

A Heritage of Wild Rivers

E. Glenn Carls

Photos: George Luste

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Look at a map of Canada, and you think water. The great oceans and bays and the multitude of inland lakes catch your eye. Look closer and you see that they are stitched together by a magnificent arabesque of rivers and streams. Most are anonymous components of a continental system that hauls water to the sea, but all are part of Canada's priceless heritage of wild rivers.

It is difficult to say why rivers are so highly valued for wilderness recreation. For those of us who are canoeists or kayakers, the attraction to moving water is visceral. We respond to it naturally and intuitively. But we would be hard pressed to explain in a completely rational way why some of us submit freely and repeatedly to the stress and violence of white water. Neither can we say, in terms that are logically satisfying, what it means to sit alone on a rocky spit of Canadian Shield and listen to the wailing of a loon.

We may not know why people use wild rivers for recreation, but we do know that more of them are doing it. In fact, the *total* demand for wilderness rivers is becoming larger and more diverse — for generation of hydro-electric power, for transportation, impoundment for domestic water supply, diversion for agricultural use, and for recreation. Despite this nation's plentiful supply of fresh surface waters, it is becoming increasingly difficult to canoe in solitude on an unaltered Canadian river.

In August, 1976, a study team from the University of Waterloo monitored the recreational use of three northern Ontario rivers — the Missinaibi, the Mattagami, and the Moose. Data collected on that trip have been used to develop a computer simulation model capable of evaluating various conditions of use and test alternative management practices. In addition, that experience and previous canoe trips have helped to form some impressions of wild river management for recreation in the future.

The Alteration of Rivers

The camp, from which survey operations were conducted, was located on the upstream point of Moose River island. From that vantage point it was possible to observe and in many cases interview canoe parties arriving down-river from the Missinaibi and the Mattagami (the Moose is formed by the confluence of the two rivers). Extending upstream from the tip of the island was a gravel bar, more or less dry except for a shallow, flowing wash that separated bar from island. This little "brook" was mostly undistinguished except for the rather surprising fact that it alternately, and regularly, flooded and dried up. The site was too far upstream to expect tidal influences from James Bay and the pattern of fluctuations was too regular for the effects of upstream rainfall. The change in water level was being caused, rather, by the periodic release of impounded waters of the Mattagami River.

A HERITAGE OF WILD RIVERS



Without arguing here the relative social and economic merits of damming for power or preserving for recreation, it can be simply pointed out that any alteration in the river environment — bridges, dams, roads, mining and logging operations, cabins, campsites — will also change, subtly or profoundly, both the ecology of the river and the nature of potential recreation experiences. On rivers like the Mattagami, damming produces characteristic changes in the canoeing environment. On the upstream side, a reservoir of impounded water produces flat-water canoeing conditions that are more akin to lakes than rivers. Downriver, the stream bed is susceptible to recurrent periods of flooding and drainage as water is discharged from the reservoir. At low water level, canoers on the Mattagami reported boulder fields (formerly rapids) that required either a portage or periods of intermittent paddling and wading. Fish were seen stranded in low water pools, and camps pitched at water's edge were sometimes left high and dry.

In addition to these more tangible effects on recreation activity, there is also the inevitable aesthetic infringement of dams, hydro facilities, and other man-induced changes on the wilderness experience. Research has shown, in general, that landscape scenes are more preferred for outdoor recreation when they contain a minimum of people and of man-made structures.¹ For some people the solution is to find another, more pristine river that fulfills their wilderness expectations. Rivers are a finite resource, however, and in many of the more densely populated parts of the country that is no longer a realistic choice.

Recreation Demand

North Americans have an outdoor history and tradition that fires their interest in outdoor recreation, especially the wilderness forms of activity. We also have the wherewithal to participate — high average incomes, increased leisure, and the highest level of mobility in the world. In addition, the population is growing and there are simply more of us. As a result, the total demand for outdoor recreation areas and services has been rising steadily since World War II, and the use of most existing resources has become more intense. In many places, environmental and social carrying capacity limits have already been exceeded, with a consequent reduction in the quality of the resource and the recreation experience.

On the Moose River, the impression was not one of too much use or overcrowding. For the eight day observation period, a total of seventeen separate canoe parties and seventy-two participants was counted. On the average, these figures amount to about two groups and nine canoers per day.

Statistics of this kind can be deceptive, however, and a more realistic view of use patterns is given by the distribution of observation times. For example, on August sixth, seventh, and ninth, only one canoe party was counted for each of the three days. For all practical purposes, each of these groups had the river to itself. It is unlikely that they had any direct contact with other groups. In contrast, three separate parties were literally canoeing the river together on August eighth. For them the river was very crowded.

MOOSE RIVER CANOE PARTIES

August 3-10, 1977

| Party Number | Date Observed | Time Observed | Number of Canoes | Number of Participants |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | August 3, 1976 | 11:40 A.M. | 1 | 2 |
| 2 | " | 8:00 P.M. | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | August 4, 1976 | 11:00 A.M. | 5 | 10 |
| 4 | " | 2:30 P.M. | 2 | 6 |
| 5 | " | 3:30 P.M. | 1 | 2 |
| 6 | August 5, 1976 | 12:00 Noon | 1 | 2 |
| 7 | " | 12:15 P.M. | 1 | 2 |
| 8 | " | 1:05 P.M. | 1 | 2 |
| 9 | August 6, 1976 | 9:35 A.M. | 7 | 13 |
| 10 | August 7, 1976 | 3:30 P.M. | 1 | 2 |
| 11 | August 8, 1976 | 10:15 A.M. | 2 | 4 |
| 12 | " | 10:15 A.M. | 2 | 4 |
| 13 | " | 10:25 A.M. | 1 | 4 |
| 14 | " | 2:00 P.M. | 2 | 5 |
| 15 | August 9, 1976 | 12:00 Noon | 2 | 5 |
| 16 | August 10, 1976 | 3:20 P.M. | 3 | 6 |
| 17 | " | 5:00 P.M. | 1 | 2 |
| TOTAL | | | 34 | 72 |

Of all the canoe parties interviewed, only one indicated no contacts with other groups. All the others reported some form of encounter, either by passing other groups, being passed, or sharing campsites. In general, there seemed to be no particular dissatisfaction with these conditions, and in fact, there was a high level of camaraderie that is familiar to most wilderness travelers. It is clear, however, that an increase in total use will also increase the number and frequency of encounters. Already, at some of the more popular areas for canoeing, like Algonquin and Quetico provincial parks, the number of groups present during peak periods of use has led to a deterioration of campsites and a reduction of opportunities for an uncrowded wilderness trip. With easier access to more remote regions and growing interest in backcountry recreation, similar conditions are certain to develop as the use of relatively isolated rivers continues to grow.

About half the canoe groups interviewed in the Moose River survey were from Ontario, predominantly southern Ontario, and about half were from the United States. They came from locations as widely separated as Indiana and Maine. These represent the substantial travel investments that people are willing to make for access to wilderness rivers, and the pressures that are likely to develop as recreational rivers are "discovered".

The Wild River Traveler

There was a time when one could assume a fairly high level of skill in canoeing and woodcraft from those who assembled a proper outfit and traveled remote wilderness rivers. A satisfying number of these people are still found. Their gear shows the battered mellowness of long use, and their demeanor shows a comfortable familiarity with the wilderness environment. However, in this day of freeze-dried food, canoes that are virtually indestructible, an unpeppable number of gadgets, and wilderness at-

titudes that are sometimes more romantic than practical, the assumption of skill can no longer be made.

An increasing number of people who use wilderness rivers, and other backcountry resources, are ill-prepared to take full advantage of their trip. Although figures on this variable were not kept, a fair estimate is that about a third of those observed in the Moose River study were in this group. Their lack of knowledge and skill created potential dangers to themselves, their companions, and the environment. Lost outfits and personal injuries are already plentiful, and it is safe to predict that the number of accidents will grow as more people with less experience use wild rivers for recreation. In many cases, their judgment and skill in selecting equipment and avoiding emergency situations is inadequate for the conditions that they find.

In contrast, it is encouraging to find groups of young people associated with camps and other organized groups using wild rivers. For the most part, they are well-prepared and led by capable adult leaders. Outdoor programs of this kind result in many benefits, including a more intelligent use of wilderness resources and more rewarding personal experiences.

