

# Canadian WILDERNESS

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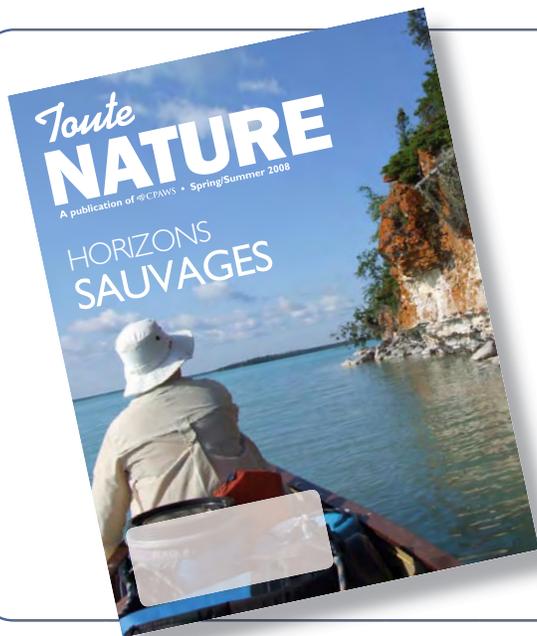
a new future  
for parks

- + CPAWS turns 45
- + Nahanni headwaters protected



 **CPAWS**  
CANADIAN PARKS AND WILDERNESS SOCIETY

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Cher membre,

Nous sommes heureux de vous offrir notre magazine en français. Pour recevoir une copie, s'il vous plaît, contactez-nous.

info@cpaws.org  
1-800-333-WILD

## CONTACT US

### **CPAWS**

613-569-7226 or 1-800-333-WILD  
www.cpaws.org

### **CPAWS British Columbia**

604-685-7445  
www.cpawsbc.org

### **CPAWS Calgary/Banff**

403-232-6686  
www.cpawscalgary.org

### **CPAWS Northern Alberta**

780-432-0967  
www.cpawsnab.org

### **CPAWS Manitoba**

204-949-0782  
www.cpawsmb.org

### **SNAP (CPAWS) Quebec**

514-278-7627  
www.snapqc.org

### **CPAWS New Brunswick**

506-452-9902  
www.cpawsnb.org

### **CPAWS Newfoundland**

709-726-5800  
www.cpawsnl.org

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902-446-4155  
www.cpawsns.org

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867-873-9893  
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416-971-9453 or 1-866-570-WILD  
www.wildlandsleague.org

### **CPAWS Yukon**

867-393-8080  
www.cpawsyukon.org

## IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR MEMBERS

### CPAWS' 2008 Annual General Meeting

November 30, 2008 in Ottawa, Ontario

Bylaw changes will be presented for approval. The proposed changes will be made available on the website or by request with the location of the AGM by October 18, 2008.

The following slate of nominees will be voted on:

Evan Sorestad, Tracey Williams, Sherri Watson, Julie Davidson and Raymond Plourde.

Biographies can be found on the CPAWS website at [www.cpaws.org](http://www.cpaws.org), or can be mailed to members on request.

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society  
506-250 City Centre Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1R 6K7  
1-800-333-9453  
[nominations@cpaws.org](mailto:nominations@cpaws.org)



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*Cover: "My friends and I rushed to the top of Sulphur Mountain in Banff National Park half an hour before the last gondola trip down. The late September sun had just started to set, giving the landscape a warm, golden glow. Never actually having seen mountains before, I was so overwhelmed by their beauty that I had trouble taking this photo because my eyes wouldn't stop tearing up and I couldn't see through the viewfinder. I have never seen anything so breathtaking in my life!" Photo: Geneviève Parisé*

*Above: Monarch butterflies gather at Point Pelee National Park before heading south over Lake Erie. Read about biodiversity problems in Pelee and other small parks on page 5. Photo: Bonnie Bailey*



CPAWS is Canada's voice for wilderness. Since 1963, we've played a lead role in creating over two-thirds of Canada's protected areas.

National Office  
506-250 City Centre Avenue  
Ottawa, ON K1R 6K7  
Telephone: 613-569-7226  
Fax: 613-569-7098  
E-mail: [info@cpaws.org](mailto:info@cpaws.org)  
Web: [www.cpaws.org](http://www.cpaws.org)

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## PRESIDENT'S DESK ●

# 45 Years and On

SHERRI WATSON

CPAWS is 45 years old this year—and what a lot we have done in that time! We have grown from one office to 14 from coast to coast to coast. We've taken the lead in protecting 4 million hectares of Canada's unique and precious wild places—iconic names like Banff, Nahanni and Algonquin. What will the next 45 years bring? Will Canada continue to have wilderness where grizzly, caribou, wolves, whales and songbirds thrive, or isolated parks that, zoo-like, allow a few of the remaining species to hang on?

Conservation has always been split ideologically between conserving nature for public activities like eco-tourism, and protecting the natural state for the greater good. Current trends magnify the differences and conflicting values. In addition to unprecedented expansion of human populations, industrial invasion of the remotest parts of the globe and climate destabilization, we have globalization.

Global economic decisions on the future of the planet are made in cities often remote from the affected communities, in rooms deprived of any view of nature and where it's easy to marginalize ecological sustainability. The challenge is growing to spread the ethos of wilderness protection. An increasing percentage of our population are immigrants who have never had the opportunity to get out in Canada's wilderness. We are raising a generation of twelve-images-per-second beings, wedded to technology and virtual experiences without effort, but missing the rewards of actually experiencing our wilderness realities that rejuvenate the spirit.

There are some counter-balances. There is slow acknowledgment that maintaining air and water quality and agricultural health relies on large intact tracts of lands and waters. There is broader

recognition that the extinction of species—up 10,000 times the expected rate according to the IUCN—is primarily associated with loss of habitat and that large proportions of their available territory must be preserved for large species to survive in the long term.

As well, the growth in outdoor recreation by millions of North Americans is a major engine for national economies, bringing much needed benefits to local communities. As wilderness around the world disappears, international tourists can still look to Canada to get in touch with nature.

We have our work cut out for us. CPAWS's vision that Canada will set a new global standard for the conservation of nature, securing at least one-half of our public lands and waters as a permanently wild trust Canadians hold for all humanity, won't be easy to achieve. Luckily, we have some great assets to dedicate to the job. We have a team of dedicated staff across the nation, thousands of volunteers and an exciting partnership with Mountain Equipment Coop on The Big Wild to encourage Canadians to voice their support for wilderness protection. The continued contributions of all of our supporters will be essential to success.

