

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

### **Barry Wellar**

For over 30 years Barry Wellar has pioneered research into projects ranging from satellite imagery and remote sensing to rural and urban development. He has brought the science of applied geography into public policy. His knowledge and expertise are sought the world over.

Barry Wellar began contributing to Geography in the Service of Government as a graduate student at Northwestern University where he conducted studies and provided expert advice for the NASA, the USGS and the US Bureau of Census. His investigations made significant contributions to the use of satellites to monitor land use changes and to the application of remote sensing to urban and regional analysis. He developed new ways to measure traffic flows and new techniques for incorporating environmental factors into urban and regional development.

Later at the University of Kansas, Professor Wellar conducted more government research. He designed one of the initial environmental impact assessments for the US Army Corps of Engineers, directed a first-ever Neighborhood Analysis project and was a primary researcher in the Integrated Municipal Information Systems project, a first study investigating the use of information technology in local governments. In 1972, he won a NASA competition to design an information system for dynamically monitoring US land use change.

In 1972, Professor Wellar returned to Canada at the Federal Ministry of State for Urban Affairs. His policy and research contributions included the design of eco-development measurement techniques, a research agenda on small community development policies, the development of quantitative approaches to social indicators and the creation of information technology research programs for the OECD and the UN.

Upon his appointment in 1979 as a Professor of Geography at the Université d'Ottawa Barry Wellar pursued with conviction his involvement in public policy. In addition to teaching workshops and advising agencies on Geographic Information Systems, he undertook consulting assignments. In that role, he designed a new tax regime system for residents of Canada's northern and isolated communities and developed and tested the walking security index. More recently he proposed an Urban Sustainability Index to the Prime Minister's Task Force on National Urban Strategy.

Throughout his career as a researcher, civil servant and academic, Dr. Wellar has contributed to Geography in the Service of Government at the municipal, provincial, federal and international levels, and is regarded as a leading proponent of the need to include a geo-factor when formulating public policies. He has made numerous methodological contributions in the fields of remote sensing, geographic information science, impact assessment and ecosystem planning. His contributions have been recognised by the Association of American Geographers, by governments, and by numerous other organisations.

It is with great pleasure that the Canadian Association of Geographers honours Barry Wellar.