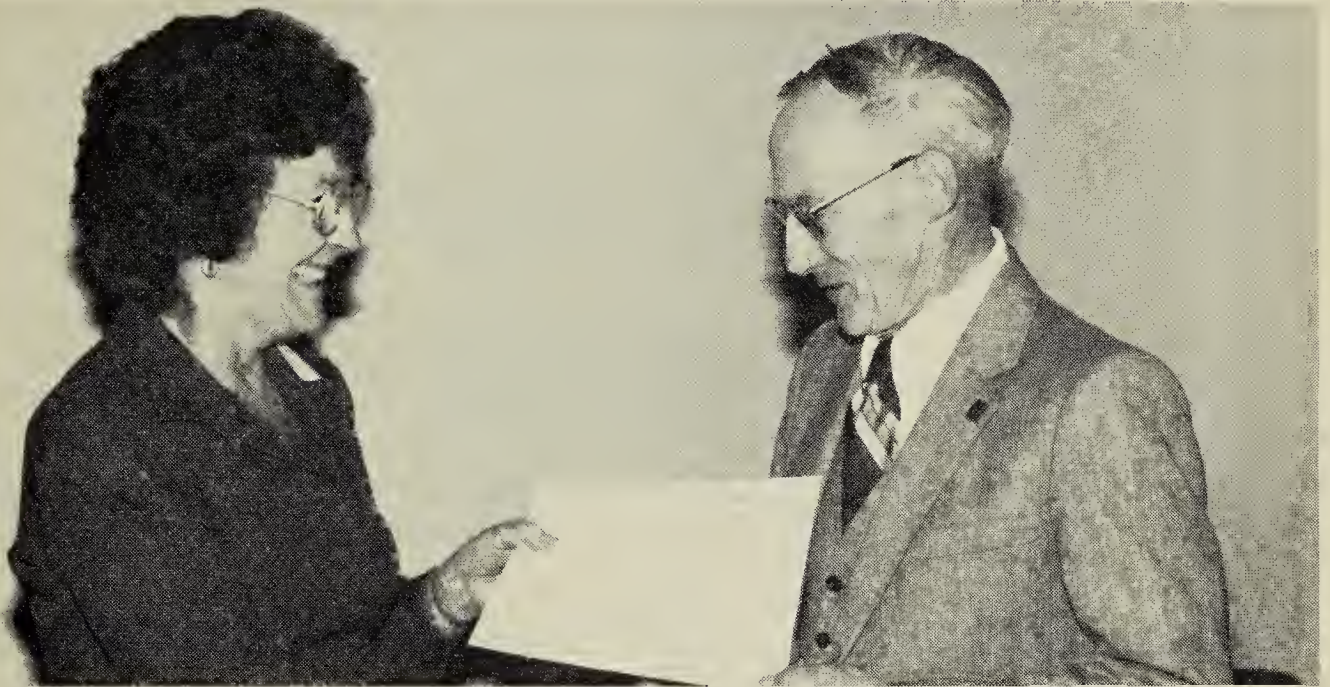


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# SOCIETY NEWS

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*Presentation of Larry Morgotch award to Sheina Wait*

## SNHS AWARDS 1982

Awards were presented at the Annual Meeting in Moose Jaw on 16 October.

The Conservation Award was presented to Ducks Unlimited (Canada) for its work towards the preservation of prairie wetlands. The award was presented to the president, Dr. Herb Cowburn of Saskatoon.

The Larry Morgotch Memorial Award for excellence in photography was presented to Sheina Wait of Moose Jaw for

the series of slides she presented at the members slides on 15 October.

The Cliff Shaw Award is annually presented for an article published in Blue Jay. It has been presented for first publications of younger members, and for quality of articles or numerous and varied contributions. This year it was presented to a young contributor who sent in a photograph and a short letter to accompany it. It was the story that was told by Eric Feilburg's photograph that earned him the Cliff Shaw Award to take to his home in East Braintree, Manitoba.

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## LETTER TO ENVIRONMENT CANADA

Ms. Gail Turner  
Information Directorate  
Environment Canada  
Ottawa, Ontario. K1A 0H3

Dear Ms. Turner:

I represented the Saskatchewan Natural History Society at the DOE Headquarters First Annual Public Consultation Meeting, September 21-23, 1982. I also attended the regional

meeting held in Regina on September 19. Attached to this letter is my rather general report to SNHS. The Society wishes to congratulate Environment Canada for the development of long-range plans and for the resolve to consult with public interest groups before the annual updating of those plans. The Society also wishes to express appreciation for the payment of air fare for one delegate to the Ottawa meeting.

In preparation for the first public consultation meeting I studied Environment Canada's 1982 Strategic Plan. As a naturalist my conclusion is that the future holds little hope for environment in Canada. Apparently Canadians are expected to live in a consumer society with ever increasing GNP and energy growth. As naturalists we would like DOE to plan for a conserver society.

DOE employees attended the meeting and they listened to the delegates of the public interest groups and they tried to answer our questions. My conclusion is that they are conscientious environmentalists and that is just not good enough. As environmentalists they plan to manage and to change the environment for the economic growth of man. They are quite prepared to reduce the quality of the environment. As naturalists we would like DOE employees to reflect a greater understanding of ecosystems. Man is after all only one organism in the biosphere and he is completely dependent on the continued existence of a healthy natural environment. DOE should, in our opinion, place less emphasis on managing and changing the environment for an easier richer life for man and far more on the rights of other organisms of our natural ecosystems. We recognize the right of man to use some of the earth's renewable resources but we oppose the complete destruction of natural ecosystems and the elimination of species.

As a life-long resident of the prairies I would have attended a study session considering the long-term future of healthy grassland ecosystems in Canada. However, there was no such session. Forestry does bring billions of dollars into Canada but so does Agriculture and from a much smaller area of land. Clearly there is a perennial conflict between exploitation and preservation. Among employees of the forestry branch of DOE I found some awareness of the need to maintain the naturalness and the species diversity of our forests. I wish that DOE had some influence in preservation of our fragile grassland ecosystems and the fertility of our farm soils.

I attended the national parks session because SNHS members have for twenty years worked for the preservation of some grassland ecosystems by Parks Canada. Our objective was to have something of our grassland heritage preserved. In every National Park preservation should, but does not always, have top priority. This means that the activities and the numbers of humans must be controlled. It also means that man must carefully study the ecosystems contained within each park and must monitor changes taking place and then must manage and control disturbances or pest species which have somehow been introduced.

There are many other comments which I would like to make but as a delegate to the Ottawa meeting I am expecting a detailed questionnaire and I will give it prompt and careful attention. The opinions I express are my own but as one of the founding members of SNHS in 1948 and as editor of our natural history journal for more than twelve years I think that the same ideas are held by many members of our society. — *G. F. Ledingham*, Dept. of Biology, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan. S4S 0A2