As I write this, an election looms with the environment a possible major theme for the first time in electoral history. I hope we'll have succeeded in making wilderness conservation a part of the dialogue, and a part of people's voting considerations. For we have much to do in the next 45 years. ●



*Sherri Watson is CPAWS' National President.*

Photo: Adam Smith



## Nahanni River headwaters protected for future national park

In April 2008 CPAWS celebrated the announcement by federal Environment Minister John Baird that the headwaters of the South Nahanni River in the Northwest Territories are now temporarily protected to enable the creation of a new national park, to be called Nááts'ihch'oh [pronounced naah-tseen-CHO].

This new national park is to be established in collaboration with the local Aboriginal people of the Sahtu region, and will protect a critical part of the South Nahanni Watershed. The park complements ongoing work to expand Nahanni National Park Reserve—a spectacular World Heritage Site in the adjacent Dehcho region of the NWT.

Nááts'ihch'oh covers the upper 20% of the South Nahanni Watershed—an area of 7600km<sup>2</sup>—and includes key calving grounds for woodland caribou, as well as important habitat for grizzly bears—both species at risk which need large intact ecosystems to survive.

At the announcement, CPAWS representatives congratulated the Sahtu Dene and Métis for joining forces with the federal and territorial governments and the Dehcho First Nations to fulfill a shared vision of protecting the South Nahanni Watershed.

“Next, we look forward to the federal government quickly announcing a final expanded boundary for Nahanni National Park Reserve that protect the watershed,” notes Alison Woodley, Manager of CPAWS’ national protected areas program. “This will be a globally

significant achievement which is science-based, championed by Aboriginal organizations, and overwhelmingly supported by northerners and Canadians from across the country”.

CPAWS has been leading a public campaign for many years to protect the entire South Nahanni Watershed by expanding Nahanni National Park Reserve and protecting the adjacent headwaters.

### PARK EXPANSION UPDATE

CPAWS is still working to expand the existing Nahanni National Park Reserve to encompass the southern (Dehcho) portion of the watershed. Public consultations in late 2007 confirmed overwhelming public support for protecting the entire watershed. The joint Parks Canada/Dehcho First Nations working group tasked with developing a new boundary for the national park has recommended that 95% of the Dehcho part of the watershed be protected, and the Dehcho First Nations have formally endorsed this boundary option.

CPAWS is calling on the Prime Minister to implement the recommended boundary immediately, which was developed following five years of research and public consultations. We urge the Prime Minister to resist back room pressure to leave more areas of the watershed open to mining. Stay tuned to our email alerts to see how you can help us finish this important work. Visit [cpaws.org/news](http://cpaws.org/news) to join the list.

## Nahanni Timeline

**1970** In the face of a proposal to dam the South Nahanni River, CPAWS/NPPAC\* leads a nationwide public campaign to protect the Nahanni in a national park. A “Park or Power” speaking tour crosses Canada, and CPAWS organizes an expedition to the Nahanni. Our first recommendation to protect the entire watershed is made in 1971.

**1972** CPAWS/NPPAC celebrates the establishment of a national park reserve in the Nahanni that protects 1/7<sup>th</sup> of the watershed, but suggests that it needs to be greatly enlarged.

**2000** CPAWS joins Dehcho First Nations in calling for the protection of the entire South Nahanni watershed in an expanded national park reserve.

**2003** CPAWS, joined by celebrities and journalists, hosts an expedition on the Nahanni to highlight the need to better protect Nahanni.

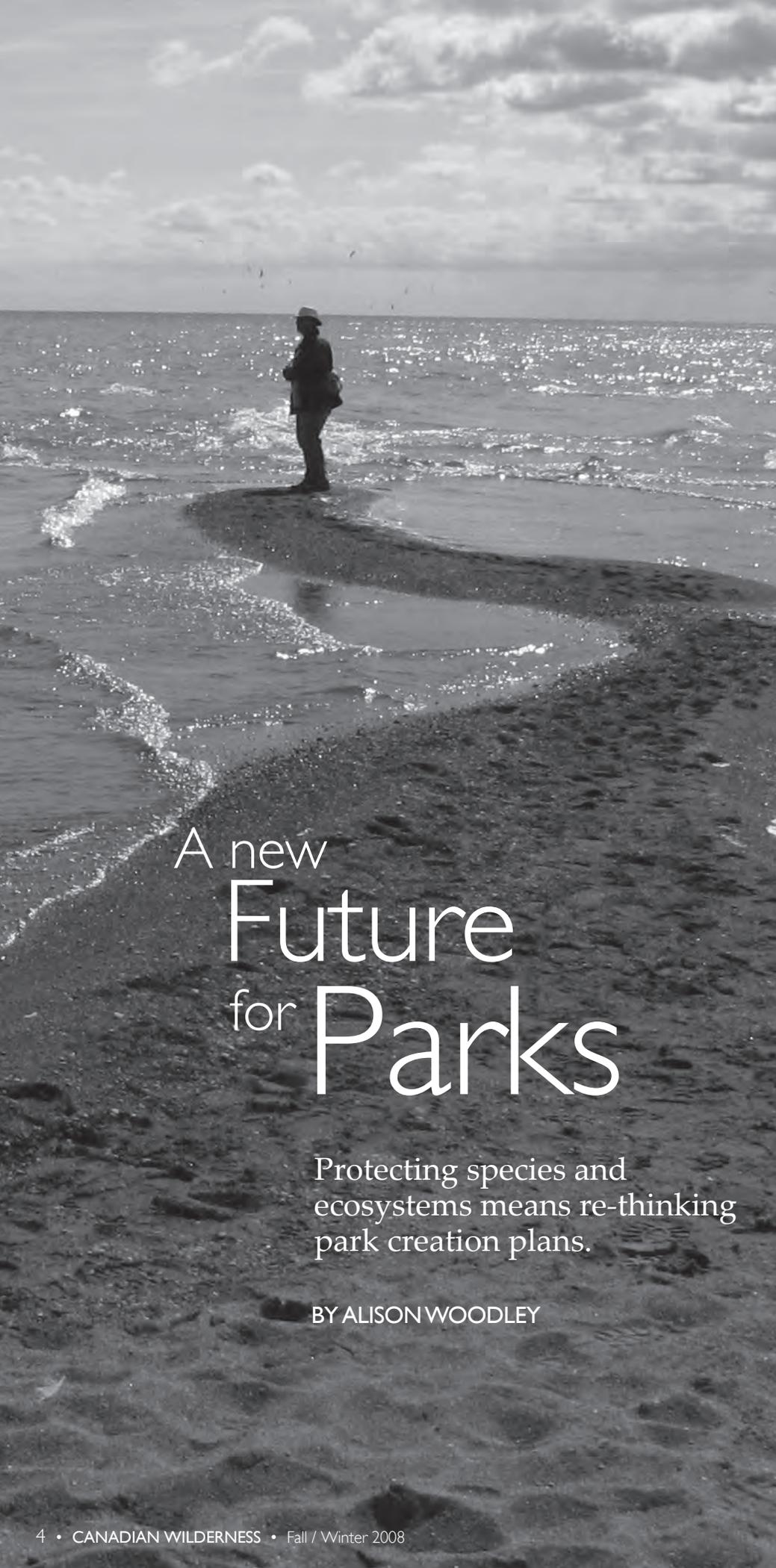
**2005/06** CPAWS’ Nahanni Forever speaking tour engages Canadians coast to coast.

