THE MATTAWA RIVER, ONTARIO 1988-1998

REPORT TO THE CANADIAN HERITAGE RIVERS BOARD ON THE STATE OF THE RIVER

PREPARED FOR PARKS ONTARIO

BY

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD

This report was prepared by Ontario Parks to allow fulfilment of the requirement stated in Appendix 1, Section B(b) of the *Canadian Heritage Rivers System Objectives, Principles and Procedures: "The [Canadian Heritage Rivers] Board will review each designation every ten years in conjunction with the responsible agency"*. It is intended to permit the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to review the present status of the Mattawa River as part of the CHRS and to record changes that have occurred to the river over its ten-plus years in the System, 1988-98.

The information contained in the report pertains to the human and natural heritage, recreational values, and integrity values, for which the river was nominated to the System. These are mostly contained within the boundaries of the two provincial parks - Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain. These parks comprise the "management area" of the desingated river as recognised by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board. However, it is recognised that a number of important values are located along the river outside these parks, and within the broader watershed of the river. The condition of values which lie outside the management area, and management activities affecting these values, are also addressed in this document where appropriate.

Since designation of the Mattawa River to the CHRS in 1988, two important changes have occurred within the System:

1. First, specific integrity value guidelines were introduced in 1990 for natural, cultural and recreational values. The Mattawa River would not currently meet the *natural* integrity guidelines because of the three major impoundments controlling water levels. The natural values of the Mattawa River are nevertheless grandfathered as valid contributions to the System. An assessment of changes to all integrity values is summarized in section 4.4.

2. Second, national thematic frameworks were adopted by the Board in 1997 and 1998 now provide a mechanism for measuring the contribution that the river makes to the System, in terms of other similar natural and human heritage values within System. This contribution is described in Appendix 1.

Finally, it should be noted that, in addition to fulfilling the Board's requirements, this document is intended to be useful to interested agencies and individuals. However, it is essentially a *summary* report on the condition of values and related activities. For detailed information on these, the reader is referred to documents listed in the Selected Bibliography.

Nick Coomber
January 1999

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is indebted to staff of the Sudbury office of Ontario Parks, Ministry of Natural Resources, for information provided in preparation of this report. In particular, the services of Pauline Haarmeyer and Will Kershaw ensured the accuracy of the information contained. Many useful summaries of relevant information were also provided by David Harding in a draft monitoring report on the French and Mattawa Rivers.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PERIOD 1988-1998

The Mattawa's decade in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) has been marked by a significant increase in recreational use, some of which can be attributed to the CHRS designation. At the same time, management of the river has grown to meet the demands of this increased use. Not only has Ontario Parks made significant improvements to facilities and enhanced the historical and natural experience of canoeing the river, but other government and local non-government groups have made major contributions. In particular, the organization *Friends of the Mattawa Heritage Park,* established in 1993, has almost eliminated the problem of garbage and vandalism through coordination of an annual *Trash Bash*, and at the same time has enhanced the knowledge and experience of river users through publication of the *Mattawa River Heritage Map*. The Mattawa-North Bay Conservation Authority has contributed through two significant land acquisitions and coordination of the annual canoe race during Rendezvous festivities.

Three specific actions taken by, or in association with, Ontario Parks have had a particular impact on the condition of the river's nomination values, and indeed are likely to have even greater impact in the decade to come. These are:

- The management plan for Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park
- Closure of public access to Bouillon Lake
- Initiation of work on the Canadian Ecology Centre

Samuel de Champlain Management Plan. Although opened as a park in 1962, a formal park management plan for Samuel de Champlain was not completed until 1990, two years after designation of the river to the CHRS. The plan thus recognizes the importance of managing the nomination values contained in the park along a 7 kilometre section below Mattawa River Provincial Waterway Park, including the historic Campion Rapids area. As an operating park, management of Samuel de Champlain is key to the management of the Mattawa River's heritage and recreational values. Almost all of the river's facilities for "developed" camping, day use, boat launching, hiking, interpretation, and information, and resources for natural and cultural resource management, are located within the park boundaries. Specific capital and other projects contained in the plan are noted in Appendix 2, Table 2.2, with commentary on progress in regard to these projects.

Closure of Bouillon Lake Access. The road from Highway 17 to Bouillon Lake was the only route available to anglers, destination campers and motorboat users wishing to gain access to the section of the river west of Bouillon Lake. This section of the river contains spectacular scenery with steep shorelines, a gorge and delta at the mouth of Purdy Creek, and is a key component of the natural and historical experience that the Mattawa River provides to river tourists. The poor condition of the road led to its closure in 1995 and, because of its popularity, there have since been continued public demands for its reopening. However, the closure has brought about a marked reduction in problems of

garbage, graffiti, vandalism, excessive noise and illegal camping. The condition of the river and its campsites in this section has improved remarkably.

Canadian Ecology Centre. The Canadian Ecology Centre is an ambitious project of the Mattawa and Area Forestry Committee, working in conjunction with industry, educational institutes, and a number of local government and non-government groups, on which construction began in 1998 in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park. Termed an *Eco-Centre Experiential Learning Facility* it will focus on public awareness of sustainable forestry practices, conservation, eco-tourism and education through development of four season "eco-camps".it is intended to be a major regional attraction for groups and individuals that will provide major economic spinoffs locally. While the Centre has had almost no impact on the river's nominaiton values to date, it may be anticipated that in the coming decade and beyond, it will be the single most important attraction drawing additional rivers users to the river. It will also be an exceptional opportunity for educating river users and adding to their appreciation of its natural and cultural values.

Comment on changes in Parks Ontario management. (info needed)

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Mattawa River was nominated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) in January 1988 and at the same meeting the management plan for the Mattawa River Provincial Park was tabled[1]. The Canadian Heritage Rivers Board accepted the nomination and plan and recommended designation of the river. The Mattawa thus became the first, and only, river to be recommended for nomination and designation at the same meeting.

