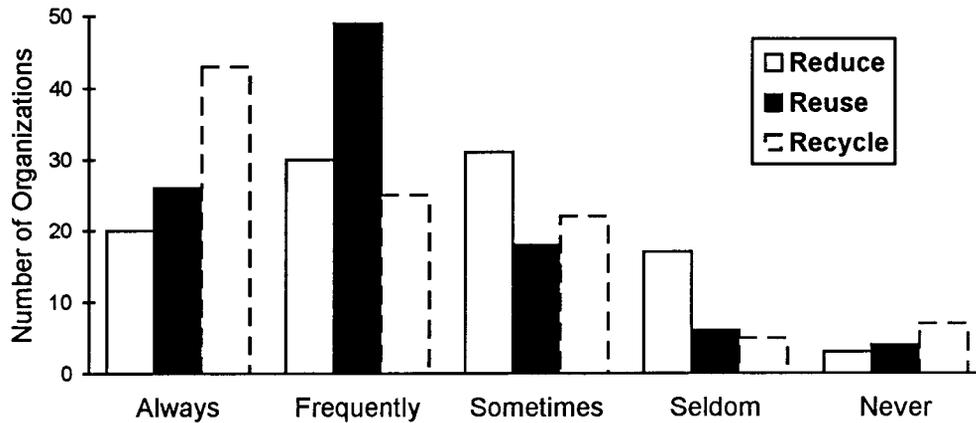


Figure 6. Environmental organizations' adherence to the 3Rs

Because of the largely voluntary nature of environmental organizations in British Columbia, it is to be expected that their filing systems tend to be haphazard. A methodical filing system is in place and used consistently by 54.9 percent of the respondents. The remaining 45.1 percent either have no filing system or are not using one consistently. As Susan Hart noted, even if a voluntary association "has an office and one or more central filing systems, the quality of these systems may not be very high, and good records-keeping may not be a priority for the association."<sup>8</sup>

When questioned about the approximate extent of records currently in the office, over forty percent of the respondents estimated that their paper

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<sup>8</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations," 129.

A few respondents indicated by their comments that they understood the primary value of records, but not all of them could see capitalizing on it. One respondent commented: "Very rarely do we find it necessary to refer back to the thousands of documents, files, etc. we have stored as we must initiate action immediately. Otherwise if it is put on the back burner it will never get done." Another respondent indicated that the records of the organizations were not valuable because "everything changes: research, and the battles." In other words, both these respondents doubted the records could serve the needs of the organization long after the action they documented. In contrast, the respondent for another organization wrote: "Archived records (though disorganized) helped a lot in reactivating the anti-uranium struggle after a 7-year moratorium lapsed in 1987."

Respondents were asked to select their preferred type of repository for the permanent preservation of their records. Only 21.4 percent of the participating environmental organizations indicated that they would prefer to have their records preserved in a local city or regional archives. The bulk of the respondents, 57.5 percent, selected a dedicated repository for environmental organizations' archives. The remainder of the organizations chose either the British Columbia Archives and Records Service, a university archives, or an option not covered by the given categories. Some of the other options suggested a lack of understanding regarding the nature of archival preservation, such as a network database, while others indicated that the local museum would be their preferred location. One respondent simply indicated that the repository in which their records would preferably be preserved would be "whatever works!" Figure 8 illustrates the types of repositories preferred by the environmental organizations participating in

the study. None of the organizations indicated a wish to donate their records to the National Archives of Canada.

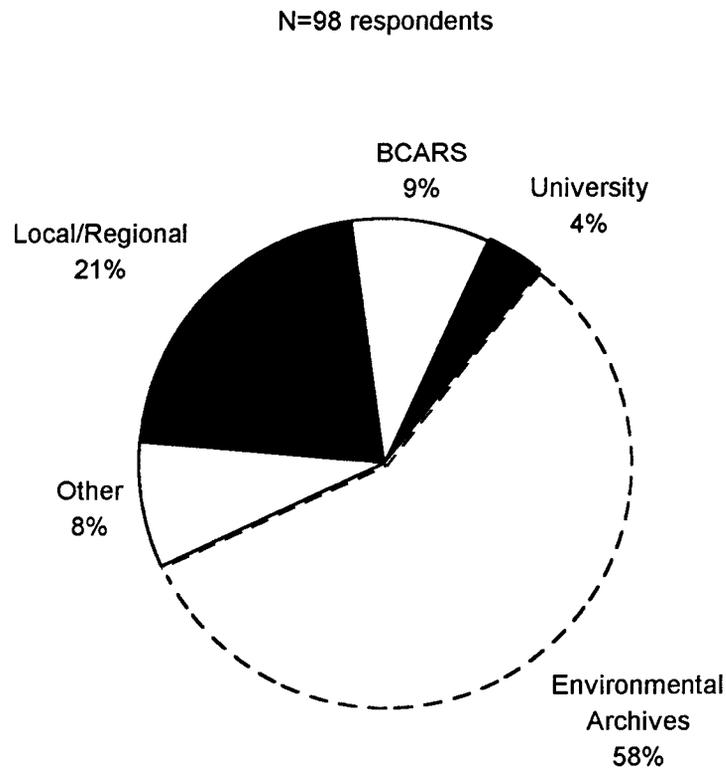


Figure 8. Preferred repository for the donation of records

Since a majority of the environmental organizations answering the questionnaire operate only on local issues in remote areas of British Columbia, one might have assumed that more of the organizations would prefer to preserve their records locally. This logic is supported by the complete lack of preference for the National Archives of Canada. Obviously preservation in British Columbia is preferred. Some of the

records would occupy less than one four-drawer, letter size filing cabinet. Only 10.6 percent indicated that their records would occupy more than five filing cabinets. Figure 7 illustrates the complete responses.