**2007** The Prime Minister and Minister of Environment commit to a massive expansion of Nahanni National Park Reserve and set aside 28,800 sq km of land for that purpose.

**2008** The Minister of Environment announces that the upper 20% of the watershed will be set aside for the establishment of Naats'ihch'oh National Park.

CPAWS continues to push for final boundaries for the expanded Nahanni National Park Reserve that protect the watershed.

\* CPAWS was originally known as the National Parks and Protected Areas Association of Canada, or NPPAC.



# A new Future for Parks

Protecting species and ecosystems means re-thinking park creation plans.

BY ALISON WOODLEY

Sassafras trees, skinks, fox snakes, and even prickly pear cactus—Point Pelee National Park, Canada's southernmost point is a hot-spot of biodiversity. Established in 1918 at the urging of birders and hunters, this special place is the only national park protecting Canada's lush Carolinian region.

Point Pelee acts as a funnel for migrating birds and butterflies, making it a must-see for naturalists throughout North America. Over 400,000 nature lovers flock to Pelee each year for the opportunity to add rare birds to their life lists.

But since its inception, biodiversity in the park has plummeted, alarming Parks Canada scientists. A 2000 study by the agency found that about 20 species of reptiles and amphibians have been lost from the park in the last 100 years. Although bullfrogs were numerous until the mid-nineties, in just a few years, they've disappeared.

How could this happen in a national park? High visitor rates and past pesticide use is part of the problem, but the biggest culprit is the park's tiny size. At only 20 square kilometres, Pelee is one of Canada's smallest national parks. Agricultural land to the north and Lake Erie on the south isolate Pelee from other protected areas. The park just doesn't protect enough habitat to support the full complement of species that once lived there.

Pelee is not the only park where we are losing species. There are an impressive-sounding 3,500 protected areas in Canada. But on a map, they appear as tiny dotted islands in an archipelago. Almost 3,000 of our protected areas are less than 100 km<sup>2</sup> in size—smaller than the city of Lethbridge, Alberta.

A University of California at San Diego study by William Newmark presents some alarming conclusions. Newmark looked at mammal populations over time in large parks across Western North America. The only parks that successfully protected the full range of mammal species present when they were established were Canada's Yoho, Kootenay, Banff and Jasper—an interconnected assemblage covering more than 20,000 square kilometres in the Canadian Rockies. Even Yellowstone National Park, at roughly 9,000km<sup>2</sup> wasn't big enough to prevent the extirpation of the grey wolf, although the species has since been reintroduced.

It's useful to think of parks like islands formed by rising sea levels, writes Newmark. Newly cut off from surrounding habitat, the island would have more species on it than its size could support, and we'd expect some to die off over time. If we create a park without ensuring connections to surrounding habitat, we're in essence creating an island, and stranding the species on it at sea. The smaller the island, the higher the rate of extinction.

### Time to think "big"

Parks are vital to the bigger conservation picture. Certainly, timeless places like Nahanni's Virginia falls, and endangered species like the Banff Springs snail might have disappeared if not for National Park intervention. But if parks are to mean ecosystem protection, we need to think bigger than just protecting a particular species, in a particular place, at a particular point in time.

Conservation biologists now suggest four basic objectives that we need to meet if we are to protect healthy ecosys-

tems in the long term. First, we need to protect examples of all our native ecosystem types. Second, we need to ensure that healthy populations of all native species are protected throughout their range. Third, we need to maintain processes like reproduction, nutrient cycles, water cycles and wildfire that link together elements of the natural world into functional ecosystems. And finally, we need to make sure that

To retain healthy functioning ecosystems for the long term, roughly half of our land base will need to be protected.

ecosystems are resilient—that they are able to stay healthy in the face of growing pressures like climate change. To achieve these goals will require a new, more ambitious approach.

### How much is enough?

From amphibians to wolves, species vary in the amount of land they need to thrive. Studies find that many larger animals need much more protected habitat than most of our protected areas currently provide. How much is enough? The most widely cited target for protected areas for many years was 12% of the entire planet's land base, recommended by the Brundtland Commission in 1987. At the time, only 4% of the world's land was protected. Although this global target wasn't science-based,

it was adopted by many political jurisdictions and conservation organizations in Canada and around the world.

Throughout the 1990s, the 12% target motivated progress on establishing new protected areas in Canada through major campaigns like *Endangered Spaces*, led by WWF Canada and CPAWS. Today, we know that protecting 12% is clearly not ambitious enough to safeguard wilderness ecosystems. In fact, according to conservation biologist Fiona Schmiegelow, scientists predict that 50% of all species could go extinct if conservation lands are restricted to this level. The 12% goal has become a ceiling that we need to break through.

In Canada, meanwhile, industrial development is ramping up at a pace that we've never before seen. Particularly in the north, this growth is linked to exploding global demand for resources. Protecting large portions of our public lands and waters is more imperative than ever. Canada is the steward of 20% of the world's remaining wilderness—a vital store of fresh water and carbon that if released, would quicken the pace of global warming.

### At least half of our land base

No one study exists that identifies a single target for protected areas that can be applied everywhere. But there are strong indications that to protect healthy functioning ecosystems for the long term at least half of our land base needs to be protected.

