



May 23, 2006

Media Information Sheet

OTTAWA RIVER NOMINATION

Presented to Canadian Heritage Rivers – Board of Directors

Ottawa River Valley – The Canadian Heritage Rivers System is Canada’s national river conservation program. It promotes, protects and enhances Canada’s river heritage and ensures that our leading rivers are managed in a sustainable manner.

Becoming a Canadian Heritage River requires **two** formal steps – nomination and designation.

Representatives from the Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee, led by Chair Len Hopkins, travelled to Kananaskis, Alberta to present the Ottawa River Nomination Document to the Canadian Heritage Rivers – Board of Directors. Reports from the meeting indicate the presentation was well done and that the nomination was positively received. In the Board deliberations it was agreed that the document needs minor revisions to increase emphasis that the nomination is only for the Ontario portion of the river. As such, the Board will reconsider the nomination, pending receipt and review of the revised document.

The Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee is comprised of representation from all reaches of the river. From Lake Timiskaming in the north, to Hawkesbury in the east, a stretch of over 590 kilometres, committee members have held over 30 meetings in 18 communities in Quebec and Ontario.

The creation of the nomination document has been a collaborative effort consisting of submissions and information provided by community leaders from both sides of the waterway. Over 100 volunteers have contributed information to the committee.

Recently, representatives of the government of Quebec had advised committee members that the provincial government has other priorities and therefore does not wish to participate at this time. This follows a previous request by Quebec Provincial representatives to delay making the Nomination Presentation to the CHRS – Board at their meeting in 2005.

Accordingly, the Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee chose to respect the wishes of the provincial government, wait until the CHRS Board Meeting in 2006 to make the nomination presentation and proceed in a manner which would allow participation by the Province of Quebec in the future.

Nominating only one section of a river flowing through two provinces follows the precedent of the Bloodvein River, a river that flows through the provinces of Manitoba and Ontario.

Interestingly, the decision by the committee to create an all inclusive document has resulted in the request for minor revisions to the Nomination Document by the CHRS – Board of Directors.

Len provided these comments upon his return from Alberta:

“The Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee received an excellent reception from the CHRS – Board of Directors in Alberta and after some minor changes, we are confident that confirmation of the Ottawa River nomination will be received. As Chair of the Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee, I want to compliment and thank all members of our Executive and Steering Committees, the municipalities and more than 100 volunteers from the Ottawa River Valley, who contributed information. There is a wonderful “family” relationship among all these people from both sides of the Ottawa River and we will continue to work positively with everyone in the days and years ahead. I am very confident about the future of our beloved Ottawa River Valley.”

With the receipt of the formal approval of the Nomination Document, the Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee members will start on the Heritage Strategy phase of the project, necessary before the Ottawa River receives final approval for designation as a Canadian Heritage River.

For more information about Canadian Heritage Rivers visit: www.chrs.ca

For more information about the Ottawa River Heritage Designation Project visit: www.ottawariver.org