



# Noozaawinijing Welcome

Indigenous Newsletter  
May 2018



Unity Riders on the Main Beach in Wasagaming  
National Indigenous Day Celebrations, June 24, 2017

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Riding Mountain National Park is located within Treaty 2 Territory and we work with First Nations from Treaties 2, 4 and 1. We mention this to honour our relations and the contributions they have made to establish the park, province, and Canada.

### Message from the Coalition

Aneen! From the Anishinabe of Keeseekoowenin I greet all the people around Riding Mountain! As spring, summer, and fall come upon us, our wish is that you will enjoy Riding Mountain National Park. We invite you to enjoy as much of the land as you can. Allow yourself to enjoy the earth as we, the Anishinabe have.

Get to know the land, water, and all of its life!

**Chief Norman Bone of Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation Senior representative of the Riding Mountain Forum and Senior Officials Forum**



*Chief Norman Bone (left) and Acting Superintendent Paul Tarleton*

### Message from Parks Canada

I first want to acknowledge Riding Mountain National Park is within Treaty 2 territory and is at the crossroads of First Nations who belong to Treaties 1 and 4. The park is part of the traditional homeland of the Anishinabe people.

Our love, pride, and care for this place are only possible thanks to the respect given to the land by the many generations before us. It is important to remember the ancestors' contributions with gratitude as we move forward together.

The park is fortunate to have a strong working relationship with the Coalition members (Seven First Nations with Interest in Riding Mountain National Park). These relationships will help us advance Reconciliation, and further strengthen First Nation participation in park management.

The first step in this journey is to share information on progress that we have made together. In this spirit, I am happy to introduce our first Indigenous Newsletter. It shares some stories about our mutual successes and highlights some opportunities that are possible with Riding Mountain National Park.

I hope you find this newsletter enjoyable and we will see you at the park in 2018!

**Paul Tarleton  
Acting Superintendent, Riding Mountain Field Unit**



# The Senior Officials Forum, Riding Mountain Forum (Coalition) and the Park

**We appreciate Forum members' contributions. They raise ideas and advise on a range of subjects. As well, they provide a positive and consistent link between First Nations and the park.**

## What is the Difference between each Forum?

The 1998 agreement between Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation (KOFN) and Parks Canada established the **Senior Officials Forum (SOF)**.

In 2006 the **Riding Mountain Forum (RMF)** was formed between Coalition of First Nations with Interests in Riding Mountain National Park (Coalition) and Parks Canada. The Coalition consists of seven First Nations from Treaty 2, 4, and 1 (see map) who consider the park part of their traditional territory.

## How do the Forums Work?

These ministerial forums guarantee a formal and consistent link between First Nations and Parks Canada. Each agreement outlines common goals and protocols. Dwayne Blackbird (Forum Coordinator) and Les Campbell (Park Indigenous Affairs Manager) coordinate the meetings. Throughout the year the groups meet to share information (e.g., ideas, needs and issues) and collaborate on projects of mutual interest.



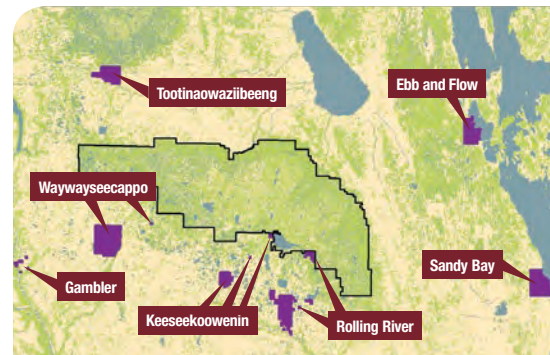
*Riding Mountain Forum Signing Ceremony, 2006*

## Success to Date!

Here are some of the successes we have achieved together.

Human Resource Initiatives (e.g., leadership development, youth internships, jobs)

- Sharing Lodge
- Wildlife Council
- Traditional Knowledge Council
- Medicine Society MOU
- Special Events Participation
- Contracting Opportunities
- Increasing Indigenous programming
- Training
- Forum Contribution Agreements
- Clear Lake Cooperative Management Agreement



*Les Campbell, Indigenous Affairs Manager, working with Dwayne Blackbird, Forum Coordinator*

## Our Commitment to You

**P Partnership:**  
Working collaboratively in heritage place planning, management, and operations

**A Accessible:**  
Encouraging access to traditional lands and traditional activities

**R Respectful:**  
Building mutual respect, trust and understanding

**K Knowledge-based:** Honouring and incorporating traditional knowledge

**S Supportive:**  
Supporting Indigenous partners' communities

Parks Canada is committed to renewing and growing our relationship with Indigenous peoples based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation, and partnership. Our work is based on these five principles



# Stewards of the Land

The park recognizes the Anishinabe have traditional connections to the park land and waters. Together we work to protect Riding Mountain National Park.