In 2007, 1500 scientists from more than 50 countries around the world signed a letter to all provincial, territorial and federal governments in Canada. They called on governments to protect Canada's boreal forest, and recommended that at least half be set aside in a network of protected areas, while the rest was managed using leading-edge sustainable development practices. This same principle is embedded in the

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*Left: A visitor to Point Pelee National Park stands on the southernmost tip of Canada. The peninsula acts as a funnel, attracting an incredible diversity of migrating birds each fall and spring. The diversity of year-round species in the park is decreasing. Photo: Lori Iovino*



Large mammals like the Woodland caribou, above, are adversely affected by human development in their habitat. Photo: Graeme Joseph

CPAWS and Mountain Equipment Co-op have launched The Big Wild, a public movement in support of a dramatically larger vision of wilderness conservation than we have ever contemplated before in Canada. We invite you to add your voice in support of the vision.



Boreal Forest Conservation Framework, an agreement developed by leading resource companies, First Nations and conservation organizations including CPAWS, and now endorsed by over 176 companies, First Nations, conservation groups and other institutions.

Much of Canada's wilderness—including the Boreal forest—is home to Aboriginal peoples. Many strongly support its protection. More than ninety per cent of our remaining wilderness landscapes and all of our oceans and great freshwater lakes are publicly owned. In southern Canada, a surprising amount of greenspace still links parks like Algonquin in Ontario to New York's Adirondacks and the northern Appalachians.

CPAWS is integrating this new scientific thinking into our work. Establishing bigger parks is one piece of the puzzle. We are also moving from our earlier approach of securing protected areas site by site to protecting whole networks of lands and waters. With input from communities, governments, industry and First Nations, we believe that land use plans (and their equivalent in the

ocean environment) are key to creating a huge network of protected areas and sustainable management practices, particularly in the relatively intact landscapes of northern Canada.

### Can we succeed?

We're seeing more encouraging signs that decision-makers now grasp the importance of large-scale wilderness conservation. In the past 18 months, the federal government, working in collaboration with First Nations, conservation groups and the Government of the Northwest Territories, committed to protect more than 100,000km<sup>2</sup> of intact Boreal ecosystems. We have also seen some long-awaited first steps on marine protection, with the 2007 federal announcement of marine protected areas in Lake Superior and the Pacific's Bowie Seamount, and three new National Wildlife Areas to protect bowhead whales and seabird colonies in Nunavut. Just this past summer, the Province of Ontario committed to protecting more than half of its northern Boreal, the largest conservation announcement by a Canadian government in the nation's history.

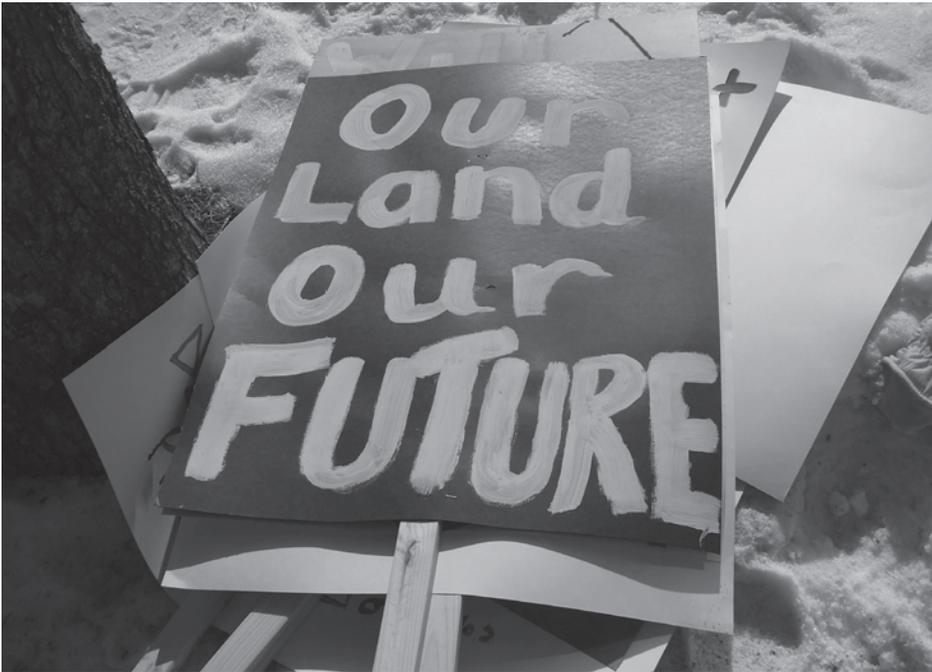
Protecting Pelee in a National Park was a forward-thinking decision. 90 years later, we still have a Carolinian forest on Canada's southernmost point, when most of the original forest has been lost to development. Thanks to parks, we still have a wilderness park in Ontario's Quetico, an undammed Virginia Falls in Nahanni, and the world's last fully-functioning mountain ecosystem in Banff, Yoho, Jasper and Kootenay Parks. Parks have always protected the places and values important to us. CPAWS is still committed to creating new parks. Now the connections between those special places have become just as important. As Canadians' understanding of the need to "think big" increases, our chances of succeeding in protecting our irreplaceable wilderness will too. ●

*Alison Woodley is the manager of CPAWS' National Protected Areas Program. This article is based on a presentation about the case for protecting Canada's "Big Wild" at the Canadian Science Writers Association annual conference in June 2008.*

# Ontario sets new bar for wilderness protection

JANET SUMNER

A long-simmering dispute over Ontario's Mining Act that erupted earlier this year helped create the right conditions for the biggest wilderness conservation commitment in Canada's history. CPAWS-Wildlands Chapter, based in Toronto, played a key role. Here's the inside story.



In July, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty announced that his government would protect at least 225,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Boreal region under its "Far North Planning Initiative". He also announced that Ontario would modernize the way mining is done in the province to be more respectful of Aboriginal communities and private land holders.

The announcement meant that Ontario became the first jurisdiction in Canada to commit to protecting more than half of its largely intact northern Boreal region—part of the world's greatest

remaining forest. How did we get to this historic moment?

Five years ago, then-opposition leader Dalton McGuinty confirmed that he had big plans for Ontario's Great Boreal Forest, located in the far north. Responding to advice from our organization and other Ontario environmental groups, he promised in writing to "institute meaningful, broad-scale land-use planning for Ontario's Northern Boreal Forest before any major new development, including ensuring full participation by native communi-

ties." He added: "Land use planning must protect the ecological integrity of this natural treasure to help provide a sustainable future for native people and northern communities."

