



TransCanada Corporation Commits One Million Dollars to Support Bird Conservation in Canada

May 29, 2009 - As millions of migratory birds return home from their southern wintering grounds, TransCanada Corporation is supporting an initiative to protect important bird habitat across the country.

TransCanada Corporation has committed \$1 million over the next five years as a national sponsor of the Canadian Important Bird Area Caretakers Network, a nationwide initiative to establish a volunteer network of caretakers who will watch over and protect Important Bird Areas (IBAs) in their community.

"Community stewardship of local bird habitat is essential for the health of the Important Bird Area system - and for the birds," said Mara Kerry, Nature Canada's director of conservation. "These natural spaces are vitally important for our breeding, migrating, staging and wintering birds, and the conservation of these sites is a cornerstone of effective bird conservation."

Volunteer caretakers, who can be individuals or nature groups, will help conserve IBAs by surveying bird populations, building nest boxes, erecting signs, removing invasive species, planting native grasses, and promoting awareness of the value of wildlife. There are nearly 600 IBAs in Canada.

"TransCanada believes in building relationships in the communities in which we live and work, and this philosophy is shared with the Caretaker Network Program," said Brian McConaghy, TransCanada Corporation's VP of Community, Safety and Environment. "Caretakers work with the community to promote Important Bird Area sites and to ensure that local conservation ideas are put into action."

"Support from partners like TransCanada means there will be eyes and ears on the ground at IBAs to increase awareness and undertake conservation action," said Kerry. "This will help ensure a brighter future for birds, and help to preserve healthy ecosystems for birds, other wildlife, and people."

Bird Studies Canada and **Nature Canada** are the Canadian co-partners in **BirdLife International**. Together we deliver the international Important Bird Areas (IBA) program in Canada, which aims to identify, conserve and monitor a network of sites that provides essential habitat for bird populations.

Nature Canada is an Ottawa-based charity whose mandate is to protect and conserve wildlife and habitats in Canada by engaging people and advocating on behalf of nature. With strategies based on sound science and passion for nature, Nature Canada effects change on issues of national significance, including bird conservation, wilderness protection, species at risk and national parks.

Bird Studies Canada advances the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of wild birds and their habitats through regional, national, and international programs. Bird Studies Canada is Canada's national body for bird research and monitoring, and is a non-governmental charitable organization.