The Mattawa River was nominated to the CHRS for its natural and human heritage and its recreational opportunities. It met all four natural heritage selection guidelines, two of the four human heritage guidelines, both recreational guidelines, and all integrity guidelines[2].

A commemorative plaque was unveiled during a small ceremony at the main access point in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park, just below Campion Rapids, on August 5, 1988.

1.2 Purpose of the Report

Every ten years or less, the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board reviews nominations to ensure that rivers still meet program guidelines. To enable this, managing governments are required to undertake a study of the condition of their rivers' nominations values and to submit findings to the CHR Board for consideration.

The purpose of this report is to describe the condition of the natural and human heritage, recreational, and integrity values for which the Mattawa River was nominated, as well as changes and management actions influencing their condition over the period 1988-1998[3].

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[1] The management plan for Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park, through which the river flows for seven kilometres of the nominated section, was tabled with the Board in 1990.

[2] Specific integrity guidelines for natural, human and recreational values were introduced in 1990, after designation of the Mattawa. Natural integrity guidelines now require that rivers nominated for natural values be free of impoundments. Three dams on the Mattawa would now disqualify the river on this count; however, the river's natural values has been grandfathered into the System.

[3] The CHR Board approved deferral of this report until 1999. It thus covers a period of approximately twelve years.

1.3 Overview of French River Management

The Mattawa River links the city of North Bay on the west side of Trout Lake and the town of Mattawa on the Ottawa River, a total distance of about 65 kilometres. The river *per se* rises in Trout Lake and flows from its eastern outlet for about 55 kilometres to the Ottawa River. For 43 kilometres from the outlet at Trout Lake, the river course is protected in two provincial park: the first 36 kilometres flows through Mattawa River Provincial Park, and the next 7 kilometres through Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park[4]. The remaining 12 kilometres was not nominated to the CHRS and lies outside any protected area[5]. Similarly, the eleven kilometres of the route through Trout Lake and the La Vase Portage was not included.

Mattawa River Provincial Park. Mattawa River Provincial Park (MRPP) was established in 1970 and is classified as a waterway provincial park. It comprises an incomplete strip of land 122 metres (400 feet) wide along both banks of the river. Total area of the park is 3260 hectares. Significant portions of the shoreline of Talon Lake, including Kaibuskong Bay, are privately owned and excluded from the park. Most of the privately owned land is used for residential and cottaging purposes and are administered by municipal governments. There is no budget and no staff assigned specifically to managing the MRPP; its values and use are managed through Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park.

Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park. Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park (SDCPP) was established in 1962, expanded in 1971, and comprises a much wider land base than MRPP, extending up to two kilometres from the river both to the north and south. In fact, some of the northern part of the park lies outside the drainage basin of the Mattawa River. In spite of this, the total area of the park, 2550 hectares, is less than that of the Mattawa River Provincial Park. There are no privately held lands within the park. Unlike the MRPP, the SDCPP is not a waterway park but is an "operating park", with a budget and full- and part-time staff.

Managing the designated section of the Mattawa River over the period 1988-98 has been largely achieved through management of the two provincial parks. However, the Mattawa

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[4] The *CHRS Nomination Document for the Mattawa River, Ontario* (page 9) is in error in stating that the nominated section is 33 kilometres long.

[5] The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources administers crown land along almost all of the north shore of the lower section of the Mattawa and owns the Hurdman Dam which controls water levels as far upstream as Campion Rapids. There is virtually no crown land on Trout Lake, although some public lands are held by the City of North Bay and the North Bay Conservation Authority.

North Bay Conservation Authority has played an active role in regard to managing the river's watershed outside the provincial park and in organising activities affecting the entire length of the river. The Authority, for example, was involved in the protection of wetlands at the Mattawa Bridge and developed the Voyageur Adventure Tour, a five-hour historical tour of the river. Annually, the Authority has sponsored a canoe race along the entire length of the river from North Bay to Mattawa. Since 1993, the race has been held in conjunction with *Rendezvous*, an annual celebration of the voyageur history of the river. Acquisition of lands at Shields Point and the La Vase Portage in 1993 also augmented the Authority's role in managing historical values of the river and protecting its integrity. The Authority is playing a lead role in the nomination of the La Vase Portage to the CHRS which will greatly increase the integrity of the designated river section.

Key values along the river, within the two provincial parks, are protected within five types of management zones: two nature reserve zones, a historical zone, two natural environment zones, four access zones, and a single development zone[6].

Nature Reserve Zones. Nature reserve zones are intended to provide complete protection to special natural features of provincial or national significance. Two small nature reserve zones are identified in SDCPP:

- 12 hectares in two areas southwest of Land Lake containing bogs and significant communities of Virginia chain fern, wild rye and bottle brush;
- 20 hectares at the confluence of Amable du Fond nd Pautois River on Moore Lake which contains important wildlife habitat and aquatic vegetation.

Historical Zones. Restrictions on development intended to protect artifacts and enhance users experiences are key to historical zones. Each park contains one:

- 100 hectares in SDCPP comprising 122 metre strip along the river from the western boundary to Campion Rapids
- 181 hectares at La Porte de l'Enfer which extends along the river from Pimisi Bay to Elm Point which contains remains of a timber chute and an abandoned native ochre mine and refining site.

Natural Environment Zones. These two zones comprise most of the two parks: 3043 hectares in MRPP and 2108 hectares in SDCPP. Within these areas the primary goal is resource protection and, secondarily, recreation management.

Access Zone. In MRPP, access to the river for boaters and anglers is provided through two access zones: Pine Lake, and Rice Bay. A third zone is available in the MacPherson

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[6] *French River Provincial Park Management Plan*, Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario, November 1993, pages 3-8.

Drive area but is not used at present, and a fourth access to Bouillon Lake has been closed (see 2.1.etc below)[7].
Development Zone. A 310-hectare development zone is located in SDCPP containing two large campgrounds, a day use area, historical displays, including the CHRS plaque, river access and other visitor services and recreation facilities.