But for four years after McGuinty became premier, little had been done on the file. Instead, rampant staking for minerals and a big diamond project were going forward without land use planning. CPAWS Wildlands and other conservation organizations held meetings with government officials, urging them to act on the premier's 2003 promise. These conversations led us to conclude that without public awareness, there would be no action. So we began to reach out to the public. We called for a moratorium on new industrial development approvals north of Ontario's forestry "cut line" until comprehensive land use plans were in place. We also began raising further alarm about the potential environmental damage from ad hoc approvals for major new industrial projects, such as the Victor Diamond Mine in Ontario's fragile north.

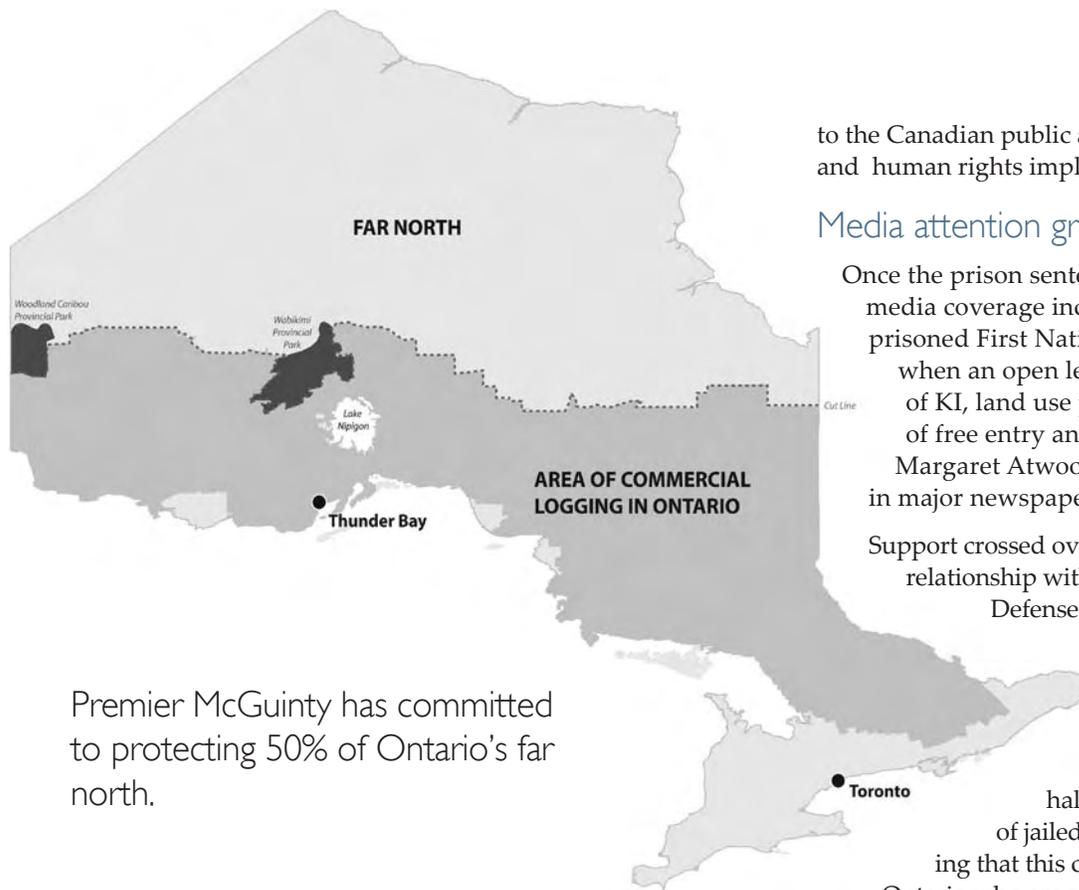
## Onto the front burner

Other priorities for the government always seemed to crowd out ours.

After researching the carbon footprint for the Victor Diamond mine project we decided to expand our messaging to the public that not only were the conservation values such as caribou and watersheds at stake, but that the Boreal region is part of the world's largest terrestrial carbon reserve. As concern about climate change grew, this message began to resonate with the public and the government.

Then, in the winter of 2007, a dispute erupted in an Aboriginal community's traditional territory in Ontario's northern Boreal. Kitchenuhmaykoosib

Above: Young protestors rest their signs while they attend the court proceedings for KI leaders. Photo: Anna Baggio



Premier McGuinty has committed to protecting 50% of Ontario's far north.

Innuuwug, known as "KI", did not want drilling for platinum to go forward on its lands. An exploration company called Platinex pushed forward anyway with its plans for drilling.

CPAWS Wildlands League supported the people of KI in their fight to protect their lands. We shared the community's concern that a proper land use plan had not been prepared, that their consent had not been received and that incursions in this largely intact area could harm wildlife and water quality. Platinex ignored the community's moratorium call. A legal battle ensued, and KI leaders were sent to jail the following spring, found in breach of an antiquated mining law.

At the root of the conflict was the *Ontario Mining Act*. Since 1906, the *Act* has contained a provision that gives exploration companies and prospectors the right to stake claims on virtually ANY land in the province, regardless of any other use to which it is being put. This means that a prospector or exploration company could stake out claims on Crown land, or on private property—often to the surprise of the property owner! Most other provinces have similarly antiquated provisions allowing "free entry".

Shocking community members, a Superior Court of Ontario justice ruled that the *Mining Act* had to prevail and that the community must allow Platinex to drill. Community leaders could not in good conscience permit this to happen and in March of 2008, six members of the community were sentenced to 6 months in jail. While the "KI 6", as they became known, were in jail, CPAWS Wildlands League helped carry a message

to the Canadian public about the egregious environmental and human rights implications of the court's decision.

## Media attention grows

Once the prison sentences were handed down, national media coverage increased public support for the imprisoned First Nations people. Another big boost came when an open letter to the government in support of KI, land use planning in the north and the end of free entry and signed by celebrities including Margaret Atwood and Stephen Lewis, was published in major newspapers.

