



ONTARIO
PARKS

THE BLACK FLY TIMES

The Ontario Parks Newsletter

May

1

2012

To all our returning staff - WELCOME BACK!! And to those of you who are coming to work with us for the first time - WELCOME!! All of you have made a commitment to our province's most significant natural and cultural heritage by choosing to work at Ontario Parks and I'm super excited to have you on board.

Ontario Parks is one of the world's largest and most respected park systems, with over 9.5 million visits made each year. Many of you have finished training and are out in the park system doing your jobs. As you are out working, always keep in mind our mission:

To protect significant natural and cultural resources in a system of parks and protected areas that is sustainable and provides opportunities for inspiration, enjoyment and education: now and for future generations.

Regardless of the role you play in our organization, the things you do are critical to achieving the mission outlined above. Our organization has over 100 years of history in service of Ontarians and their protected spaces, starting with the establishment of Algonquin in 1893 and continuing to this day. As an organization, we've thrived over the years by providing the highest level of professionalism, customer service and quality of experience to campers from Ontario and abroad and our reputation for these things is what keeps people coming back.

I do want to take this opportunity to highlight two things that I am looking for from everyone... these two things are what keeps organizations like ours fresh and progressive...know what they are?

Innovation and Creativity.

Just like everyone has a role in contributing to the achievement of our vision, everyone also has a role towards ensuring that we continue to do things better and smarter. The way there is through creative and innovative ideas. I have an expectation for everyone in Ontario Parks that they will always be thinking about ways to make us a better and smarter organization.

As we progress through the summer I am looking forward to being out and about and meeting as many of you as I can.

Be safe and be well.

Bradley Fauteux
Managing Director
Ontario Parks



THE BLACK FLY TIMES



WAKING THE WATERS – EARTH DAY 2012

French River Provincial Park Visitor Centre

Over the past three years the French River Visitor Centre First Nation and Aboriginal Advisory Committee has hosted “The Voices of the Elders” events on “Protecting Our Water”. During this journey we shared traditional and science based knowledge and received advice from over 100 elders that “our youth are our future” and that “we need to start today to engage and empower them to take action to protect the waters and their communities.” (Randy French, French Planning Services).

On Earth Day, April 22, 2012, the Advisory Committee along with park staff, hosted a forum designed to engage youth and elders called “Waking the Waters”. It was a day to have fun, hear stories, sing, watch skits, and self designed videos; all in respect to the waters and their conservation both in the present and past.

Invited guests included the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, French River Metis Tribe, Dokis First Nation, Henvey Inlet First Nation, Magnetewan First Nation, Shawanaga First Nation, Wasauksing First Nation, Wahta Mohawk Territory, Toronto, Napanee, and Oakville. This special day was sponsored by Environment Canada-Bi-National Community Action Framework on Lake Huron and supported by Ontario Parks, Ministry of Natural Resources–Parry Sound District, the French River Cultural Industries Council, and many volunteers.

“miigwi`ch for a day of excellence. When Grandfather Sun came up this morning to

greet everything it was excellent. We should be so grateful for the young ones. We had everything that was needed, simple, and the privilege to witness our future before us, the young ones...if we want a good life forever we must work harder to encourage the young ones at school, get them to Ceremony and make time to take them with us

wherever we have opportunity to go.”
(Marilyn Capreol)



The French River Provincial Park and its staff feel very lucky to have such an involved and passionate partner in the French River Visitor Centre First

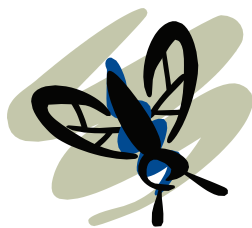
Nation and Aboriginal Advisory Committee. The park looks forward to continuing to deliver quality educational and cultural experiences with this very special group of people.

*Jeremy Pawson, Assistant Park Superintendent
Killarney / French River Provincial Parks*

IT WAS A BUSY WINTER AT ARROWHEAD!