Three bull elk in an ungulate survey

## Protecting the Elk – Ganawendan omashkoozoog

The bovine TB program has been ongoing for a number of years, using a multi-pronged approach to eradicate TB in Elk and White-tailed deer. The program operates inside the park in cooperation with representatives from the Coalition, led by Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation (KOFN). In partnership with the Wildlife Committee of the Riding Mountain Forum, Indigenous

Knowledge helps guide wildlife health management. The park wildlife lab continues to examine and test elk and deer samples brought in by hunters. These samples are important in providing information on disease surveillance on the elk and deer populations in the region. Additional testing and sampling within the park is required to supplement these samples.

While a specialized helicopter crew is contracted to do the capturing of the elk, park staff work with local First Nations participants to identify the location of elk for the helicopter crew (bird dogging), and with examining the carcasses of any suspect elk that are removed. Meat from the elk (if approved for human consumption) is distributed to local First Nations communities.

## Guardians of the Moose and Elk



Moose.

Photo: ©istockphoto.com by creighton359

For the past number of years, the Riding Mountain Forum has assisted with the ungulate survey in the park. This year, Indigenous wildlife technicians, including members from Waywayseecappo, Rolling River, and Keeseekoowenin First Nations helped with the ungulate survey from January 29 to February 1-2, 2018. Park staff and wildlife technicians fly survey lines across the entire park to get an estimate of elk and moose numbers. The survey usually takes 3-4 days depending on weather and flight conditions.



*Parks Canada staff work with Richard & William Bone of Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation at the bison handling facility in RMNP*



*Members from Tootinaowaziibeeng First Nation with bison head for educational purposes*

## Healthy Bison

**The Bison are powerful and the Anishinabe regard them with high honour. Bison Management has been part of the park since its early establishment.**

A bison surplus took place November 20-23, 2017 in cooperation with the Coalition of First Nations. The bison were transported to an abattoir for processing and the meat, hides, and heads were distributed to local Indigenous communities by Parks Canada staff and members of the Coalition.

In cooperation with members of the Coalition, another three bison were removed directly from the bison enclosure area. Field removals are done when bulls cannot be trapped in the handling facility. These bison were selected to be field dressed in the enclosure. Great amounts of respect, teaching, and knowledge are shared between Elders and youth as they work together.

Working with our First Nations partners creates an opportunity to understand the importance of Indigenous Knowledge in the management of bison. Parks Canada engaged local Indigenous knowledge holders through Dwayne Blackbird, Forum Coordinator, to ensure protocols surrounding the surplus were followed.



*Elders and youth from Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation field dress a bison in RMNP*



# Restoring Grasslands and Reducing the Risk of Wildfire

Since the early 1990s, the park has slowly removed white spruce plantations. The aging plantations cause many challenges as almost all of them were located on what was once fescue grasslands, as well as create wildfire risk.

Richard Bone and members of Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation have been instrumental in this project. Richard and his crew have felled approximately 6 ha of trees and assisted in limbing and cutting trees. This crew helped increase the efficiency of the project and as a result we are ahead of schedule.

In the spring of 2019, Parks Canada's fire management team hopes to apply prescribed fire to this area to aid in fuel reduction and grassland restoration.



Restoration crew member from Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation working on refinishing the Visitor Centre logs

## Protecting Federal Buildings

The Conservation of Heritage Buildings Project worked with Indigenous partners from the Coalition of First Nations to refinish the exterior logs of the Visitor Centre. There are 17 federally designated heritage buildings in the park and 12 require work to maintain and conserve the character and function of these buildings. In May of 2017, the late Alvin Bone and his crew from Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation removed the existing stain and prepared the surface for three new coats of stain including one coat of UV protection.

This opportunity to do specialized work on a Federal Heritage Building, staining it to the high standards of Federal Heritage Building Review Office, creates the chance to develop new skills. As well, it helps preserve the original hand drawn white spruce logs for years to come and represents an achievement we can all take pride in and enjoy.



