

March 21, 2005

To Len Hopkins and Nicole Desroches,

Ottawa Riverkeeper would like to express our support to have the Ottawa River named a Canadian Heritage River. There is no arguing the historical and cultural significance of the Ottawa River – the primary transportation route into the heart of Canada for thousands of years. Ecologically speaking, the Ottawa River is not only one of Canada's most significant rivers, it is very important on a global scale.

The Ottawa Valley contains examples of globally rare ecological communities such as alvar habitat and rich wetland and forest habitats, which support an impressive diversity of flora and fauna. The Ottawa River Valley hosts the most biologically diverse ecosystems in Québec yet is also one of the most threatened landscapes in Canada.

Heritage designation of the Ottawa River will be an important stepping-stone to ensure that this incredible river is protected and respected by all. I believe that encouraging people to enjoy the river by swimming, fishing and boating will give rise to better stewards who will act to protect the ecological integrity of the river for future generations.

In my contact with citizens from all over the Ottawa River Watershed, I feel confident that most people are eager to be good stewards and demonstrate their respect for the river. What we need is a movement to get all users of the river together to decide on the future of the river. A Canadian Heritage River Designation could provide a pivotal role in helping to conserve the richness and beauty of the Ottawa River.

Thank you for your leading efforts and Ottawa Riverkeeper looks forward to participating in the designation process.

Yours truly,



Meredith Brown  
*Riverkeeper and Executive Director*  
Ottawa Riverkeeper / Les Sentinelles de la Rivière des Outaouais