Support crossed over from the U.S. when, thanks to our relationship with colleagues at the Natural Resources Defense Council, we were able to deliver a tersely-worded letter to the government from Robert Kennedy Jr. He asked the Premier to reform Ontario's outdated mining rules and do whatever possible to halt ongoing drilling on traditional lands of jailed First Nations' leaders. "It is appalling that this could happen to Aboriginal leaders in Ontario who are standing up for their people and their traditional lands in the face of antiquated and unjust mining laws," wrote Kennedy.

Public outrage and media coverage grew as one of those jailed, Bob Lovelace from the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation, went on a hunger strike. Approximately 1,000 people attended a rally in late May in front of Queen's Park, the Ontario legislature. KI, Ardoch and Grassy Narrows First Nations, Rainforest Action Network and Christian Peacemakers among others provided logistical support, and erected three large teepees on the legislature's lawn. First Nations leaders and celebrities spoke to the crowd, calling for changes to the *Mining Act*.

Finally, after the Ontario Court of Appeal reviewed the case against the First Nations, they were released. When the court issued their reasons for the decision a couple months later, the justices acknowledged the mining act's role in the jailing of the leaders, noting that it was a remarkably sweeping law. Reading between the lines of the Appeal court's decision, it was clear that *Mining Act* was at the heart of the problem.

## Premier McGuinty speaks

A couple weeks later, the Premier made his landmark announcement to protect the Boreal Forest. As he noted:

Ontario's Northern Boreal region is one of the last truly wild spaces on the planet. It is home to over 200 sensitive species of animals—such as polar bears, wolverines, and caribou—many of which are threatened or endangered. Preserving these spaces will help ensure



Ontario's biodiversity.

Permanently protecting these lands will also help a world wrestling with the effects of climate change, as they are a globally significant carbon sink. Protecting this region is a key part of the Ontario government's plan to fight climate change.

Following very quickly, in August Michael Gravelle, Minister of Northern Development and Mines announced that the government would hold a series of public and stakeholder meetings about modernizing the *Mining Act*.

The Premier's announcement has changed the way land planning is done in Ontario. It sets a high bar for protection, one that meets a growing consensus in the scientific community that over 50% of the ecosystem needs to be set aside from industrial development to give it a chance to survive.

The decision resonated with conservationists around the world. Over 1,500 scientists worldwide signed a letter to the Premier, thanking him for his bold and visionary commitment.

### The hard work continues

The announcement is not the end of the story, however, but the beginning. It is the beginning of an enormous collaboration we intend to undertake with First Nations to balance their need for economic development with protection of the watersheds and wilderness that keep the ecosystem services of the boreal functioning. It is also a new beginning for valuing and protecting terrestrial carbon to slow climate change.

Since the announcement, CPAWS Wildlands League has met with First Nations and government to discuss how planning should move forward. Working with groups like Ecojustice and the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy, we're reviewing mining legislation from around the world to draft new provisions for a new *Mining Act* for Ontario. Our hope is that new legislation will provide a fair and respectful approach to First Nations and will not foreclose on other land uses, while still ensuring a vibrant mining economy in the north.

McGuinty's vision is groundbreaking and took tremendous leadership on his part. This announcement would not have been possible without the principled stand taken by communities like KI, wide public support and the unrelenting focus on the Boreal Forest and land use planning by environmental groups including ourselves, Rainforest Action Network and Ecojustice Canada. We fought together to protect the Boreal Forest and for the right to say NO to irresponsible and harmful development. Seeing the Premier's vision through will take time. Delivering land use plans in all communities will take over a decade to complete. Some communities are ready to plan right now; in other areas the science is inadequate or the time is not ripe. We'll keep working to make sure the announcement delivers. ●

Janet Sumner is the Executive Director of CPAWS Wildlands League

## Ontario's northern Boreal...

Extends from the northern limits of the Great Lakes - St. Lawrence Forest to the Hudson Bay Lowlands

Part of Canada's 1.4 billion acre Boreal Forest that is one of the world's largest remaining intact ecosystems

### Scale of Area to Be Protected

22.5 million hectares; 55 million acres; 87,000 square miles; 225,000 square kilometers

43 per cent of Ontario's land mass; more than half is to be protected in an interconnected network of conservation lands

The new protected areas will, in total, be larger than 40 of the 50 U.S. states, including New York, Florida, and Washington State

Larger than 60% of the world's nations and almost as large as the United Kingdom or twice the size of England

### Wildlife haven

Home to over 200 sensitive species of animals such as polar bears, wolverines, and Woodland caribou—many of which are threatened or endangered

Vital habitat for hundreds of millions of migratory birds, many of which nest in the Boreal and migrate south through the US

Species are at risk due to a number of reasons. These include habitat loss, pollution, land use and resource management activities, as well as the spread of invasive species

### Home to Aboriginal Communities

Home to 24,000 people living in 36 communities

Communities retain strong ties to the land and traditional food gathering and other land-use activities remain important

Most communities are not accessible by road



## Alberta's new Land Use Framework recognizes a tipping point

The formal review period for a draft land use plan in Alberta has ended, but it is still vital that members contact their MLA about the land use framework. Past land use planning initiatives have stalled because there was insufficient political will to enact the reforms. With sufficient courage from the citizens of Alberta, the new Land-Use Framework (LUF) will not meet the same fate.

The draft land use plan acknowledges that Alberta has "reached a tipping point, where sticking with the old rules will not produce the quality of life we have come to expect."

This admission in the LUF suggests that an important transition is occurring within the Government of Alberta.

Many of the proposed reforms are headed in the right direction. However, CPAWS Northern Alberta is working to bring problems in the plan, together with workable solutions, to the attention of the Alberta government. These include recognizing the creation of protected areas as a conservation strategy; finding ways to avoid a development rush while the planning process is underway; clear and measurable outcomes that reflect the broad public interest, secure funding and opportunities for public participation. Take action at [www.cpawsnab.org/CPAWS-LUF.htm](http://www.cpawsnab.org/CPAWS-LUF.htm)

## Recent protection gains:

### Will Quebec follow Ontario's lead in the Boreal?

Ontario's July 2008 commitment to protect at least half of the Northern Boreal could set a precedent for neighbouring Quebec. Quebec's Environment Minister had already committed to protecting 8% of the province by the end of 2008, but revisions of Quebec's forest policy haven't yet addressed Boreal habitat. In fact, Premier Charest intends to open the Northern Boreal to even more mining activity.

In Spring 2008, the Quebec government hit 6% with the interim protection of over 18,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land, including 1,450 km<sup>2</sup> of the Dumoine River watershed and nearly 1,000 km<sup>2</sup> in the Vallée des Montagnes Blanches. Together, these represent one percent of the province.

