

# OTTAWA-GATINEAU GEOHERITAGE



The Ottawa-Gatineau Geoheritage Project promotes greater public knowledge and appreciation of the geology and related landscapes in and around Canada's National Capital Region.

## GEOHERITAGE AND GEOHERITAGE SITES

Geoheritage is concerned with the recognition and preservation of significant natural features, such as distinctive fossils and rare minerals, exposures of major faults and unconformities (erosional gaps in the rock record), unique glacial and post-glacial deposits, and the interaction that human activity has had with these features (e.g. natural stone in heritage buildings and distinctive geological relationships revealed in quarries, road cuts, building excavations and abandoned mines).

**A geoheritage site is a locality that meets one or more of the following:**

- Exposes a significant record of natural history
- Contains characteristic or unique features
- Contributes to understanding the natural history of the region
- Offers new scientific insights
- Offers distinct aesthetic and cultural values



Many unique geological and surface landform features provide important records of the past in the Ottawa-Gatineau region. These include the billion-year-old Precambrian rocks of the Gatineau Hills, the 450 million-year-old fossil-bearing Paleozoic rocks of the Ottawa Valley, and the unconsolidated sediments that were laid down during the last Ice Age and during the subsequent time, about 10,000 years ago, when the Champlain Sea covered much of the Ottawa Valley. The present drainage systems, dominated by the Ottawa River, have incised into this geological assemblage and many slopes have been modified by landslides. These components of our local Earth history strongly influence the groundwater reservoirs, surface waterways, agriculture, mineral wealth, biodiversity, and the foundations for buildings and transportation.

## OTTAWA-GATINEAU GEOHERITAGE COMMITTEE

A committee of local geoscientists and educators meets regularly to advance the Project's goals. Members of the Ottawa-Gatineau Geoheritage Committee are willing to assist the public, municipal, provincial and federal committees or agencies, primary and secondary schools, museums, societies and public interest groups in a variety of activities in the Ottawa-Gatineau region. These activities include:

- Striving to preserve, protect and promote local geoheritage sites through liaison with the appropriate municipal or federal authorities
- Preparing information for geoheritage brochures and geosite signage
- Conducting local geoheritage tours
- Offering lectures on the geological history of the Ottawa-Gatineau region



The Ottawa-Gatineau Geoheritage Project works in collaboration with Carleton University, University of Ottawa, City of Ottawa, National Capital Commission, Natural Resources Canada, Ontario Parks and the Canadian Geoscience Education Network.

Website: [ottawagatineaugeoheritage.ca](http://ottawagatineaugeoheritage.ca)

Part of Friends of Canadian Geoheritage

**Ottawa-Gatineau  
GEOHERITAGE**

The goals of the geoheritage project are:

- **PRESERVATION** of world-class geoheritage sites, by minimizing the loss of irreplaceable geological and surface landform features of the Ottawa-Gatineau region through insightful land-use planning
- **PROTECTION** of geoheritage sites by strengthening and enforcing applicable laws to help preserve significant records of Earth history
- **PROMOTION** of public awareness through the production of informative signs, brochures and guidebooks for geoheritage sites

These objectives involve the stewardship of local natural features and education of people living in the region. Provision of greater geoheritage recognition will add another dimension to the interesting geohistory of the area for residents and tourists alike.