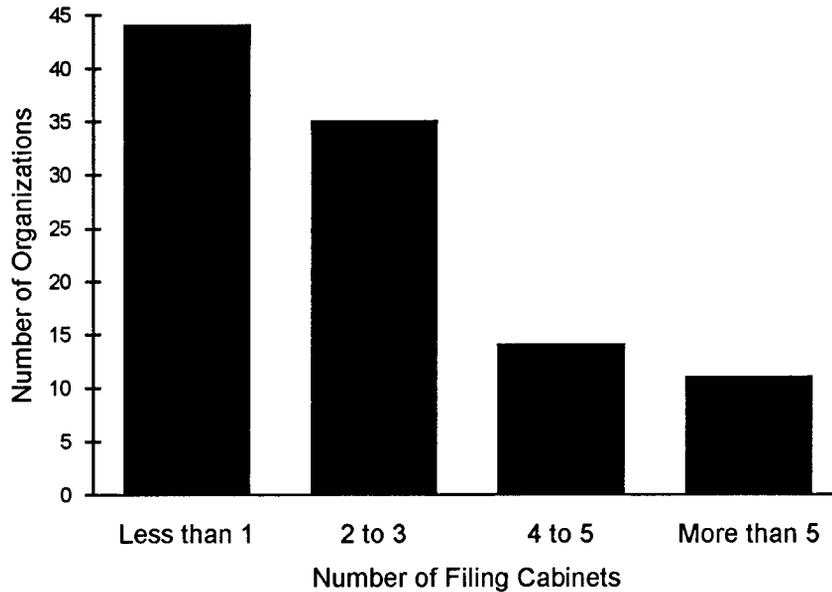


Figure 7. Extent of records

The fact that many of the organizations accumulate few records might be assumed to explain why they do not have a filing system. Table 3 illustrates that this is not the case for the respondents. The extent of records has no direct relationship with the use of a filing system.

Table 3.—Relationship between extent of records and use of a filing system (percentage of organizations)

FILING SYSTEM	LESS THAN 1 CABINET	2-3 CABINETS	4-5 CABINETS	MORE THAN 5 CABINETS
YES	21.2	20.2	8.1	5.1
NO	22.2	15.2	4.0	4.0

N=99 respondents

The responses about the extent of administrative and operational records in the office should be taken as an approximation, since a large number of organizations are using computers in their work. The results are a general indication that can be used in conjunction with other variables to develop an understanding of influences on the extent of records in environmental organizations. The number of activities, the membership size, the office location and age, and the value attributed to the records are all likely factors affecting the extent of records in the office either positively or negatively.

The number of activities in which an environmental organization is involved does not seem to greatly affect the extent of records generated and kept in the office (see table 4). The amount of records increases slightly with the number of activities, but not proportionally to the increase of activities. The most likely explanation of the only slight increase may be found in the kinds of activities in which these organizations are involved. Of the eleven categories of activities provided on the questionnaire, only half necessarily imply the creation of records. The preservation of habitat and wildlife, two of the most prevalent activities, do not require paperwork to be effective. Direct action oriented groups can protest against the

destruction of wildlife and habitat without the production of any records at all. An event, such as cleaning up a stream, may generate some paperwork in the organizational, promotional, and follow-up stages. However, these organizations often exist to motivate people into taking action, not to account for it. Environmental education, the activity category selected by the most organizations, does not necessarily require records creation, or accumulation, if it is performed through word of mouth and by example rather than in conjunction with the publication of information circulars. As one respondent commented, regarding the small amount of records in environmental organizations, "I think you'll find that the majority of the 'interesting stuff' (the lobbying, decision-making, etc.) which actually causes governments to take action is done verbally, with few good records. The behind-the-scenes discussion and persuasion may be converted to dry written records which do not adequately reflect what happened." Another offered the opinion that "records relating to the internal functioning of the organization such as minutes of meetings, committee reports, treasurer's reports, etc. are generally minimal."

Table 4.—Relationship between number of activities and extent of records  
(percentage of organizations)

NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES	LESS THAN 1 CABINET	2-3 CABINETS	4-5 CABINETS	MORE THAN 5 CABINETS
1-2	13.6	8.7	1.0	1.0
3-4	11.7	9.7	2.9	3.9
5-6	12.6	8.7	4.9	3.9
7-8	3.9	3.9	2.9	1.0
9-10	0	1.0	1.0	0
11-12	0	1.9	1.0	1.0

N=103 respondents

Table 5 shows that the age of the office also does not appear to be related to the extent of records. Even though approximately half of the organizations are less than ten years old and the ranges of categories of age are somewhat broad, it appears that for environmental organizations the extent of records does not increase dramatically with the age of the organization. It is clear from the table that the younger organizations do have fewer records than the older ones, but generally it cannot be determined that older groups have in fact preserved more records. It was noted earlier that some organizations have difficulties with the formalization process and will revert to a voluntary structure in order to remain active and effective environmentalists. Because formalization is not always considered beneficial, and therefore does not necessarily occur as an organization ages, and because of the emphasis on recycling, the extent of records need not greatly increase as an environmental organization ages.

