

Where Do We Go From Here?

Natural Heritage Standards & Accountability

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**This is
not a new
idea**

Natural Heritage Practitioner

Anyone working in land use planning and/or land management where the focus is on natural heritage features and areas, systems, and/or their functions.

Potential Activities

Studying
Conditions

Assessing
Impacts

Mitigation

Management

Review &
Comment

Permitting &
Approval

Potential Job Titles

Natural Heritage
Planner

Planning
Ecologist

Ecologist

Biologist

Conservation
Lands Manager

Many more...

Where are we now?

Training

Employer

Individual

Courses / Training

Self Directed

Mentoring

- Inconsistent
- Organization-based practices
- Learning & teaching biases

Consistency

Survey methods / protocols

Commonly accepted practice(s)

Professional opinion

Research / “science-based”

Guidance documents

- Variability in basic concepts and interpretation creates conflict
- Not all practitioners adhere
- Quality of output varies greatly

Oversight

Conservation Authorities

Municipal Government

Provincial Government

Federal Government

NGO's

- Relies on numerous agencies with different roles, responsibilities, authority and technical expertise
- Provide a ‘backstop’

Challenges

These are not new issues.

So...

Why talk about it now?

Legislative Changes

Bills 109 and 23 were omnibus bills. They are extensive. Please refer to summaries online or the bills themselves for the full scope of these Acts. Only a few salient points to the current presentation are reflected here.

- **Two omnibus bills**
 - The More Housing for Everyone Act (Bill 109)
 - The More Houses Built Faster Act (Bill 23)
- **Broad scale changes to land use planning in Ontario**
 - Review timelines
 - Changes for Conservation Authorities
 - Refocus to natural hazards and flooding
 - Removal from natural heritage review
 - Shifting municipal responsibilities
 - Changes to OWES
 - Evaluations
 - Role of Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry
 - Contemplation of / proposal for offsetting policy

Implications

Oversight

Existing Challenges

- Relies on numerous agencies with different roles, responsibilities, authority and technical expertise
- Provide a 'backstop'

Implications of Legislative Change

- Backstops reduced or removed
- Increased discretization of oversight
- Increased industry-based oversight

Consistency

- Variability in basic concepts and interpretation creates conflict
- Not all practitioners adhere
- Quality of output varies greatly

- Risk greater gaps and variability in interpretation, implementation, standards, outcomes.
- Exacerbate existing issues

Training

- Inconsistent
- Organization-based practices
- Learning & teaching biases

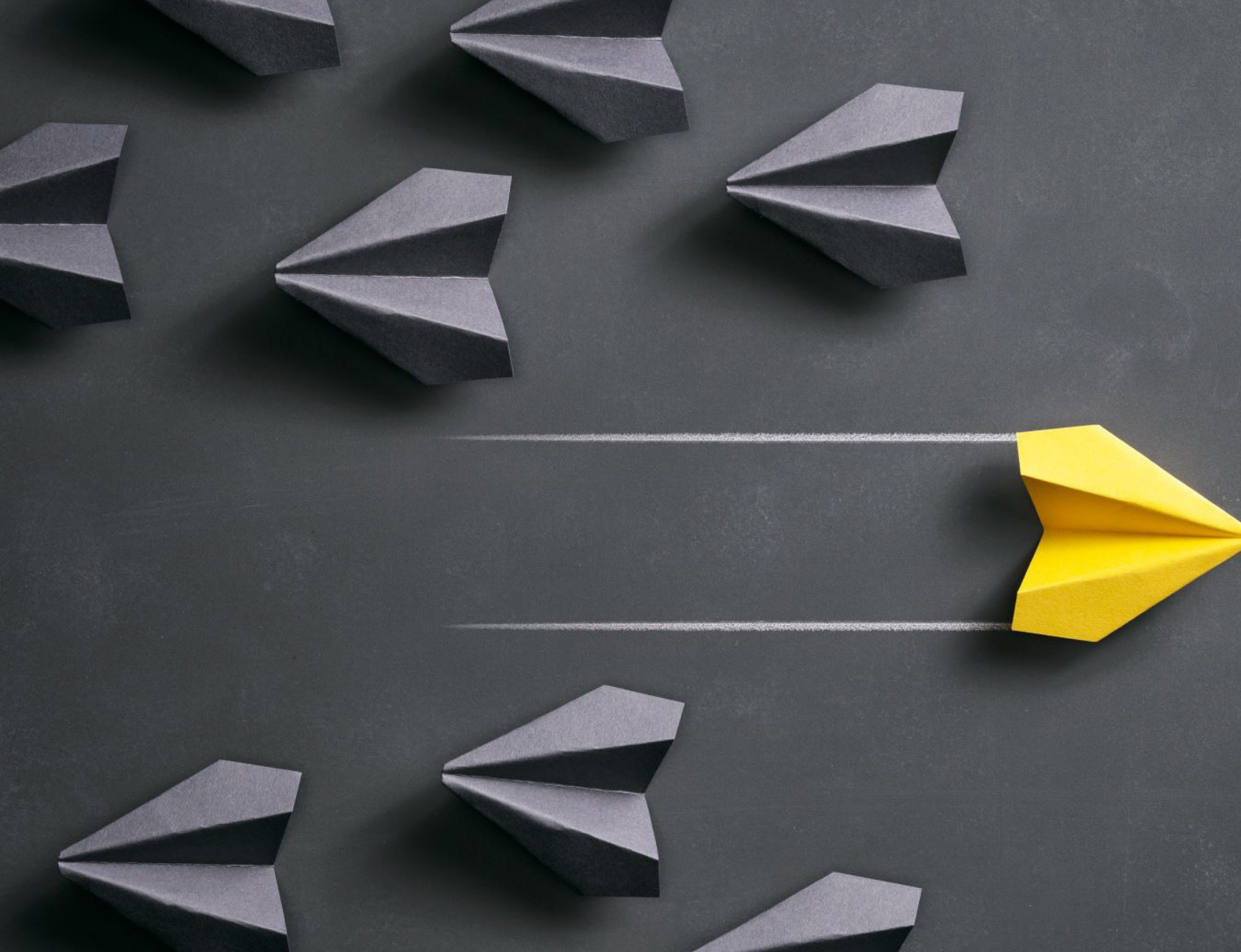
- Inconsistent
- Organization-based practices
- Learning & teaching biases

