

Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre

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May 17, 2016

Mayor Jim Watson
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Watson

The enclosed issue of the Ottawa-Carleton Wildlife Centre's spring newsletter highlights '*best wildlife management practices*' that have been implemented in London, Ontario (pages 4-7) and in the Province of Alberta (page 8). It shows, as does the enclosed recent article in the Globe and Mail, the growing recognition of the importance of wetlands and the critical role that beavers play in the environment.

As the Provincial Riparian Specialist from the highly-regarded Alberta Riparian Habitat Management Society said "*we may think we can't live with beaver, but the reality is we can't live without them*".

Unfortunately, the City of Ottawa continues to undervalue wetlands, regularly breaking up dams and killing beavers, even in provincially significant wetlands as they are compromised or converted to municipal drains to support questionable development.

The City of Ottawa has a very poor track record when it comes to protecting wildlife, wetlands and other natural habitat. The Wildlife Strategy and the more recent Protocol for Wildlife Protection during Construction have been failures based on their original promise, watered down to '*best practices*' that have not been implemented, even in areas of substantial natural habitat such as the Rockcliffe Lands and the West Carleton Environmental Centre.

Ottawa residents are showing an increasing level of concern about the lack of protection for green space, the loss of significant trees and the unnecessary harm that is done to wildlife. Not only Ottawa residents but people from across the country express surprise and disappointment that the nation's capital is not showing the same leadership as other cities when it comes to the environment. That Ottawa is not living up to the commitment in its Greenspace Master Plan as a '*Green and Environmentally Sensitive City*'.

We sincerely hope that in the lead up to 2017 celebrations this will change. A long-overdue starting point will be to move Wildlife and Biodiversity into the Environment Committee's responsibilities. Given that this Committee is responsible for green space, urban forestry, climate change, open spaces and natural urban features, one wonders how wildlife and biodiversity would have been excluded in the first place.

Sincerely


Donna DuBreuil
President

Enclosures