

Canada's leading charity using the law to protect and restore the environment.

## Ottawa natural gardens

**Status: Victory**



**An unreasonable bylaw banning natural gardens in Ottawa is being reformed thanks to the threat of legal action.**

Ecojustice went head-to-head with the City of Ottawa in the summer of 2009 when a local couple, Hank and Vera Jones, were issued a notice of violation for maintaining a garden with native plants that encouraged butterfly and bee activity. The notice instructed the Joneses to cut down their garden or risk having the city do the work and send them the bill.

Ecojustice made it clear that homeowners could not be forced into maintaining golf course-style lawns by threatening a court injunction if the City of Ottawa opted to mow the Jones' garden. The battle attracted province-wide media attention, and within days the City of Ottawa rescinded the notice of violation it had issued. The City also announced that bylaws would be reformed to accommodate similar gardens in the future.

Once a new bylaw is in place, green thumbs in the nation's capital will be able to maintain gardens that go beyond aesthetics to serve the environment as well as the senses.

Ecojustice staff:

Will Amos

*"As pesticide bans sweep the country, cities need to embrace natural looking gardens and stop punishing people with environmentally-friendly lawns."*

– Will Amos, uOttawa-Ecojustice clinic director

Our clients:

Henry and Vera Jones

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