The impact of this will be exacerbated.

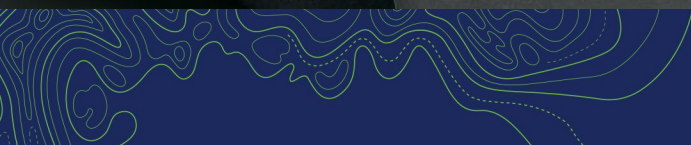
Shifting Industry & Perceptions

- Public Awareness and Concern
- Natural Asset Management
 - Ecosystem Services
 - Environmental Economics
- Nature-based solutions
- Climate Change
- Biodiversity
- New & emerging technologies & innovations

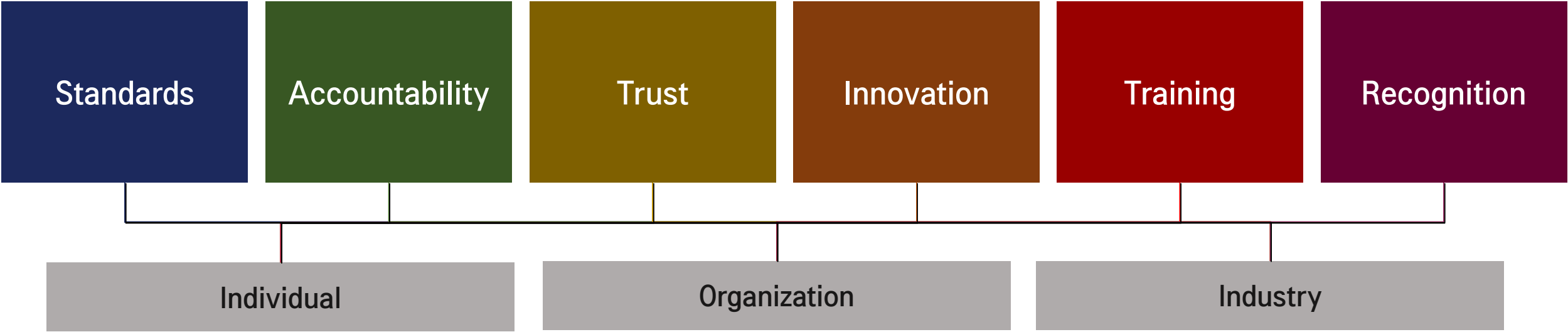




We are at a watershed moment in our industry



We propose that now is the time for a professional association for natural heritage practitioners in Ontario



Isn't there already something out there?

Maybe...

There's an existing College or Professional Body we can promote / establish as an Ontario standard.

Maybe...

We can work with an existing organization to modify or create something that meets the needs.

Maybe...

There isn't and we need to create something new.



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Define our umbrella

(‘ella ‘ella, eh, eh, eh)

Existing Associations & Colleges

College of Applied Biologists
(R.P.Bio)

EcoCanada
(EP)

Society for Ecological Restoration
(CERP)

International Society of Arborists
(ISA)

**Ontario Professional Planners
Institute**
OPPI

**Ontario Association of Landscape
Architects**
OALA

A dose of realism

A professional organization won't solve all the problems!

It will take time.

There will be challenges.

But...

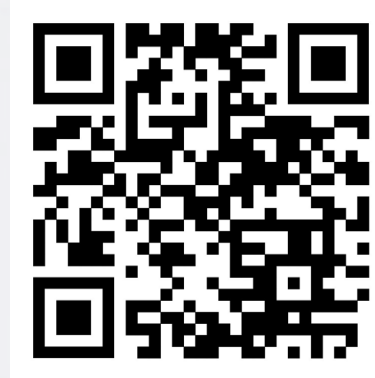
**Be visionary.
Make change.**

Where do we go from here?

This presentation doesn't give the answers. **It starts the conversation.**

Spread the word. Join the conversation.
Get involved.

Thank You



<https://www.nsenvironmental.com/nhpi>

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