Winter 2011/12 was off to a slow start for outdoor winter recreation with very little snow through the holiday season, but this was all to change with the arrival of snow and cooler weather as December drew to a close. Good snow conditions through January and February along with the park’s new skating trail, a series of special events and an active resident Nordic ski club made for a banner year for winter visitation.

Arrowhead’s core winter activity is Nordic skiing, with over 33 km of maintained ski trails. The trails are popular with local skiers, but also draw visitors from



THE BLACK FLY TIMES

across central Ontario, with regular busloads coming up from the Toronto area and families making an annual trip to ski at the park.

Nordic Ski programming started off with the Jackrabbit program for kids and Learn to Ski program for adults on January 7. This year saw the highest registration to date for the Jackrabbit program, with



159 children participating. These programs are run by the Arrowhead Nordic Ski Club, a dedicated group of volunteers from the local community.



A new, 1.3 km skating trail drew a lot of attention in the local community and beyond. Acting Park Superintendent John Leadston adopted the idea for the trail from McGregor Point Provincial Park. The trail became a destination for recreational skaters, and brought many new visitors to the park.



The tubing hill is a mainstay for visitors to Arrowhead, and continued to be popular with kids and adults alike.



Snowshoeing has been increasing in popularity in recent years. Arrowhead maintains over 7 km of trail over varied terrain which is well used by park visitors.

Special Events

The annual Muskoka Loppet was held at Arrowhead on January 22 with 220 competitors participating.

On February 22-24, the Ontario Federation of Secondary Schools Athletic Associations (OFSAA) 2012 Nordic Ski Championships descended on the park. OFSAA Nordic was Arrowhead's largest competition to date with 649 competitors participating in the three day event.



In a unique and exciting initiative, Arrowhead partnered with the Town of Huntsville and organizers from the local high school and the community, to create a ski trail



on Main Street for the sprint races on the last day of OFSAA and the first day of the Parasport competition. The event brought hundreds of spectators to Huntsville's downtown, and was a resounding success.

Hot on the heels of OFSAA was the 2012 Provincial Winter Parasport Championships. This was the second time Arrowhead hosted the Nordic

THE BLACK FLY TIMES

component of this exciting event - the inaugural games, then called Paralympics, was held in Huntsville in 2006. The games consist of a variety of sports including ParaAlpine Skiing, ParaNordic Skiing, Wheelchair Curling, Wheelchair Basketball, Wheelchair Rugby, Swimming and Sledge Hockey.

Not as easy as it looks! Able bodied students from a local school try their hand at sledge hockey on the outdoor rink near Mayflower Lake at Arrowhead. The park was given two sledges as a legacy gift from Parasport Ontario in recognition of support for the games. The sledges will be made available to local youth who would like to learn more about the sport.



And as if all this wasn't enough to keep park staff and the local ski club busy, Arrowhead also hosted two elementary school races in February and March 2012, each with record numbers in the range of 350-400 participants from area schools.

Looking forward, Arrowhead will be hosting the Nordic component of the Ontario Seniors Games in 2013. The park, in partnership with the local ski club and Chamber of Commerce are also in the planning stages for hosting the 2013 Canadian Masters National Cross Country Ski Championships at Arrowhead. Thanks to the beautiful location, fantastic terrain, carefully developed trails and facilities and dedicated staff and volunteers, Arrowhead has become a popular venue for winter sport in Ontario.

*Peter Briand, Park Superintendent
Arrowhead Provincial Park*



BLUE LAKE ENVIROTHON

Blue Lake has been hosting the Envirothon the last two years. It is a competitive program between Dryden and Kenora high school students enrolled in the



outdoor education programs. The Envirothon involves MNR judges, trappers etc., in a competitive but educational environment.

*Scott Ellery, Park Superintendent
Blue Lake Provincial Park*

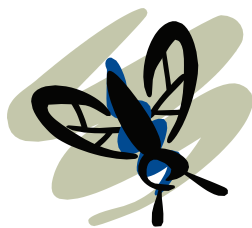
ONTARIO PARKS IN THE NEWS

Have you noticed lately when you pick a newspaper or turn on the TV that Ontario Parks is in the news more often? That's no accident. The Marketing and Communications (M&C) team with Lori Waldbrook leading the charge have worked hard over the past 18 months to get the word out about the great range of things that visitors can see and do at our parks.