Members of the Sandy Bay First Nation Elders and Language and Culture Program, checking out logs for a youth log carving program.

# The Sharing Lodge

To the Anishinabe of Riding Mountain and other Indigenous peoples, the waters of Wagiiwing or Noozaawiniijing yield healing properties. This is a common thread in recreation, leisure, and tourism. The Sharing Lodge began as a place for Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation (KOFN) to share the stories of their history and connection to this place. Located in Wasagaming in Riding Mountain National Park, the Sharing Lodge holds great potential because many of the visitors to the park are attracted to Wasagaming for recreation.

KOFN staff work hard to implement and support special events at the Sharing Lodge including KOFN 61A



*Members of the Ebb & Flow First Nation during a workshop held at the Sharing Lodge*

“Little Spruces”, National Indigenous Peoples Day Celebrations, Treaty Days and workshops. Parks Canada

continues to support the future vision of this place to tell the Anishinabe story of Riding Mountain.

## Visiting and Connecting with First Nation Communities

Parks Canada wants to get to know you and your community better! Working with Coalition representatives, Chief and Councils, Elders and other community members we are trying to visit each First Nation community.

While we have begun to make great connections, we will soon be coming back and offering a series of events called

**Indigenous Community Conversations.** Through the guidance of First Nation leaders we hope these events will create opportunities to share information, gain a greater understanding of each other and strengthen our relationships.

Ideas? Just contact us! See the last page for contact info.



*Visiting Sandy Bay Elders*



*Visiting Ebb & Flow First Nation*

# Jobs and Other Opportunities with Parks Canada

Parks Canada offers career opportunities across Canada and in Riding Mountain National Park. The park works with the Forums to successfully recruit and retain Indigenous staff members. There is a range of jobs from student positions to senior park leaders in areas of guiding, labour, trades, resource conservation, information technology, administration, and management.

Parks Canada supports Indigenous people's interests in seeking economic opportunities as a reconciliation priority. Together we are working on new initiatives, such as Indigenous tourism opportunities. Ask us about these opportunities! See the last page for contact info.



Loretta Moar (past President), Lance McKay (Vice President) of our local union with Superintendent Michaela Kent. Their co-workers voted them into these leadership positions.

## Stories of Some of Our Employees



Dwayne Blackbird with Les Campbell, Indigenous Affairs Manager at RMNP

### **LES CAMPBELL (WAYWAYSEECAPPO FN)** *Indigenous Affairs Manager*

In 2016 Les joined the park management team. He is a proud member of Waywayseecappo FN, Treaty 4, and has made the park and Onanole his home. Before becoming a manager he gained experience as a: Warden Trainee/ Patrol Person (Mount Revelstoke & Glacier National Parks); Indigenous Liaison Officer and Resource Conservation and Visitor Safety Specialist (Pacific Rim National Park Reserve); and Park Warden (Riding Mountain National Park). To complete his Master of Arts, Environment and Management at Royal Roads he worked with Elders from Waywayseecappo First Nation to examine how Indigenous Knowledge and mainstream sciences can be weaved together to help manage the land. Les is passionate to influence change in Parks Canada and support Indigenous voices. His vision is to influence people's perspectives and the landscape.

### **LANCE MATTHEW MCKAY (ROLLING RIVER FN)** *Anishinabe Youth Internship Program*

As a student I wasn't too sure about what I was going to do for a career, but thanks to this Program I discovered what I love doing and what makes me happy. Riding Mountain is a beautiful place, and this program is a wonderful opportunity for First Nation youth. Every day was different, from clearing trails with the trail crew, to tagging fish in the lakes for a resource conservation study or patching highways with the road crew. Close to the end of my internship, the First Nations Liaison and I discussed my work preferences and interests in the park. I love working outdoors and with my hands. After I graduated high school, I applied to work with the Grounds Maintenance crew and got the job. I would definitely encourage youth to follow in my footsteps and get involved with Parks Canada. It led to many opportunities inside and outside of Parks Canada.



