

**Ministry of Natural
Resources**

Office of the Minister

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May 27, 2009

Mr. Doug Stewart
Chair, Canadian Heritage Rivers Board
Director General, National Parks
Parks Canada
25 Eddy Street, 4th floor
Gatineau QC K1A 0M5

Dear Mr. Stewart:

On behalf of the Province of Ontario, I am pleased to approve the designation of the Ontario portion of the Ottawa River to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System.

The Ottawa River will play an important role in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, providing representation of several important cultural heritage themes. Aboriginal people have used the resources along the Ottawa River, or Kichi Sibi, for over 6,000 years. The river continues to be considered the heartland of the Algonquin First Nations community. It has an outstanding history and political significance as the gateway for continental exploration, a premier transportation corridor during the fur and timber trade eras, and home to the nation's capital. These and other significant values and features make the Ottawa deserving of heritage river status.

The *Heritage Strategy for the Ottawa River 2009* sets out a plan to support conservation and management of river heritage values. It was prepared by the Ottawa River Heritage Designation Committee (ORHDC), a citizen's group made up of landowners, community experts and representatives of municipalities along the river. Extensive public, community and committee meetings held between 2003 and 2008 enabled a diverse group of citizens and organizations to be involved. Expressions of support were provided from members of federal and provincial parliament and municipal government. Contributions were also made by various organizations and partners. These grassroots actions and levels of involvement and support demonstrate the commitment to this initiative.

I would like to express my appreciation to all those who supported and participated in this initiative. It is my hope that the Ontario portion of the Ottawa River will receive designation to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System in the near future.

Sincerely,

Original signed by

Donna Cansfield
Minister of Natural Resources