We have been building a list of contacts in the media; travel writers, lifestyle and family writers, and outdoor writers. And not just the traditional media; we've been talking to bloggers and other on-line influencers.



Nine times annually, M&C sends an update to media including story ideas, what's new at parks and upcoming events. This information teases travel and lifestyle media to go online to find out more in at least two supporting blog articles. In



THE BLACK FLY TIMES

2011 Lori attended conferences hosted by the Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) and GoMedia Canada Marketplace. At these conferences, travel writers book appointments with Ontario Parks to discuss story ideas. At these events Lori has spoken to many Canadian writers as well as journalists from as far away as Australia.

Ontario Parks is becoming better known as a great source for interesting content, excellent images and even some video. Media know who to call and can rely on Ontario Parks' staff to provide solid information and great follow-up. Many Ontario Parks staff members have helped tremendously over the past few years to build this reputation and the growing body of great coverage.

With this approach to "earned media", Ontario Parks can deliver good marketing coverage on a very small budget!

You can help us in our quest to get the Ontario Parks word out to the media. Each year M&C develops a "conversation calendar" that guides what we give the media. It links marketing objectives, target audiences and story ideas. From here we generate the nine travel updates and blog articles that are sent to media. We're always looking for story ideas, interesting park facts, and great pictures. The more interesting, the more likely the media will be in writing a story about Ontario Parks. Please send any ideas you have to your zone marketing representative or to Lori Waldbrook. And when the request comes in for more detailed information, a photo, a quote, or a reality check(!), please send it in as soon as possible.

Here's a recent example:

The Pinery recently hosted Charles-Antoine Rouyer who writes for the Toronto French weekly "Express" and also is a guest on the French Tfo TV Show "Relief"

<http://relief.tv/videos/1100034703>

*Anne Craig, Senior Marketing Specialist
Marketing and Communications Section*

LEARN TO CAMP MOVES FORWARD FOR 2012

As most of you know, 2011 was a pilot year for Learn to Camp, Ontario Parks' program to introduce "reluctant" campers to the joys of provincial parks. The program was a great success and is expanding for 2012.

What's New?

Our original parks, Bronte Creek, Sibbald Point, and Darlington are still part of the program but this year Murphys Point, Six Mile Lake and The Pinery will also host programs. A travelling program will cross Northern Ontario and Learn to Camp weekends will be held at Halfway Lake, Grundy Lake, Pancake Bay, Lake Superior, Sleeping Giant, Kakabeka Falls and Rushing River. This year, participants will have the option to stay one or two additional nights using the Learn to Camp equipment.

Once again, Coleman has very generously donated camping equipment to be used by participants. Pepsi and SC Johnson (Off) are also lending support.

Getting the Word Out

In April, Marketing and Communications staff along with staff from zone offices and Learn to Camp parks crossed the province spreading the word about Learn to Camp. London,



THE BLACK FLY TIMES

Sudbury and Ottawa hosted Learn to Camp open houses for local community groups, libraries, immigrant services organizations, tourism representatives and the media. They enjoyed some good food, music, Ontario Parks' displays and were able to chat to staff about Learn to Camp. The media response has been fantastic; coverage included CTV Sudbury, CBC Radio – Points North and Ontario Morning, CBC TV Ottawa plus numerous local radio stations, community newspapers, and local cable TV.

What's Next?

Registrations for Learn to Camp sessions are already over one-half filled with the first session still weeks away and over fifteen community sessions have been booked to date. Parks are in the process of hiring and training their Learn to Camp leaders and camping equipment has begun to arrive.

To celebrate Tourism Week, the Learn to Camp road show will be at events scheduled at Dundas Square in Toronto and the Barrie and Sault Ste. Marie Travel Information Centres.

Helping Out

We always need volunteers to help lead community Learn to Camp sessions. If you are interested in volunteering and have not already put your name forward, please contact Jeff Brown (jeff.brown@ontario.ca).

