

President's Message

The past year has been very busy for both the Chapter and for CPAWS as a whole. We are especially pleased that John McDonnell has joined the Chapter as Executive Director. He has much experience in conservation issues, acquired as Executive Director of the Forêt La Blanche Ecological Reserve northeast of Buckingham where he continues to work on a part-time basis. The campaign for protection of the Dumoine watershed has advanced significantly. Approximately 1440 km² in the watershed have now been temporarily removed from logging and mining. We hope that interim protected status will be afforded to this area shortly.

Our "Afternoon to Celebrate the Dumoine" held in conjunction with the CPAWS National AGM in late November was a resounding success, as it was standing room only! We would like to thank Becky Mason, Romola Thumbadoo (who spoke on behalf of Grandfather William Commanda, Elder of the Kitigan Zibi First Nation), Marie-Ève Marchand, Jay Morrison, Tony Buell and John McDonnell for their contribution on a successful event.

In addition to the Dumoine, smaller but important areas such as the Noire River and Lac Vert areas have also been identified for potential protected status as part of the ongoing *Quebec Protected Areas Strategy*.

Elsewhere, across the country, protected areas status appears certain for several large areas, including most of the Nahanni River watershed in the Northwest Territories. However, despite these gains, much needs to be done to ensure full protection of existing parks and to expand the area that is currently under protected status in eastern Ontario and western Quebec, as well as across Canada.

I invite you to attend the Chapter's Annual General Meeting to learn more about our plans for the coming year.

Ken Buchan

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Annual General Meeting

May 15, 2008

Room 156, National Library & Archives of Canada
395 Wellington, Ottawa

7 p.m. Annual General Meeting

8 p.m. Speaker – Senator Tommy Banks, Chair of
the Senate Standing Committee on Energy,
Environment and Natural Resources.

The meeting will be followed by a special presentation on Gatineau Park. Contact our office or check our website for further information.

Note: As a result of changes to the national CPAWS governance structure, CPAWS-Ottawa Valley is becoming an incorporated entity and will be asking members to approve several changes to the chapter constitution in order to comply with the new national model. To reduce our costs and save paper, the constitution and proposed changes have not been included with this mailing. Copies of the constitution, with the proposed changes highlighted, will be available at the AGM. Contact our office to obtain a copy.

Parks Board recommends reduction of logging zone in Algonquin Park

For decades CPAWS-Ottawa Valley and CPAWS-Wildlands League (with head office in Toronto) have sought the removal of logging from Algonquin Park, the only park that now allows this industrial activity. Currently there is an important window of opportunity to achieve a reduction in the logging footprint in Algonquin. A year ago the government-appointed Ontario Parks Board made recommendations to reduce the logging zone from 78% of the Park to 46%. The Parks Board's recommendations are available at www.mnr.gov.on.ca/mnr/Ebr/altf/document_en.pdf. The new Minister of Natural Resources, Donna Cansfield, is currently reviewing the Parks Board recommendations.

CPAWS remains committed to the complete phase out of logging in Algonquin, and believes that implementation of the Parks Board recommendations represent a first step towards achieving this goal.

Please take the time to write the Premier of Ontario and the Minister of Natural Resources, to ask that (a) the Parks Board recommendations be implemented; and (b) a plan be drawn up to phase logging out of the Park.

Premier Dalton McGuinty

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Natural Resources Minister Donna Cansfield

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View and sign our online petition:

www.petitiononline.com/alglogov/petition.html

For more information, visit the *Algonquin Park* campaign page at www.cpaws-ov-vo.org or contact the Chapter office.

Big Wild!

CPAWS has teamed up with Mountain Equipment Co-op, Canada's largest retail cooperative dedicated to supporting people in achieving the benefits of self-propelled wilderness and outdoor recreation, to create *The Big Wild* — a movement for everyone who cares about Canada's wild places.