Quebec also moved ahead with public hearings on the creation of the largest provincial park in Quebec, around the Lakes Guillaume-Delisle and Eau-Claire near Hudson Bay. SNAP Quebec actively participated in the process and encouraged many other groups to support the joint proposal by Cree and Inuit to include the Nastapoka River watershed, protecting a total area of nearly 27,000 km<sup>2</sup>.

## Happy 40th birthday to Ontario's CPAWS Wildlands League

The Toronto-based CPAWS Wildlands League is celebrating 40 years of work to protect Ontario's wilderness. Founded as the Algonquin Wildlands League in 1968, the chapter has played a key role in the biggest successes in Ontario wilderness conservation, including:

- Obtaining a 2008 provincial commitment to protect at least half of Ontario's northern Boreal region review and update the antiquated Mining Act
- Introducing a new Endangered Species Act in 2007 with caribou listed as the number one species for protection
- Convincing the government in 2007 to purchase only FSC-certified paper. As a first step, 30% of the paper currently purchased is FSC certified
- Introducing a new Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act in 2006 that safeguards the ecological integrity of more than 9 million hectares of wilderness
- Establishing 2.4 million hectares of new protected areas through the 1997-1999 Lands for Life land use planning process

## Offshore gains in Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia government has decided to allocate significant offshore oil and gas revenues from the Sable Gas Project into a land conservation fund to help the province reach its target of protecting 12% of the provincial landmass by the year 2015.

Currently, only 8.2% of Nova Scotia is legally protected from activities such as clear-cutting, mining, and road-building. CPAWS has been calling for the establishment of a provincial land conservation fund for many years and was on hand with the Premier in July for this historic announcement. These funds will be used for the purchase and protection of ecologically-significant properties in Nova Scotia.

For the conservation of Nova Scotia's nearshore marine waters, however, the picture is not nearly so rosy. Nova Scotia is the only coastal province in Canada not to have a legally-designated marine protected area in the inshore environment. To address this unacceptable situation, CPAWS NS is undertaking a comprehensive research project to identify the best sites on the inner Scotian Shelf for the creation of coastal marine protected areas. This report, which will be presented to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, is part of a larger CPAWS NS initiative to push for the creation of a network of marine protected areas for Canada's Ocean Playground.

## B.C. "Call of the Wild" gala honours CPAWS heroes

CPAWS BC will host what promises to be an amazing and inspirational evening in Victoria in late October where all of British Columbia's prestigious lifetime achievement Harkin award winners will be honoured.

At the "Call of the Wild: Heroes of Canadian Conservation Dinner and Silent Auction", the focus will be on past accomplishments and the future of conservation and wilderness protection in Canada. The evening will be hosted by Harvey Locke, longtime CPAWS member and well-known conservationist.

To find out more about this evening to celebrate Canada's great wilderness, and to get inspired by the courage, passion and determination of BC environmentalists who have achieved great gains in our province and around the globe. Visit [cpawsbc.org/call\\_of\\_the\\_wild\\_dinner](http://cpawsbc.org/call_of_the_wild_dinner) or call 604-677-2759.



Gord James (left), Chair of the CPAWS Calgary/Banff's board and Anne Marie Syslak, Director of Education accept the 2008 Emerald Award for environmental excellence from an Alberta Emerald Foundation representative.

## CPAWS Calgary Banff wins award

The Alberta Emerald Foundation has honoured CPAWS Calgary/Banff's environmental education program with a 2008 award for environmental excellence.

Each year, the Alberta Emerald Foundation receives over 100 nominations in a number of categories for achievements by Albertans in protecting the environment. CPAWS Calgary/Banff's program was nominated by local teacher, Robert Pierce and the chapter staff received the award at the Citadel's Shocor Theatre in Edmonton on Tuesday, June 3.

Since 1997, CPAWS Calgary/Banff Chapter has developed and delivered approximately 3,000 environmental education sessions to over 65,000 students. CPAWS offers in-school presentations, guided hikes and teacher training programs using themes such as grizzly bear ecology and protecting endangered species. The chapter is launching a new water conservation education program this fall.

## NB government to decide on Restigouche's future

Current logging plans show most roadless areas in the Restigouche, one of Eastern Canada's most spectacular wild watersheds, will be clear-cut over the next five to ten years. The New Brunswick government will decide this autumn how much, if any, of Restigouche wilderness gets protected, and how much will be cut and converted to tree plantations.

The Restigouche shelters wild Atlantic salmon, Canada lynx, moose, black bear, marten, flying squirrels and abundant forest and coastal birds.

Only half a percent of the Restigouche is currently protected from industrial development, and CPAWS is asking that at least 50,000 hectares of Restigouche's most pristine areas be protected forever.

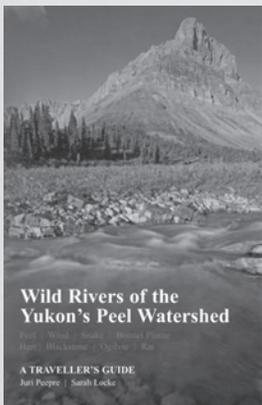
### TAKE ACTION!

Write to Premier Shawn Graham and let him know what you think should happen with Restigouche's wilderness.

Premier Shawn Graham,  
P.O. Box 6000  
Fredericton, NB  
E3B 5H1  
shawn.graham@gnb.ca

Learn more at [www.cpawnsb.org](http://www.cpawnsb.org).

## Hot off the presses



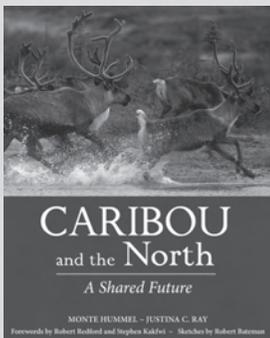
### Wild Rivers of the Yukon's Peel Watershed

*A Traveller's Guide*  
By Juri Peepre and Sarah Locke

212 pages, softcover  
\$24.95 plus shipping  
available at [yukonbooks.com](http://yukonbooks.com)

If you've been reading *Canadian Wilderness* for a few years, you'll already know about the remote, beautiful Peel watershed. Author Juri Peepre led a CPAWS national tour in 2007 to raise awareness about the need to conserve this relatively unknown area threatened by industrial development. Peepre and coauthor Sarah Locke have now produced a comprehensive guide to canoeing and hiking this spectacular area. This well-researched account of the geography, natural and human history of the watershed is recommended for those planning a trip, and for vicarious paddlers too.

