



The Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club

Kenneth W. McRae - 2008 Conservation Award (Non-member)

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The Conservation Award for a non-member is given in recognition of an outstanding contribution by a non-member in the cause of natural history conservation in the Ottawa Valley, with particular emphasis on activities within the Ottawa District.

Ken McRae is the recipient of the 2008 award to recognize his exceptional efforts as a champion of water resources, concentrating on wetlands in the Ottawa area, while also monitoring other issues in Eastern Ontario and in provincial legislation.

Ken is extremely hard-working and dedicated, and has become very knowledgeable about wetland protection and related development issues. All of this work has been done as a volunteer while holding down a full time job.

Ken identifies problems primarily by monitoring the Ontario Environmental Registry where all environmental changes requiring government approval are posted, as for example, water taking permits or municipal zoning by-law amendments. The problems that Ken so identifies are then researched exhaustively and detailed briefs are presented to appropriate authorities and followed up diligently. Some issues go on for many years making it difficult for anyone to continue to address them, but Ken persists with fortitude.

Copies of his correspondence are circulated to a large number of people interested in protecting wetlands - which may include local politicians and government staff-- alerting them to possible negative effects of planned activities. This information serves to raise or enhance awareness of others and to facilitate their participation in decision making regarding management of our environment. Ken's actions serve as a model to residents of Ontario to exercise their rights under the Environmental Bill of Rights and help to improve government decision-making on the environment.

Lately Ken has focused on preserving Ottawa's Goulbourn Wetland Complex, water taking permits that impact upon wetlands such as the Leitrim wetland, and environmental issues pertaining to quarries and golf courses. Other issues that Ken has grappled with include the Class environmental assessment for the Highway 7 expansion, the City of Ottawa's Official Plan treatment of provincially wetlands and drainage issues under the Drainage Act. In past years, he served as a member of the Friends of the Jock River.

Ken McRae is a worthy recipient of the Conservation Award (Non-member) for 2008.
Congratulations!

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