

## **Expert Perspectives on the Heinz Center ‘Filling Data Gaps’ Report\***

“Accurate and current monitoring information is vital to our efforts to conserve America’s invaluable ecosystems. Data gaps in that information serve no one’s interests well, least of all those of American taxpayers and all of us who rely on the services those ecosystems provide for our health and well being.”

**-- Terry F. Young, Ph.D., Agricultural and Environmental Chemistry,  
Consulting Scientist, Environmental Defense**

“My recent experiences with the Upper Yellowstone River and the Grand Canyon underscore the importance of having reliable monitoring information on which to base decisions. Without these data, decision-makers often were forced to use inadequate generalized estimates to make decisions which should be based on scientifically sound data. Maintaining up-to-date information is a small price to pay to protect some of America’s world renowned natural treasures. Our prized ecosystems and our future generations deserve our best efforts.”

**--Duncan T. Patten, Ph.D., Plant Ecology,  
Research Professor, Montana State University**

“Environmental indicators at the national scale are essential if we are to understand the condition of our country’s plant and animal communities, how our ecosystems store carbon, and other features that describe the productive capacity of the nation’s ecosystems. Summarizing complex ecological information in simple and powerful ways is crucial if we are to manage our ecosystems so they provide the essential goods and services on which society depends. Only with ongoing and consistent monitoring data can we implement sound policies that achieve these goals at both the national and local levels.”

**-- Gordon Orians, Ph.D. Zoology  
Professor Emeritus, University of Washington**

“‘Unsung and underfinanced’ is a term *The New York Times* recently used in describing ongoing monitoring. Unsung and underfinanced? Yes. But also critically important to sound scientifically based understanding of our ecosystems and the risks they face. Addressing critical data gaps in our understanding of important ecosystems poses the ‘pay me now or pay me later’ riddle’. The most cost-effective ecosystem management strategies can be implemented only when based on sound and ongoing environmental monitoring data.”

**-- John L. Knott, Jr., Managing Director/CEO  
The Noisette Company, LLC**

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\* All of these individuals have been active in development of the Heinz Center’s ecosystems report as members of its Design Committee for the 2007 report.