Table 5.—Relationship between age of office and extent of records  
(percentage of organizations)

AGE OF OFFICE	LESS THAN 1 CABINET	2-3 CABINETS	4-5 CABINETS	MORE THAN 5 CABINETS
Fewer than 2 years	11.6	10.5	5.3	0
2-10 years	27.4	16.8	6.3	6.3
11-25 years	3.2	7.4	0	4.2
26-50 years	0	1.1	0	0

N=95 respondents

The location of the office of the environmental organizations studied appears to have a marginal influence on the extent of records (see table 6). The logical assumption is that the more formal the office space, the more records that would be both created and kept on hand. As Susan Hart has written, "the records created increase in formalization, types, and volume at each stage" in the development of a voluntary association.<sup>9</sup> Although many environmental organizations remain informal, the volume of records does seem to increase as the organizations grow more formal. Despite any emphasis on recycling, a business office indicates a growing formality of operations and a growing formality of records keeping. Formality permits a greater availability of storage space and a more permanent location for the storage of the records. It also requires a greater accountability to those served by the organization. Accountability is supported by a greater extent of records and by better records management.

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<sup>9</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations," 23.

Table 6.—Relationship between location of office and extent of records  
(percentage of organizations)

OFFICE LOCATION	LESS THAN 1 CABINET	2-3 CABINETS	4-5 CABINETS	MORE THAN 5 CABINETS
Member's home	29.7	18.8	6.9	5.0
Shared space	3.0	5.0	0	4.0
Separate business space	4.0	8.9	5.9	1.0
Other	5.0	2.0	0	1.0

N=101 respondents

Table 7 shows that the size of membership served by an office does appear to be related to the extent of records. A larger membership generates a larger amount of records in basic administrative areas. Such records might include membership mailing lists and a record of the collection of membership dues. More members also generally mean more money and more specific activities in which an organization might become involved. While these activities may or may not generate records, the increase in membership does.

Table 7.—Relationship between membership size and extent of records  
(percentage of organizations)

MEMBERSHIP SIZE	LESS THAN 1 CABINET	2-3 CABINETS	4-5 CABINETS	MORE THAN 5 CABINETS
1-200 members	33.3	17.7	3.9	2.0
201-500 members	5.9	5.9	4.9	3.9
501-1000 members	0	4.9	2.0	0
1001-5000 members	2.0	4.9	0	2.9
More than 5000 members	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0

N=102 respondents

Finally, it is not possible to declare a relationship between value accorded to the records and the extent of records found in the office.<sup>10</sup> That is, one cannot conclude that seeing records as valuable will increase the extent of records maintained. Over 85 percent of the respondents felt that their records held some value for future consultation, but as table 8 indicates, one third of those respondents still report maintaining less than one filing cabinet of records. The conclusion to be drawn from this table is that value attributed to the records does not guarantee an increase in the extent preserved. The data do clearly show, however, that those organizations that do not consider their records to hold any value for future consultation also do not have very many records.

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<sup>10</sup>Value is discussed in greater detail later.

Table 8.—Relationship between value of records and extent of records  
(percentage of organizations)

VALUE OF RECORDS	LESS THAN 1 CABINET	2-3 CABINETS	4-5 CABINETS	MORE THAN 5 CABINETS
Records valuable	33.3	29.3	13.1	11.1
Records not valuable	7.1	5.1	1.0	0

N=99 respondents

All of these factors influencing the extent of records in environmental organizations, records which might be available someday for archival acquisition, are important to know for developing strategic plans for acquisition.

### **Environmental Organizations and Archives**

Questionnaire recipients were asked about the value they ascribe to their records, the preferred location for permanent preservation, and their willingness to donate records to an archival repository. Finally, they were asked to evaluate the importance of preserving records in the context of preserving the environment.

As mentioned earlier, over 85 percent of the respondents felt that their records held some value for future consultation. A number of respondents qualified their response with an indication that only some of their records would be worth preserving and a few went so far as to specifically mention newsletters as being the only records worth preserving. Some of those who qualified their response as to the value of their records exhibited a misunderstanding of archival value, the value of records as evidence of an organization's structure, functions, and activities.

For example, as one respondent commented: "Much of our other 'paper' is mundane workings of the group to keep our eye on things. Perhaps not historical nor worth keeping." Another felt that the incoming and outgoing correspondence of the organization "would not have much significance for future generations unless properly collated. However, if grouped by subject/chronological order etc. they could form the basis for a fascinating history of how opposing land use agendas are set and fought over." The evidential value of original order is unknown to this respondent, but the informational value of the records for studies on land use is recognized. While the current order of the correspondence was not noted, the organization in question did admit to having a methodical filing system that is used consistently. Similarly, a respondent wrote that "someone would have to spend a lot of time editing our files before they would be suitable for preservation." It is difficult to know what this respondent means by "editing", but clearly these respondents all have some difficulty perceiving how others could effectively consult their records for one reason or another. On the other hand, two respondents admitted to not knowing what might be archival and expressed a desire to learn. A lack of understanding about the value of records and the work of archivists is not peculiar to environmental organizations. Susan Hart discovered similar attitudes in her study of the archives of voluntary associations, and Eva Mosley found a comparable lack of awareness of the value of records in voluntary associations of the women's movement in the United States.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations"; Eva Mosley, "Women in Archives: Documenting the History of Women in America," The American Archivist 36 (1973), 219.

