



The Canadian River Heritage Award

Guidelines and Procedures

March 11, 2021

Background

The Canadian River Heritage Award (the Award) was first presented as the Bill Mason National River Conservation Award in 1994 on the 10-year anniversary of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS). It was subsequently presented triennially at Canadian river heritage conferences organized in association with the CHRS.

In 2020, award criteria were updated through a partnership between the CHRS Board and the Canadian Canoe Museum (CCM), and the award was renamed The Canadian River Heritage Award to reflect its national significance while carrying forward the spirit in which it was originally conceived and honouring the contributions of its recipients.

Bill Mason was born in 1929 in Winnipeg, Manitoba and became one of Canada's most well-known and beloved conservationists and canoeists. A naturalist, author, artist, and filmmaker, his legacy includes books, films and artwork that celebrate a reverence for the natural world, including his award-winning canoeing books and films in the Path of the Paddle and his feature films, *Death of a Legend* and *Waterwalker*. Bill's Oscar-nominated short film, *Paddle to the Sea*, based on the classic children's book by Holling Clancy Holling, became one of the most viewed National Film Board films of all time.

Award Criteria

Recipients are recognised as making an outstanding contribution of national significance to river heritage in Canada.

Nominations are considered based on two key criteria:

Scope – the extent to which the nominee has positively contributed to Canada's river heritage. While regionally important actions may be recognized, they must represent a unique and enduring contribution that is notable at a national scale.

Impact – the degree to which the actions of the nominee have had, or are expected to have, a profound and lasting influence on individuals and/or communities, and natural or cultural heritage in Canada.

Nominations will also be assessed regarding the degree to which the nominee's accomplishments embrace diversity and advance inclusion.



Selection Process

Eligibility

The Award is intended to recognise individual contributions rather than those of a group or organization. However, more than one individual can be nominated for a single award in cases where individual contributions are interrelated and complementary to the shared nomination.

Any individual who is a present or former long-term resident of Canada is eligible for nomination. The only exceptions are elected or appointed public officials who may not be nominated while in office.

The Award may be granted posthumously if the person is nominated within one year of their death or was nominated at any point prior to their death.

Individuals can be nominated more than once. A new nomination is needed in each award period for which the individual is to be considered – nominations are not carried over to subsequent award years.

Frequency

The award is presented biennially in odd-numbered years.

Nominations are accepted on an ongoing basis but must be received by **June 30** to be considered within that award year.

Any nominations received after **June 30** will be considered for the following biennial award year.

There is no limit on the number of nominations that may be received within an award period.

Nomination & Selection Process

Nominations may be submitted by anyone using the approved nomination form. This form is available on the Canadian Heritage Rivers website or can be received in hard copy by contacting the Canadian Heritage River secretariat.

Nominations can be submitted in English, French, or any Indigenous language spoken in Canada. If necessary, nominations will be translated to support their review by the nominating committee.

Nomination Review

Administration of the nomination and selection process will be facilitated by the CHRS secretariat.

Nominations received during the nomination period are reviewed by active CHRS and CCM board members and ranked using a standardized scoring system to produce a shortlist of at least three but no more than five nominations. Board chairs do not participate in this review due to their role in the selection committee.

If multiple nominations receive the same score such that the number of equally ranked nominations exceeds five, all equally ranked nominations are included on the short list.

The short list of nominations is advanced to the selection committee by the CHRS secretariat.

Selection Committee

The selection committee is composed of five individuals and includes:



- The current Chair of the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board (or designate).
- The current Chair of the Canadian Canoe Museum Board (or designate).
- A selection committee chair, to be appointed jointly by the CHRS and CCM Board chairs or their designate(s).
- An Indigenous individual with ties to the intent and spirit of the award as identified by the selection committee chair in consultation with the CHRS and CCM Board chairs (or designates).
- An additional individual identified by the selection committee chair in consultation with the CHRS and CCM Board chairs (or designates) with consideration given to previous award recipients, nominees, or river champions.

The Selection Committee will review the original nomination forms and may consider the scoring applied to determine the short-listed nominees. The committee may also seek out additional information to inform their deliberations.

Normally, only one award will be presented within an award year. However, in exceptional circumstances two awards may be presented in a given award year at the discretion of the Selection Committee.

Award Presentation

Whenever possible, the Award is presented in the year in which it was received by a member of the selection committee or another notable individual who may have a meaningful tie to the Award recipient(s).

The Award is presented at an in-person event hosted at the Canadian Canoe Museum or another appropriate location agreed to by the recipient(s). If an in-person presentation is not possible, the Award is presented in a manner agreed to by the recipient(s) in coordination with CCM and CHRS secretariat staff.