*Anne Craig, Senior Marketing Specialist
Marketing and Communications Section*



WINTER IN THE WILD FESTIVAL

Winter is one of the most extraordinary times to visit Algonquin Provincial Park as it becomes transformed by the snow and solitude. To showcase this, park staff, in cooperation with The Friends of Algonquin Park, planned and held the first ever *Winter in the Wild Festival* on the Family Day weekend in February. Through educational and recreational activities, the festival introduced park guests to the best of what the winter wilderness of Algonquin has to offer the whole family. For a large number of attendees, it was their first time visiting the park in the winter!

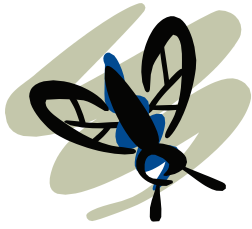
The day started off with a Guided Bird Walk at Spruce Bog Trail led by Natural Heritage Education (NHE) Specialist, Justin Peter along with Kevin Clute from The Friends of Algonquin. Attendees were thrilled to spot several "Algonquin specialties" such as a Spruce Grouse and Gray Jays as well as a mischievous Pine Marten. Guests were then invited to the Visitor Centre to warm up in the café overlooking a beautiful wintery Algonquin landscape and for a homemade chili lunch served by park staff.



Guided bird walk

After lunch, Chief Park Naturalist Rick Stronks offered tours of the Visitor Centre Collections Room which is not normally open to the public and includes hundreds of study skins. The exclusivity of this event brought several people from long distances for this experience alone!

In the afternoon, Kevin Clute led a guided snowshoe excursion in a search for signs of winter



THE BLACK FLY TIMES

wildlife. Snowshoes were generously provided by The Friends of Algonquin Park. The remainder of the afternoon and evening took place at Mew Lake Campground where the “Captain” of Mew Lake Campground, Hwy 60 Group Leader Harvey Cornell was at the helm. Activities included ice skating on the Mew rink, winter camping demonstrations by Operations South staff, hot chocolate, roasted marshmallows, a tasty BBQ, and the first ever winter Public Wolf Howl, which included a cozy fireside talk and short hike to the howl site, led by Justin Peter. The wolf howl marked the end of the festival and was the perfect conclusion to the day.

Due to the popularity of the event and feedback, the park has decided to host the event again on February 16, 2013 – Saturday of the Family Day long weekend.

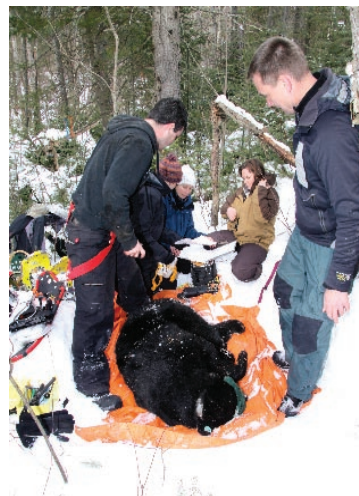
Thanks to The Friends of Algonquin Park and all park staff that worked and volunteered to put on such a fantastic festival. It was a wonderful collaboration of all program areas!

*Andrea Coulter, Planning Intern
Algonquin Provincial Park*

A DAY TO REMEMBER

Anyone who has seen the Rick Mercer episode where he visits a bear den in Algonquin Provincial Park will have an understanding of the experience some Central Zone staff had this past February. Thanks to the incredible generosity of Marty Obbard, six people from the Zone office (Beth Cragg, Jocelyn Moffett, Sandy Dobbyn, Meghan Pomeroy, Susan Purves and Sharon Duffy) had the opportunity to assist in the processing of three cubs and a sow (female bear). Marty’s official title is Research Scientist Predators & Wildlife Conservation, but most know him as “The Bear Guy”.

Even though there was over a dozen people present when we snowshoed into the bush, the whole crowd was silent as Marty and his team approached the den. Emotions ran high before we got the word that yes, all the cubs were alive! After that, the team worked with speed and precision to get the sow tranquilized with the jab stick so the research could begin.