respondents did indicate an understanding of the value of local preservation to keep their records accessible to them. The suggestion of an environmental repository, however, seems to have overridden the local nature of many organizations and the need or desire to keep records locally. Identity is a powerful force. This preference for an environmental archives is an expression of the sense of being part of a larger movement. For organizations who work together on many similar and overlapping issues, the idea of many environmental records housed together is desirable as a large resource and for direct networking purposes.

In examining more closely the preferred type of repository for donation against the area in which the organization operates an interesting discovery arises. Table 9 indicates that although few organizations are working outside the province, none of them preferred local or regional repositories or the provincial archives. Even though the office has a specific locality from which the organization operates, the greater the geographic focus of the organization the more it is likely to prefer a repository dedicated to the preservation of archives of environmental organizations.

Table 9.—Percentage of organizations choosing archival repositories, by geographic area of operation

AREA OF OPERATION	LOCAL ARCHIVES	BCARS	UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHIVES	OTHER
Local	19.1	4.5	3.4	37.1	5.6
Provincial	2.3	4.5	0	12.4	0
Inter-provincial	0	0	0	1.1	1.1
National	0	0	0	2.3	0
International	0	0	1.1	5.6	0

N=89 respondents

Of equal importance in analyzing the preference for an environmental repository is the actual geographic location of the organizations selecting this option. Table 10 indicates that the remotely located organizations are equally interested in an environmental repository, even though the most likely location for such an archives would be in the Lower Mainland.

Table 10.—Percentage of organizations choosing archival repositories by geographic location of office

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	LOCAL ARCHIVES	BCARS	UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES	ENVIRONMENTAL ARCHIVES	OTHER
Lower Mainland	5.1	3.1	1.0	15.3	1.0
Victoria	1.0	1.0	0	6.1	0
Other	15.3	5.1	3.1	35.7	7.1

N=98 respondents

Both the geographic location of an organization and its geographic focus play a role in the development of acquisition strategies and cooperative interinstitutional strategies. The respondents have overwhelmingly chosen a thematic response, but since such a repository does not exist, the data must be carefully analyzed to determine its implications for existing archives.

While an organization may prefer to donate its records to one type of repository rather than another, the potential to acquire records in any given case depends upon the existence of records and the willingness of an organization to donate them. Of course, taken as a whole, this picture of preference does not entirely resolve what an effective strategy would be for any given repository or among all of them in British Columbia collectively. The possibility of acquisition is a combination of the preference for the repository seeking the acquisition and the willingness of a body to donate their records to any archival repository. In this study, a large majority of the environmental organizations in British Columbia who responded to the questionnaire indicated that they were willing in some degree to donate their records either now or in the future. Specifically, 49.5 percent were very willing and 29.1 percent were somewhat willing to donate. Only 10.7 percent had some reservations or were quite unwilling to consider the donation of records to an archives. An additional 10.7 percent were uncertain about donating.

In comparing the attribute of according value to records and the willingness of the organization to donate, an important factor for developing strategic plans for acquisition of the records is realized. As table 11 indicates, even those organizations that do not consider their

records to have any value for future consultation are still generally very willing to donate their records to an archival repository.

Table 11.—Percentage of organizations willing to donate by value of records

VALUE OF RECORDS	UNCERTAIN ABOUT DONATION	NOT WILLING TO DONATE	HESITANT ABOUT DONATION	SOMEWHAT WILLING TO DONATE	VERY WILLING TO DONATE
Records valuable	9.1	2.0	7.1	26.3	41.4
Not valuable	1.0	1.0	1.0	3.0	8.1

N=99 respondents

The issue of willingness to donate was expanded upon by asking a final question concerning the role and importance of archives in the "turnaround decade".<sup>12</sup> Environmental organizations in British Columbia almost entirely agree or strongly agree that society should be concerned with preserving the records of human activity during the struggle for planetary survival. Only five percent of the respondents disagreed with archival concerns for preservation. These organizations would likely be in full agreement with one of the reflections of Hugh Taylor:

As one example of our rapacity we are losing 20,000 species of plant and animal life a year irreversibly, which is like tearing that number of pages from the book of life. We have irretrievably lost this information

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<sup>12</sup>The phrase has been applied by environmentalists to the 1990s decade as meaning that individuals and society only have ten more years in which to turn around their attitudes and behaviour towards the environment. If radical changes are not made, then the environment will not be saved.

which could be self-perpetuating and evolving. Is this not more valuable than some forms of information which librarians and archivists struggle to preserve? ... In short, the influence of western civilization, of which libraries and archives have always been a part, is destroying life on the planet.<sup>13</sup>

One respondent concurred with Taylor's writings by commenting:

Forests contain records. In forests are records of past weather, volcanic, aboriginal peoples and settlers' activities. Plant and life form records also are contained in forests. We feel our forests are essential for revealing our past and maintaining our future existence on planet earth.