Anishinabe Youth Internship Program participant Lance McKay from Rolling River First Nation

May 2018





Kaylee Smith doing a beading demonstration at Riding Mountain National Park



Tashina Houle-Schlup delivering the tipi program in Riding Mountain National Park

**KAYLEE SMITH (ROLLING RIVER FN) AND TASHINA HOULE-SCHLUP (ROOTS EBB AND FLOW FN) Indigenous Cultural Interpretation Students**

Tashina and Kaylee are attending Brandon University studying in the fields of Education and Arts. Through the summer they delivered beading demonstrations/workshops as well as dancing demonstrations. They also helped develop and deliver Riding Mountain's new Indigenous themed bison program *Home on the Range* and camp fire programs. Jobs such as this can lead to long-term careers with Parks Canada.

**MARY SWAIN (KEESEKOOWENIN OJIBWAY FIRST NATION)**

For 20 years Mary has been part of the park's team. As part of the Visitor Experience staff, she works in various locations in the park. Due to her work, experience, and overall disposition, many staff reach out to for her assistance.



Mary Swain, busy at work in Riding Mountain National Park.

**LORETTA MOAR (O-CHI-CHAK-KO-SIPI FIRST NATION)**

Loretta has worked in a number of cleaning, labour and trail positions in the last 20 years. In addition, she is our past local union President and held a number of national union leadership positions such as being on our national negotiations team.



Loretta Moar cuts logs for the wildfire risk reduction program, winter 2017-18.

**Ask us about working for Parks Canada! We actively recruit through [JOBS.gc.ca](http://JOBS.gc.ca)**

For more information contact Shelley Neustater in Human Resources at (204) 848-7210

**LAURA BRANDON AND DESMOND MENTUCK (WAYWAYSEECAPPO FN)**

Laura was our first Anishinabe Cultural Interpretation Officer who began the development of Anishinabe programming in the park. Last year Desmond replaced Laura. He works with a team to create new Indigenous themed programs (e.g., Heritage Camping) and assist with special events.



Desmond Mentuck



Laura Brandon, sharing Anishinabe culture with park visitors, June 2015

# Sharing Anishinabe Culture

Come enjoy the park! We have a range of interesting programs for youth and adults alike as well as opportunities for Indigenous tourism in the park and beyond.

## **Riding Mountain is home.**

It is home to the Anishinabe, who have raised their families, cared for the land, and hunted and fished here for generations, and who, despite being made unwelcome here in the past, are an integral part of the life of the Park.

*Excerpt from the Visitor Experience Strategy  
Essence of Place statement.*

## Indigenous Tourism in the Park

The park is taking steps to improve visitor experience. To help with this process, an “Essence of Place” workshop was held in a sharing circle with members of the Coalition

of First Nations at the Anishinabe Sharing Lodge. The workshop helped the park better understand how to reflect the spirit of Wagjiwing/ Noozaawinijing and its original

peoples. This strategy can be replicated with local First Nations to support Indigenous tourism in the area.



*Desmond Mentuk and Patrick McDermott deliver Indigenous cultural programming during the Heritage Camping trip in summer 2017.*



*Sandy Bay Elders checking out the Visitor Centre in Wasagaming*

## Cultural Programs

The park offers a number of cultural programs with Indigenous content and messaging developed by park staff, some of whom are local Anishinabe, but also with input from our First Nations partners. An important part of the messaging is the acknowledgement of Treaty 2 territory and the welcoming of visitors to Treaty 2 territory. This opens up the conversations to speak about the treaty relationship between the Indigenous people of Canada and Canadians as well as the historical and future partnerships that play a significant role in what Canada is today.

We had school programs built

around the historical use of the bison which covered the many ways in which Indigenous peoples used this important animal. Students had the opportunity to experience hands-on learning, including how bison hides were cleaned and used in many ways (clothing, tools, shelter, and food). The youth also had the opportunity to work with First Nations park staff trained in tipi teachings to put up small tipis.

For National Indigenous Peoples Day, our Indigenous partners did presentations on dance regalia, dancing, crafts, and our musical connection to the fur trade. We also



had the chance to help support our partner, Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation, in their coordination of the Indigenous Day Weekend Celebration.

Our summer programs highlighted the unique relationship that the surrounding Indigenous communities have with the park and how those relationships span generations. The programs included a smudging circle, beading workshops and demonstrations, Indigenous dance demonstrations, a car caravan to the Lake Audy bison enclosure, campfire presentations on Indigenous culture, and a unique Heritage Camping experience. Some common threads that were weaved into all programming included Anishinabe language, Truth and Reconciliation, Treaty territories, and Anishinabe connection to the land and animals.



