

Environment

Wilderness an area that must be protected

By BARBARA HALSALL
Endangered Species

A brochure from the World Wildlife Fund says, "We think of Canada as a land of limitless wilderness. But it is not. Human activity is quickly chipping away at the remaining wild places that once made up so much of our landscape.

If we don't act now to save our wildlands and wildwaters, we will lose the opportunity to do so within the next 10 years."

The brochure gives some examples of what is happening to wilderness in Canada: 90% of Ontario's Carolinian forests have been lost; less than 1% of the original tall-grass prairie remains, making this the most endangered habitat in Canada; only small remnants of old growth Atlantic hardwood forests survive uncut; the proposed James Bay II hydroelectric development in Quebec will flood an area the size of Lake Ontario.

In 1989 the WWF launched their Endangered Spaces campaign as



a ten year initiative designed to ensure that each of Canada's 350 natural regions is represented by a park or other protected area by the year 2000. I am including their mission statement, the Canadian Wilderness Charter. It is worth reading. They suggest that individuals can: sign the Canadian Wilderness Charter, make a donation to the World Wildlife Fund and join a local group working to save Endangered Spaces in your area. WWF 1-800-387-8660.

P.O.W.E.R. is working to protect an endangered area, the Niagara Escarpment. P.O.W.E.R. already has spent

lawyers' fees on six days of a hearing to amend the Niagara Escarpment Act so that waste disposal will no longer be a permitted utility.

The hearing for that amendment (no. 52) will resume on April 10, 1991 at the Halton Hills Civic Center in Georgetown.

To help, you can join P.O.W.E.R. and attend the hearing to save the escarpment. If the Acton Quarry becomes a garbage dump, a hike on the Bruce Trail could be a walk from one garbage dump to the next.

THE CANADIAN WILDERNESS CHARTER

1. Whereas humankind is but

one of millions of species sharing planet Earth and whereas the future of the Earth is severely threatened by the activities of this single species,

2. Whereas our planet has already lost much of its former wilderness character, thereby endangering many species and ecosystems,

3. Whereas Canadians still have the opportunity to complete a network of protected areas representing the biological diversity of our country,

4. Whereas Canada's remaining wild places, be they land or water, merit protection for their inherent value,

5. Whereas, the protection of wilderness also meets an intrinsic human need for spiritual rekindling and artistic inspiration,

6. Whereas Canada's once vast wilderness had deeply shaped the national identity and continues to profoundly influence how we view ourselves as Canadians,

7. Whereas Canada's aboriginal peoples hold deep and direct ties to wilderness areas throughout Canada and seek to maintain options for traditional wilderness use,

8. Whereas protected areas can serve a variety of purposes including: a) preserving a genetic reservoir of wild plants and animals for future use and appreciation by citizens of Canada

and the world, b) producing economic benefits from environmentally sensitive tourism, c) offering opportunities for research and environmental education,

9. Whereas the opportunity to complete a national network of protected areas must be grasped and acted upon during the next ten years or be lost,

WE AGREE AND URGE:

1. That governments, industries, environmental groups and individual Canadians commit themselves to a national effort to establish at least one representative protected area in each of the natural regions of Canada by the year 2000,

2. That the total area thereby protected comprise at least 12% of the lands and waters of Canada as recommended in the World Commission on Environment and Development's report,

OUR COMMON FUTURE

3. That public and private agencies at international, national, provincial, territorial and local levels rigorously monitor progress toward meeting these goals in Canada and ensure that they are fully achieved, and

4. That federal, provincial and territorial government conservation agencies on behalf of all Canadians develop action plans by 1990 for achieving these goals by the year 2000.

You can make a difference!

P.O.W.E.R. says 'nuts' to dump

Local environmental group Protect Our Water Environmental Resources (POWER) is determined to ensure the provincial government doesn't forget that

as far as it's concerned the Niagara Escarpment is no place for a dump.

To ensure the New Democratic Party doesn't have a case of amnesia when it comes to POWER's concerns, the group's President, Barbara Halsall, presented each of the provincial government's cabinet ministers with a jar of nuts labelled "Escarpment Dumps Are Nuts," at the NDP convention held in Toronto this past weekend.

Ms. Halsall said Monday the group is hopeful the jar will jolt the NDP cabinet's collective memory when the province considers the viability of a proposal by Milton-based Reclamation Systems Incorporated (RSI) to convert the Acton quarry into a landfill.

Saying there are so many environmental issues before the provincial government, POWER wants to ensure that its concerns don't get lost in the shuffle, said Ms. Halsall.

Ms. Halsall wants the government to "just say no" to the RSI proposal now, instead of allowing it to proceed through the remaining part of the Environmental Assessment Act process.

She justifies her position citing a NDP communique dated March 29, 1990 that the now Environment Minister Ruth Grier wrote "I assume that if the Escarpment is a Biosphere Reserve (which it is) you will have no further need to worry about quarries and garbage dumps."

"If it was wrong to dump garbage on the Escarpment before the election it should also be wrong now," said Ms. Halsall.

Under the Environmental Assessment Act, Ms. Grier is expected to review government agency comments on the RSI proposal at the end of this month, said Ms. Halsall. The Minister is then expected to call a 30 day public comment period and Ms. Halsall is hoping all Halton Hills residents will write letters opposing the dump.

ECOLINE
by Catherine Farley

Caring for Our Land

BUYING GREEN
Some consumer items that are less harmful to the environment are identified with a government logo:

Products include:
paints, paper,
batteries,
motor oil,
cloth diapers...
and soon
laundry and
dish detergents.

Environmental and performance standards must be met - such as recycled content, non-toxicity, biodegradability, and durability.

Green-labelled products are marketed by some companies, but these do not necessarily meet objective standards.

Sophie the wise Whale says:
"If you have to buy...
first look for the logo!"

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877-2217

73 MAIN ST. S. DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN

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- prizes
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- barbeques, and

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