

Take Action for Temagami December 31, 2005

Temagami Integrated Planning (TIP) is a process being undertaken by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) that is directed at the management of recreational activities in the Temagami area. This ongoing process has long-term implications for canoeing in the area and particularly for the preservation of historic canoe routes that cross through Crown Lands.

Since all types of recreation and land use occur throughout the planning area, the TIP process will attempt to harmonize the development and management of:

- 1.A Recreation Management Plan for unregulated Crown Lands in the Temagami area.
- 2.Management Plans for the five Provincial Parks in the area.
- 3.Management Plans for the eight Conservation Reserves adjacent to the Parks.

Temagami has been a world-class canoeing destination for over a hundred years. These modern travelers rely on an intricate network of trails and portages developed over thousands of years by aboriginal peoples. Accordingly, numerous sites of archeological and cultural significance are found throughout the area.

Temagami is situated in the transition zone between the Great Lakes – St Lawrence Forest to the south and the Boreal Forest to the north and contains the largest remaining stands of old-growth red and white pine in the world. The area also boasts the highest points of land in Ontario - only accessible by canoe and holds many naturally scenic, wild and remote areas. Temagami represents one of the largest un-broken wilderness areas in Ontario at this latitude and is located only a half-days drive from the largest city in Canada.

If we care about Temagami, its cultural heritage and wilderness experience, we need to make our voices heard.

Temagami is again under attack from logging interests, with approvals to increase cutting substantially during the 2004 - 2009 Forest Management Plan. These activities threaten wilderness canoeing by directly destroying traditional portages with roads and extraction blocks. The development of road networks for extraction purposes also allows increased access and use in previously remote areas.

Other groups are pushing for increased motorized access and use. Without proper safeguards, these activities threaten traditional canoe routes by irreversibly damaging historic portages and campsites. Motorized activities further threaten traditional wilderness travel by destroying the solitude and the aesthetics of wilderness that many come to Temagami in search of.

The MNR is asking for public participation in the planning process. Some of us recently attended public meetings in Ottawa and Toronto to understand what we as canoeists can best do to get our concerns heard.

We have an opportunity for our input to make a difference.

Please write a letter supporting preservation of the characteristics that make Temagami so special and help it survive as a canoeing destination.

If you are not into writing letters, you might start by looking at this CPAWS link that describes how to write an effective letter and provides talking points. Go to:
<http://www.cpaws-ov.org/effectiveadvocacy1.html>

If you want to read further about the Temagami Integrated Planning process, the published documents are posted at:

http://www.ontarioparks.com/english/tema_planning.html.

The 1996 Temagami Land Use Plan (TLUP):

<http://crownlanduseatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca/supportingdocs/temagami/temanew.html>

provides the basis for much of the TIP planning process.

If you haven't got time to read all of this and most of us don't, then please use the material in the letters that C_Mel and I have put together and posted below. Please feel free to cut and paste excerpts as you see fit add your own introduction and closing statements etc.

It is preferable to send your letter via Canada Post or United States Postal Service. Please don't be shy, because you have a US address. We know that there are a lot of Americans who visit Temagami, to canoe and we need all the help we can get to protect what little remains of it for future traditional users.

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