For more on the Peel watershed, read the Spring 2007 and Fall 2005 issues of *Canadian Wilderness* online at [www.cpawns.org](http://www.cpawns.org).



### Caribou and the North

*A Shared Future*  
Monte Hummel and Justina C. Ray  
Forewords by Robert Redford and Stephen Kakfwi  
Sketches by Robert Bateman

320 pages, hardcover  
Available From your favourite bookseller  
Order online at [www.dundum.com](http://www.dundum.com)

Across between textbook and coffee-table book, *Caribou and the North* is accessible to the non-biologist. Original sketches by Robert Bateman and dozens of photographs complement the clear, comprehensive writing by Justina Ray, Monte Hummel and a team of caribou experts.

If you've wondered how caribou can be threatened when huge herds still cross the tundra, part of the book is devoted to clearing the confusion. All caribou and reindeer belong to the same species, but populations vary quite a bit in behaviour and appearance—and some populations face extinction. Hummel and Ray place *Caribou* in a larger context as well, highlighting their well-known importance to northern Canadians, and the surprising ways their fate is intertwined with that of all living things.

# Reflections on wilderness conservation

As CPAWS turns 45, we asked some long-standing members about their views on conservation, and what they see in the future for Canada's wild places.



**John O'Driscoll, 48**  
President, CPAWS/SNAP Quebec

## What do you see as the most significant change in conservation during your career?

The increased emphasis on the quantity as well as the quality of the territory protected. The imperative now is to conserve vast swaths of nature rather than just specific beauty spots, areas where wildlife concentrates, or even just good examples of an ecosystem.

I must say I miss the old way a bit. Like a lot of people, I got interested in conservation because of the wonder that places of outstanding natural beauty, rich wildlife populations, or simply unusual appearance, inspired in me. I want others to be able to share that wonder.

Nevertheless, the shift in priorities is absolutely necessary. Global warming is altering habitat and human development is eliminating it at such a pace that many species' populations are plummeting. Identifying, protecting, and exalting exceptional natural sites is important and very enjoyable—but we're now also in a race against time to conserve much of the 'unexceptional' nature that remains.

## What do you see as Canada's biggest conservation challenge in the coming years?

As a young conservationist inspired by our planet's magnificence, the biggest challenge I see us facing is selflessness. Are we Canadians able to see beyond our personal desires to thoughtfully consider the well-being of another—our planet, and all its intricate ecological processes and bounty of species? Are we able to use our foresight—one of our most important evolutionary traits—to envision what the consequences are and will continue to be if we consume, extract, drill, mine, and log at our current rates? Our atmospheric climate is changing and it is finally an accepted fact: humans have been the major contributors. This has consequences for all life including ours and our childrens'.

But it is within the realm of possibility to change our habits, behaviours, standards of commerce and development we have allowed to become acceptable and even admirable. It is within the realm of possibility to change the course we are on; slow and reverse the decline of the planet that supports all life, our life. But do we have the will—the will and the discipline—to be selfless? I continue to have hope and believe we are logical, honest, caring, considerate and able—to do what is best for the greater good of all life on earth. Because in the end, our survival depends on it!



**Theresa Gulliver, 29**  
Conservation campaigner,  
CPAWS Yukon  
Photo: Erica Heuer

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**Tim Gray, 44**  
Member, CPAWS Board of  
Directors; previously a staff  
member for 15 years.

## What do you see as the most significant change in conservation during your career?

I think that the most important change in conservation is the shift in societal perception of the role and value of parks and protected areas. When CPAWS started out these areas were seen as luxury goods, recreational playgrounds, or tourism base camps. Forty years later many people now recognize that we need to leave large areas wild, for their own sake and for the ecological services that they provide.

As a result we're also beginning to see planning for protection take place BEFORE large scale resource development, for example in the NWT and northern Ontario. We have also seen large scale redress of protection deficits in several regions of the country in places like B.C., Nova Scotia, mid north Ontario, and Quebec, in recognition that we have not yet protected enough.

This shift, more than any of the great places we have protected, is what is most important and sets the stage for the next 20 years where we need to secure half of Canada in reserve status.

# TALES FROM THE BIG WILD CHALLENGE



To support wilderness protection in Canada, Katy Holm and her partners are travelling through the Nahanni region to the Cirque of the Unclimbables in the Northwest Territories.

Some trips, the big ones, stay with you forever. They're significant chapters, where you endure and push your boundaries. They can take you into stunning beauty or unbelievable discomfort, but while you're there you learn something about yourself and the world around you.

I took my first big trip when I was 20. I spent a month kayaking the west coast of Vancouver Island. When I came home I smelled like the ocean. I've been to Greenland by sailboat, been stuck in the pack ice, and I've climbed for 45 hours straight on a first ascent.

It's been two years since I've done a big trip, and I'm dying for another adventure.

This year, with the launch of The Big Wild, I decided I want to share my experiences and connect with Canadians who value wilderness. I want to contribute because I think big expanses of wilderness are a part of Canada that I don't want to see disappear. While I value industry and development, I also see the need for increased conservation. After thinking about various incredible places to go, I decided on a trip to the Nahanni. It's an amazing place; the landscape and ecosystems are completely unique, yet only a small portion of the area is protected.

For years I've wanted to paddle the Nahanni River to the Cirque of the Unclimbables and climb Lotus Flower Tower. While the trip is not new, it's definitely an ultra-classic. With my partners Kelly, Ken, and Laurie, I plan to spend three weeks paddling the South Nahanni River and then climb the 600-metre line on Lotus Flower. We'll need about eight days to paddle out, so if time and weather let us, maybe we'll get to do a first ascent of another route. That's the dream. We'll let you know what happens in reality.

*katy Holm*

The Big Wild was founded by Mountain Equipment Co-op and the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS).

## Help protect wild places.

The Nahanni National Park Reserve is recognized as a World Heritage Site. For years CPAWS and local First Nations have been advocating for expansion to protect the entire South Nahanni watershed. Find out more about preserving the Nahanni, and read about Katy's epic journey through it. You can also dedicate an adventure of your own to wilderness protection in Canada. Visit [thebigwild.org/challenge](https://thebigwild.org/challenge).

[thebigwild.org](https://thebigwild.org)™