The Big Wild refers to the part of Canada that is still in its natural state, the large roadless area where rivers flow free, big lakes and oceans lap against wild shores and animals of diverse species roam as they have for thousands of years.

The Big Wild vision is to keep at least half of Canada's public land and water wild forever. CPAWS is realizing this vision by supporting wilderness conservation campaigns across Canada. The Big Wild helps these campaigns by educating people about the urgent need to protect one of the world's last remaining wilderness areas – which amounts to 20% of all that's left on the planet; raising funds for wilderness protection; and enabling people to show decision-makers they support wilderness protection.

To learn more and get involved today in critical initiatives to protect Canada's wilderness, please visit the *Big Wild* website at www.thebigwild.org.

Nahanni Expansion

Ottawa - April 2008

The federal government will create a giant new national park covering 7,600 km² in the headwaters of one of Canada's most spectacular northern rivers, Environment Minister John Baird announced April 8th.

The Naats'ihch'oh National Park Reserve will protect the watershed of the South Nahanni river in the Northwest Territories. It will be adjacent to the larger Nahanni National Park Reserve, which the government said last year it would expand.

Naats'ihch'oh, which means "stands like a porcupine" in the language of the local Dene aboriginal people, is an important habitat for grizzly bear, Dall's sheep and woodland caribou.

Dumoine: Now is the time to act!

The largest protected area currently under consideration by the Quebec government in the Ottawa River watershed is a 1440 km² site extending along the Dumoine River, 150 km northwest of Gatineau. It comprises 1/3 of the 4400 km² Dumoine watershed and links the boreal forest to the north with the temperate forests along the Ottawa River to the south. As such it provides a biodiversity connection between the boreal and the Algonquin to Adirondacks region, itself the site of an important international landscape-scale connectivity initiative.

By establishing a protected area in the Dumoine watershed, the government of Quebec would not only protect a significant portion of the last intact wilderness in southwestern Quebec, but also provide local communities with an important opportunity to diversify economies heavily affected by the forestry crisis. CPAWS-OV has been working extensively with these local communities, where support continues to grow for a major new protected area in their backyard. Support for a protected area has been expressed by the Pontiac regional government, the *Conférence régionale des élus de l'Outaouais* (CRE-O) - a regional body comprised of mayors from throughout the Outaouais, local business people, industry, and First Nations. CPAWS-OV, supported by the CPAWS-Quebec chapter with headquarters in Montreal, remains committed to the establishment of a protected area covering the majority of the watershed, with the caveat that any forestry operations taking place in the remainder of the watershed be certified by the *Forest Stewardship Council* (FSC). While we expect an announcement of interim protection in the near future, your support remains critical.

For more information, please visit the *Dumoine* campaign page at www.cpaws-ov-vo.org or contact the chapter office.

Opportunities for new Quebec protected areas in the Ottawa River watershed

In 2001, the Government of Quebec promised to protect 8% of the province by 2005 under its *Quebec Protected Areas Strategy*. Although there have been some encouraging signs, the amount of protected land in the province still hovers around 4%.

Late last year, the *Ministère du Développement durable, de l'Environnement et des Parcs* (MDDEP), which is responsible for Quebec protected areas, gave regional governments until January 15, 2008 to comment on a host of proposed protected areas across the province. Several are located in the Ottawa River watershed; the largest is in the Dumoine River watershed. Others include Mount O'Brien – a site near the town of Danford Lake, two remote portions of the Noire River watershed, and the Lac Vert-Lac Poisson Blanc area, a popular canoeing and recreational destination a short distance north of Gatineau. Both of these sites were identified as important areas that require protection in a 2005 CPAWS-OV report.

Contact the Chapter office for more information on these and other important Quebec initiatives.

Caribou and climate change: What is the connection?

The planet is warming, putting life as we know it at risk. Saving the woodland caribou and their Boreal Forest home can help.

