

The Gerry Couture Stewardship Award

Since 2009, an anonymous donor has provided the Gerry Couture Stewardship Medal and a \$1000 prize to a (preferably curmudgeonly) individual chosen for outstanding personal dedication to natural resource conservation and management in the Yukon.

The purpose of the Gerry Couture Stewardship Award is to foster public awareness of, and appreciation for, the personal dedication required to conserve and manage the Yukon's natural resources. The donor of the award is inspired by Gerry Couture's fearlessness and persistence in the face of adversity, and his creativity, innovation, and curmudgeonliness.



Gerry Couture near Old Crow

Nominations

Nominations can be made annually until November 17. Please email nominations to: outreach@yukonconservation.org. The Award is presented at the annual YCS Year End Party. To make a nomination, or to self-nominate, please provide the following information:

About the Nominee

Name
Phone number
Email address
Organizations or businesses with which the Nominee is affiliated

About You

Name
Phone number
Email address
Affiliation to nominee

Responses to these questions:

1. Why do you feel this individual is a worthy recipient of this award?
2. Please provide some background information about this individual and reasons for your nomination.

For more information call YCS at (867) 668-5678 or email yconsoutreach@ycons.yk.ca.

About Gerry Couture

This award was inspired by Gerry Couture's courage and dedication to protecting the Yukon's natural resources.

Gerry's background and character place him among the Yukon's colourful 5%. Born March 5, 1939 in Rossland BC, Gerry began working with natural resources at the early age of 15, working summers in mining and logging camps and smelters. Among his many life adventures, Gerry has served in the Canadian military and been a pilot, tradesman, competitive dog musher, homesteader, farmer, hunter, commercial fisher, and placer miner.

Over the years, Gerry has served on a number of boards working to protect fish and wildlife habitat. His roles have included: 17 years as the Canadian Delegate to the Yukon River salmon negotiations under the Pacific Salmon Treaty; 13 years helping to establish and chair the Fish and Wildlife Management Board; and 12 years with the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee.

Perhaps his most difficult challenge with salmon hit close to his home in Dawson City. Mounting dissatisfaction with the Yukon Placer Authorization – an outdated relic of a bygone era – finally forced a full scale review in which Gerry, as a representative of the Salmon Sub-Committee, joined with those calling for substantial change. This issue was highly volatile in Dawson City – the home of placer mining – where, in 2002, a demonstration called Black Wednesday was held. Under such local pressure the average citizen might have withdrawn until the crisis had passed. But Gerry has a military temperament and he never backed down despite becoming the target of industry harassment and threatening phone calls – not to mention ostracism by his home town. Eventually, a new Placer Regime rose from the ashes and salmon are certainly the better for it.

Gerry worked as YCS's Mining Coordinator until he retired in 2009. The Yukon Conservation Society is proud to commemorate Gerry's feisty spirit and personal dedication to conservation with the annual Gerry Couture Stewardship Award.