To these designated zones may also be added the 61-hectare conservation area at Shields Point managed by the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority. This area, donated in 1994, comprise mostly agricultural lands as well as some old growth pine and wetlands. A management plan was completed[8] for the lands in 1998 which proposes passive recreational use and interpretation of the natural and cultural heritage of the lands.

The two provincial parks are managed through the North Bay District Office of Ontario Parks in North Bay. The superintendent of these two parks is also responsible for *.... add organisational information*

[7] Additional access to the river is provided through three areas outside the park: MacPherson Drive, Blanchard's Landing, and from Highway 17 at Pimisi Bay

[8] North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. *Shields-McLaren Conservation Area Master Plan. Final Report*, August 1998.

2. CHANGES TO NOMINATION VALUES 1988-1998

During the last ten or so years significant measures have been taken by Ontario Parks and other agencies and organisations to manage the outstanding natural and historical experience that the CHRS-designated section of Mattawa River provides to visitors. A considerable number of *proposed* measures were incorporated in the management plan for SDCPP in 1990. Progress n these measures is desribed n Appendix 2.1. In general, actions taken have affected relatively few changes to nomination values, but have been nonetheless effective in maintaining or enhancing the role that nomination values play as components of a Canadian heritage river.

As a result of these actions, negative changes to nomination values have been minimal, while the quality of a number of values has been enhanced. Major changes are primarily related to the recreational value of the river:

- Heritage appreciation
- Canoeing
- Angling

2.1 Heritage Appreciation

At the time of designation of the Mattawa River, increasing use of the river by boaters and anglers was resulting in garbage, litter and sanitation problems at portages and favoured campsites. These problems were beginning to detract significantly from the natural and human heritage experience that river tourists sought. Initiated by the Voyageur Canoe Group in 1989 and making use of the services of the Environmental Youth Corps, an annual *Trash Bash* has been held during which volunteers have collected and disposed of garbage and litter. Boy Scouts and Canadian Armed Forces personnel from Petawawa have also participated in clean-ups along the river. Since 1993, the *Trash Bash* has been organised by Friends of the Mattawa Heritage Park. In 1994, Friends published the *Mattawa River Heritage Map*, a guide for river users containing information on the river's historical and natural values.

Of particular significance to the heritage experience of the section of the river within Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park was the closure of the Bouillon access road from Highway 17. In spite of opposition from the many users of this access route, the park management has succeeded in increasing the heritage experience of the highly significant river section between Bouillon Lake and Campion Rapids by reducing use levels and, with this, the occurrences of garbage and vandalism.

The cultural heritage of the river can now also be appreciated by visitors to the river without needing canoes or other personal equipment. In 1994, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority initiated a *Voyageur Heritage Tour*, a five hour trip along the ten kilometres of the river within the park. Participants travel in replica North canoes, are led by costumed guides who interpret fur trade lore, and participate in fur trade era activities.

2.2 Canoeing

The past ten years has seen a significant increase in the number of canoeists travelling this challenging and historic river. Many of the improvements made in terms of the heritage experience (2.1above) also enhance recreational canoeing on the river. In addition to the annual cleanup of garbage and litter, the replacement of privies at campsites along the river enhanced the canoeing experience.

While the closure of the Bouillon Lake access road reduced the number of put-in points for canoeists, access via MacPherson Drive was greatly improved as a result of improvements made by East Ferris Township. Opportunities for competitive canoeists were increased through the promotion of the annual Mattawa River canoe race as part of the Rendezvous celebrations.

2.3 Angling

Angling is a significant part of the river touring experience as well as an important activity in its own right. A significant population of lake trout exists along the river, although in the 1980's numbers seemed to decline, along with an alarming drop in the yellow pickerel (walleye) population, particularly in Lake Talon. Following public input, it was determined that over-fishing of pre-spawning fish, deterioration of spawning shoals and stranding of eggs by draw-downs were factors in the population drop. A number of projects were carried out by the Lake Talon Cottagers Inc. In conjunction with the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Community Fisheries Involvement Program several actions were taken: the draw-down of Lake Talon was delayed until after spawning, spawning grounds were cleaned and rehabilitated, and pickerel and rainbow and lake trout species were stocked.

The North Bay Fisheries Management Plan, 1987-2000 (MNR, 1987) classifies Lake Talon as a B2 lake, meaning a lake with some private shoreline and some environmental constraints to lake trout production.
Need copy of plan plus information on results.

3. STUDIES AND PLANS

3.1 Studies and Plans of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources

Lake Talon Loon Nesting Study

This annual study begun in the early 1990's on Lake Talon, and more recently on Turtle Lake, observed nesting patterns in natural shoreline sites and two types of artificial nesting platforms. It is intended to provide an understanding of which factors most affect the success of nesting loons including water quality, adjacent vegetation and site characteristics, shoreline slope and configuration, human activities and shoreline development. Results to date indicate that loon nesting is most successful on island sites where shoreline slope is suitable.

Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park Management Plan, 1990

The approval of the management plan for Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park in 1990 was a key step in managing the designated section of the river as a Canadian Heritage River[9]. The management plan defines a goal similar to that of Mattawa River Provincial Park: *"to maintain and manage the outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences"*.[10] The plan identifies 10 significant natural areas and designates two nature reserve zones (32ha), a historical zone (100ha), a development zone (310ha) and designates the remainder of the park a natural environment zone. The plan describes a number of projects related to the nomination values of the river which were proposed. Progress on these projects is described in Appendix 2.2.

Canoeists Survey, 1994

In 1994 two students funded through the Environmental Youth Corps to clean up garbage and install privies along the river from Pimisi Bay to Bouillon Lake also conducted a survey of 27 canoeing and kayaking parties. Stated reasons for making the trip included because it was a heritage river. Most other reasons were related to the river's natural values and most respondents indicated a willingness to pay a user fee to help maintain the river. 19 groups complained about the problems of garbage and/or sanitation.

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[9] Technically, this plan should have been submitted to the Board prior to designation of the river section.

