



ABBOTT CONWAY

Beardmore buyer Abbott Conway leads fight to preserve wilderness

A belief that the people of Ontario have a right to reasonably accessible areas being set aside for wilderness recreation and that the government must provide clear policies to protect these areas and see these policies are carried out, has been earning Abbott Conway, a buyer for Beardmore and Company, a lot of ink in newspapers across the province for the past two years.

Protection of the wilderness values of Ontario's provincial parks from destruction by commercial or other uncontrolled interests is the concern of the Algonquin Wildlands League, of which Mr. Conway has been president, since its formation in the summer of 1968.

Five parks, Algonquin, Quetico, Lake Superior, Killarney and Missanabi are the main concerns of the league. The name Algonquin was chosen for the league because the park carries with it the image of these wilderness values. Algonquin Park has also been the one hardest hit by problems of intrusion by lumbering.

Have support

The 1500 member league has the support of well-known conservation groups like the Federation of Canadian Naturalists, the Conservation Council of Ontario and the Canadian Audubon Society. No director or member of the league is paid. It is strictly a voluntary group.

Conway, who journeys to Toronto from his home near Arkel at least one night a week for meetings, has travelled most of the main canoe routes in Algonquin Park and has been in all parts of the park except the southwest portion. Most of his excursions in the park were carried out, while he was president and general manager of Anglo-Canadian Leather Company Limited, in Huntsville. He came to Acton in 1963.

Lumbering is the principal problem in Algonquin Park, he says. "In the mid-fifties they started working with mechanized

equipment instead of bush gangs," Abbott explains. Roads were built wide enough for two trucks to pass each other at 40 miles per hour. Chain saws and timberjacks were brought in, all of which helped to disturb the normal peaceful surroundings of the park.

Concerned about further disturbances, the league submitted a plan for zoning of the park, in the spring of 1969. The result was a provisional master plan drawn up by the government. The plan pleased neither conservationist or lumber company officials. The league asked that 50 per cent of the land in the park, specifically the western half, be zoned primitive. At that time the government was prepared to zone only 5 per cent of the land primitive. Nor were they prepared to zone as primitive any land which already was under a timber licence.

"We have never said all logging in the park should be stopped," Conway points out. "What we've said is it should be phased out in the western half."

Terrain different

Terrain is quite different in the eastern half of the park than in the western half. Sandler soil in the eastern half is more inclined to produce pine and poplar trees. Different types of logging are carried on in each half. Communities like Pembroke and Huntsville depend heavily on the park's timber trade.

The league's position on logging in Quetico Provincial Park, near Thunder Bay has been somewhat more adamant.

"They had no business cutting in Quetico at all," Conway says.

According to the league president, logging operations there employ only about 225 persons. He feels arrangements could be made to relocate the workers. Until recently, 50 per cent of the park was under timber licence, but the government's withdrawal of 400 square miles from licence makes it possible for 70 per cent of the park to be zoned primitive.

Part of the problem with unnecessary logging is that researchers have not yet been able to find a commercial way to regenerate yellow birch.

"Yellow birch is not a vanishing species, but it's hard to find the venter yellow birch," Conway explains.

Although excessive lumbering is the principal problem endangering the wilderness of the parks, it isn't the only one. Commercial installations like restaurants and service stations that are locating close to the highway running through part of the park are not compatible with the league's idea of a wilderness zone.