Those respondents disagreeing with the importance of archives cited a combination of reasons. The first is the establishment of society's priorities for action. Second, that archives may be preserved, but that there will not necessarily be any future generations to use them. The resulting opinion of these environmental organizations, as one respondent wrote, was that archives may be "a luxury we don't have time for." As another respondent put it:

Somehow with planet Earth's very survival at stake, preserving archives for future generations which may not happen can seem a trifle superfluous. Are you sure your priorities are in order?

Fortunately for the acquisition archivist, the number of respondents favouring the priorities of archives greatly outweighs the small voice of protest.

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<sup>13</sup>Hugh A. Taylor, "The Totemic Universe: Appraising the Documentary Future," in Archival Appraisal: Theory and Practice: Proceedings of the Joint Meeting of the Association of British Columbia Archivists and the Northwest Archivists Association in Vancouver, B.C. 26-28 April 1990, ed. Christopher Hives (Vancouver, B.C., Archives Association of British Columbia, 1990), 19.

The sample population of environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia provides baseline data for ENGOs that can be used to develop strategic approaches to acquisition. Environmental non-government organizations in British Columbia are generally less than two years old, involved in an average of four and one half different principal activities, and have less than one filing cabinet of records. They are willing to donate their records, which are considered to be of some value, and they would preferably donate to a repository dedicated to environmental organizations' archives. Having acquired this knowledge, archival repositories and programs can apply it to acquisition plans to target specific organizations falling under their acquisition policy. The next chapter is a discussion of the possibilities for success of various strategic approaches which might be taken towards the acquisition of the records of environmental organizations.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION: THE STRATEGIC ACQUISITION OF ENVIRONMENTAL RECORDS

The data which have been gathered about environmental non-government organizations, in combination with knowledge of archival practices and resources, generates an understanding of the requirements for the archival acquisition of environmental organizations' records. Specific questions to be answered when planning acquisition in this arena include, first and foremost, with which among the plethora of environmental organizations will archival repositories and programs have the most success in acquiring records. Intimately connected with this is when to approach an organization. In order to acquire these records, archivists will find that a pro-active strategic approach will produce the best results. Cooperative interinstitutional strategies from the global to the regional level, acquisition strategies planned by a single archival repository or program, and documentation strategies developed by a team of concerned persons are three different approaches to consider. According to the data analysis, each will have a different degree of success.

Different issues need to be considered in the development of a cooperative interinstitutional strategy for the records of environmental non-government organizations. Environmental problems are tackled provincially, nationally, and internationally by professional and voluntary conservationists, environmentalists, and radical environmentalists in the same manner that environmental issues are not limited by political

boundaries. Should an organization broaching issues from across the province have its records preserved by the provincial archives? Should the records of a British Columbian group working on national problems end up in Ottawa, acquired by the National Archives of Canada for their national significance in the environmental arena? These are just a few questions which archival repositories and programs working on cooperative interinstitutional strategies must attempt to answer.

Data analysis suggests that a global approach to cooperative interinstitutional acquisition strategies would be inappropriate. While some of the organizations polled work internationally, a large majority of the respondents focus on local and regional problems. The environmental movement is global, but at this time the wisest use of limited archival resources would not be the development of cooperative strategies at the global level. For British Columbia, cooperation with European archivists may prove important in the future as more European environmentalists join the struggle to preserve old growth forests in British Columbia threatened by logging practices. The archival repositories and programs of this province, however, might find it more rewarding to begin with the environmental non-government organizations within the province who, for the most part, are working in their own backyards.

By the same token, the development of national cooperative strategies should also wait until regional and local initiatives are more firmly established. National strategies might attempt to draw some of the records of higher profile British Columbian organizations out of the province. The respondents favoured local and regional archives and no one selected the National Archives of Canada for the donation of their records. National support for regional plans, the sharing of specific plans, and the joining of

regional plans where they touch one another would gradually build a nation-wide strategy for the acquisition of the records of environmental non-government organizations.

Cooperative interinstitutional acquisition strategies at the regional or provincial level will be the most valuable use of archival resources. The strongest links in a cooperative interinstitutional strategy for environmental records are government and university sponsored institutions. In British Columbia, however, the respondents did not overwhelmingly prefer either British Columbia Archives and Records Service or the universities. Only 13.3 percent selected either of these categories. It is almost intuitive of the respondents that the categories least selected are also the repositories least likely to actively pursue the acquisition of records of environmental organizations in the near future despite the institutional strength they might lend to a cooperative strategy. The British Columbia Archives and Records Service first serves its institutional sponsor and then, resources permitting, acquires other records.<sup>1</sup> It is possible that the university archives in British Columbia will head in the same direction as the provincial archives — concentrating on institutional records, with few or no resources to spare for non-institutional acquisitions — with the implementation of information and privacy legislation affecting universities and municipalities. If the costs of institutional responsibility strike municipal archives the same way, the environmental organizations preferring local repositories may not find a home for their records in government sponsored repositories. Acquisition

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<sup>1</sup>See Chapter 1 discussion of institutional responsibility.

of non-institutional records may become solely the realm of museum and historical societies.