[10] The 1988 management plan for Mattawa River Provincial Park states that its goal is *"to maintain and manage outstanding recreational water routes and landscapes having both representative natural features and historical resources to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences"*. Ontario, Ministry of Natural Resources. *Mattawa River Provincial Park Management Plan.* 1988. Page 3

Life Sciences Report for Site Region 5E
Northern Ontario Wetlands Evaluation
Need summary of information on these

North Bay District Fisheries Plan, 1987
The Fisheries plan for North Bay District prepared by the Ministry of Natural Resources in 1987 recognizes concerns and proposes strategies for Talon Lake. Overfishing of pre-spawning pickerel is addressed through the establishment of a sanctuary from mid-March until mid-May in two townships. The shortage of pickerel and trout in the lake is addressed through stocking of pickerel, rainbow trout and lake trout. Spawning bed assessments were also made and improvements made when necessary. This latter action has been undertaken with considerable input form the public, notably the Lake Talon Cottagers Inc.
Any other measures in this plan for the Mattawa?

3.2 Studies and Plans of Other Governments

Forest Health Monitoring
For many years, the Forest Health Monitoring Unit of the Canadian Forest Service has been studying gypsy moth populations in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park. Pheromone traps have determined that local populations have remained low and most moths caught have been male. Since 1985, the Unit has annually studied the effects of acid rain on tree crowns relative to other factors such as insects, diseases, droughts and storms. Results indicate that acid rain is not having a significant impact on forest crowns in the park.

CHRS Economic Impact Study, 1991
In 1991, Parks Canada, sponsored by the CHR Board and with the cooperation of SDCPP staff, undertook a survey of users of the Mattawa River, as part of a program to assess the economic impact of designating the rivers as a Canadian Heritage Rivers. This was the first attempt by the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to determine economic impacts on a river possessing multiple access points and the survey was treated primarily as a methodological development exercise. About 500 questionnaires were completed by interviewers during the middle and late summer of 1991. Data on economic impacts was judged to be of minor value due to inconsistencies in the survey method. However, the survey provided useful information user patterns and origins.

Salamander Study
Begun in the fall of 1997, this project is presently being undertaken by Nipissing University in a white pine stand in Samuel de Champlain Park. Salamanders were chosen as they are good indicators of environmental changes. The study is intended to improve scientists' ability to interpret research on the impact of forest practices on numbers of the "downed woody debris community", which comprise habitat for salamanders. The study involves comparisons of the numbers of animals detected in artificial habitats compared with the true population under or inside logs.

Trout Lake Water Quality Study, 1989-91

Although Trout Lake lies outside the designated section of the Mattawa River, it comprises the main source of water for the river and is therefore integral to the biological integrity of the river. Monitoring of the water quality of the lake is also a priority of the City of North Bay, which depends on the lake for its water supply. It is one of the largest untreated water supplies in North America. In 1989, in conjunction with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and the Trout Lake Homeowners Association, the City studied the effects of septic systems of shoreline residences and recreational activities such as ice fishing on the lake's water quality. The study continued until 1991 and found almost no evidence of fecal pollution.

Rice Bay Wetlands Evaluation, 1992

As part of the Northern Ontario Wetland Evaluation, the Rice Bay wetlands, a series of seven wetlands between Tilliard Lake and Talon Lake, comprising about 140 hectares in total, were inventoried as a single complex in 1992. The complex lies in the vicinity of the delta at the mouth of North River and encompasses a candidate Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. Only part of the complex is located within the Mattawa River park boundaries.

The complex contains a diversity of marsh communities and an unusual silver maple swamp forest. Within the wetlands are provincially significant communities of waterwort *(Elatine minima)* and regionally significant flora such as water awlwort (*Subularia aquatica*). The area experiences considerable recreational activity including waterfowl hunting, skiing and snowmobiling, as well as fuelwood cutting.

La Vase Watershed Study, 1996-97

Need copy or information on this

Shields-McLaren Conservation Area Master Plan, 1998

In 1998 the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority completed a management plan for the 61 hectare property donated to the Authority by the McLaren family in 1993. The property is located on Shields Point north of Kaibuskong Bay on Lake Talon and is surrounded on three sides by roads, cottages and cottage lots.

The conservation area possesses no shoreline, but interesting human and natural history features including a mature white pine stand, a wetland and, nearby, the foundations of the area's first trading post established in 1860 by Andrew Shields. No aboriginal archaeological sites were identified. Human heritage themes thus include early settlement, logging and trading. Recommendations of the plan address trail network, maintenance procedures and signage and facilities.

3.3 Studies and Plans of Other Organizations

Canadian Ecology Centre, 1995
The Mattawa and Area Forestry Committee, and non-government agency established in 1994, prepared a draft proposal in December 1995 for the development of a Canadian Ecology Centre in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park. The Centre would be partnership-run world class facility dedicated to teaching and eco-tourism modelled on the Teton Science School in Wyoming. Residential and day students and visitors would participate in field studies involving new technology and focusing on forest ecosystems and other elements of the Canadian Shield environment. Since completion of this report, an archaeological survey has been undertaken of the site and construction work has commenced.

Archaeological Survey of Proposed CEC Site, 1997
A survey of the favoured site for the Canadian Ecology Centre near the Amable du Fond River as undertaken by Dr. Pollock assisted by First Nations representatives. An archaeological site was located about 100m from the building site. Flakes and cracked rocks indicate that it was probably a single occupation hunting camp up to 200 years old. A second dig at a more remote location from the building site revealed prehistoric Algonkian artifacts and non-native objects.