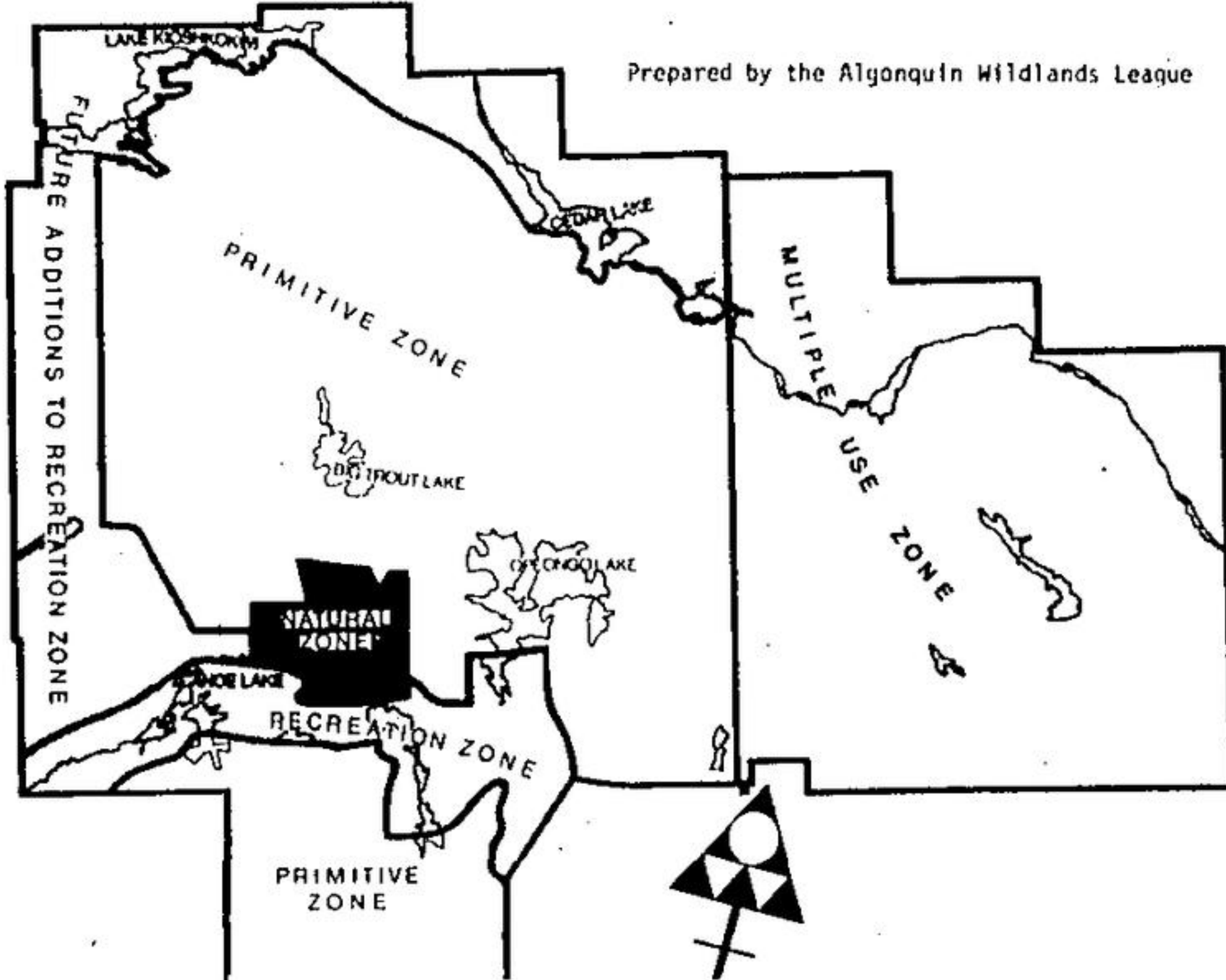
Promise solitude

According to Conway the government promises visitors to the park four things: quiet, solitude, enjoyment of natural surroundings and development of self-reliance. He considers the latter a very important part of the wilderness concept.

Conway points to an old adage "ill-adventure is the result of incompetence," to illustrate his point. Successful adventures into the wilderness where there are no services to use as crutches can be of great assistance psychologically in overcoming the tensions of urban life. Construction of roads in the park diminishes the opportunity for adventure.

Canoe routes in the park are becoming more crowded every year. "The run from Canoe Lake to Brent is just like Grand Central Station in the summertime," he says.

In August of 1968, a Toronto daily reported the discovery of a fishing party using high-powered motor boats, trucked into the wilderness area over logging roads. The party was discovered



ALGONQUIN WILDLANDS LEAGUE PROPOSAL FOR ZONING ALGONQUIN PARK

in Booth Lake about four miles inside the park boundary, 15 miles from Barry's Bay. In another instance, a canoe party came upon water skiers being towed by a 50 horsepower outboard motor.

Deer seldom seen

Deer that used to come right up to cars, near the old road are seldom seen near the new road. Since the Department of Lands and Forests abandoned its headquarters at Cache Lake, there is no one to feed them in the winter. The park's timber wolf population, the most southerly in Ontario, could also be in danger because of a group in Bancroft which recommends poisoning the wolves because they are killing the deer.

Accurate aerial surveys of the park's animal population cannot be taken, but the number of timber wolves is estimated at between 200 and 300. The park

covers an area of 3,000 square miles.

Request for zoning of certain parts of provincial parks as primitive is not unreasonable as far as the league is concerned. With the exception of Polar Bear provincial park and the district of Patricia, both of which are accessible only by air, the province's provincial parks represent less than 2 per cent of Ontario's total land mass.