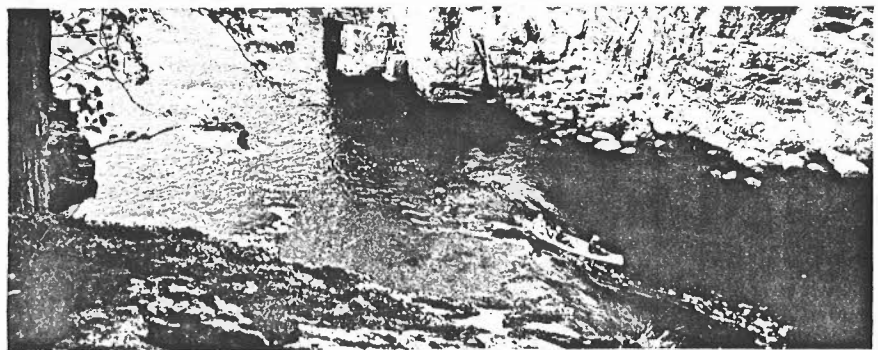
Recreational Management of Wild Rivers

There is a genuine lack of development on rivers like the Missinaibi.² There are portage trails, of course, but most of these were cut long ago by Indians and Voyageurs. Portage markers, where they exist, are posted for safety and do little to disrupt the wilderness atmosphere. There are also a few well-worn, traditional campsites at places like famous Thunderhouse Falls. Beyond these few alterations by the Ministry of Natural Resources and the canoers themselves, the traveler is left to his own resources.

Recreation resource managers in the future will have to resist the temptation to "develop" wild rivers. In some places where use pressures are more intense, it may be necessary to selectively "harden" the site by designating camping areas and building sanitation facilities. These techniques should be used sparingly, however, to minimize their effect on the wilderness experience.

From a wider perspective, the problem of wilderness management is often one of too many people and too few areas. New areas, and access to them, are needed to distribute and dilute the use load to more acceptable levels of biological and social tolerance. In some of the more popular or environmentally sensitive areas, it may be necessary to impose use restrictions. As illustrated earlier, the problem may not be total use but patterns of use that concentrate participation in certain times and places.

Finally, there is need to establish a suitable system of national and provincial wild rivers. The federal and provincial governments, along with several important citizen organizations, are making important moves in that direction.³ But these efforts are coming none too soon. Development programs like Quebec's massive James Bay project continue to shorten the time remaining for positive action. They also foretell the future of many major river systems unless such action is taken. Decisions made in the next few years will largely determine the total future of wilderness recreation opportunities and the will to maintain the heritage of Canadian wild rivers.



Hey! There's a Bear Out There

Ed O'Connor

Several years ago we had a young couple on their first wilderness canoe trip with us (for 1 day) who were quite let down because they "knew there was wildlife about, if we'd only show them where to look". The fact is, they did discover some wildlife when the chap accidentally kicked a hornet's nest - but I don't think it was what they had in mind. Regretably, we explained, wildlife just doesn't pop up when you want it or expect it and you could spend a week in the bush and see nothing of any consequence - or you could see enough in an hour to last you a lifetime. The following are just a few of the many wildlife 'adventures' we've had on canoe trips in the bush country.

The York River was clothed in darkness when one of the girls decided her teeth needed cleaning and passed by our campfire on her way to the river. In a few seconds she was back, breathless and visibly shaken. "There's something snorting and thrashing about down there," she told us. We found nothing there, at the river, and put it down in our minds as an over-worked imagination.

Next morning, while the others still slept, three of us launched a canoe quietly and eased our way downriver. Before we'd gone ten yards a slight sound drew our attention toward shore where two whiskered faces were turned in our direction. Otter. One poked his head out of the water to stare big-eyed at us, while the other - on the log - merely gave us a casual glance before going back to crunching his breakfast, as we drifted by. A splash behind us brought our heads 'round to see two more otter, swimming ten feet away from us. During the next hour we counted nine otter and five beaver, sighted at close range and showing little alarm at our presence. We even tried to herd a beaver back toward camp for the others to see, with him absolutely refusing to dive to escape - until he tired of our fun and games. Later, after breakfast, we again launched canoes and headed up a nearby creek where we startled three deer into flight. What a day - and me without a camera.

It was while we were setting up the tents, on the shore of Biggar Lake, northwest Algonquin, that I discovered movement in the tall grass. Puzzled, I watched to see what would come out, when two young birds in dark grey colour struggled their way clear. I noted them, then went on with the chores - but we were to learn over the next week that this pair was not to be ignored. They forever followed in our footsteps and it took us a while to discover they were after the insects we disturbed in walking - and that they, indeed, were a pair of young grey jays, probably freshly booted out of the nest. It got so bad we didn't dare take a backward step without looking behind first to see if they were clear. They even tried to follow us into the tents and, here, we drew the line. How can you be firm with a bird that hops into the canoe, when you go for a paddle, and how do you explain to him that he's a bird - not a people? I still don't know whether to blame them or the mice for the midnight slides on our tent. I'd just start to doze off when I'd hear this "thump - swish" about every few minutes. Go on home, you brats. I'm tired!

It was on about the second or third night the bear came to visit. Mike was already dead to the world on his side of the tent and I wasn't far off it when the noise started that brought me up sharply to one elbow. Snuffling and grunting, thankfully on Mike's side of the tent, but high up on the tent. That was no coon! Next moment, there was a loud snort about six inches from my ear, "whoosh" - and there was almost one more camper on his way to the moon. Now, I can think of at least a hundred places I'd rather be than in a zippered up tent, with a bear outside. Mike slept on,

while I debated whether to dig a hole in the floor or merely run through the tent wall. Should I growl at him? God, no! He'd probably think it was another bear giving a challenge and there wasn't room for both of us in here. I settled it with a loud cough. Blessed silence followed. Next morning I hid a grin when my sister told me of a bear visiting her tent. Sorry about that, Marg. I should have coughed louder.

That night was one of those nights you see in the horror movies - with a full moon streaked with black ribbons of cloud but still managing to lay a path of gold across the bay, in front of our camp. "Let's try a wolf howl," someone suggested and Mike seized on the idea, adding his own to give a howl out in the canoe where he'd get the best echo off the nearby hills. They pushed off in a canoe, while the rest of us waited on shore for the results.

"O-o-o-o-w-w-w", the sound of Mike's howl bounced off the hills. Even before the last echo faded there was an explosion of excited barking, across the lake - then more further down - then a long howl of a lone wolf, just over the bay, and, lastly, a second lone howl up behind our camp. The whole thing lasted only minutes - but it was enough. It was fifteen minutes before we could bring ourselves to talk over a whisper. Further attempts proved fruitless and I wondered if the pack thought Mike's howl came from the lone hunter and he'd howled back "I didn't say anything. What are you all yapping about?"

To add further proof to our 'bear story', John came face to face with the bear, on the hill behind our camp one night. Needless to say, the meeting was too much for the bear, who'd already been coughed at by a tent, and he never came back.

In the early morning, under a sun filled sky, we boarded canoes and began the paddle down North Tea Lake toward Biggar Lake - taking our time and just enjoying the scenery and the soft murmur of the water under the keel.

The lake began to narrow down, as we approached the first of three portages to Biggar, and I pulled over to avoid a large rock in the bay. Some slight movement drew my attention toward the top of the rock, to see a whiskered face peering down at our approach. Closer now and the face was gone but, as we came 'round the rock, there were three of them - otters - gazing in our direction from the water, evidently young and nervous of our approach.

We eased off on the paddles trying to hold back the canoes against the push of the wind, so as not to panic the youngsters. The canoes kept moving ahead, though, and the otters staying right in our path - sometimes diving, then coming up to bump heads in their nervousness. It looked so funny, one was tempted to chuckle - but we had no wish to take them too far away from their parents, who must be nearby. At last we managed to get to one side and bypass them. A bit further on we decided to pull into the shore for a bit of lunch.

Seated on the driftwood lining the shore, we were suddenly startled by loud snorting out in the bay. An adult otter swam by - evidently one of the parents, looking for the 'terrible trio' who were probably cowering along the shore somewhere, after their experience with us. It was a narrow bay and I had no doubt she'd find them before long. I just hope her snorting wasn't her low opinion of canoeists - but in truth, the otter has a membrane which closes off their nostrils, when diving and swimming below the surface. When they surface they have to snort like this to clear their nostrils again.

We could fill a book on these wildlife experiences and each one of them is like the 'frosting on the cake' of travel through bush country. The reading of it isn't the same though. Get out and experience it for yourself



EDITORIAL

LIVING ON INDIAN TIME

This issue is about three weeks late and I have no heavy thoughts for an editorial. Those of us who put the paper together have been living on "Indian time", heeding the beckoning call of singing rapids in rivers swollen by the run off of heavy winter snows, keeping our priorities straight and putting canoeing ahead of publishing deadlines.