3.4 Chronology of Major Events, 1988-98

1988
CHRS plaque unveiling ceremony
Stocking of pickerel and trout in Lake Talon

1989
Completion of OMNR North Bay District fisheries plan
Initiation of Trout Lake water quality study

1990
Approval of management plan for SDCPP
Trout Lake water quality study (year 2)

1991
Initiation of Trash Bash by Voyageur Canoe Group
CHRS economic impact study
Trout Lake water quality study (year 3)

1992
Annual Trash Bash
Completion of Trout Lake water quality study
Proclamation of Alexander Mackenzie Voyageur Route

1993
Provincial Parks Centennial
Initiation of "Rendezvous"
Formation of Friends of Mattawa River Heritage Park from Voyageur Canoe Group
Field inventory of Rice Bay Delta-Blue Mountain complex
Lake Trout spawning bed project (year 1)
Northern Ontario wetlands evaluation
Annual Trash Bash

1994
Canoeist survey
Creation of Mattawa and Area Forestry Committee (MAFC)
Donation of Shields Point to North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA)
Lake Trout spawning bed project (year 2)
Lake Trout shoal enhancement (year 1)
Arial reconnaissance of Rice Bay-Blue Mountain complex
Annual Trash Bash and Rendezvous

1995
Closure of Bouillon Lake access road
Canadian Ecology Centre proposal by MAFC
Creation of Restore the Link?
Lake Trout shoal enhancement (year 2)
Annual Trash Bash and Rendezvous

1996
Voyageur Adventure Tour initiated
Lake Trout shoal enhancement (year 3)
Annual Trash Bash and Rendezvous

1997
New Talon Dam water level strategy
Lands for Life reconnaissance of river valley
Proclamation of AMVR by Ontario?
Discussions with Nipissing Univ. ref land transfer
Salamander study initiated
Archaeological survey for CEC
Completion of LaVase Watershed Study
Annual Trash Bash and Rendezvous

1998
Shields-McLaren Conservation Area master plan completed
Construction of CEC initiated

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values

4.1 Natural Heritage Values

Theme/sub-theme	Nature and Location of Natural Value	Changes Since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
1. Hydrology			
1.1.1 Water Content: Clear water (0-50 mg./l), low turbidity & dissolved solids	Minor pollution in Trout Lake and Kaibuskong R.	Water content essentially unchanged.	
1.2.2 Seasonal Variation Temperate Spring peak	Relatively short river has single peak. Levels maintained artificially during summer.	River valley is slightly milder than surrounding area.	
1.3.6 Drainage Basin	Atlantic Ocean Basin - St. Lawrence River System.		
1.4.7 River Size: 62-71 m3/sec. Stream Order > 2	Entire river section.	Flow regulated by three dams.	
2. Physiography			
2.1.4 Hydrogeology:	Impervious gneisses and granites of Canadian Shield throughout area		
2.2.2 Faulting	Mattawa River Fault, forms northern boundary of Ottawa Bonnechere Graben		
2.2.4 Volcanism	Amphibolite and other dykes throughout area		
2.2.5 Metamorphism	Region was subjected to high grade metamorph-ism in Ottawa-Bonnechere graben	Brucite mining in 1950's for magnesium - largest deposit in N. America. Potential for feldspar and mica extraction.	
2.2.6 Glacial scouring	Bedrock scouring Paresseux Falls area,		
2.2.7 Glacial retreat	Kames and eskers found throughout river corridor	Sand and gravel extraction for construction occurs outside park	Gravel pit near main park road in SDCPP to be rehabilitated.
2.2.10 Glacial melting: Lake Algonquin drainage outlet (10,500 B.P)	Gravel deposits; aban-doned river channels and cataracts at Talon Chute to Pimisi Bay; boulder pavement at Pine Lake/ McCool Bay		
2.3.3 Physiographic Region	Canadian Shield - Laurentian Region.		

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.1 Natural Heritage Values (continued)

Theme/sub-theme	Nature and Location of Natural Value	Changes Since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
2.4.6 Topography: Moderate gradient, middle section of river	Drop of 50 metres over about 43 km from Trout Lake to eastern boundary of SDCPP.		
3. River Morphology			
3.2.3 Lake influenced river system	Turtle, Talon and other lakes along length		
3.3.2 Boulder rapids	Des Roches		
3.3.4 Cascading rapids	Campion, La Rose		
3.3.5 Chutes	Talon Chute		
3.3.6 Waterfalls	Paresseux Falls		
3.4 Fluvial Landforms			
3.4.2 Deltas, outwash plains, fans	Tombolo in Shields Bay, deltas at mouths of North River, Purdy Ck., and on Moore Lake	Much of tombolo is privately owned. Moore Lake delta designated as Nature Reserve Zone, enclosed within a Development Zone.	
3.4.4 Meanders, oxbows	Oxbow lakes and blind channels near mouth of North River		
3.4.10 Gorges	Main channel, The Gut, Purdy Creek		
3.4.11 Potholes	Large pothole on north shore near Talon Chute		
4. Biotic Environments			
4.1.2 River System: Middle zone	Entire designated section of river		
4.1.6 Oligotrophic lakes:	Talon, Turtle, Long and Pine Lakes.		
4.1.7 Mesotrophic Lakes:	Robichaud Lake, Moore Lake	Beaches and other uses on Moore Lake threaten ecosystem.	Vegetation study. SDCPP management plan addresses many concerns.
4.2.9 Ecozone: Boreal Shield.	Entire river and management area.		20 km section of river inventoried by Mattawa and Area Forestry Committee in

			1995.

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values (Continued)

4.1 Natural Heritage Values (continued)

Theme/sub-theme	Nature and Location of Natural Value	Changes Since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
4.1.10 Bogs	Outlet of Long Lake, Gem Lake		Areas near Long Lake designated as Nature Reserve Zones
4.1.12 Swamp forests	Silver maple complex in Rice Bay wetlands		
5. Vegetation			
5.1.3 Old growth hemlock and hardwoods	Northern part of Samuel de Champlain PP		
5.1.7 Significant plant communities:	Mattawa serves as a post-glacial plant migration corridor. Species rare in Ontario include jointweed, eyebright, false pimpernel, lake cress, wild rye, and Virginia chain-fern, awlwort and waterwort.		
6. Fauna			
6.1.1 Significant fish populations	Lake Trout in Turtle Lake, Talon Lake - spawning areas	Over-fishing of pre-spawning pickerel. Low populations of pickerel and trout in Lake Talon.	Fish sanctuary in spring. Ongoing fish stocking in Talon and Turtle Lakes. Sonic fish tag survey 1994. Artificial shoal created by Lake Talon Cottagers Inc. Earlier Lake Talon drawdown stranding fewer eggs.
6.1.4, 6.1.7 Significant reptile populations	Sizeable population of Blandings turtle at western? extent of its range.		
6.1.2 Significant mammal populations	White tailed deer, black bear, timber wolves. Largest white-tailed deer population in region	Hunting pressure and demands of hunters in northern part of SDCPP.	New cut-line to mark boundary proposed in management plan for SDCPP.