The league is not against campers, it's merely interested in preserving portions of parks as wilderness. Members would like to see development of satellite parks for campers, outside of the wilderness zone.

With so many organizations working towards preservation of parks, why is it necessary to form another group, some ask. League members' feeling is that other societies cover such a broad field of conservation

problems that their energies are of necessity spread over a vast geographic area and a wide range of interests. There is a need, they feel, for a special group to focus the views of those who seek their recreation back from the roads on the wilderness trails and waterways of Ontario.

During his term as president, Abbott has been interviewed on CBC television, and on radio by Betty Kennedy and John Bradshaw. The league and Algonquin Park were also discussed on Joe Forster's open-line show broadcast over station CHIN.

The league intends to continue its efforts towards having a large part of the western half of the park zoned primitive and is ready to enlist new members. Membership fee is \$2. The league's mailing address is The Algonquin Wildlands League, Box 114, Postal Station Q, Toronto.

Chamber plans several events

Second meeting of the new executive of the Acton Chamber of Commerce discussed the Citizen of the Year award, town appearance and organizing an enlarged annual sportsmen's show, among other items of business.

Roy Goodwin is president with past president John Shadbolt, 1st vice Paul Nielsen and second vice Alan Eastwood. Treasurer is Chester Anderson, secretary Donald McDonald and directors are John Secord, John Rol, Fred Gordon, Don Dupuis, Kevin Conroy, Ron McKnight, Syd Lamb and Mike DeJong.

The civic committee has requested interested people begin considering their choice for Citizen of the Year and reasons for their selection. The Chamber is hopeful there will be keen interest in the function, anticipating heavy mail in the next few weeks. All correspondence should be sent to Acton Chamber of Commerce. Social committee chairman Alan Eastwood is involved in organizing the Citizen of the Year

dance which will take place Saturday, April 24. The Shaynes, Acton's popular dance group, have been engaged to play for the event. Tickets are available through the executive.

The Chamber hopes to form a Beauty Acton committee which would be concerned with the general appearance of the town on an all year round basis and would include looking after Christmas lighting.

Show success
The success of last year's sportsmen's show has spurred members into hopes the event will be held annually.

John Shadbolt told the Chamber he has obtained the co-operation of Parks Board again regarding use of the park, lake and arena for a two or three day event. He has also written to numerous organizations in town who assisted at last year's show requesting their help again.

The Labor Day weekend is favored for the show and the Chamber executive was enthused that with many events already booked they could look forward to a full weekend of outdoor activities.

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Georgetown

Why campground stall asks Hegedus family ?

Esquesing's holding by-law — hailed by many — is hardly being touted by the Hegedus family of R.R. 1, Georgetown.

They have acquired the franchise for a Kampgrounds of America (KOA) tourist campground which they propose to operate on their property on the west half of Lot 28, Concession 7, in Esquesing. The property is located adjacent to and north-east of the Cedar Springs Motel.

Unless the Hegedus family can get plans under construction by March 1, 1971, they will be left off the KOA directory which goes to over one million American campers and practically assures the success of the operation. The franchise cost them \$10,000.

They wrote and appeared before Esquesing council with plans for their enterprise on January 11 and asked for a permit to operate their campground. According to Zoltan Hegedus councillors verbally approved establishment of the campground but so far they have no permit.

The only reason they can see for reluctance to grant them a permit is they fail to conform to the land holding by-law. But Mr. Hegedus says their plans correspond with the Official Plan as it is being proposed and with the actual growth potential of the existing area.

They pointed this out in a letter asking for an amendment to by-law 29-69 — the controversial by-law over which the Ontario Municipal Board is now pondering following a hearing Thursday, February 11.

Says re-apply
At the hearing, O.M.B. chairman David Jamieson suggested the Hegedus' refer

organized" establishment they say they wish to develop.

They point out in the letter that the land they propose to develop has never been used for an agricultural purpose since most of it is "unempt, bush, swampy, infertile land." They feel development they make on the land will be a decided improvement.

Area benefit

The Hegedus family also point to statistics issued by the Ontario Department of Tourism forecasting 1,500,000 campers in Ontario. They feel this area would benefit from the tourists

who would use their campground and take in local attractions.

Their franchise, which expires July 1, unless operating, offers restrooms, showers, laundry facilities, recreation room, and a place to buy groceries. The campground will have "spacious" sites, picnic tables and fireplaces, complete utilities, swimming pool, playground area and mini-golf area.

They can't understand why anyone would object to this type of operation. They are also wondering why they are being stalled on a project they feel does not contravene any existing or intended by-law in the Township of Esquesing.