As Ed O'Connor points out in his article on wildlife experiences on some of his canoe

trips, reading about it is not the same. You have to get out and experience it yourself. This also holds for writing about canoeing. It can't compare with being out on the river, paddle in hand, bucking canoe under tightly braced knees.

Let's all get out and experience the back-country first hand this summer. Shoulder the pack and heft the paddle. Throw away the watch, tear up the schedules and forget deadlines. Live on Indian time and head off into your own special wilderness.

news briefs

FALL GENERAL MEETING

The fall general meeting of the WCA will be held September 16 in the Colborne area. Details will be mailed to members in August.

CONSTITUTIONAL MEETING

As a result of the work to incorporate the WCA a number of substantial changes are required in our constitution. The executive has called a special meeting for September 9 (at a location yet to be determined) to consider these changes and hopefully to ratify a new constitution. Any member interested can obtain a copy of the proposed constitution by contacting either Cam Salsbury or Gord Fenwick.

NORTHERN ONTARIO CANOE TRIP

Experienced canoeists interested in a 3 to 4 week trip in northern Ontario, leaving Toronto on August 22, should contact Bill Templeman, 569 Christie St., Toronto M6G 3E4, or call him at (416) 925-2934.

NEW ALGONQUIN PARK POLICY

The MNR has instituted a new policy with respect to interior camping permits this year. It is now possible to obtain permits by reservation. Forty percent of permits will be available this way, with the remaining 60% being available on a first come - first served basis. Reservations can be made with the Park Superintendent.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE

Our next issue will be coming out in early September. Anyone with articles, trip reports, photographs etc. to submit should send them to the editor no later than August 20.

APOLOGY

Due to an oversight in laying out the last issue the article "Maps and Wilderness Canoeing" was not credited to the Topological Survey of Canada from whose brochure it was taken. Our apologies to the good people in Ottawa who let us use the piece.

Members interested in obtaining the brochure (which includes a map index for the 1:250 000 scale maps) can do so by writing to the Canada Map Office, 615 Booth Street, Ottawa K1A 0E9 and asking for brochure MCR 107. It comes free of charge.

SPORTSMEN'S SHOW

Once again the WCA had a very successful booth at the Sportsmen's Show in Toronto. The executive would like to thank the following members who helped to set up and staff the booth: Eric Arthurs, Anneke and Dave Auger, Brian Back, Sandie Barnard, Ken and Mike Brailsford, Claire Brigden, Barry Brown, Sandy Bruchovsky, Rob Butler, Sandy Button, Norm Coombe, John Cross, Mary Jo Cullen, Glenn Davy, Diana Dennis, Gord Fenwick, Greg Gaglione, Finn Hansen, Toni Harting, Paul Jones, Bill King, George Luste, Stewart McIlwraith, Bill McKenny, Bill and Rita Ness, Rick Paleske, Sandy Richardson, Cam Salsbury, Paul Skinner, Roger Smith, the Tissols, and Randy Wallece.

Special thanks goes out to Jim Greenacre who organized and coordinated the whole thing.

VOYAGEUR 300 CANOE RACE

Due to unavoidable circumstances the canoe race on the French River described in the March newsletter has been postponed until next year. Anyone interested in further information and updates should contact:

Programme Voyageur 300,
Rainbow Country Travel Assoc.,
210 Cedar Street,
Randolph Centre, Suite H,
Sudbury, Ontario,
P3B 1M6.

Dear Friends,

It has been a spring of high water and good canoeing, and we have had many enjoyable club trips. One of these was a special Sierra Club - W.C.A. trip on the Petawawa River which I had the pleasure of leading in the absence of George Luste. The rapids were awesome in their power, and those of us who had been on the same trip last spring were amazed at the change in the river.

George meanwhile was running the Missinaibi soon after breakup. It must have been a very exciting experience for the group.

I am certain that you all shared my feelings of sadness and concern over the recent tragedy on Lac Temiskamingue. The W.C.A. has sent a letter to the staff, students and parents of the St. John's School offering our sympathies and best wishes for their continuing programme.

There has already been too much speculation about the event in the press; but whatever the particular circumstances, which I trust the inquiry will fully bring out, the disaster

serves as a powerful reminder of the potential dangers in wilderness travel. All of us who venture out into the wilderness must make certain that we are adequately prepared and equipped, and that we know what to do in the event of a mishap.

Unfortunately I will be out of the country when the investigation unfolds. However, because because of the importance of the event and its potentially harmful effects on the recreational canoeing community, I have appointed a special committee consisting of Gord Fenwick, Cam Salsbury and Sandy Richardson to monitor and respond on behalf of the W.C.A. should it be warranted.

Have a safe and enjoyable summer of canoeing and hiking.

Sincerely,

Roger Smith

BRIEFS...

THE GYPSY CANOE CLUB

A group of enterprising blind adults, and also some with limited vision, have been building up membership in a canoe club of their own. Some can paddle and some are taking lessons at Seneca. Some are adventurous, and some are timid. Some are in good physical condition and some lack muscle tone for want of sufficient exercise. They have obtained a trailer canoe rack and are building up a stockpile of equipment for camping purposes, and will also be investing in canoes suitable to their common handicap.

What this club needs is VOLUNTEERS. They like to take trips down gentle rivers or across chains of lakes and they enjoy portaging, evening campfires and the general business of camping. They can't, however, do this alone. They need drivers who can paddle, and paddlers who can drive. They need YOU.

If you would be willing to devote even one weekend per year to their club, they would be eternally grateful. Usually they go out from Saturday morning until Sunday afternoon, but some are proposing longer trips for the really able bodied, and a few with limited vision would like to try some white water in the "beginner" class.

Please phone Bruce Matheson at 449-5282 any evening. You can't imagine what this would mean to him (as club president) to have your interest and your expertise.

ALGONQUIN REGION CANOE ROUTES

The MNR has produced a new brochure "Algonquin Region Canoe Routes". It was designed to ease increasing pressures on Algonquin Park itself and to open up a variety of alternative canoe routes. The brochure can be obtained by writing the Ministry of Natural Resources, Box 900, Huntsville, Ontario POA 1K0.

N.W.T. CANOE TRIPS

Any members planning trips in the Northwest Territories should contact Travel Arctic, Dept. of Development and Tourism, Government of the Northwest Territories, Yellowknife, N.W.T. X1A 2L9. They will assist with information about routes, trip reports etc.

YOUTH ENCOURAGEMENT FUND

This fund was established last year to encourage our young student members to participate in major wilderness trips and to improve their skills by attending available courses. The Y.E.F. Committee has already received a number of contributions for 1978, but needs more help if it is to repeat its successful work of last year.

Any members who are interested in helping with this significant W.C.A. programme are encouraged to send contributions to the treasurer. Cheques should be payable to the Wilderness Canoe Association, and should indicate that the money is for the Youth Encouragement Fund.

CANOE-A-THON

Temagami Wilderness Camping with the assistance of many WCA members held a successful canoe-a-thon on the Credit River in April. The event raised \$1500, with \$200 going to the Youth Encouragement Fund of the WCA.

MEMBERSHIP LISTS

Copies of the W.C.A. membership list are available to members on request. Please send a self-addressed 9" x 6" envelope with 30¢ postage to the W.C.A. postal box.

SLIDE SHOW

The WCA is planning to hold a slide show of members' trips some time in early winter. Anyone interested in more details should contact Cam Salsbury or Gord Fenwick.

RECYCLE NEWSLETTER ENVELOPES

In order to reduce costs and to help cut down on waste generally, members are asked to save their newsletter envelopes to be used again. Please return these to the next general meeting, or return them (together with friends') to Ken Brailsford, 21 Kingsmount Park Rd., Toronto, M4L 3L2.



SPANISH RIVER

Following the meeting with INCO representatives at our Annual Meeting in March to discuss the proposed damming of the Spanish River, The WCA issued the following statement of its position:

INTRODUCTION

The Spanish River originates about 160 km northwest of Sudbury, just south of the Arctic watershed, and flows generally south for about 240 km before emptying into Lake Huron near Killarney Provincial Park. For most of the first 100 km the river moves quickly in uninterrupted flow through a picturesque wooded valley, bordered by spectacular bluffs reaching more than 150 m in height in places.

We, the Wilderness Canoe Association, are opposed to any attempts to ruin this last remaining free-flowing section of the Spanish River. The lower half has already been lost through damming and water pollution. The upper Spanish provides the longest stretch of canoeable water, with minimum portages, yet negotiable rapids, of any remaining river within easy reach of the heavily populated areas of Ontario.

HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

The headwaters of the Spanish River are well-known as the haunts of the famous, if controversial, Ontario author and frontier character, Grey Owl. He is believed to have operated a trapline on the upper part of the river. He and his son lived for a considerable time in Biscotasing, then a thriving railroad town of some 3000 inhabitants, at the source of the Spanish River.

FISHING ON THE RIVER

The clear, sparkling cold waters required by speckled trout, perhaps the most prized of all sports fish in Ontario, are rapidly disappearing. The Spanish River, with its many small spring-fed tributaries, still harbours a substantial population of native speckles. They can be seen rising to the surface to feed on aquatic insects in eddies and quiet pools along much of the upper portion of the river. Damming the river will destroy the conditions necessary to the survival of speckled trout.

EFFECTS OF DAMMING ON DOWNSTREAM AQUATIC LIFE

Damming a stream, by greatly increasing the surface area and the length of time that water stays in the system, tends to warm the water being impounded. In addition to destroying the existing aquatic life in the impoundment, aquatic life downstream is likely to be adversely affected. Artificially manipulating the water flow in the river so that high flows correspond to peak power requirements at some distant point, rather than with natural changes in rainfall and the seasons, is destructive. The breeding biology of stream life is attuned to natural cycles of temperature and water flow. Trout spawn deposited in gravel beds ideal for its survival will be left high and dry by a sudden drop in water level, or will be washed away or buried in silt when an unseasonable rush of water occurs.

EFFECTS ON BREEDING AND MIGRATING WATER FOWL

Black ducks and common goldeneyes are two of the most important species of waterfowl harvested by hunters in Ontario. Common goldeneyes are particularly abundant on the Spanish River during summer, with family groups in evidence almost constantly. They feed in relatively shallow flowing water, on the aquatic life which such conditions provide in abundance. Goldeneyes are late fall migrants, depending on the open water along the rapids of rivers such as the Spanish, for a food source to replenish their energy resources while following the river south. In spring, often as early as February, common goldeneyes begin to move northward towards nesting grounds. Courtship and pairing occur at this time of year, prior to arrival in nesting areas. Open water provided by rapids, such as those along the upper portions of the Spanish, is crucial, in that it provides the only available food source at this season. Damming the Spanish River will destroy the breeding population of the common goldeneyes on the river, and jeopardize the much larger migratory populations of this, and certain other species, using the river during spring and fall migration.

EFFECTS ON MAMMAL POPULATIONS

Beaver lodges are found regularly along the banks of the Spanish River. Populations of otters and mink are relatively high. In the extreme climate of Northern Ontario, beavers often depend on the thawing action of moving water to allow them to get out of their feed beds, or to cut additional emergency food if they run short. Mink and otters depend on open, shallow water and foraging for other aquatic food. Moose come to the river to graze on underwater vegetation in the shallows, and to escape from flies. The steep shoreline which would result from damming would not be suitable for these uses by moose. Damming the river would destroy much of the mink and otter population currently found along the river, and could have adverse effects on the beaver and moose populations.

OTHER CONCERNS

- Sudden unpredictable changes in water level caused by opening and closing a dam cause difficulty and often danger to canoeists downstream from the dam.
- Lowering of water levels in the impoundment areas behind the dam often results in unsightly shorelines of exposed silt and debris, rendering the area unattractive for recreational uses.
- Greatly increased availability of access during and after construction, will allow the Spanish River to become just another roadside lake, in an area where such lakes are already common. Lost forever will be a unique wilderness river, in a region where many such rivers have already been destroyed.
- To allow a private company such as INCO to dam a public river in Ontario for the purpose of generating hydro-electric power is to establish a dangerous precedent, since no such private dams have been constructed in the past fifty years.
- With the seeming uncertainty as to the future of the mining industry, and INCO in particular, it seems inadvisable to detract from the tourist potential of the area by permanently destroying the Spanish River for a temporary benefit to one company.
- There is widespread concern in Ontario at present that Ontario Hydro has been over-forecasting energy consumption rates. Therefore, it seems very doubtful that the shortages that the Spanish River dam will supposedly insure against will in fact occur.
- Since all costs related to the construction of the Spanish River dam would be tax deductible business expenses for INCO, we, as Canadian taxpayers are once again being asked to finance the destruction of our own countryside, without the benefit of such public money to conduct our own studies to document the need for, and logic of, preservation.

WHY PRESERVE WILDERNESS?

Those who would destroy the Spanish River, and other such remnants of wilderness, ask those of us who argue for their preservation to quantify, in economic terms, the value of such places. When we are unable to do so, they scoff and say that, therefore, these places must have "no value" at all. We would suggest that a week spent in the solitude of a wilderness setting, away from the demands and pressures of modern urban living, gives more benefits than hundreds of dollars spent on tranquilizers, antacids and psychiatrists' fees. How does one measure the value of a sudden sighting of a moose around the bend of a river? What value do you place on the satisfaction of watching a trout rise to a fly made with your own hands? Or what is the worth of the feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment in successfully pitting one's own skills and strengths against the challenges of a fast flowing river? True, these things cannot be directly translated into economic terms, but, have we become so materialistic that we cannot express or understand values in any terms other than dollars?

PUKASKWA NATIONAL PARK

The provisional Master Plan for Pukaskwa National Park on Lake Superior is now out and the Conservation Committee is currently studying it. Parks Canada are looking for public input on the document. Anyone interested in obtaining a copy should contact Parks Canada, P.O. Box 550, Marathon, Ontario, P0T 2E0.

MISSINAIBI RIVER

The Ministry of Natural Resources has completed the second phase of its study of the Missinaibi River, and has presented proposed boundaries and a management programme for the river.

The programme's first phase began in January, 1977 when the Missinaibi River - a popular fur trade route in the 18th century and now popular with canoe trippers was designated as a provincial park reserve.

At that time, all Crown land for a distance of 122 m on both sides of the river and 426 km along its length, were placed within the park reserve. This ensured that no further land would be sold while the possibility of establishing a provincial park is being considered.

Along its length, the Missinaibi River Park Reserve not only includes substantial recreation resources, but also crosses private lands and areas of high timber or mineral value.

Mr. Miller said this fact was considered by the planning team in the course of preparing the boundary and management proposal.

As part of the study, they reviewed all information available on the Missinaibi River, developed and recommended optional boundaries, and prepared management guidelines to ensure that all recreational and resource uses of the river remain economically sound until the final status of the Missinaibi is determined.

The Conservation Committee has sent out about 50 copies of the proposals to members who have canoed the river and asked that they submit comments. In addition, the Committee has submitted a response on behalf of the Association.

While the committee was generally pleased with the proposals, it did have some reservations about the boundaries and the ambiguities of the management proposal. In particular, the Committee thought that the proposed 122 m boundaries on either side of the river for most sections were too small and offered no more protection than existing rules governing logging operations along rivers. The Committee recommended a minimum 200 m boundary along the entire river, with larger 1000 m boundaries for the sensitive Peterbell Marsh and Thunderhouse Falls areas. Another major concern was the existence of forest access roads. The Committee stressed that to maintain the wilderness aspect of the river, access should be limited to Peterbell and Mattice, and all logging roads be closed to public use.

It is hoped that with the response from canoeists and others, the Missinaibi will soon be granted some sort of protection as a Wild River Park.

ROAD THROUGH KILLARNEY

The Killarney Park Association has been created in Sudbury to represent the interests of park users. Inasmuch as Killarney is a primitive park, and roads are considered inconsistent with the solitary recreation experiences to be provided in a primitive park, the association is opposed to the construction of any road across the park to link the towns of Killarney and Whitefish Falls.

In 1968, a feasibility study on a road was conducted which concluded that construction "could not be justified". However, a new study has been authorized by the Ministry of Transportation and Communications. The business community of Sudbury, the Killarney Park Assoc. and similar organizations are opposed in principle to the road, and a brief is being prepared for presentation at public hearings.

The Killarney Park Assoc. would greatly appreciate the support of everyone interested in preserving Killarney as a primitive park and opposing the construction of a road. All W.C.A. members who have enjoyed the beauties of Killarney are urged to write the Killarney Park Assoc. expressing their support. You will be notified when public hearings will be held. Contact: Killarney Park Assoc., Victor Dunn, President, 1250 RamseyView Court, Sudbury, Ontario P3E 2E7.