The impending doom of total archives in British Columbia, or that facet which includes the total realm of creators, augments the need for cooperative interinstitutional strategies. Strategies must draw upon all strands of the archival network to see that the records of environmental organizations do not disappear. In her discussion of the problem of homeless archival fonds, Susan Hart coins the phrase "street archives":

These are the would-be delegated archives, the records created by small businesses, by families, by voluntary associations ranging from highschool soccer clubs to free trade protest groups. Their creators haven't the knowledge, stability, or resources to establish archival programmes. Many of these fonds are extremely valuable to society, and some of them used to be sought out and welcomed at our major archival institutions. Not so much anymore, so now there are more street archives.<sup>2</sup>

Where will the records of environmental organizations be preserved? Will they be preserved? Without pro-active intervention by archivists, the records of this predominantly voluntary sector of society will be lost to the documentary heritage. The solution lies in strengthening the network of archival repositories and programs, and building appropriate cooperative acquisition strategies at the regional level.

For the records of environmental non-government organizations, an appropriate approach would be to see that, where possible, local archival repositories take the initiative to preserve the records. This would be in the best interests of the organizations, many of which prefer this approach and

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<sup>2</sup>Susan Hart, "An Active Approach to Preserving Non-government Archives," unpublished paper presented at Association of Canadian Archivists conference in Banff, 1991, 1.

are operating at the local level, and of the archival network, by sharing the responsibility for preserving this segment of the documentary heritage. As Hart suggests, the network approach might provide "empowerment and re-orientation for its members, especially the smaller institutions."<sup>3</sup> The so-called "important" fonds would not remain the property of the larger institutions — institutions now caught up in responsibilities to their sponsors. Taking a holistic approach to preserving the documentary heritage, cooperative strategies will ensure that valuable records are preserved somewhere rather than left to unknown fates. That somewhere is most likely to be the smaller institutions of British Columbia dispersed throughout the province where two-thirds of the province's environmental non-government organizations can also be found.

Environmental records, as with any archival records, are best maintained within the context in which they were created. For many environmental organizations, the context in which they were created is also the geographic context of the environmental issues they addressed.<sup>4</sup> For other farther ranging organizations, the context of creation is equally important. When a British Columbian environmental organization approaches national or international environmental concerns, it is with a British Columbian understanding of the environment. The fight to save the Brazilian rain forest is made with the awareness of living in the "Brazil of the North", as British Columbia is becoming known worldwide for its forestry practices and treatment of its own rain forest. Persons and

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<sup>3</sup>Susan Hart, "Active Approach", 8.

<sup>4</sup>Table 2 demonstrates this fact for the respondents.

organizations operate from within a political, social and economic climate. The same climate affects records creation. The same climate will later assist in archival and historical understandings of the records and the organization itself.

Because environmental organizations are of two basic types — in pursuit of local issues or attempting to heal the entire earth — and because most of the groups in British Columbia are locally oriented, it would be inappropriate for an acquisition strategy to target only larger, older organizations with more formal structures and the likelihood of more records. While most groups are small and informally structured, their efforts are equally critical to society's environmental battles whether working as conservationists, reform environmentalists, or radical environmentalists. The difference in a repository's acquisitional approach to these locally operating organizations is to make contacts with them at the height of the issue when the extent of records being created and/or received is also at a peak. At this point, notification of archival interest in the records and securing a contact person would increase the possibility of acquisition after the issue is resolved and the organization disbands. Susan Hart proposes that once a voluntary association has been carefully researched and contacted, the archivist should then draw up a contract with the organization. The contract would specify "that in the event of the closure of the association, all its records would be transferred (by donation or purchase) to the archival repository."<sup>5</sup> It is extremely important to be pro-active with issue oriented groups since, as Sewell noted, they tend not

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<sup>5</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations", 134-135.

to be permanent and expire when the key issue does.<sup>6</sup> Once they have expired, "their records will survive only by chance or with the help of a vigilant archivist."<sup>7</sup>

Larger, more formal organizations, on the other hand, can be contacted at any time since they are not as likely to disappear overnight along with their records. Unfortunately for archivists in British Columbia, only a few of the environmental organizations polled fall into this category.

Regardless of when an organization is approached, archival acquisition will be strengthened by good relations between the repository and the organization. Elizabeth Knowlton enumerates the benefits of contact with gay and lesbian organizations:

Good relations between an activist group and an established archives can result in better record keeping, better conservation, and possibly in a collection for the repository. Groups that are short-lived or constantly changing, that have no safe place for their records, will seriously consider an institution as a depository if it has proved interested, helpful, and trustworthy.<sup>8</sup>

Archivists should adopt a similar approach to environmental activist groups when planning to acquire their records. Data analysis of their records keeping practices indicates that early archival interest may in fact lead to better records management and greater possibilities for acquisition.

One difficulty which will arise in the acquisition of these records is the emphasis that environmentalists place upon recycling. It is especially crucial with environmental organizations to contact them during their most

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<sup>6</sup>Sewell, Dearden and Dumbrell, "Wilderness Decisionmaking," 151.

<sup>7</sup>Susan Hart, "Voluntary Associations", 135.

