

# Ken Elliott protects forests from boardrooms

Ken Elliott is a university graduate, a 29-year-old professional with a career which is among the most misunderstood in Canada.

Ken is a registered professional forester, the politically correct term for a person once known as a forest ranger. And while recent surveys have suggested that the average person in this country perceives this as one of the most

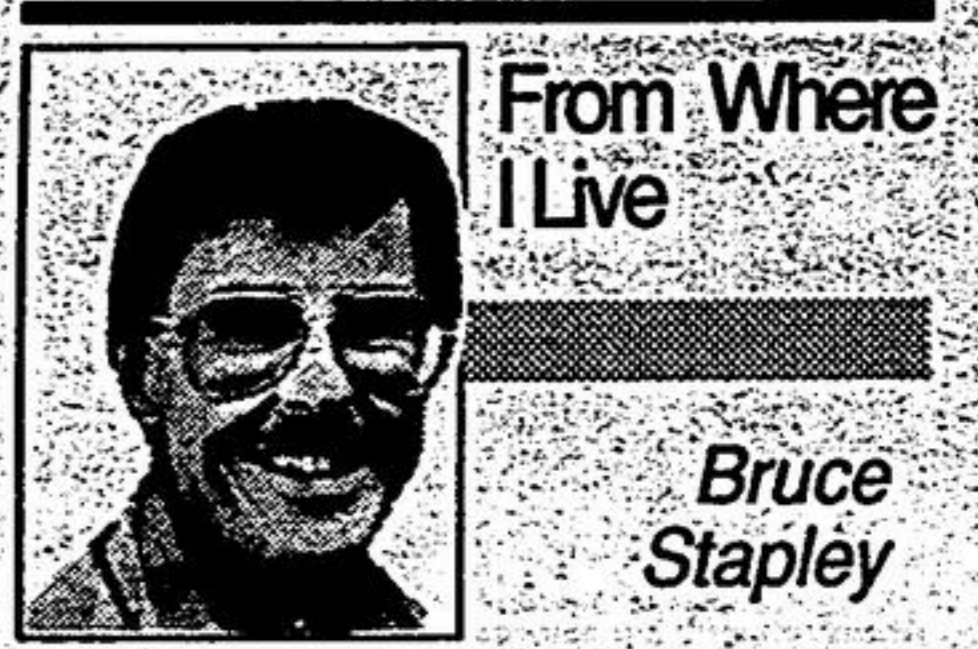
stress-free professions, Ken is quick to point out there's a lot more to his job than a daily walk through the forest.

Ken came to work for the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources after obtaining his honors bachelor of science degree in forestry at Lakehead University in Thunder Bay in 1986. He was assigned to the 2,000 acres of

bush known as the Durham Regional Forest, where he had worked during his summers off while studying to become a forester.

The Durham Forest is one of many in which the ministry has entered into an agreement known as the agreement forest program. This arrangement sees governments at all levels cutting a deal

with the ministry whereby these valuable forest resources are maintained and cared for by that ministry. The ministry becomes the caretaker, and for its troubles gets to pocket the profits resulting from any tree thinning that may be required to guarantee the health of the forest as a whole. The agreement between the Durham Forest and the MNR is



67 years old.

The forest over which Ken presides is a combination of public and private land, with his job being to provide responsible forest management and protection regardless of ownership. And that's where the stress-free stereotype so often associated with his line of work can become just that - a myth.

Ken told me during an interview earlier this summer that he spends more time in his office on the phone, or in meetings with municipal representatives and developers, than he does patrolling the forest. In fact, he estimated he only gets to be in the forest an average of one or two days a week.

He just shrugged at the suggestion his job is one big love in with nature. It's not uncommon, he maintained, to find him in a high rise office tower locked in debate with a private land developer looking to spend some 40 or 50 million on a housing project. The bone of contention invariably involves just how many mature trees are going to have to come down in order to build the new neighborhood. Ken assured me it can be extremely stressful trying to convince the big money interests to leave 50 or 60 trees standing when they see these tall pines standing in the way of a couple of million dollars profit. Especially in these tough economic times.

But he assured me his was still an easy job to love, despite the constant struggles with those whose appreciation for the forest is tempered by the need to make a living.

While some people might question the need to meddle in the forest's natural evolution at all, Ken is insistent that a proper, responsible forest management program can actually improve the overall quality of a forest. Such a program can hurry the natural process of forest rejuvenation by weeding out trees that prevent sunlight from reaching many other trees, while at the same time providing much needed logging for the benefit of man.