MADAWASKA RIVER

The Madawaska River is one of the major waterways in Southern Ontario. Commencing at Source Lake in Algonquin Park, it travels approximately 250 km to its mouth on the Ottawa River at Arnprior dropping a total of 400 m. The spectacular natural conditions that existed on the river during historic times have largely disappeared under the floodwaters of a number of major hydro-electric impoundments which have been located along the waterway. The natural areas that remain on the river are of major significance to the outdoor recreation programme of this Ministry.

One such area is that stretch of river between the villages of Combermere and Griffith. The sufficient water volumes on this stretch together with the nature of the white-water areas makes this section the most outstanding and significant river resource in Southern Ontario. In an attempt to safeguard these resources the section from Aumond's Bay to Griffith was established as a Provincial Park Reserve in 1971.

In recent years the use of this section of the river for recreational purposes has increased drastically. People are now using this area as a prime destination point for canoeing, kayaking, fishing, car camping and general day use. As a result of this usage, there has been progressive deterioration of a number of the key areas along the shoreline together with the accumulation of large amounts of garbage.

In an attempt to curtail this problem of overuse and to help preserve this natural area for the recreational enjoyment of future generations, the Ministry has initiated an interim control programme which is designed to regulate the type and amount of recreational use on the public land along this stretch of the Madawaska River. Emphasis is being placed on the following five key areas:

| Location | Allowable Usage | Restrictions |
|----------------|--|--------------|
| McFee's Bay | Public Access Point Day Use Activities Parking | No Camping |
| Kamaniskeg Dam | Public Access Point Parking | No Camping |
| Aumond's Bay | Public Access Point Parking | No Camping |
| Green Lake | Public Access Point Parking | No Camping |
| Griffith | Public Access Point Parking | No Camping |

These areas will be posted to "Camping Prohibited" and will be enforced under the authority of Section 30 of the Public Lands Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1970.

As in the past, overnight canoe-in-camping on Crown Land along the river will be permitted. However, in order to curtail further site deterioration, some of these sites will also be posted to "No Camping", but canoe-in-camping in other areas will be permitted. The Ministry hopes that the people who utilise these sites together with the portages will follow the "leave no trace" ethics of interior camping. Garbage containers will be located at the previously mentioned access points.

If you have any questions or comments concerning this programme please write to the District Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Box 220, Pembroke, Ontario.

WILDERNESS ETHICS

The MNR in Huntsville has informed the Conservation Committee that their major problem in managing canoe route resources is maintaining high standards of "housekeeping" and has asked our group to assist in any way we can.

All canoeists are reminded that we must be responsible for the environment while on trips. Read the article on Wilderness Ethics and the Environment in this issue, and let us all make certain that we do everything we can to preserve the wilderness resources that we have remaining.

wilderness ethics and the environment

Gord Fenwick

Environmentalists are always aware of and concerned about pollution and deterioration of our environment due to harmful emissions of industrial waste, and increasing demands caused by an increasing population with increasing expectations.

In the long term I feel Canada as a whole should insist on stringent pollution control measures for industry and also set an optimum population level which should not be significantly above our present population. The success of these two goals would do much to ensure that Canadians could continue to live in harmony with and enjoyment of our vast natural landscapes. In return we could receive the vast but not unlimited harvest of renewable natural resources in perpetuity for present and future generations.

In this busy, congested world that many of us experience it is so easy to blame someone else, especially large, impersonal groups such as industry, government and unions, forgetting that it is to a large extent our own individual demands for products and our own expectations that dictate the actions of these large bodies. If we as individuals cannot act responsibly enough to continually evaluate our own way of life and its effects on others, on our environment, and on our country, and at least from time to time take steps for the good of the former rather than our own personal self interests, then we have no right to speak out against others.

In this light it is imperative that all of us who travel through, and care about our wilderness areas examine our attempts at maintaining their wilderness quality, not only for ourselves but for the increasing numbers of fellow travellers.

If we are ignorant of our shortcomings, if we don't care, if we do not develop a code of Wilderness Ethics to express this concern then we may in the end contribute more than any polluting industry to the destruction of the wilderness areas we love!

I feel it worth considering some of the suggestions made by the Conservation Committee of the WCA to the Trails Council in November of 1976:

"Restricting the usage of areas alone will not ensure that a wilderness area remains wilderness. A major problem is often the careless

and thoughtless actions of trail users which damage the area and destroy the experiences of others.

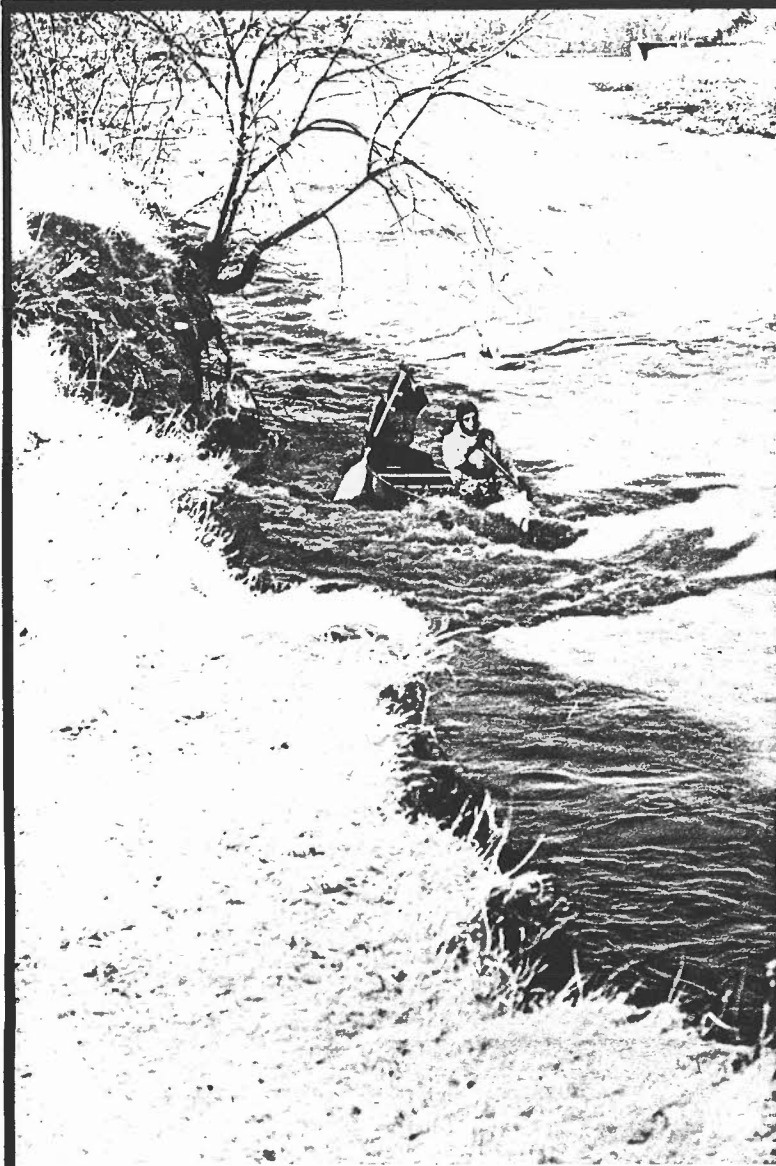
- 1) **Education:** It is important that trail users be educated in a new code of Wilderness Ethics. (This can be done through magazines, newspapers, television, clubs, etc.) The aim should be to encourage users to respect the wilderness and realize that it is their responsibility to maintain it through prudent use.

A suggested code of ethics might be:

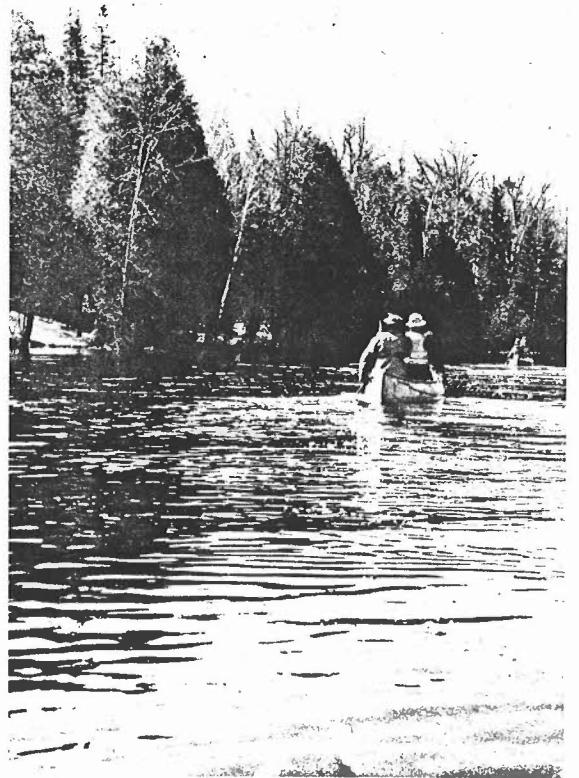
1. Leave as little trace as possible when passing.
2. Camp on hard ground, if not in a designated campsite.
3. Use portable cooking stoves instead of building an open campfire.
4. Don't wash, or clean dishes, or empty dirty water near fresh water sources.
5. Use only biodegradable soap.
6. Locate toilets well away from water sources, dig hole and bury feces.
7. Do not pick, trample, or damage plants, or disturb wildlife.
8. Limit size of group to not more than 8.
9. Keep your noise level down.
10. Pack out everything packed in, and then some.
11. Take personal responsibility for all one's actions and their consequences.
12. Use freeze dried foods, not in glass or tin containers.
13. Report in and out at start and finish of a major trip.