<sup>8</sup>Elizabeth Knowlton, "Documenting the Gay Rights Movement" Provenance 5, no.1 (Spring 1987), 27.

active phase to perhaps reduce the recycling of records with archival values and counteract the possible ill-effects of excessive recycling. Since this study did not include any appraisal of extant records, any hypothesis regarding the degree of evidential or informational value which the records of environmental organizations may hold cannot be formed. It is also unknown to what extent the records being recycled would be of interest to an archival repository. Further studies along these lines would be necessary to prepare a better acquisition strategy for the records of environmental non-government organizations.

Documentation strategists would view the data gathered by this study differently. Data analysis presents the opportunity for a documentation strategy studying what records need to be created by environmental organizations or others to document the history of the movement, particularly those functions with a scarcity or absence of documentation. Documenting environmentalism, however, may prove to be a task beyond the time and effort of archivists in favour of this strategic approach. While the respondents were mostly agreeable to the donation of their records to an archival repository, archivists must be very aware of the type of organization with which they are dealing and attempting to document. Radical environmentalists especially may find requests to create records for the establishment distasteful. They may also find that records created by others that document their activities are unwelcome for legal reasons. As shown by the comments of a few respondents, archival priorities, which are less aggressive than the priorities of documentation strategies, are not always the priorities of member of environmental organizations. Conservationists and reform environmentalists are more likely to assist the development of a documentation strategy which requires the cooperation of

creators, users, and preservers and "includes not only archival and manuscript but also published, visual and artifactual materials" as potential sources for documenting a phenomenon.<sup>9</sup> However, the insistence of documentation strategists to fill in the gaps of the documentary record will likely meet a lot of resistance from organizations of any kind which achieve some of their goals through reducing, reusing, and recycling materials. Half of the respondents indicated that they always or frequently consciously reduce the number of documents they create. It is not reasonable to expect environmental organizations to create additional records to fill in any gaps perceived by documentation strategists.

One of the most significant findings for archivists to arise from this study is the strong preference among environmental organizations for a dedicated repository for environmental archives. While such a repository does not exist in British Columbia and the respondents may have been unaware of this fact, the implementation of an environmental archives raises a number of issues.

Thematic archives have a certain practical appeal for researchers, even though the records may be severed from their context of creation. All of the records are related to a particular subject. The benefit is that "with such in-depth coverage and focussed acquisition, access should be easier since researchers presumably have a clearer idea of what is available in a thematic archives than in comprehensive holdings with more wide-ranging mandates."<sup>10</sup> The trouble with thematic archives is that they are often

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<sup>9</sup>Samuels, "Improving Our Disposition," 134.

<sup>10</sup>Marcel Caya, ed., Canadian Archives in 1992, 52.

created according to the whims of historiography and may lose their financial support when the subject is no longer of interest. They do not solve the problem of "street archives", being "reactions to specific problems of neglect, rather than being proactive solutions to removing neglect of marginalized archives altogether."<sup>11</sup> An environmental archives could be a proactive solution based on the creators rather than the subject, environmental non-government organizations rather than environmentalism. If established for the environmental organizations with the proactive support of archivists, such a repository might withstand the changing winds of secondary research by continuing to be valuable to the creators.

The functions and activities of environmental organizations tend to overlap despite the organizations' differences in philosophical approach. By bringing the records of these organizations together, the potential for understanding the various branches of the movement may be increased. For example, all of the records concerned with saving various parts of a watershed would be together, records created by both voluntary associations and more formally established associations, conservationists, reform environmentalists, and radical environmentalists. The shape of the issue becomes more complete in seeing what efforts have been made by all organizations, each doing their own part towards saving the whole. The possibilities for networking through an environmental archives would be appealing to creators who often work on the same basic issues but in different parts of the province. An archives for environmental organizations

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<sup>11</sup>Susan Hart, "Active Approach", 4.

would permit a holistic understanding of the relationship between humans and the environment at the end of the twentieth century.

An environmental archives in British Columbia would not, however, permit ease of access to many of the organizations donating their records. The most likely location to be suggested for an archives would be Vancouver or Victoria, and two-thirds of the organizations are outside of both Greater Vancouver and the Capital Region. By bringing environmental records together in the urban core where the resources to support a repository are greatest, a large number of organizations would suffer the loss of their own records.

Given the geographic problems for a single environmental archives in British Columbia, an alternate approach for the records of environmental organizations in the larger urban areas like Vancouver and Victoria, might be to build upon the environmental network of resources. Through outreach and education, archivists could encourage some of the organizations to preserve their own records. The majority of the organizations are voluntary, but situations exist whereby the continuity of the environmental movement could provide a home not normally possible for voluntary associations. Some organizations are sharing resources and administrative space to reduce overhead costs. With such close networking and sharing of resources, the preservation of the archives of organizations housed together would be possible. As organizations fold, their records could be preserved by other organizations, supported by the resources of continuing and new organizations using the same office space. The records would be locally preserved in the appropriate context and available to those who would most desire access. Data analysis shows the strong preference for an environmental repository that this type of situation could

accommodate. When preserving their own records is no longer feasible, the organizations could then donate them to the local archives.

The problem with this idea is that even slightly more formalized organizations that share business space move around a lot. For example, where once there were at least half a dozen environmental organizations housed together in Vancouver — a situation ideal for the establishment of an environmental archives — one year later only two remain. When organizations are on the move, it is difficult to know whether or not they would want to leave some of their records behind in an archival repository.

