



Submission Guidelines for Nastawgan

Thinking of submitting an article to Nastawgan?

The magazine welcomes well-told stories and informative articles that resonate with the Wilderness Canoe Association community. Following these guidelines will improve your chances of publication.

Contact us at journal@wildernesscanoe.ca

What We're Looking For

We welcome articles about:

- Wilderness and backcountry trips
- Canoe routes, hiking trails, and waterways
- Wilderness travel ideas and techniques
- Club projects and programs
- Gear reviews
- Training and skills
- Camp cooking and recipes
- People, places, and issues relevant to the WCA community
- Articles do not need to focus solely on canoeing or any specific region.

What We Prefer to Avoid

- Day-by-day trip journals ("Day 1, Day 2...")
- Blog-style narratives
- Excessive personal storytelling
- Detailed accounts of every fish caught
- Complete daily menus
- Generic descriptions lacking original insight

Readers are looking for engaging, informative, and memorable content.

Maps Matter

Trip articles should include a clear route map showing:

- Put-in location
- Take-out location
- Major route features
- Distance legion, north
- Use the metric system

A good map helps readers understand and appreciate your journey.



Article Length

Reader feedback consistently favors concise articles.

Major Features

- Long story with pictures **5,000 words, ~11 pages**
- Medium story with pictures **~3000 words 6 pages**
- Short story with pictures **1000 words ~1-2 pages**
- One full page of text **~1100 words**
- Longer submissions may be shortened during editing

Short Pieces

- Usually **1-2 pages**
- Suitable for:
 - Humorous stories
 - Opinions
 - Gear reviews
 - Recipes
 - Brief personal essays
 - Book reviews
- Articles exceeding **6,000 words** are generally discouraged.

Before You Submit

- Publication is not automatic.
- The editorial team considers:
 - Originality
 - Current content balance
 - Previous coverage of similar rivers, routes, or topics
 - Available magazine space

If you have an idea, consider pitching it first.

Send a brief description (one or two paragraphs) to:

This can help determine whether the topic is a good fit before you invest significant time writing.

Formatting Requirements

While Word documents are preferred, content is more important than format.



Ideally Submit:

1. Article Text

- Microsoft Word document

2. Layout Version

- Showing photos placed where you envision them

3. Photos

- Separate high-resolution files >2Mb, 4-5Mb ideal. (JPEG preferred)
- Separate document or shared drive folder is also acceptable

Photo Guidelines

- Include people and/or canoes whenever possible
- Avoid submitting only landscape photos
- Provide captions for each image
- Credit photographers when applicable
- Clearly identify files and caption (e.g., *Photo1 - Joe paddling into eddy.jpg*)
- Supply photos as stand alone files.
- Indicate source of all photos in your heading. Individual exceptions can be credited in photo caption.

Writing Tips

1. Know Your Audience

WCA readers are experienced outdoors people.

Skip the obvious and focus on:

- Meaningful details
- Route-specific information
- Memorable experiences
- Lessons learned

2. Show, Don't Tell

Instead of saying:

"The trail was beautiful and exciting."

Show readers why:

"The trail wound through towering pines and emerged at rocky overlooks where the river could be heard crashing through boulder gardens."

Use sights, sounds, smells, textures, and experiences to bring a place to life.



3. Avoid Superlatives

Avoid claims such as:

- "The best river"
- "The greatest trip"

Let readers draw their own conclusions from the details you provide.

4. Avoid Medical Advice

Do not present medical or health guidance unless you possess recognized professional qualifications.

5. Teach Readers Something New

Successful articles often make readers think: "I didn't know that."

Bring your personal knowledge, observations, and passion to the story. Share details readers are unlikely to find through a simple internet search.

Editing Expectations

- Your first draft is not your final draft.
- Editors may:
 - Suggest revisions
 - Reduce word count
 - Adjust structure
 - Select photos
 - Modify layout

The goal is to create the strongest possible magazine article within a reasonable time frame.

What Matters Most

Nastawgan values:

- ✓ Original stories
- ✓ Strong storytelling
- ✓ Accurate facts
- ✓ Clear maps and photos that help tell the story
- ✓ Reader-focused content
- ✓ Unique wilderness experiences

More than perfect grammar or professional writing credentials, the editors are looking for engaging stories that teach, inspire, or entertain the wilderness paddling community.



Tables of Data

When using a table in the article, ensure the contents are spaced cleanly in the table and not made to look crowded or incorrectly spaced.

Schedule

Nastawgan Production Schedule				
Target Dates	Obtain Story & Editing	Layout Work	Proof to Printer	Mail out to Members
Spring	Jan	Feb	Feb 28	March 15
Summer	April	May	May 30	June 15
Fall	July	Aug	Aug 31	Sept 15
Winter	Oct	Nov	Nov 30	Dec 15

Transferring Large Files

WeTransfer.com can be used to transfer large files up to 2 Gb if required or a Google Drive.



A Sample Manuscript First Page

Joe Stern
123 Paddle Street
Canoetown, Ontario
M6C 4N2
123-456-7890

~Approx 1510 words

DOWN DANGEROUS DOODLE CREEK

Article: Joe Stern

Photos: Ina Bow

It was a dark and dreary day when the four of us packed all the gear plus the two canoes in and on top of the van. We'd much rather have stayed in bed and do what all sane people should do on a day like this, sleep. But alas, we had made arrangements with the fly-in airplane people, and we had to be there on time. And besides, we really wanted to paddle that famous river.

Five hours of driving through the fog and misery of this terrible day brought us, pooped out, to the float plane base on Nowhere Lake, where the somber-faced pilot was busy refueling his ancient float plane.

"So, you're the guys for Doodle Lake?" he mumbled without moving his lips. "Okay, jump in. Let's go. That'll be two flights because this old lady Beaver here can't take more load than one canoe plus two people and gear. Got the money?" Nice, confidence-inspiring guy, this one.

We paid him. He loaded two of us plus equipment in and on the scruffy-looking flying machine. The take-out on the glassy-smooth lake was beautiful. That pilot knew what he was doing.

At last, the long-awaited expedition to Doodle Creek, that notorious canoe-eating collection of rapids, falls, and killer-souse holes, was on its way.



Float plane base on Nowhere Lake

Revision Oct 26, 2026