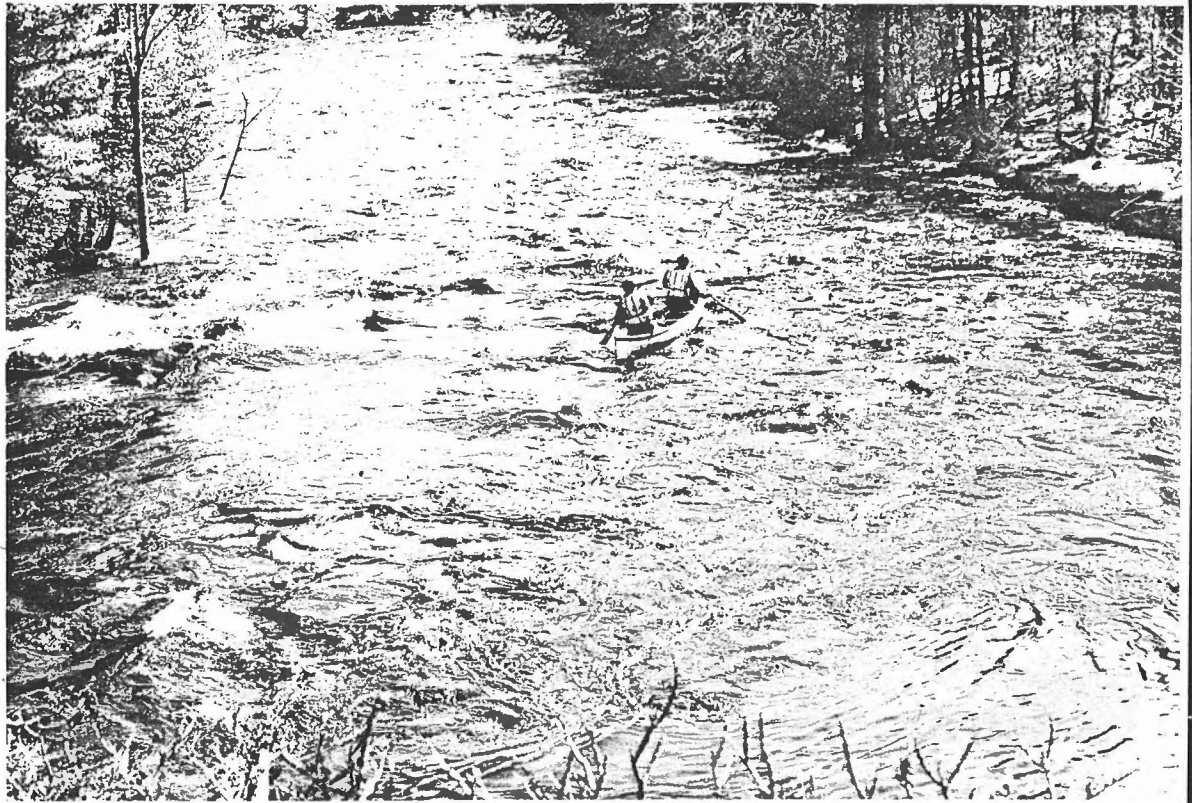
We should never become fixed in our ways, especially in terms of what is the right way of doing a task!

In light of our own continuing experience, the experience of others, and changing conditions, we should always be willing to consider and try different ideas and methods which appear to have merit, hopefully to the benefit of the Wilderness Environment and all of us who experience it!



Running the Sprin

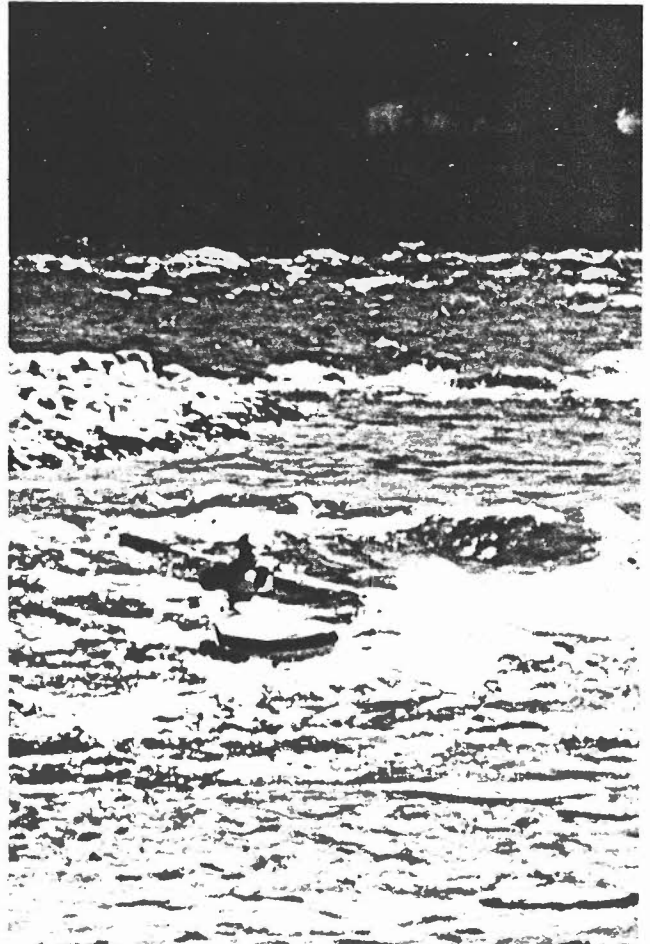




ng Waters

Photos: Brian Back

Sandy Richardson





beaver creek

Story & Photos: Gord Fenwick



The sun had barely cleared the trees as our small party of four canoes entered the flood-swollen waters of Beaver Creek. After paddling the initial calm section and making three portages, we pulled our canoes up on a snow bank and had a leisurely hot breakfast to the roar of a falls ahead.

The river was so high we worried that it might run white along its entire route. Would we have to portage everything? Would we be able to finish on time? Should we continue? Our curious and adventurous natures had the best of us and we set out along the portage around the falls.

There were many portages, but we also found many challenging rapids that we could run. With the very cold water a tip could be fatal, and we exercised extreme caution in every set.

With the late break-up there was still snow in the bush, and we saw little bird-life. The trees had yet to bud, and no black flies or mosquitoes were out.



salmon river

Glenn Spence

High water and sunshine were the order of the day as our two groups of four canoes set out to make the traditional spring run down the Salmon. Once again the excellent little river provided whitewater challenges for all the canoeists.

Unfortunately the high water caused two crews serious difficulties, resulting in two dumped canoes. Although there were no serious consequences, filling out the new WCA mishap reports caused us to assess carefully what happened and how it could have been prevented. As a result I have a few suggestions that I would like to share with members participating in WCA canoe trips:

1. There is an inherent danger in pairing partners over the phone. Please explain fully to the trip organizers your canoeing experience and abilities.
2. Every boat should always have a rescue rope handy.
3. A canoeist should never try to grab an overhanging structure or tree. The force of the current will cause you to dump.
4. In a group of four canoes, the weakest canoe should go third. This will enable the group to have more rescuers downstream.
5. The WCA should have another signal so that you could tell the canoe behind you to go back. (We came up with an impromptu signal - grasp the shaft with both hands and wiggle your paddle vigorously.) I would like to hear comments on this. Of course, never get too close to the canoe in front of you in rapids and swifts.
6. Never assume the river is the same from year to year. On several trips this year the participants have had to portage what they would have run last year.