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.2 Human Heritage Values

Theme/sub-theme	Cultural Heritage Value	Changes since 1988 & Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
1.1.1 Aboriginal fishing	Aboriginal fishing sites - Elm Pt., Grasswell Point., Camp Is., Dugas Bay.	Recreational camping has disturbed several sites. Dams have drowned others.	
1.3.4 Quarrying stone	La Porte de l'Enfer, aboriginal ochre mine and refining site. Brucite (hydrated oxide of magnesium) deposit near Talon Chutes (nat. sig.)		Porte de l'Enfer included in Historical Zone
2.1.1 Navigable channel	Aboriginal trade route for Early, Middle and Late Woodland cultures. Portages: 14 historic portages, 11 still intact. La Vase portage (Prov. sign). European fur trade route of the NWC and HBC, The Mattawa Route (HSMBC) and Canoe Route to the West (OHF Plaque).	Dams have drowned two significant sets of rapids - La Rose and de la Tortue. 3-km section in western part of SDCPP designated as a historical zone	La Vase portage section of river to be nominated to CHRS in 1999. Possible nomination of Mattawa River below SDCPP considered. Mattawa River Heritage Map published.
2.1.2 Human-powered freight	Replica *canot de maitre* in Voyageur Museum (Samuel de Champlain P.P.).		
2.1.5 Cargoes	Located in Voyageur Museum		
2.3.1 Log running	Log driving route for the square timber and lumbering industry, log chute and camp (1855) remnants at Paresseux Falls; dam remnants at ??.		
3.1.3 Shoreline seasonal settlements	Seasonal native camps at Palframan Camp, Grasswell Pt., and Campion Rapids.		
3.2.1 Archaeo-logical evidence of shoreline aboriginal settlements	Werewolf pits, 4 rock "cairns", 28 archaeological sites (e.g. Pimisi Bay-Campion Rapids).	Recreational camping is threat to some sites near shoreline	Historical zone designated near Campion Rapids.
5.1.1 Ritual or ceremonial structures	Petroglyphs and pictographs at Camp Island, other locations.	Some threat from recreational users.	

5.1.2 Spiritual sites	Watchdog rock - spiritual site		

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.2 Human Heritage Values (continued)

Theme/sub-theme	Cultural Heritage Value	Changes since 1988 & Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
5.3.4 Literary accounts	Literature: diaries of Daniel Harmon, Gov. George Simpson, Alexander Mackenzie		
6.1.1 Official exploring parties	Exploration: Brule (1610); Radisson and Groseilleurs (NHS's); Champlain (1615); Henry (1764); MacDonnell; Marquette and Jolliet (1673); La Verendrye (1731);		Voyageurs Museum. Annual *Rendezvous* celebrates lives and activities of these pioneers. Mattawa River Heritage Map published in 1994. Voyageur Adventure Tours initiated in 1995.
6.1.4 Commercial exploration	Alexander Mackenzie (1779); George Simpson;		Proclamation of Alexander Voageur Route by Ontario in 1992.
6.2.1 Aboriginal conflict	Aboriginal conflict between Iroquois and Nipissing		

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.3 Recreational Values

Recreational Value	Nature of Resource	Changes since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
Canoeing	33 km canoe route managed by Ontario Parks, 9 portages, 9 access points, 6 campsites. About 2,000 canoeists use route annually	Increase in number of canoeists. Conflict with power boaters and destination campers.	Annual "Trash Bash" has virtually eliminated garbage problem. Voyageur Adventure Tour now offered by SDCPP. Annual canoe race organised as part of annual Rendezvous celebrations of voyageur life.
Camping	216 designated campsites in SDCPP, plus group camping. MRPP contains dispersed campsites along river, some with privies.	Sanitation problems at some dispersed sites in MRPP. Garbage and vandalism at most popular sites on river.	Many privies replaced at dispersed sites. Annual trash bash and closure of Bouillon Lake Road have reduced problems of garbage and vandalism.
Natural heritage appreciation	Spectacular scenery created by Mattawa River Fault, numerous picturesque rapids and falls, significant floral communities, vulnerable ecosystems, evidence of glacial scouring and melting, wildlife viewing.	Litter and garbage problem due to intensive use of MRPP. Pressure from forestry industry to allow cutting. Wildlife threatened in northern SDCPP by absence of cut line along boundary.	Annual "Trash Bash" has virtually eliminated garbage problem. Also closure of Bouillon Lake Road has helped to maintain natural experience of Portage Des Roches area. Canadian Ecology Centre, to be completed in 2000 will provide major focus for natural heritage interpretation and research, especially forest ecology.
Human heritage appreciation	Major interpretive themes for both Parks. Voyageur Heritage Centre houses replica canoe and fur-trade artifacts.	See natural heritage appreciation above.	Voyageur Adventure Tours initiated by NBMCA in 1993. Rendezvous annually celebrates voyageur life and times.
Hiking	Trail system in southern half of SDCPP.	Relatively undeveloped trail system in SDCPP.	27 km of cross country ski trails developed. Day use trail cut from Talon Chutes to SDCPP. Trails plan initiated for system in northern part of SDCPP. Footbridge study to be undertaken to allow access to north side of river in SDCPP.
Boating	Boat launch facilities at Jingwakoki Cgd., Long Lake and Campion	Boat launch on south shore of Bouillon Lake no longer accessible due	MacPherson Drive access point improved by East Ferris Township.