The key to the preservation of records from environmental non-government organizations by archival repositories and programs or by the environmentalists themselves is education and knowledge. Just as archivists need to build their own knowledge of acquisition targets, they also need to build a knowledge of archives among those targeted. Educating members of environmental organizations will promote donations to archives, better records management practices, and the preservation of their own records where possible. Knowledgeable archivists will build better acquisition strategies planned appropriately for their targets. Sharing that knowledge will increase the success of cooperative acquisition strategies built from the regional to the national level.

The records of environmental non-government organizations document an ever-increasing important facet of our society. The environmental record is contained within the fonds of government agencies, scientific researchers, and non-government organizations. None of these classes of creators can be ignored in building a fair and representative picture of environmental concerns. This thesis has shown that only through strategic acquisition planning, within a repository and among institutions, can the

records of environmental non-government organizations be preserved as part of the documentary heritage of society.

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## APPENDIX A

### ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND ARCHIVES

This questionnaire is simply a method of obtaining your opinion on a few matters of importance to the archival community. Your answers will remain confidential and any information you supply will not be used as a direct means for the acquisition of your records by any archival repository.

Please answer each question with a check in the appropriate box.

#### YOUR ORGANIZATION

1. What are the principal activities in which your organization is involved? (Select all options that apply)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> wildlife preservation   | <input type="checkbox"/> publishing        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> habitat preservation    | <input type="checkbox"/> litigation        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> environmental education | <input type="checkbox"/> product sales     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> environmental research  | <input type="checkbox"/> fund raising      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> political activities    | <input type="checkbox"/> social activities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> direct action           | <input type="checkbox"/> other _____       |

2. Which of the following phrases best describes your organization's world view? (One only please)

- wilderness should be preserved since it is a valuable renewable resource which can be used by humans
- wilderness should be preserved for the intrinsic value of life contained in it
- wilderness should be preserved for the intrinsic value of the natural system as a whole, both the organic and the inorganic
- other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Briefly describe the purposes or aims of your organization.

4. Which of the following terms describe you organization? (Select all that apply)

- incorporated       non-profit       registered charity

5. How many years has your organization existed in its current form?

- fewer than 2 years                       26-50 years  
 2-10 years                                 more than 50 years  
 11-25 years

6. How many years has this office of your organization existed?

- fewer than 2 years                       26-50 years  
 2-10 years                                 more than 50 years  
 11-25 years

7. What is the geographic area of operation of your office?

- local/regional                             national  
 provincial                                  international  
 inter-provincial                          other \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is the approximate membership served by your office?

- 1-200                                         1001-5000  
 201-500                                     more than 5000  
 501-1000

9. Where is your office located?

- in a member's home  
 in a member's home with another organization  
 in space shared with another organization  
 in separate business space  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

10. How many of the employees in your office are paid and not volunteers?

- None                                          6-10  
 1     More than 10  
 2-5

11. Does your organization have any other office locations?

- yes     no

If yes, then what is your relationship to the other office(s) or branch(es)?

- autonomous from  
 head office of  
 directed by  
 reporting to  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

## YOUR RECORD KEEPING HABITS

12. What media are used for running your activities and meeting your administrative needs? (Select all that apply)

- paper  video tape/film  
 computer disks  other \_\_\_\_\_  
 audio tape

13. What percentage of the paper used in your office is made from recycled stock?

- None  51-75%  
 1-25%  76-99%  
 26-50%  All

14. What percentage of the paper used in your office is permanent or acid-free?

- None  51-75%  
 1-25%  76-99%  
 26-50%  All

15. If you were to have all of your administrative and operational records in paper form, how much space do you think they would occupy in a standard, four-drawer, letter size filing system?

- less than 1 filing cabinet  
 2-3 filing cabinets  
 4-5 filing cabinets  
 more than 5 filing cabinets

16. Do you have a methodical filing system for your records that is used consistently?

- yes  no

17. How often do you think your office consciously reduces the number of documents it creates?

- always  seldom  
 frequently  never  
 sometimes

18. How often do you think your office reuses the materials on which previous documents were created?

- always  seldom  
 frequently  never  
 sometimes

19. How often do you think your office recycles paper containing documents which are no longer actively needed for running activities and administering the office?

- always  seldom  
 frequently  never  
 sometimes

20. Does your organization agree that reducing, reusing, and recycling is a way of achieving some of your goals?

- strongly agree  disagree  
 agree  strongly disagree

### **YOUR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES**

21. Do you think that any of the documents made or received in the course of your activities hold any values for future consultation?

ie. Are they worth preserving indefinitely?

- yes  no

22. Imagine for a moment that your records need to be properly preserved forever. Where would you prefer to have them taken care of? (One only please)

- local city or regional archives  
 British Columbia Archives and Records Service (Victoria)  
 National Archives of Canada (Ottawa)  
 university archives  
 dedicated repository for environmental organizations' archives  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

23. Provided access restrictions to your records were established according to your specifications, how willing would you be to donate your records to an archival repository either now or in the future?

- very willing  not willing  
 somewhat willing  uncertain  
 hesitant

24. Do you agree that society should concern itself with preserving the records of human activity amidst the struggle for planetary survival?

- strongly agree  disagree  
 agree  strongly disagree

25. Please feel free to provide further comments regarding either your organization, your records, or your feelings about archives.