Hopefully, everyone will have safe trips this year.

moon river

Glenn Davy

The moon is a river I had seen many times as our family made the weekend jaunt (rush) to and from the cottage. After seeing it so often from the bridge I wondered what it would be like as a canoeing river. This spring was my chance to find out, and even the constant rain over the weekend could not "dampen" our spirits.

There is much varied terrain along this trip as the river flows from a rocky area around Bala to swampy low-ground type terrain a few miles above Moon Falls, then back to more Georgian Bay like features to Healey Lake. In these areas are rapids, chutes, falls and, unfortunately, the odd man-made dam. Canoeists use this river to a certain degree judging from the signs of "civilization" that we passed along the way. It is unfortunate that not all canoe campers are as conscientious about no trace camping as our association is. Apart from this, though, both days of paddling were enjoyable with an exhilarating into-wind paddle up Healey Lake. All in all a good weekend's fun.



July 15-21 MAGNETAWAN RIVER

organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037
book IMMEDIATELY

A leisurely trip down the Magnetewan starting at Burkes Falls and travelling the entire route to Georgian Bay. This is an ideal trip for photographers and for fishermen wanting extra time to explore these outdoor interests. Intermediate to experienced. Limit 4 canoes.

July 22-23 KIOSK TO BRENT

organizer: Joe Keleher 416-279-2534
book before July 8

An interesting and scenic flatwater trip through a chain of narrow lakes in the northwest corner of Algonquin Park. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

July 22-23 MUSQUASH - GIBSON RIVERS

organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
book before July 8

The lower Muskoka offers a combination of rivers and lakes with few portages. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

July 27-30 ALGONQUIN

organizer: Gary Walters 416-783-0408
book between June 30 and July 15

A flatwater exploration trip for those wishing to develop portaging experience. There will be two trips: (a) Come up Thursday for both or (b) Come on Saturday for thesecond only. Suitable for novices. Limit 5 canoes.



August 5-7 PETAWAWA RIVER

organizer: Joe Keleher 416-279-2534
book between July 8 and 22

Spectacular rapids and wild scenery describe this section from Brent to Lake Traverse. Most of the rapids are not canoeable and some of the portages are over rugged terrain. We will take the train (canoes in baggage car) from Lake Traverse at 3:30 am Saturday. Suitable for novices. Limit 4 canoes.

August 12-13 ALGONQUIN

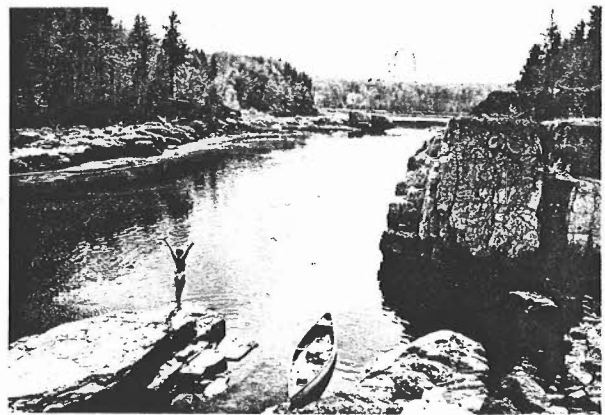
organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037
book between July 15 and 29

A novice trip into Algonquin for those just starting out in canoe camping. Also suitable for solo canoeists who would like to hone their skills. Limit 6 canoes.

August 26-28 GIBSON - McDONALD CANOE ROUTE

organizer: Gary Walters 416-783-0408
book July 11-15 and July 21-26

An exploratory trip of approximately 55 km in the area of Six Mile Lake Provincial Park. There are nine portages but each is less than 300 m. Suitable for novices. Limit 5 canoes.



September 2-4 FRENCH RIVER

organizer: Glenn Davy 416-621-9037
book between August 5 and 19

The historic French River with its rugged scenery and many challenging rapids offers a chance to relive the past on an old fur trapping route. Suitable for intermediate. Limit 4 canoes.

October 15 UPPER CREDIT RIVER

organizer: Jim Greenacre 416-759-9956
book between September 17 and October 1

A one day trip in the area immediately to the north-west of Metropolitan Toronto. Suitable for novices with basic canoeing experience who would like some fast water. Limit 6 canoes.

October 21 SAUGEEN RIVER

organizer: Howard Wickett 416-827-0383
assistant: Ken Riepert 416-845-3608
book between September 23 and October 7

The Saugeen from Durham to Hanover is an exciting trip for intermediates; a little white water, and many natural hazards which require percise maneuvering in the fast current. Adequate calm sections to get rested up for the next challenge. Approximately 20 km without portaging. Limit 6 canoes.

I am relatively new at organizing trips for the W.C.A. It now being about one year since leading my first trip, I took time to sit and reflect back on the past outings which I so cheerfully volunteered to take out. Perhaps my "newness" to this sort of activity has afforded me the opportunity to notice things to which the more experienced organizers have since become accustomed. I wonder how many organizers have experienced these same occurrences and feelings? And looking back on them has to lend a somewhat humorous note amid some of the frustrations that are inevitably encountered.

Of course, as in anything one attempts to do, there is the occasional "hitch". Fortunately (due to reasons stated later in this article) the vast majority of the trips go off without a hitch, and the hitches that do occur are more often than not, humorous, if not downright hilarious.

There's the time when for a whole month before your proposed wilderness outing the weather is clear, sunny and warm. Then as the last canoe pushes off, the echo of not so distant thunder rolls across the river valley. That night amid the din of the rain, you listen to everyone frantically try to smash every mosquito that has decided upon their tents as shelter for the night. This, of course, kills the conversation and sends everyone off to an early bed. Amazing how all stays so cheery.

Or when you take out a whole group who all happen to be on their first ever canoe trip you get bombarded with questions (fortunately) so that you begin to feel more and more like the Ann Landers of the canoe world; followed by...

The trip the following weekend which contains not one person you know and, naturally, you are still accustomed to answering hordes of questions and giving advice. Then only after parting some of your great worldly wisdom on these poor helpless souls, do you discover that the participant with the least experience has been canoeing grade III and IV rapids for five years before you found out that you hold a paddle at the little end instead of the big end...

Or when a participant arrives at the starting point one hour late, but there's not one darn thing you can say because you were fifty minutes late...

And so on. Organizing trips can be so much fun!

Seriously, though, the rewards of organizing outings are high. After all, you get to see a certain area you wish to travel and you always have good company in which to travel. Also you give other people the opportunity to get out and enjoy the wilderness experience where, but not for you, they may not receive that chance.

the executive of the W.C.A. Without these people there would not be the organization that this Association presently has. We are active in many areas of work that interest us all, and we have developed a very definite say in certain things, such as conservation. Our treasurer has led us into a financially solvent position, an undeniably difficult job. Our secretaries, membership people and youth organization people have all contributed greatly to the strength of the W.C.A. And of course the chairmen and vice-chairmen have provided the leadership not only for the executive, but for all members of the club.

And now I come to the next group of people who assist an organizer — the participants. It is through your cooperation and your taking part in trips and various other activities, not to mention your spirit, that makes this Association so strong and such a pleasure to be a part of. When you think about it, you people are really the most important to the Association. For without you members there would be no job for the executive, and no-one to organize a trip for. Any time I have organized a trip (and I'm sure this goes for most organizers) I have always received the utmost in courtesy and cooperation from the participating members. You have no idea how easy and pleasurable this makes an organizer's task. Without this attitude and spirit I rather doubt our outings programme would be nearly as successful and complete as it is now.

This brings me to the last of the people that I want to make mention of. I say last, but certainly not least. Without the Outings Committee an organizer's job would be most difficult, as he would not have a "place to start" from. These people have been of invaluable help to me over the past year, answering questions and solving problems that now seem elementary after gaining some experience. I'm quite sure I must have tried the patience of some of these people, but if I did they never let on, and they never stopped encouraging me. I feel sure that every organizer has gone to them at one time or another and received the same treatment that I have.

I'm certain that every trip leader has at one time or another been thanked by various people in the club for organizing a certain trip, and this means a lot to us. However as a trip leader myself I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone out there, executive and members alike for everything they have contributed. I would also like to thank the members who have helped me develop the level of proficiency in canoeing I now have, in particular one member who went on the Missinaibi River with me last year. I'm sure I made them and him feel like "Ann Landers" a few times.

It is the people asking questions, members leading and helping others, and generally the spirit of this Association that makes it a joy to organize trips in the W.C.A.

equipment

This issue we have a number of small items about some products, places to get them, and places to get them repaired.

