

From: Cole Swanson **Sent:** January 22, 2026 9:24 AM

To: Connie Parent <C.Parent@northkawartha.ca>

Cc: Fynn Leitch

Subject: In gratitude to Edward Hilton

Good morning, Connie,

I hope this email finds you well. This past weekend, I opened my exhibition at the Art Gallery of Peterborough - *Lithic Life* - which is a survey of artworks, past and present, exploring connections between artistic practice and the land. The centrepiece of this show is a collaborative mural called *Communicating with Split, Remembering Connections*. I worked with artist/scholar William Kingfisher (Chippewas of Rama First Nation) to forage and refine natural pigments from Apsley, Ontario and in the township of North Kawarthas, applying the handmade colours to a roadside rock-blast on highway 620 near Chandos Lake. It has always been my ambition to create a temporary artwork that celebrates the amazing geological constitution of the land in that region, a place where I pass through often when visiting family north of Bancroft.

I am writing to let you know of the vital role that Edward Hilton – the Economic Development Officer under your charge – has played in making this creative concept into a reality. It was a very tricky endeavour to plan a highwayside artwork like this. From our earliest conversations, Edward showed incredible support in helping make this piece a reality, which included surveying possible sites ahead of our visits, acting as a community/township liaison, mobilizing support for the project, engaging the mayor, and attending the site when we were working to ensure the highest safety standards. As an artist who has worked in regions around the world and in unconventional contexts like this, I can honestly say that I have never had the pleasure of working with someone like Edward. He is kind, quick to act, and open-minded, and I am so grateful that our paths met through creative collaboration. While temporary, the piece has brought me into close relationship with the North Kawarthas land and community, and represents an important milestone in my artistic career.

If there is interest, you can check out the exhibition from now until March 29 at the Art Gallery of Peterborough. More information on the exhibition can be found here: <https://agp.on.ca/exhibitions/lithic-life/>

With gratitude,

Cole Swanson