Deep reductions in fossil fuel emissions are a big part of the climate change puzzle, but protecting caribou habitat can also make a difference by providing a home for wildlife. Canada's remaining intact Boreal Forests are home to the Woodland caribou. And as our climate changes, the Boreal could be home to many more species. 20-30% of species worldwide are threatened by climate change, and we are seeing North American species fleeing northward into the Boreal to escape a warming planet. Canada's intact Boreal Forest is one of the world's largest storehouses of land-based carbon. Our Boreal stores more than 186 billion tons of carbon – 27 years' worth of global carbon emissions from the burning of fossil fuels!

But when the Boreal Forest is developed or logged, its ability to absorb and store carbon is lost or reduced, and carbon is released to the atmosphere

Protect caribou habitat -- take our foot off the global warming accelerator!

Visit www.caribouandyou.ca to learn more and to take action.

Would you like to receive our Newsletter by email?
If so, please contact John McDonnell, Executive Director at jmcdonnell@cpaws.org

You thought it was Gatineau “Park”? Think again!

On April 21, the eve of Earth Day 2008, the Ottawa Valley chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS-OV) released a new booklet for decision-makers on the perilous status of a wilderness area north of Ottawa known to many as “Gatineau Park.”

The 361-km² parcel of land is a much-loved recreational haven for the people of Ottawa-Gatineau and one of the most beautiful pieces of wilderness held in trust for Canadians. It's also a shelter for 23 endangered species. But because its boundaries aren't etched in any law, this "park" we enjoy can be eroded away – sold piecemeal, developed or paved over with roads at the will of its managing body, the *National Capital Commission* (NCC). Without legal protection, it's just another piece of pretty landscape near a big city, easily threatened by development – not a park to be enjoyed by our grandchildren.

The CPAWS-OV booklet illuminates the park's many beauties and its incredible vulnerability. Destined for decision-makers in the federal, provincial and municipal governments and agencies as well as park supporters, the booklet clearly sets out steps that need to be taken to make a reality of the name "Gatineau Park."

Among other things, it calls on decision-makers to:

- Freeze development within the park
- Pass a law that will fix the park's boundaries in law, requiring the NCC to get Parliament's approval to sell or develop land
- Hold the NCC to its promise to make buying land within the park precinct and on its margins a priority
- Start the process for making Gatineau Park a real park by bringing it under the *National Parks Act*

CPAWS-OV is encouraged by recent promises from the NCC and the federal minister responsible for the Commission, Lawrence Cannon, to start taking these steps. But threats to the park are moving fast. The recent plan to build a housing subdivision at Carman Road, inside the park and the large swath cut directly

through the southern tip of the park by the new boulevard des Allumettières are upsetting examples of the many ways the park is threatened.

On Earth Day, CPAWS-OV called on decision-makers to make the right decisions, right here on the doorstep of the nation's capital and protect our Gatineau Park!

Copies are available for \$2 (or \$4 including mailing). Contact the Chapter office at (613) 232-7297

CHAPTER NEWS

Directors and Volunteers Needed!

The Chapter can only continue its work with a strong board of directors and other active volunteers. If you are able to help in either of these capacities, please contact the OV office. Currently we are seeking volunteers for our various conservation campaigns in both Quebec and Ontario (Dumoine and other new Quebec protected areas, Algonquin Logging, Algonquin to Adirondacks (A2A), Gatineau Park, Eastern Wolf protection, etc). In addition, we need volunteers to help with fundraising, and Chapter events.

Donations are Most Welcome

The Chapter also needs funding to operate its conservation campaigns. Please consider making a special donation. Mail donations to: CPAWS, 601-250 City Centre Ave., Ottawa, ON K1R 6K7, with your cheque payable to Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society.

Launch of our new Website

After a few months of being offline, the Ottawa Valley Chapter's website has been re-launched! We would like to thank Marc Gravel for his hard work in the creation and maintenance of our new website as well as Francis Grenier for the translation.

Please visit us at: www.cpaws-ov-vo.org

Chapter Office Contact Information

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We thank you for supporting the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and for helping protect wilderness in Canada!