Park staff with adult bear



Keeping baby bear warm

The main duty of the Central Zone staff members was to keep the cubs warm while the sow had her collar changed. It is difficult to describe what it feels like to have a seven week old bear cub snuggled into your jacket. There were squeals, licks, scratches and eventually purrs as the bears settled in with their surrogate moms and dads. Everyone took turns with the cubs as they were measured and weighed one by one. Each staff member insisted that their cub was in fact the best cub.

THE BLACK FLY TIMES



The sow had been injured a number of years ago and as a result doesn't have use of one of her hind legs, but she managed to give birth to three healthy cubs, and was healthy looking herself. Not an easy feat! This was even more apparent to the staff who visited the second den of the day. This den housed a much smaller, younger female in poor condition. Life is not always easy for wildlife, even within our protected areas.

This incredible experience changed the way we see bears. The knowledge we gained and the experiences we had that day will stay with us forever.

Our thanks to Sandy Dobbryn for the fantastic photos. For those who haven't seen the Rick Mercer Report, check out the Bear Wise site [here](#).

Central Zone Office Staff

ADM'S CORNER

With spring upon us, we are now entering our busiest operating season and I am reminded of the various responsibilities that the Provincial Services Division (PSD) undertakes. With such a diverse range of activities, involving



the opening of our provincial parks; protecting people, property and communities from fire; managing our fish and wildlife resources and enforcing our natural resources Acts, health and safety is paramount.

Protecting the well-being of all MNR staff is part of our ministry's commitment to organizational excellence and is part of the Ontario Public Service (OPS) Wellness Strategy. Every employee should feel confident that their work environment is healthy and supportive and that they have access to the skills and tools to do their job safely.

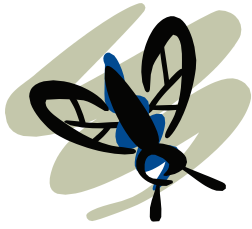
A variety of training tools are available to provide you with the knowledge and skills to keep your workplace safe. These training materials are available through the [MNR Healthy and Safe Workplace Website](#).

While training is a key element to our health and safety program, it is also important that we continue to have open and constructive dialogue at all levels of our organization. We all share responsibility for the health and safety of our employees and co-workers and we need to continue to work together to ensure a safe workplace that benefits everyone. Staff should be aware of their responsibilities under the

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#).

I am reminded daily of the dedication and passion that Provincial Services Division staff has for their job and it is indeed a pleasure working with you. I wish everyone an enjoyable season that is free of accidents and injury and I thank you for your continued support of a safe and healthy MNR workplace.

*Tracey Mill, Assistant Deputy Minister
Provincial Services Division*



ABOUT DIVERSITY

Ontario Parks is a collaborative workplace where we work to foster an environment that supports organizational excellence. We are customer focused and strive to deliver the highest standards of value and service to our park users. We value diversity and inclusiveness and look to the health and welfare of our staff as key to delivering on our commitment to Ontarians to be the best park system we can be.



One of our organizational values is diversity. We celebrate our differences and draw on the strengths and capabilities of all Ontario's communities. We welcome and respect divergent points of view to reform and enlighten us. We depend on and value each other.

I can personally see that change is on the horizon. As an organization we are shifting and moving in a direction that aligns us with the vision of past Secretary of Cabinet, Shelly Jamieson, which was set in motion when she launched the Diversity program in the OPS.

"In a diverse organization ... respect, inclusiveness and fairness (are) a part of everything we do. It is about how we treat the public and each other ... diversity and inclusion are priorities in our effort to become a more modern organization and a leading employer".

An organization that actively supports diversity helps all its employees do their job well; in turn, we have employees who feel vital and important to the organization. They are free of harassment and discrimination, and are encouraged to thrive in a welcoming culture and work environment.

I welcome and encourage you to follow the links below to learn more on:

THE BLACK FLY TIMES

The [Regional Diversity Teams](#), which would be more than happy to provide a presentation for your staff.

