

Abstract Submission for 5th Canadian River Heritage Conference

Title of Presentation:

Rivers to Oceans Week: Celebrating Canada's Watersheds

Category: Celebrating River Heritage

Presenters:

Max Finkelstein

Canadian Heritage Rivers System

Max.Finkelstein@pc.gc.ca

Dr. Luba Mycio-Mommers

Canadian Wildlife Federation

lubamm@cwf-fcf.org

Abstract

Starting in 2007, Oceans Day (June 8) and Canadian Rivers Day (second Sunday in June) will be celebrated during Canada's newest celebratory "weeks" — Rivers to Oceans Week — June 8 to 15. This week focuses on creating understandings of Canada's watersheds, our connection to fresh- and salt-water environments and what Canadians can do to protect them.

Everyone lives in a watershed — it is an area of land that water flows across or through on its way to a particular water body. Think of it as a network of springs, lakes, streams, rivers and wetlands, and all the land they drain. Rivers flow through them as freshwater makes its journey from the land to the salty ocean.

Oceans Day, first declared in 1992 at the United Nations Earth Summit, is celebrated every June 8 to raise awareness about the importance of the Earth's oceans, and inspires us to take better care of them. Canadian Rivers Day, celebrated since 2003, gives Canadians a chance to honour rivers for the important place they occupy at the heart of our history and natural heritage.

This session will introduce Rivers to Oceans Week, a part of CWF's WILD Education program. WILD Education is a family of environmental education programs delivered through partnerships to schools and informal educators. For Rivers to Oceans Week, CWF and its partners will deliver kits to all schools in both official languages and to informal educators and community sectors.

Partners of the Week include the Canadian Heritage Rivers System, Environment Canada (Biodiversity Convention Office, Marine Environment Branch), Parks Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Museum of Nature, Canadian Association of Principals, Scouts Canada and the Coastal Zone Association of Canada. The 2007 program features rivers and ocean of Canada's North in tribute of International Polar Year (2007-08).

Biographical sketches:

Max Finkelstein is an author, public speaker, an employee of Parks Canada, and a member of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System.

Dr. Luba Mycio-Mommers is Director of Education, Canadian Wildlife Federation.