	Rapids.	to closure of road.	

4. Summary of Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.3 Recreational Values (continued)

Recreational Value	Nature of Resource	Changes since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
Sportfishing	Lake Trout is prized fish; also yellow pickerel, bass, northern pike, sturgeon.	Hazardous levels of mercury in pickerel and other fish in Lake Talon	

4. Changes to Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.4 Integrity Values

Integrity Value	Changes since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
4.4.1 Natural Integrity Values		
Free flowing waters; no upstream or down-stream impoundments; natural values not created by impoundments.	Water levels on river are controlled by dams at outlets of Trout Lake,	
Minimal human impact on key ecosystems	Some poaching in northern SDCPP.	New cut line proposed in management plan to clearly define boundary.
Water quality suitable for continuation of original aquatic ecosystems	Phosphorous loading of Trout Lake.	OMNR and OME studies effect of shoreline septic systems on quality of Trout Lake. Trout Lake Homeowners Association encourages replanting of shoreline vegetation, use of non-phosphate detergents and annual septic pumping.
4.4.2 Human Heritage Integrity Values		
Same visual appearance as during period of historical importance	Vandalism and garbage problems at most used campsites and portages.	Problems much reduced by annual trash bash and closure of Bouillon Lake access.
Artifacts unimpaired by human land uses	A number of aboriginal archaeological sites were drowned by impoundments.	
Neighbouring land uses do not affect historical experience	Highway 17 adjacent to river at Pimisi Bay. Forestry practices adjacent to park boundaries.	SDCPP discussing addition of Pimisi Bay access point to park. Mattawa and Area Forestry Committee committed to sustainable forest practices.
Water quality suitable for non-contact recreation		
4.4.3 Recreational Integrity		
Water quality suited to nomination values	Mercury in Lake Talon pickerel	
4.4.4 General Integrity		
Sufficient size	Headwaters and mouth of river not included in designated section.	11 km La Vase River and Portage section, including Trout Lake, to be nominated in 1999. 162 ha conservation area planned by NBMCA.
Ecosystem components	122 metre strip of land in MRPP barely adequate to protect ecosystems.	Two land acquisitions by North Bay-Mattawa CA totalling 100 hectares. Discussions held with Nipissing University regarding possible addition of 314 hectares at eastern end of Lake Talon. Lands for Life survey indicated significant

		widening of park in Rice Bay area.

4. Changes to Condition of Nomination Values (continued)

4.4 Integrity Values (continued)

Integrity Value	Changes since 1988 and Threats to Condition	Actions and Related Research
Water quality sufficient to enable continuation of nomination values	No systematic water quality testing on river	Trout Lake, source of river, is carefully monitored.

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APPENDIX 1

CONTRIBUTION OF MATTAWA RIVER VALUES TO THE CHRS

Two national frameworks have been developed for, and adopted by, the Canadian Heritage Rivers Board to provide a tool with which to assess the degree to which Canada's river-related natural and human heritage is represented in the Canadian Heritage Rivers System. The human heritage (cultural) framework was completed in 1997 and the natural framework in 1998.

Both frameworks are thematic classifications of what the Board considers to comprise Canada's river heritage. The themes are divided into sub-themes, and the sub-themes into elements. An assessment has been made of all rivers included the System as of December 1998 to determine which themes, sub-themes and elements are represented. This provides a means of identifying the thematic contribution that each river makes to the CHRS. As shown on the following charts, a tally can be made of the number of *other* rivers containing representations of each sub-theme element. (Because nominated rivers do not formally comprise part of the System, designated and nominated rivers have been counted separately.)

It should be noted that there is no attempt in these charts to *rate* representations. It is recognised that there is considerable variation in the significance, size, condition and locations of representations which make some much more important components of the CHRS than others. In the next few years, following review and final ratification of the thematic structures of the frameworks, ratings will be made of each representation. Until this time, the following charts provide only a rough guide as to which values of the French River are rare or unique in the System.

It may be noted that most values of the Mattawa River are relatively common in the System. However, one theme elements are represented only on the Mattawa River: the "watchdog" rock which aPpears to be unique as a spiritual site in the CHRS. Other theme elements represented on the Mattawa River appear to be almost unique, being found on only one or two other rivers: these include the extensive metapmorphism which produced the gneisses along the river, riverine potholes such as those near Talon Portage, petroGlyphs, such as those on Camp Island, and the reconstructed canot de maitre and other artifacts found in the Voyageur Museum.

Moreover, further insight into some common representations that the Mattawa River brings reveals that the river actually brings rare form to some themes. Further study will be needed to determine how significant are the river's representations of faulting (15 other rivers) and commercial freight (19 other rivers).

Table 1.1 Comparison of Natural Theme Representations of the Mattawa River with other Canadian Heritage Rivers