The [Employee Networks](#), which are employee-driven associations, organized around shared interests, issues and a common bond or background.

What is your [Diversity Profile?](#)

The [OPS Diversity Calendar](#) and the [Days of Significance](#).

*Keith Johnston, Positive Space Champion
Southern Region Diversity Team*

~ Diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. We are all unique, embrace it and celebrate ~

HEALTH AND WELLNESS TASK TEAM

Wow, another season is upon us and it will be another exciting season for your Ontario Parks 'Health and Wellness' program. Our team had a chance to review the summary questionnaires from 2011 and you folks did a whack of stuff. Parks challenged other parks, park staff held healthy lunches and BBQ's, purchased exercise equipment but most importantly you got involved in a healthy lifestyle.

This year the Health and Wellness Task Team encourages everyone; parks, Friends employees and volunteers to continue walking the walk when it comes to their health and wellness. Continue to promote and participate in the activities, connect with other parks for ideas and challenges and keep moving your programs forward.

THE BLACK FLY TIMES



Promoting health and wellness in your workplace doesn't have to be complicated, expensive or time consuming. Here are a few ideas to kick off your season:



Organize a healthy pot-luck lunch to kick off your program. Then continue with a healthy lunch

program three times a week, or hold a health recipe cooking competition.

Organize a physical activity picnic or choose a common goal for the entire staff to loose weight as a group, challenge another park or Zone staff to a walk-a thon.

Organize a Mental Health day and invite a local mental health professional as a guest speaker.

Remember there are three pillars to a Health and Wellness program: Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Mental Health. Use your imagination to plan your program with these pillars in mind.

Get out and be active, eat healthy meals and look after your mental health.

We are "Parkies", it is what we do!!!!

*Tom Mates, Acting Chair
Health and Wellness Task Team*

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS UPDATE – PLAN IN MOTION!

Following in the success of last year's Ontario Parks Staff Conference, the Ontario Parks Management Team (PMT) endorsed the formation of task teams to continue with the implementation of Ontario Parks *Strategic Directions*. The following *Strategic Directions* task teams and their respective PMT sponsors are:

Ecological Integrity: PMT Sponsors: John Salo, Southwest Zone and Ken Lacroix, Central Zone

Healthy Parks, Healthy People: PMT Sponsor: Jay Nichols, Algonquin Zone

Green Leader: PMT Sponsor: Ross Hart, Northeast Zone

Revenue Generation/Cost Savings: PMT Sponsors: Sandy White, Southeast Zone and Barry Myers, Director's Office

Outreach Opportunities: PMT Sponsor: Mandy Bidwell, Marketing and Communications

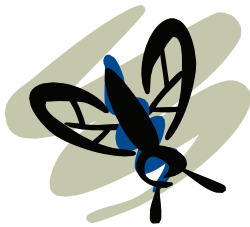
Recruitment of Ontario Parks' staff members for participation on each of the task teams is underway and will be finalized by the end of this spring!

*Jim Murphy, Park Planner
Algonquin Zone*

SO YOU ARE A NEW OR RETURNING EMPLOYEE?

We hope you enjoy your summer experience with Ontario Parks.

Don't forget to read your copy of the 2012 Staff Orientation Manual – copies are available from your manager. This manual will provide you with



THE BLACK FLY TIMES

an abundance of information to help you with your transition, including:

- General Administration
- Review Pay & Benefits Items
- OPS Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Customer Service

Personalize Your Ontario Parks Career

Career mapping is a planning tool used to forecast your job progression. Based on your training, skills, certifications, education and interest, these combinations will offer a comprehensive indication of what your job development would look like and how you would get there.

A personalized career map will offer you the opportunity to build and personally develop your future with Ontario Parks!

If you enjoy your work with Ontario Parks and are interested in furthering your experience, training and job opportunities, we encourage interested staff to speak to your immediate supervisor or manager about mapping a career path.