Individual Awards

Each recipient receives a hand-made and custom engraved wooden paddle that includes the name of the award, the year in which it was received, and the name of the recipient(s).

Additional adornments to the paddle may be made at the discretion of the CCM and CHRS secretariat in keeping with the spirit of the award and contributions of the award recipient(s).

Legacy Recognition

A public record of all award recipients is kept on the Canadian Canoe Museum website. The Canadian Canoe Museum also maintains a permanent physical record of the award and its current and past recipients.

Award Rescindment or Relinquishment

In exceptional circumstances an award may be rescinded by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board and Canadian Canoe Museum Board in accordance with specified guidelines.

A person who is the recipient of the award may relinquish the award at any time and is not required to give reasons or rationale for such action.



Addendum 1 – Nomination and Selection Standards of Conduct

Statement of Commitment

Individuals participating in the review of nominations and selection committee:

- Recognize that participation in making selections for this award is a privilege.
- Strive for integrity in all deliberations.
- Agree to communicate openly and honestly while safeguarding information received in confidence or shared in relation to deliberations concerning the award.
- Commit to remaining political neutral and carrying out responsibilities in a manner that is fair and free from bias and self-interest.
- Agree to thoroughly read the information provided on individual nominees and respond in a manner consistent with the applicable selection and review guidance for the award.

Conflict of Interest Statement

Members of the CHRS or CCM boards or selection committee will openly declare any possible conflict of interest and disclose personal or work relationships with any nominees to the selection committee chair prior to scoring nominees or participating in the selection committee.

At the discretion of the relevant Board or selection committee chair, the members involved will:

- a) continue to fully participate in the nomination or selection process in a manner consistent with the aforementioned statement of commitment;
- b) not participate in the scoring of the nominee(s) where a possible conflict of interest has been identified; or
- c) not participate in the selection committee, in which case the selection committee chair will confer with other selection committee members to find a suitable substitute.



Addendum 2 - Award Rescindment and Relinquishment Guidelines

Rescindment

Grounds for Rescission

The Chairs of the CHRS and CCM Boards may, by resolution and majority vote of their respective Boards, rescind an award conferred on a person if where they find that the award was granted:

- a) in error; or
- b) in reliance on information that was later found to be false, misleading, or incomplete; or
- c) under other circumstances such that had the selection committee been aware of those circumstances at the time of conferral it would not have granted the award; or
- d) in consideration of circumstances arising with the recipient after the award has been granted that are deemed to be inconsistent with the spirit of the award and/or decorum or ethics expected of an award recipient.

Process for Rescission

If it is expected that the grounds of rescission may apply to an award recipient, the CHRS and CCM Board chairs (or designates) shall assemble a review committee to consider rescinding the award. Membership in the review committee will follow the same approach outlined in forming an award selection committee.

Prior to undertaking a rescindment, the chair of the review committee must advise the award recipient of the review process and allow the recipient to speak to the matters leading to the review.

It is expected that the review committee will seek and fairly consider evidence of the grounds for possible rescission and include a summary of their deliberations in a review report. Whenever possible, the review report should be completed within 180 days of the first meeting of the review committee and will be submitted at that time to the chairs of the CHRS and CCM boards.

The CHRS and CCM board chairs will share the review report with their respective boards within 30 days of receiving the report from the review committee and will convene their respective boards within 90 days of receiving the review committee report to hold a rescindment vote which requires a simple majority to pass.

If the decision is made not to rescind the award, the CHRS and CCM board chairs will notify the award recipient and no further action is needed.

If the decision is made to rescind the award, the CHRS and CCM board chairs will notify the award recipient (and any co-recipients if applicable), and the name of the recipient will be removed from any records of award recipients, and replaced with a notation indicating "award rescinded on [date]".

Public or media announcements related to the review or rescindment will be at the discretion of the CHRS and CCM Board chairs.



Relinquishment

Grounds for Relinquishment

A person who is the recipient of the award may relinquish the award and is not required to give reasons or rationale for such action.

Process for Relinquishment

A person who wished to relinquish the award may do so in writing to the Canadian Heritage Rivers secretariat. Upon receiving such written notification, secretariat staff will work with the award recipient to arrange for the return of the individual award and will provide notification of the relinquishment to the CHRS and CCM Board Chairs.

Following notification of the CHRS and CCM Board chairs, the name of the recipient will be removed from any records of award recipients and replaced with a notation indicating “award relinquished by the recipient on [date].”



