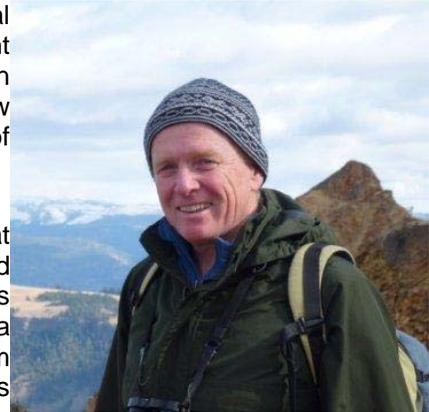


CAG Award for Geography in the Service of Government or Business

Dr Stephen Woodley

Stephen Woodley is one of Canada's leading authorities on ecological integrity, ecological monitoring and restoration, and the management of protected areas. He has a BSc in Biology from Mount Allison University (1973), an MSc in Biology from the University of New Brunswick (1979) and a PhD in Geography from the University of Waterloo (1993).



Stephen is well-qualified with respect to both sets of criteria that nominees receiving this award should possess. First, he has “a record of achievement for geography in the service of government or business over a long period of time.” Stephen was employed by Parks Canada for 32 years, rising to become Parks Canada's first Chief Ecosystem Scientist. In July 2011, he accepted a prestigious appointment as Senior Program Advisor on Protected Areas and Climate Change with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN). In this role he provides advice and assistance to governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector in countries around the world.

During his time at Parks Canada, Stephen contributed to several major international, national and provincial initiatives. For example, he is co-chair of the IUCN Task Force on Biodiversity and Protected Areas and was team leader for the North American Test of Sustainable Forests, a study conducted in cooperation with the US Forest Service. At the federal level, the Minister of Canadian Heritage appointed him as a member of the Minister's Panel on Ecological Integrity in National Parks. This led to a publication entitled “Action on the Ground” (2005) for which Stephen was one of the coordinators. In Ontario, he was a member of the Far North Science Advisory Panel which published a report in 2010 entitled “Science for a Changing Far North.” In New Brunswick, he was chair of the Greater Fundy Ecosystem Research Project and a member of the Task Force on a Protected Areas Strategy.

Stephen's expertise has also been sought out by NGOs. He was a board member of the George Wright Society, a US-based organization concerned with protecting and managing cultural and natural parks. Currently, he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Canadian Bar Code of Life Network.

Second, Stephen has distinguished himself “through the development of geographic techniques or tools used in the service of government or business.” On July 27, 2011, The Globe and Mail published an article in its Folio section entitled “Parks Canada's global impact.” In the article, the author stated that Parks Canada “defined the concept of ecological integrity” and “developed a scientific monitoring system to measure ecological health.” Canada's biggest advance, however, is seen as “the ability to measure ecological degradation.” This procedure was developed by Stephen Woodley. It has been adopted in several parks systems around the world, including those in the United States, South Korea and Finland. As Stephen told The Globe and Mail, “We use the measurement to decide what needs to be fixed and what's the standard against how we will fix it. We are really talking about the health of the land.”

For his long-term achievements in government and for his development of innovative techniques to measure ecological degradation, Dr. Stephen Woodley is a worthy recipient of this CAG award.