Ontario Parks Ambassador Program

Interested in sharing your summer employment experiences! We have the program for you! Our Ontario Parks Ambassador Program was designed to have current student employees promote their Ontario Parks' summer employment by sharing their experiences with fellow students throughout the school year. More information available in the 2012 Staff Orientation Manual – available from your manager.

Your succession planning team members are: Greg Wake, Chair, Ops & Dev.; Deanna Miller, Marketing & Communications; Lee Kinzie, Ops & Dev.; Peter Dawson, Southeast Zone; Jill Van Niekerk, Southwest Zone; Ed Paleczny, Algonquin; Michele Proulx, NWZ; Wade Murrant, NEZ

*Deanna Miller, Marketing Specialist
Marketing and Communications Section*

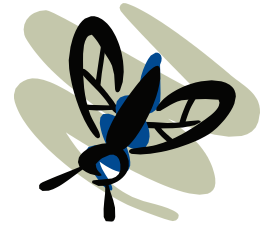
DID YOU KNOW...ONTARIO PARKS HAS A BOARD OF DIRECTORS

There is a long history of having some form of advisory committee in place to provide advice on provincial parks issues. From the mid-1970s through 1993 the Provincial Parks Council provided advice to the Minister on such topics as the review of the Algonquin Provincial Park Management Plan and cottage leases.

The current Ontario Parks Board of Directors was established as a Minister's advisory board in 1997. The role of the Board is to provide advice to the Minister of Natural Resources about planning, managing, and developing the protected areas system in Ontario. Some examples of high profile initiatives the Board has been involved in include: development of the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act to replace the Provincial Parks Act (2006), the Joint Proposal for Lightening the Ecological Footprint of Logging in Algonquin Provincial Park and recently the proposal for cottage leases in Rondeau Provincial Park.

Board members are not paid; they are essentially volunteers, however, they are

THE BLACK FLY TIMES



compensated for expenses. The Board can have up to 12 members, plus the Chair. Membership is structured primarily to represent stakeholders' views from a variety of sectors, and from across the province. In the past, members have had an affiliation with Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Northern Ontario Tourist Outfitters and the Ontario Private Campground Association. Others have been academics, or individuals with a strong interest in the environment or with a background in business.

It is the Minister's prerogative to appoint the Board's Chair and members, subject to Cabinet approval. The current Board members are:

Margaret (Maggie) Matear (Chair), Timmins, strategic planning consultant

Donald Bourgeois, Kitchener, Director of Legal Services, Alcohol and Gaming Commission

David Edgar, Sault Ste. Marie, retired tradesman

Jeremy Dickson, Atikokan, outfitter

Lynn Arnold-Cox, Pickle Lake, outfitter

Don Huff, Toronto, environmental consultant

Duncan MacIntyre, Toronto, retired business consultant

Gordon Nelson, Waterloo, retired professor

Earlene Worrell, Markham, marketing consultant

Pat Walsh, Ontario Parks, Board Secretary

One area the current Board is keenly interested in is to increase its exposure to Ontario Parks'

staff. Many park staff are unaware that the Board even exists and have no idea what they do. This will change as the Board develops a website and includes articles in future editions of the Blackfly Times to keep staff informed of what they have been up to. If you have any questions about the Board or would like to learn more please contact Pat Walsh in the Director's Office.

Pat Walsh, Strategic Planning Officer, Ontario Parks

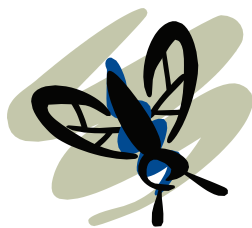
OLD TIME HOCKEY! – THE ONTARIO PARK RANGERS

Provincial Parks' employees have a long history of attending and being successful at the MNR Provincial Hockey Tournament over its 38 year history.

Park staff have played on many a district team and "the big A" fielded a team of staff back in the 1980s. To the best of my knowledge, there has never been a team comprised solely of active park staff from across the province. That changed a couple tourneys ago when the ONTARIO PARK RANGERS hit the ice in London, then North Bay and recently in Timmins.

There are some aspects of this team that we thought the staff from across the province might find interesting. Maybe not. Regardless, you be the judge.

