

ALGONQUIN PARK THREATENED

Algonquin Park. Mention the name and it conjures up images of mist-covered lakes with tall white pines along the shores, moose browsing on the water lilies in a winding stream, and the howl of wolves echoing amongst the hills. Here is a place that is embedded in the Canadian psyche; a place of such beautiful scenery that it inspired the famous paintings of the Group of Seven. A place that every year attracts thousands of campers and canoeists from all over the world.

Welcome to the oldest provincial park in Ontario and one of the largest parks in Canada. Located on the southern edge of the Canadian Shield between Georgian Bay and the Ottawa River, Algonquin Park covers 7,571 square kilometres of rolling hills, rushing rivers, and rich wetlands.

Most Canadians believe parks are supposed to be areas of protection where wildlife may live free from the impact of humans. Unfortunately, very little of Algonquin is actually protected: 75% of the park is available to logging and there's

even hunting in the park! If that's not enough, recreational overuse, regional stresses, and increased Native access compound the problems which together present a considerable threat to Algonquin's natural integrity. If something is not done soon, Algonquin's natural ecosystem may not survive the next one hundred years.

The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS) is leading the way in pushing for increased protection, and with your help we can succeed. For over two decades, the Wildlands League chapter and the Ottawa/Hull chapter of CPAWS have been fighting for the wild in Algonquin. With your help we can make Algonquin's 1993 centennial something to celebrate. Tax-creditable donations are most welcome and can be made to: CPAWS, Wildlands League Chapter, Algonquin Park Campaign, 169 Bloor Street East, #1335, Toronto, M4W 1B9.

KEEPING IT CLEAN: BROWNBAGGING

It is painfully evident that the lands and waters of canoe country everywhere are increasingly being degraded because of the shortsighted way in which many paddlers and other visitors treat the waste products of their bodies: feces and urine. Ever-growing numbers of people spread ever-growing amounts of the stuff around, together with countless sheets of eyesore-white toilet paper that takes years to decompose, even if it were buried.

And in depressingly many cases the paper is not buried at all, just left flying around in the bush. What a disgusting result of thoughtless, ignorant, just plain stupid behavior by nature "lovers" who don't give a damn for whatever reason.

But everybody should give a damn, a whole lot of damns, in fact. Of all the problems facing our canoe country, the worst one is pollution caused by too many people producing, and not properly taking care of, too much waste and garbage.

This obviously is not an easy problem to solve, demanding education, understanding, and commitment. Although the Wilderness Canoe Association does not have a mandate to provide formal education in any subject related to the outdoors, there is a way in which we can try to help lessen the problem. This is because all members have one thing in common: we're all readers of our journal *Nastawgan*. I therefore invite anybody with useful ideas about the correct treatment of human waste and garbage to write a short note presenting discussions of new and also old ideas on this important subject. Be as honest and descriptive as you need to be in writing about your idea. False modesty and "polite" language for the sake of not offending sensitive souls does not have a place in our journal. What we need is a clean

environment and that can only be achieved through honesty, sacrifice, hard work, and the killing of taboos.



As a modest beginning of this series of ideas I offer the following on *brownbagging*: Do not bury the soiled toilet paper together with the feces (or shit, if you agree with the reasoning discussed in that marvellous little book *How to Shit in the Woods*, see Reviews on page 24), but collect it in a small brown paper bag (or a big paper bag if yours is a group of several people). At the end of the day, the bag plus contents is then burned in the campfire, leaving Mother Earth free from obnoxious sheets of toilet paper. Good for you. Good for nature.

Toni Harting