REPAIRS, MATERIALS & KITS

The Sport Sewing Shop, 1659 Bayview Ave., Suite 201, Toronto M4G 3C1, will custom make tents, sleeping bags and clothing for you, and will repair your back packs, small tents, down filled clothes and sleeping bags.

For the "do-it-yourselfer" they have a selection of materials, zippers, fasteners, webbing, etc. for clothing, bags, tents, and packs. Altra sewing kits are also available. For more information call (416) 486-9666.

(Diana Dennis)

GOOLAK BACKWOODS CO-OP IS HERE — WHY?

After the glowing report on the Goolak Co-op sent to the newsletter and printed in the News Briefs of the last issue, I received their catalogue with excitement. Now that I've looked through it, I wonder why they bothered.

They have a small line of mostly American equipment at prices that are not 20 - 30% lower than regular camping stores as announced in the March issue, but rather are higher on most items! Other than offering Trailwise and Larve tents which we don't see in stores around here (but at rather high prices) the catalogue does not have much to offer. Save your \$\$.
(S.R.)

PADDLING BOOTS

During the past 5 or 6 years I have paddled extensively throughout Northern Ontario and have become increasingly dissatisfied with the quality and lack of versatility of the footwear available. Because of this dissatisfaction and potential danger, I have been searching for alternative designs in boots for paddlers.

There is now a possibility of having a "paddler's" boot manufactured, but before it is, I wish to gather more opinions on what is needed in such a boot, and its market potential. I would appreciate your comments, which should result in a better more serviceable boot. Please send me your comments or write and get a survey form: Kevin Boggs, Integrated Studies, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ont. N2L 3G1.
(Kevin Boggs)

trails council report

Sandy Richardson

After two years of holding public meetings, studying briefs and debating policy issues, the Ontario Trails Council has published its final report. The report makes 90 recommendations to the government for the implementation of a provincial trails programme. In addition, the report outlines the current trail situation and discusses the major issues identified by the Council.

The recommendations fall into a number of categories. The following highlights and comments on the major recommendations and those of particular interest to canoeists.

LEGISLATION:

The Council has recommended that the government enact legislation that would place the majority of the liability on the trail user and remove it from the landowner/occupier. The current situation where, before the law, responsibility rests with the landowner is seen as the foremost impediment to broader trail use and development.

An Ontario Trails Act is also called for, to incorporate all present trail-related legislation except for the Petty Trespass Act. This legislation would include the establishment of an on-going Trails Advisory Council.

The Petty Trespass Act should be revised to place the responsibility on the trail user to demonstrate that he has permission to be on the land concerned.

LAND RESOURCES:

The Ontario Trails Programme should minimize as much as possible the use of productive agricultural land, and areas designated as ecologically sensitive should be protected against the adverse impacts of trail recreation.

Another recommendation calls for the expansion of the Provincial Parks Programme "to relieve the existing shortage of opportunities for bicycling, horseback riding, trail biking, snowmobiling and four wheel driving within the parks system." This particular recommendation would seem to conflict with the purpose of designating a provincial park. In most cases trail biking, four wheel driving and snowmobiling are destructive and not suitable trail activities to be carried out in provincial parks.

COMPATABILITY:

The report encourages multiple use of trails where possible, but recognizes that some trails must be designated for specific uses. In particular, power and non-power uses are deemed incompatible if users are to have quality trail experiences.

FUNDING:

The Council has recommended that public funds be provided to assist in the construction and maintenance of trails. This raises the question of priorities. Given the virtual inability of the Parks Division to continue the long-term acquisition of a comprehensive park legacy, one must seriously question whether trail construction is the most appropriate use of public funds at this time. The F.O.N. in its response to this report has pointed out that the acquisition of parkland is a much more permanent contribution to society, and that park development and recreation should be forestalled if necessary to provide for progressive expansion.

CANOEING:

Of particular interest to canoeists are recommendations that a programme of land acquisition and management for campsites, portages and access points on southern Ontario lakes and rivers be launched to make them available for canoeing; canoeing programmes including public education on the dangers of canoeing flood-swollen waters be carried out; and that the M.N.R. provide map and route descriptions, including skill levels required, using the 1-5 scale developed by the C.R.C.A., with routes of categories 4 and 5 not publicized.

The report considers the existing Public Lands Act sufficient to provide protection and perpetuation of access and portage routes, although notes that enforcement has been inadequate. It recommends that the Act be enforced.

Noting canoeists' emphasis on environmental protection, the report recommends that the M.N.R. protect canoeing rivers and lake systems from adverse environmental and visual impacts of resource development and extraction programmes. All such navigable lakes, rivers and portages should be screened from resource development activities.

Finally it is recommended that sections be added to the Provincial Parks Act allowing complete river systems to be designated as parks with appropriate protections. While the intention of this recommendation is excellent, there is some concern on the part of the F.O.N. that it will provide the government with a convenient method to call areas which are inadequately protected "parks". Rivers should only be named parks if they provide full protection to the active river area and a substantial buffer, as well as for removal of all inappropriate development.

EDUCATION:

The Council proposes a set of trail-use ethics covering environmental concerns, social concerns and landowner rights and relationships. Such education is certainly needed as more and more people take to the trails. (See "Missinaibi Memories" in this issue!)

In addition to these recommendations there is a curious call for the government to "set certification and identify certifying bodies for wilderness tour leaders for various trail activities." There is no further explanation as to what this blanket statement means. Does it apply to "organized" or "outfitted" wilderness trips only? It would seem to be so vague as to open the door to any budding bureaucrat wanting to regulate all wilderness travel. As such, one would hope that it is opposed by all trail users. It is, as the F.O.N. has described it, "gross and unnecessary overregulation".

Generally the report is well researched and documented, and in most respects its recommendations are very progressive. There are, however, a few areas of concern which one would hope would be re-thought and altered before an Ontario Trails Programme is adopted and implemented.



CANOEING AND THE CANADIAN WILDERNESS: a highly selective background Bibliography

Bruce W. Hodgins.

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Note on Abbreviations:

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| C.F. | Canadian Forum |
| C.G.J. | Canadian Geographical Journal |
| H.B.R.S. | Hudson's Bay Record Society |
| H.B.S. | Highway Bookshop |
| M. & S. | McClelland & Stewart |
| O.N. | Ontario Naturalist |
| T.R.S.C. | Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada |
| U.T.P. | University of Toronto Press |
| W. C. A. | Wilderness Canoe Association |

you and hypothermia

Claire Brigden

It is beautiful to contemplate, exciting to paddle through, but deadly if you fall into it. It is ice water — cold, numbing, merciless.

How can you judge the temperature or effect of very cold water? What can you do to protect yourself? Here are a few ideas which may prevent disaster, or save a life.

Try TESTING cold water before venturing forth. Take off your socks and shoes and roll up your pants above your knees. Pick a safe stretch of shore where you know there are no potholes. Mark a place on the shore with a stick or a stone. Wade out to the tops of your calves. Walk parallel to the shoreline as far as you can until the cold becomes absolutely unbearable. Wade ashore and note the distance between you and the marker. How far did you get? One metre? Three Metres? Half a metre?

Then put your footwear back on and go and sit down. Think about it. You didn't even get your knees wet. Your trunk and head still worked perfectly, but from the knees down it was sheer hell. Don't put your canoe and paddles away. Sally forth as you intended, but with great care, good planning, and a renewed respect for ICE COLD water.

The following tips may be of value:

- 1) Before setting out abstain from the use of alcohol as a restorative measure.
- 2) When tackling fast water or a choppy lake, the best protection is a wet suit plus a life jacket.

- 3) There is a mini raft on the market called a Sea Float which is pocket sized and holds one person, which might prove invaluable on a large body of water.
- 4) The latest emergency garment is the Thermafloat, an expensive one piece jacket with long sleeves, an attached hood which glows in the dark, and a sort of tail which comes up between the legs, and fastens in the front like a diaper. The idea is that if you work quickly, you can pull it out of your pocket in the cold water, and put it on over your clothes to trap your body heat.
- 5) If you fall into the water with your life jacket on, IMMEDIATELY draw your knees up under your chin and pull in your arms in the fetal position, and wait for help. Do not try to move unless you are alone. If you are in a group, huddle together with any children in the middle. Move as little as possible.
- 6) Should you dump with no life jacket, do not take off your clothes. They help to insulate you. TREAD WATER. Do NOT drownproof. Do NOT try to swim to shore unless you are alone, or the shoreline is very close. (Treading water expends the least amount of energy.)
- 7) And finally the old cardinal rule: TWO CANOES ARE BETTER THAN ONE, is still sage advice.

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