Addendum 2 – Nomination Form

The Canadian River Heritage Award Nomination Form 2021

The Canadian River Heritage Award is the most prestigious award recognizing river conservation and promotion in Canada. Historically known as the Bill Mason Award*, it is presented every two years to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution of **national significance** to river heritage in Canada.

The Canadian River Heritage Award is offered by the [Canadian Heritage Rivers System](#) in partnership with the [Canadian Canoe Museum](#). The award recognizes the invaluable efforts of an individual Canadian to celebrate, protect and conserve heritage rivers for future generations. Nominations are evaluated based on the **scope** and **impact** of their efforts.

If you know of a river champion who has positively contributed to Canada's river heritage, and has had a profound and lasting influence on individuals, communities, and natural or cultural heritage in Canada, then please prepare and submit a nomination by email to pc.rivieresdupatrimoine-heritagerivers.pc@canada.ca. Nominations must be received by **June 30, 2021**.

Nominee and Nominator Information

Name of Individual being nominated:	
Nominee's Email:	
Nominee's Telephone:	
Name of Nominator:	
Nominator's Email:	
Nominator's Telephone:	
How long have you known the nominee and in what capacity?	



Contribution to River Heritage

Describe the extent to which the nominee has positively contributed to Canada's river heritage. Please be specific, using a timeline or narrative detailing their achievements.

(500 words or less).

* Where relevant, reflect on the degree to which the nominee's accomplishments embrace diversity and advance inclusion.

** While regionally important actions may be recognized, they must represent a unique and enduring contribution that is notable at a national scale.

Describe the degree to which the actions of the nominee have had, or are expected to have, a profound and lasting influence on individuals and/or communities, and natural or cultural heritage in Canada. (500 words or less)



Addendum 3 – Roles and Responsibilities of CHRS and CCM

Reviewing/amending this document

Either party may opt out of this awards partnership through written communication to the other party.

This guidelines and procedures document may be changed or amended at any time through the mutual agreement of the CHRS and CCM boards.

The CHRS secretariat will maintain a record of changes and undertake necessary actions to ensure that the most current version supersedes previous versions.

Finances and Program Supports

Subject to normal budget approval and availability, financial support for; a) the creation of individual awards, b) travel and accommodations for award recipients and approved guests, and c) award presentation events will be provided through the CHRS secretariat budget to a maximum of \$5,000 within an award year. In exceptional circumstances the CHRS Board and/or secretariat may allocate additional funds if available and needed to support award costs.

The Canadian Canoe Museum will provide space to host award presentation events and assume costs associated with the ongoing legacy recognition of the award on the CCM website and as a permanent physical record at the museum.

It is understood that the CCM may seek funding support from the CHRS secretariat or others on occasion to maintain or enhance the legacy recognition of the award. Should the interest arise, commercially sponsored contributions must be approved by both the CHRS and CCM before being accepted.

Communications

Design and Branding

Individual award(s) and any associated interpretive, promotional, and branding material shall be developed collaboratively by the CHRS and CCM.

Digital Media Presence

Administrative aspects of the Award such as nomination forms are hosted on the CHRS website, with the CHRS secretariat acting as the main point of contact for the nomination and selection process.

Educational elements associated with the Award will be hosted on the CCM website, with the CCM stewarding information on the history of the award and its recipients.

Both the CHRS and CCM may use their social media and other channels to promote the award, encourage nominations, and highlight award recipients and their achievements.



**Canadian
Heritage Rivers
System**

**Réseau des
rivières du patrimoine
canadien**



**THE CANADIAN CANOE MUSEUM
LE MUSÉE CANADIEN DU CANOT**

Media and Promotion

CHRS and CCM will jointly promote awards through their respective channels of communication and as desired will collaborate in the development of targeted messaging or other efforts to support raising awareness of the Award and its recipients.



Addendum 4 – Record of Award Recipients

Year	Recipient(s)
	Mr. Kirk Wipper, Founder of the Canadian Recreational Canoeing Association, Toronto
	Mr. Bill Reid, Haida Artist and Sculptor, Vancouver
	Mr. Pierre Elliot Trudeau, former Prime Minister of Canada, Montreal
	Elder William Commanda, Algonquin Nation of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg, Maniwaki, Quebec
	Mr. Hap Wilson, author, wilderness adventurer and artist, Temagami, Ontario
	Mr. Max Finkelstein, paddler, author and river advocate, Ottawa
	Mr. Don Gibson, river conservation advocate and long-time National Manager of the CHRS program, Ottawa
	Professor Bruce and Carol Hodgins, wilderness canoe leaders, educators and operators of Camp Wahnapiatae, Peterborough