Natural Heritage Value	Theme	No. CHRs with Reps. Designated	Nominated
Water Content: Clear water, low turbidity & dissolved solids	1.1.1	7	3
Seasonal Variation: Temperate Spring.	1.2.2	5	1
Drainage Basin: Atlantic Ocean Basin - St. Lawrence River System.	1.3.6	3	5
River Size: 62-71 m3/sec. Stream Order > 2	1.4.7	2	1
Hydrogeology: impervious gneisses of Canadian Shield	2.1.4	14	8
Faulting: Mattawa River fault scarp, Precambrian (Prov. sig.)	2.2.2	15	4
Volcanic intrusions - ancient plutons	2.2.4	7	0
Geologic events: region was subjected to high grade metamorphism and plutonism; graben structure (Ottawa-Bonnechere graben formed)	2.2.5	2	2
Glacial scouring: bedrock scouring e.g Campion Portage	2.2.6	7	2
Glacial retreat: kames and eskers in various locations	2.2.7	10	7
Glacial melting: Lake Algonquin drainage outlet resulting in gravel deposits, abandoned river channels and cataracts; boulder pavement	2.2.10	7	5
Physiographic Region: Canadian Shield - Laurentian Region.	2.3.3	3	3
Topography: Moderate gradient, middle section	2.4.6	2	2
Lakes and Ponds: Lake balanced river system, headwater lake	3.2.3	2	1
Waterfalls and Rapids: Boulder rapids: e.g. Des Roches	3.3.2	11	3
Cascading rapids: e.g. Campion, La Rose	3.3.3	10	7
Chutes: Talon Chute.	3.3.5	2	2
Waterfalls: Paresseux Falls	3.3.6	10	1
River morphology: Tombolo in Shields Bay, deltas at North River, Purdy Ck., Moore Lake	3.4.2	8	3
Oxbow lakes and blind channels (near mouth of North River).	3.4.4	5	1
Riverine potholes at Talon Portage	3.4.11	1	0
River gorge on main channel and tributaries eg. Purdy Creek	3.4.12	2	2
Biotic Environments: River System: Middle zone	4.1.2	12	8
Oligotrophic lakes:Trout, Talon, Turtle, Chant Plain, and Pine Lakes.	4.1.6	2	1
Mesotrophic lakes: Moore Lake, Long Lake	4.1.7	1	2
Bogs e.g. Gem Lake, Long Lake	4.1.10	5	5
Swamp forests e.g. silver maples at Rice Bay	4.1.12	2	0
Ecozone: Boreal Shield.	4.2.9	4	5
Significant plant communities: old growth hemlock, hardwoods	5.1.3	1	2
Significant flora: jointweed, eyebright, false pimpernel, lake cress, wild rye, Virginia chain-fern, awlwort and waterwort (rare in Ontario)	5.1.7	4	1
Significant pops: Fish: Lake trout.	6.1.1	10	4
Significant pops: Mammals: white tailed deer, timber wolves	6.1.2	11	5
Significant pops: Reptiles: Blandings turtle; unusual location and size.	6.1.4	4	3

	6.1.7	5	1

Table 1.2 Comparison of Cultural Theme Representations of the Mattawa River with other Canadian Heritage Rivers

Cultural Heritage Value	Theme	No. CHRs with Reps.	
		Desig.	Nom.
Aboriginal fishing sites - Elm Pt., Grasswell Point., Camp Is.	1.1.1	10	8
Quarrying: Porte de l'Enfer, aboriginal ochre mine and refining site.	1.3.4	2	2
Navigable channel: portages: 14 historic portages, 11 still intact. Aboriginal trade route for Early, Middle and Late Woodland cultures. European fur trade route of the NWC and HBC, The Mattawa Route (HSMBC) and Canoe Route to the West (OHF Plaque).	2.1.1	7	7
Human powered freight: Replica canot de maitre, (Voyageur Museum).	2.1.2	19	6
Cargoes: examples in Voyageur Heritage Centre	2.1.5	1	1
Log driving route for square timber and lumbering industry, log chute and camp (1855) remnants at Paresseux Falls.	2.3.1	3	4
Seasonal native camps: Palframan Camp, Grasswell Pt., Campion Rapids.	3.1.3	8	2
Archaeological evidence of shoreline settlements: Werewolf pits, rock structures, 28 archaeological sites	3.2.1	11	6
Ritual sites: Petroglyphs at Camp Island, other locations	5.1.1	1	3
Spiritual sites: Watchdog rock	5.1.2	0	1
Literature: diaries of traders, explorers: Harmon, Simpson, Mackenzie	5.3.4	7	0
Exploration: Brule (1610); Champlain (1615); Mackenzie (1779); Henry (1764); Simpson; MacDonnell; Marquette and Jolliet (1673); La Verendrye (1731); Radisson and Groseilleurs (NHS's).	6.1.1 6.1.4	11 1	4 1
Aboriginal conflict between Iroquois and Nipissing	6.2.1	1	1
Special regional identities: division between N/S Ontario	6.3.3	2	0

APPENDIX 2

PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PARK MANAGEMENT PLANS

Table 2.1 Mattawa River Provincial Park Management Plan - Progress in 1988-1998

In addition to measures intended to maintain the heritage, recreational and integrity values of the section of the Mattawa River within Mattawa River Provincial Park at the time of designation, some specific development projects were identified in the 1988 Park Management Plan. These were to be completed as resources permitted. While there was no commitment to an implementation schedule, this report offers an opportunity to review progress on these projects, as demonstrated below.

Nomination Value/Project	Progress
Natural Values	
Control of forest fires, insects, diseases	
Fish stocking in Turtle and Talon Lakes	
Phasing out of commercial trapping	
Human Heritage Values	
Identification of archaeological and historical sites (with MCC)	
Cooperation with landowners on protection of privately owned historical sites	
Recreational Values	
Provision of information for river users at Pine Lake	
Establishment of interpretive structures outside park at Trout Lake, Blanchard's Landing, Pimisi Bay, Mattawa Island	
Agreement with E. Ferris Twp. on MacPherson Drive access	
Pimisi Bay access development and promotion	
Limitation of canoe party size and number	

Table 2.2 Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park Management Plan - Progress in 1988-1998

In addition to measures intended to maintain the heritage, recreational and integrity values of the section of the Mattawa River within Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park at the time of designation, some specific development projects were identified in the 1990 Park Management Plan. These were to be completed as resources permitted. While there was no commitment to an implementation schedule, this report offers an opportunity to review progress on these projects, as demonstrated below.

Nomination Value/Project	Progress
Natural Values	
Control of forest fires, insects, diseases	
Preparation of wildlife management plan	
Re-cutting park boundary	
Rehabilitation of Bagwa Road gravel pit	
Phasing out of commercial trapping	
Human Heritage Values	
No projects	not applicable
Recreation Values	
Preparation of visitor services plan	
Preparation of a trails plan	
Conversion of Babawasse Campground to electrical campsites	
Updrading of Babawasse Campground	
Upgrading of Bagwa Picnic Area	
Updrading of campround areas	
Removal of boat launch at Babawasse Campground	
Upgrading of boat launch	
Feasibility and location study of pedestrian bridge	
Possible development of hiking trails on north side of river	