Ken insisted his ministry is obligated to ensure that the forest will continue to live on and stay healthy for many years to come. And while the public may well see him as an easy going forest ranger of old, Ken is content to continue on as the advocate for a timeless resource in a changing world.

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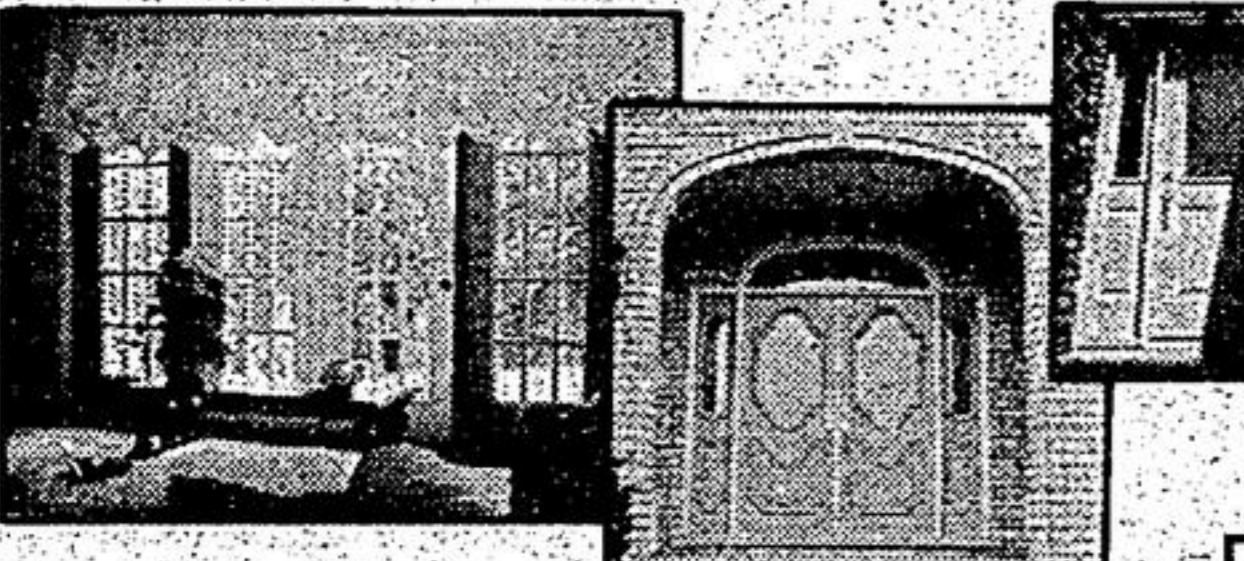
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### In the Kitchen

We each use between 30 and 40 litres of water daily in the kitchen. If each of us uses less water today, by the year 2011, Ontario will not need to use any more water than at present.

- Replace leaky tap washers. They cost about 25 cents. If leaks persist, call your plumber.
- Don't thaw frozen foods under running water. Defrost them in the refrigerator or the microwave.
- When hand washing dishes, don't wash under running water. Plug the drain and do a sinkful at once.
- Use garburetors less often, or switch to composters. Garburetors use 16 litres of water per minute.
- Buy dishwashers that have a water-and-energy-saving cycle. An ordinary dishwasher uses about 60 litres every cycle. Wash only full loads.

### Around the House


Each person in Ontario uses about 300 litres of water per day. That's enough to fill three full bathtubs - twice as much water as a person in Europe uses daily.

- Wash only full loads of laundry using cold water, whenever possible. Cold water is actually better for synthetic and delicate fabrics. For small loads, adjust the water level of your washer to the lowest setting.
- Do not let water run off from lawns on to the street or sidewalk.
- Use a broom to clean your driveway instead of wasting water.

### In the Bathroom

The bathroom is the biggest source of household water use. Leaking valves and faucets alone can waste more than 400 litres of water daily per household.

- A water-saving showerhead using 9.5 litres per minute or less can cut water use by more than 40 percent. It will pay for itself in as little as four months.
- Fill the tub with only as much water as you need - in most cases, one quarter full.
- Modify your existing toilet with store-bought toilet dams. They cost about \$7 and save about 4 litres with each flush.
- Replace your regular toilet with a water-efficient one that uses only six litres of water instead of up to 20. Toilet flushing accounts for 40% of household water use.
- Check for leaks. Add two drops of food colouring to the tank. Don't flush. After 15 minutes, colouring in the toilet bowl means there's a leak. Often you can correct this by fixing the flapper valve.



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