



## The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

### Frank Pope, Conservation Award (Member) 2006

The Conservation Award for Members is presented in recognition of an outstanding contribution by a member of the OFNC in the cause of natural history conservation in the Ottawa Valley, with particular emphasis on activities within the Ottawa District. Frank Pope is chosen as the recipient for the 2006 award in recognition his skillful leadership of the Alfred Bog Committee for over 20 years, which in 2006 achieved its goal of protection for the Alfred Bog for generations to come. Alfred Bog, lying 75 kilometres east of Ottawa, is one of the great conservation success stories of the past two decades. It took long years of hard work by local groups and all levels of government to finally save this vulnerable wetland from peat extraction, logging and drainage.

Frank Pope's involvement in the Alfred Bog conservation effort began in earnest in the early 1980s. A large part of the bog had been re-zoned to Agriculture, and an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board seeking to keep the zoning as Conservation had failed. Not willing to accept defeat, Frank Pope, with Charles Sauriol of the OFNC, created the Alfred Bog Committee in 1985 to bring together interested folks and strengthen the bog protection effort. Frank chaired the Alfred Bog Committee in its ongoing save-the-bog campaign for the ensuing 20+ years.

In this exhausting battle, Frank's commitment never wavered in the face of setbacks. His efforts spanned a range of activities -- making credible presentations at Ontario Municipal Board hearings, tribunals, advocating legislative change at the provincial level, commenting on official plans and by-laws, working with major NGOs (NCC) in land acquisition efforts, fund-raising, and negotiating with diverse groups to name but a few.

Under Frank's leadership, the Alfred Bog Committee watched for acquisition opportunities within the bog, and initiated such activities as the preparation of a management plan, a major report on the plants, animals and hydrology of the bog, contacts with other land holders in the bog, the preparation of educational brochures and articles and field trips into the bog. Funding was obtained and a 1,000 ft. boardwalk was constructed in the bog to make visiting the bog less hazardous and ecologically destructive. In the years leading up to 2004, the conservation work intensified. The Nature Conservancy of Canada purchased a total of 2,800 hectares of the bog, and Ontario Parks now manages the property as a provincial nature reserve. Peat harvesting within the bog was banned and peat mining operations that border the bog are now required to operate according to rules designed to minimize this threat. All appeals of the county official plan pertaining to the Bog are withdrawn and the years-long mediation of the Ontario Municipal Board terminated. The Bog now has an official boundary and wetland designation. Quite a success story!

With this conservation award, the OFNC is recognizing Frank Pope's unflagging commitment, leadership and final success in the effort to gain environmental protection for Alfred Bog. Congratulations, Frank!

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