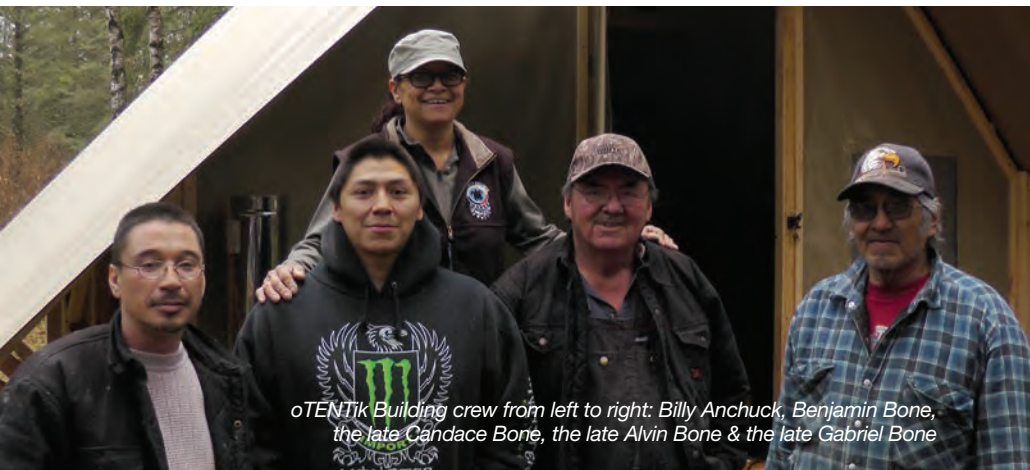
*Cultural dancer and Parks Canada student employee Tashina Houle-Schlup.*

## Take Part in Special Events!

Join us for National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21, 2018 and for Canada Day Celebrations on July 1, 2018! With the help of our First Nations partners, local community members, organizations and businesses, we hope to create events that reflect who we are as a nation and celebrate Canada as our Home. We also want to foster inclusivity and belonging and provide a space for our larger community to come together, celebrate, and learn from each other. We have not confirmed activities for these events yet, but we would like to start soon! Some of the events and activities we have thought of include;

- Musicians
- Dancers
- Artists
- Speakers
- Workshops and demonstrations
- Children's activities
- Educational and guided opportunities
- Sport activities

We appreciate your feedback and would love to hear your ideas! See contact info on the last page.



*oTENTik Building crew from left to right: Billy Anchuck, Benjamin Bone, the late Candace Bone, the late Alvin Bone & the late Gabriel Bone*

## Tribute to Alvin Bone

The late Alvin Bone and his crew members of the Keeseekoowenin Ojibway First Nation built 30 oTENTiks in Riding Mountain National Park. They assembled the initial 10 in 2012, an additional 20 in 2014 and did the winterization of 5 in 2016. In addition, they were contracted to carry out some repair jobs on the oTENTiks—everything from rebuilding wind damaged oTENTiks to roof repairs. His crew was also responsible for building the oTENTik units in Prince Albert National Park. Alvin Bone was instrumental in lifting this project off the ground and his legacy lives on in Riding Mountain National Park. This partnership fosters the opportunity to work with Indigenous contractors and suppliers on niche projects where capacity meets the need, but that also includes specialized training opportunities.

May 2018



*Eric Mentuck from Waywayseecappo dances for a large crowd on the Main Beach during 2017 Canada Day Celebrations*

# Piintikan Welcome!

## Come to the park!

The 'Open Door Program' makes it easy for Indigenous peoples to enjoy National Parks. In partnership with the Coalition of First Nations, Parks Canada is happy to give free access to local First Nations to come to their homeland in Riding Mountain National Park. You can get your permit at your local band office. Here are some ways to enjoy the park: family outings, school trips for youth, and participating in special events. From 2015-17, close to 1200 permits were issued to local First Nation citizens. For more information, please contact (204) 848-7275.



**Pick up your permit —  
it looks like this!**



Members of the Sandy Bay First Nation Culture and Language Program with a sample of "Open Door Program" permits.

Thank you to "Open Door Permit" contributors:

Words by Lance Roulette, Chief from Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation

Translation by Lillian Clearsky, Waywayseecappo First Nation

Photo of Fancy Dancer Eric Mentuck, Waywayseecappo First Nation

## We want to hear from you!

Do you have ideas? Questions? Concerns?

Please feel free to contact us!

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