Firstly, we really should be called the Ontario Parks Rangers but just like the Toronto Maple Leafs (and no, we don't want to be compared to them), we have taken some grammatical licence to take the "s" out of Ontario Parks for the purpose of verbal flow.



THE BLACK FLY TIMES

We went through one tournament with borrowed uniforms and we were named "Provincial Parks Team". Seeing as park staff started out in 1893 being called "Park Rangers" and the Rangers name being one with some NHL history, we quickly decided on a name. Being part of a uniformed organization, we soon agreed that a uniform had to be developed. Any good uniform has to have a visual identity and one of our team looked in the mirror with an enforcement hat on and came up with our RANGER logo. You have to admit he looks quite professional, concerned, determined, and actually quite handsome, just like most of our team!

The next item was jersey numbers. Any team can have normal numbers but we decided to take another tact. We used our 120 year history of protection to come up with some more unique jersey #'s. As an example;

- #6 6 classes of parks
- #7 PPCRA acclaimed
- #10 Ontario Parks makes up 10% of Ontario
- #70 1970 our largest park, Polar Bear was regulated. Our largest player wears this jersey.
- #99 no, not Gretzky but rather OLL park expansion
- #57 1957 - Provincial Parks Act
- #94 1894 – our second park Rondeau is created.
- #93 has a footnote to it besides obviously representing 1893, the year our parks "system" was founded.

When we made the jersey, we put a "big A" on the front, not to identify an assistant



captain but to signify that Algonquin was our first park and it is indeed special. Upon John Winters' retirement last year, we presented the jersey to him and have saved him a spot on our bench should he ever choose to join us. I'd love to see that moustache and fiery eyes burning up the wing with #93 on his back and the Big A on his chest. Perhaps next year in Barrie - his old stompin' grounds.

In terms of our success on the ice, well, it's a work in progress, and we like to focus more on the camaraderie and team aspect. We fielded a team comprised of Park Wardens, Operation Technicians, Assistant Superintendents, Superintendents and a Zone Manager. Our team hailed from Southeast, Southwest, Central, Algonquin, and Northeast zones. We are one of the few teams that is comprised of actual staff and not family members or former staff, including the goalie, who doesn't have to be an MNR staff at all.

We are always looking to have a bank of players to call if we are caught short. If you have an interest in joining the ONTARIO PARK RANGERS, send a note to GM Scott Thomas from Six Mile Lake.

*Scott Thomas, Park Superintendent
Six Mile Lake, Hardy Lake & Gibson River*



2012 Ontario Park Rangers

THE BLACK FLY TIMES



LEARNING TEAM

The Ontario Parks Learning Team, made up of staff from around the province was established to help guide the development of corporate level learning initiatives for Ontario Parks' staff.

Team members include:

Kathy McPherson, Learning and Education Coordinator, Ontario Parks, Peterborough

Anne Young, Assistant Superintendent, Dryden Node Parks

Anne Craig, Senior Marketing Specialist, Ontario Parks, Peterborough

Sandy White, A/Zone Manager, Southeast Zone

Kirsty Dickson, Sr. P.A. Program Coordinator, Strategic Planning and Evaluation

Bob Kloske, Zone Parks Management Specialist, Ontario Parks, Southwest Zone

Tom Mates, Superintendent, Presqu'ile Provincial Park

Jim Murphy, Park Planner, Algonquin Park

John Salo, Zone Manager, Southwest Zone

Paul Smith, A/Superintendent, Kawartha Highlands Provincial Park

Brad Steinberg, A/Chief Park Naturalist, Algonquin Park

Roel Teunissen, Park Management Planner, Northeast Zone

Louisa Vatri, Organizational Excellence Consultant, Organizational Development and Excellence Section, Strategic Human Resources Business Branch

Greg Wake, A/Manager, Operations and Development Section, Ontario Parks



Look for more updates about Learning Team activities in the coming months.

Tom Mates, A/Chair
Ontario Parks Learning Team
(613)475-4324, ext. 228
tom.mates@ontario.ca