

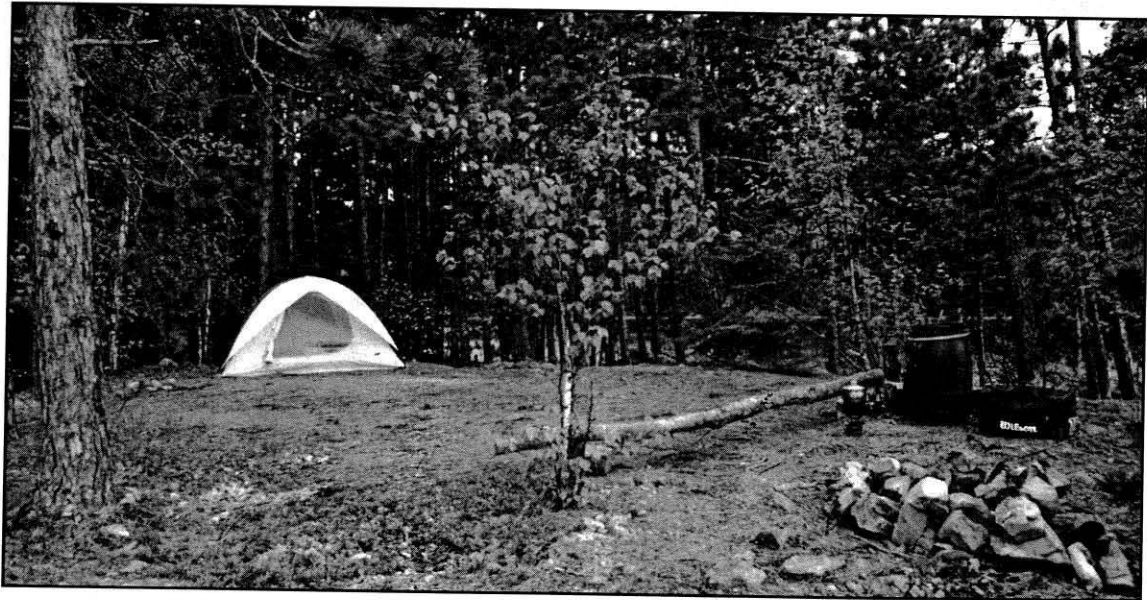
combined with the bitterly cold water had me more than slightly intimidated.

After breakfast I fished for a while and then took a walk up alongside the stream to take some pictures of the falls and emerging spring flowers. By 11:30 I was bored stiff with that, so I took another walk up the portage to Hyphen lake, and as I neared the top of the hill heard voices. They belonged to a man and his young son who were celebrating the boy's birthday with a canoe trip. I helped them carry a pack down the hill to my campsite where we talked as we lunched together. They were under a deadline and must not only cross Ten Mile today but fight this wind all the way back up Dunlop.

After lunch they headed out but had to travel a long way up the lake before they could find water calm enough to make the crossing. After about an hour they were across and gone from view, leaving me alone to ponder the question: if they can do it, why can't I? The answer I gave myself was two fold — every paddle stroke they took brought them into calmer water whereas I had to travel further down the lake where the wind would have a greater distance to work on the water and brew up mis-

By 2:30 I was in the narrows near the western end of the lake and now getting some shelter from the wind. At the entrance to the narrows, there is a cottage followed shortly by Ten Mile Lake Lodge. There are cabins to rent here as well as assistance if needed.

The 445-metre portage to Ezma Lake is found on the right-hand side of the bay just past the Lodge. This is a good but steep path and one of the locals has even nailed a sign to a tree that says "Eagle Pass." I soon had the boat and all the gear over and because of my late start, I decided to camp on this lake. The hills surrounding Ezma sheltered me from the worst of the wind, so it was an easy paddle down the lake to look for a campsite. There are several excellent sites on this lake and I picked a sheltered one near the portage into Astonish Lake at the north end of the lake. By 8 p.m. I was fed, changed into warm dry clothes, and in my tent doing some reading and writing. The wind was dying down, but it was still cloudy with a foggy rain — I imagined that this was just what the inside of a cloud must be like. I drifted off to sleep hoping that this weather would break tomorrow.



chief; and besides — I was paddling solo and as such had only half the "horsepower" to propel and control the boat. By 1:30 I sensed that the wind was quieting down a bit so decided to quickly pack up and make the run down the lake, staying real close to shore. That way if I dumped I would be able to get out of the water quickly. The trip went pretty much as expected with the only problems coming when I had to round a few points that forced the boat to run parallel to the waves. There was a zone in which the waves rebounding from the shore largely cancelled out the worst of the incoming ones and by staying within this zone, I got by without incident. About a kilometre west of last night's camp, there are two great campsites. These would be ideal for groups as they have room for many tents.

Wednesday I must thrive on disappointment. Morning brought stronger winds and intermittent driving rain that even whipped this small, sheltered lake into whitecaps. This weather presented no physical problems for me as I was well equipped with quality gear and proper clothing, but it did play hell with my schedule though. The best way, of course, to deal with a schedule in the back country is not to have one, but sometimes the real world intrudes (more on this later). By noon the lake had settled down enough for me to make the crossing to the portage to Swamp Lake.

There are two carries from Ezma to Swamp Lake — a 200-metre one at the south end of the lake and the one just across from me near the lake's northern end. This one is slightly longer at 230 metres and it took me only a few