

## **CAG Award for Geography in the Service of Government or Business**

### **Frank Quinn**

Frank Quinn has practiced the skills of a geographer throughout his adult life. During the course of his career, he has waved the flag of our discipline across Canada and beyond, advocating geographical approaches to many natural resource and environmental issues.

Frank received his B.A. from the University of Toronto and M.A. and Ph.D. in Geography from the University of Washington. Aside from three decades of experience as a water planner and policy advisor with the Government of Canada, he has also lectured sessionally at a half dozen universities in Canada and the United States. He has published over 40 monographs and articles in his special areas of interest, which are federal water policy, interbasin water diversion and export issues, Canada-United States boundary waters and Aboriginal resource rights. He continues to be asked to sit on graduate thesis committees and shares his experience with students pursuing a wide range of interests, increasingly by e-mail.

Dr. Quinn's contributions to water resource issues are varied. He is perhaps best remembered as the Director of Research for the Inquiry on Federal Water Policy (a.k.a. Pearse Inquiry) of 1984-85, analyzing hundreds of public briefs and overseeing the preparation of 22 research papers. The success of that Inquiry led to the first comprehensive Federal Water Policy in 1987.

Following that, he was for three years Canadian representative to a Natural Resources Management Group at OECD, and served brief terms as regional director of both the Canadian and American water resources associations.

Having become Canada's pre-eminent expert on the issue of water export and functioning as Environment Canada's spokesperson in that role for several years, Dr. Quinn was the logical choice in 1999 to become Special Advisor to the International Joint Commission which had received a Reference to investigate the consumption, diversion and removal of boundary waters, with emphasis on the Great Lakes. The resulting report in 2000 was commended by the governments of both Canada and the United States. It was Frank's suggestion in 1998, however, during the renewed public unrest over proposals for freshwater export, which was instrumental in reorienting the federal approach to this issue. Major watersheds, rather than political boundaries, would become the geographical basis for preventing bulk water removals, an environmental defense which could be applied without discrimination inside and outside Canada, and thus avoid international trade challenges. To date, 10 of our 14 senior governments have endorsed a national accord to legislate this approach.

Frank Quinn thus represents all that is good about our profession. His considerable experience in applying geographical insights and sharing them with students and with colleagues in government are a credit to this profession and to Canadian society.