



ONTARIO
PARKS

Ontario Parks Phase Out Policy

Background Information

Introduction

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) is seeking your input on proposed changes to the “phase out” policy.

The phase out policy was established in 1989. It includes a deadline to phase out certain activities in some provincial parks within a 21 year period (i.e. December 31, 2009). The activities are private tenure (e.g. recreation camps and agriculture), and commercial harvesting (e.g. trapping, bait harvesting, commercial fishing and wild rice harvesting).

Until the policy review is complete and decisions are made, the affected activities will not be phased out as originally scheduled by December 31, 2009.

Context

Ontario’s system of protected areas includes over 630 provincial parks and conservation reserves with an area of 9.5 million hectares, or about 9% of Ontario. These protected areas provide environmental, social, economic, scientific and educational benefits. The *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*, which came into effect in 2007, provides a legislative basis for planning and managing these areas.

Commercial Resource Harvesting by Aboriginal People

Aboriginal peoples may continue to exercise Aboriginal or treaty rights and are not affected by the current policy or proposed changes.

Where Phase Out Generally Applies

The current phase out policy is based on decisions made in 1989 and was amended by *Ontario’s Living Legacy (OLL) Land Use Strategy* in 1999. Table 1 is a summary of where phase out generally applies. Figure 1 illustrates the Ontario’s Living Legacy planning area boundary.

	Private Tenure	Commercial Harvesting (trapping, bait, fishing and wild rice)
Outside the OLL Planning Area	Phase out applies to all parks	Phase out applies to all parks
Inside the OLL Planning Area	<p><u>Pre-OLL Parks:</u> Phase out applies</p> <p><u>OLL Parks/additions:</u> Phase out does not apply</p>	<p><u>Pre-OLL Parks:</u> Phase out applies in nature reserve and wilderness class parks and management plan zones</p> <p><u>OLL Parks/additions:</u> Phase out applies in nature reserve class parks</p>

Table 1 – Where Phase Out Generally Applies

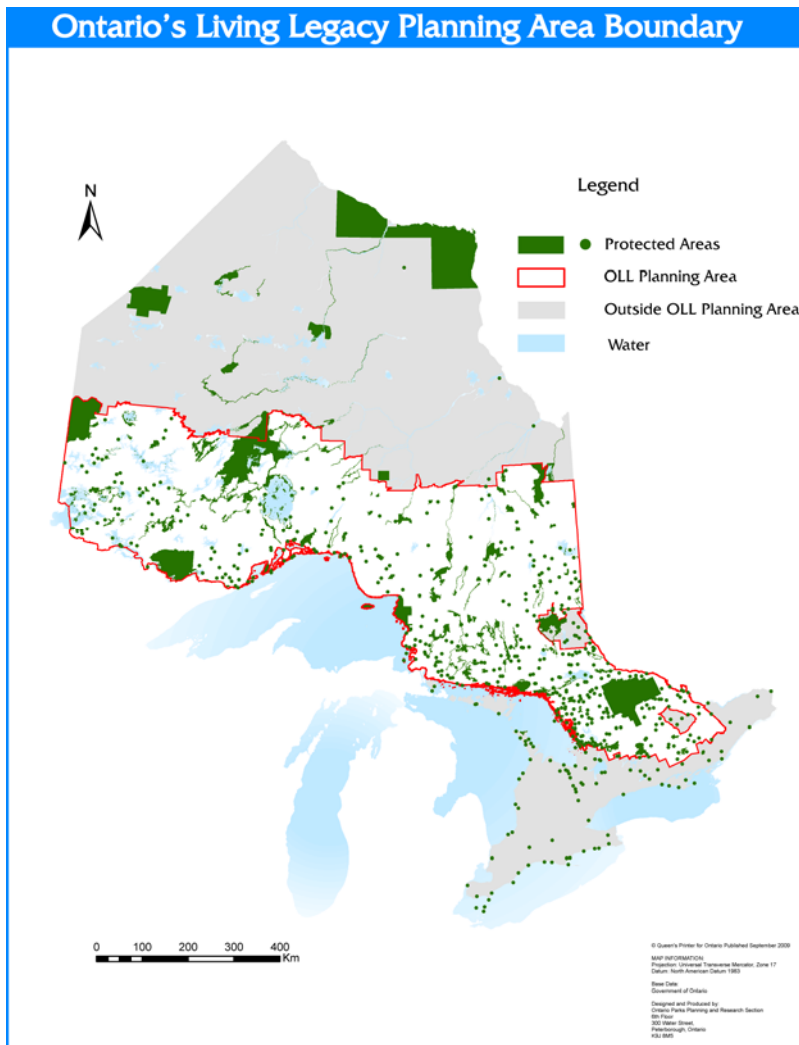


Figure 1: Ontario's Living Legacy Planning Area Boundary

Proposed Changes

The phase-out policy is currently undergoing a review. As a result, a change to grant a **lifetime extension** is being proposed by MNR for those private tenure and commercial harvesting permits/licences that would have expired at the end of 2009 in accordance with the current policy. The lifetime extension would apply to the holder(s) of the current permit/licence as of October 30, 2009 for as long as that person(s) is alive. Transfers would not be permitted, except that the transfer of harvesting licences to or between Aboriginal people will continue to be permitted.

However, according to this proposed change to the policy, there could be exceptions where the lifetime extension would not be granted. For instance, where there is concern for safety or park values, the Ministry would work with the existing permit/licence holder to establish conditions to mitigate negative impacts of the activity. Additionally, where an Aboriginal interest in a trapline is identified, discussions with the existing licence holder would be initiated to determine options.

Activities Affected by Phase Out

The number of permits/licences/areas for the five activities affected by phase out are summarized in table two.

Activity	Approximate Number of Permits/Licences/Areas affected by phase out
Private Tenure	50
Traplines	100
Bait Harvest Areas	100
Commercial Fishing Licences	0
Wild Rice Licences	0
TOTAL	250

Table 2 – Summary of the Number of permits/licences/areas Affected by Phase Out

Private Tenure

Authority to occupy Crown land, known as tenure, can take the form of a land use permit, licence of occupation or lease. Tenure authorizes a number of uses, such as private recreation camps, agriculture, commercial outpost camps, communication towers, sewage lagoons and trails. The phase out policy only affects private tenure (e.g. private recreation camps and agriculture). The basis for this is that commercial tenure, such as a lease for a lodge or outpost camp, can serve the interests of the broader public. The *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act* allows existing private tenure to continue, subject to policy, but does not allow new private tenure.

Private recreation camps have existed in Ontario since the 1920's. Over the years, especially with increased accessibility through the use of snow machines, four-wheel drive vehicles and ATVs, many of these camps received increased use beyond the hunting season. They are now known as "private recreation camps".

Commercial Trapping

Commercial fur harvesting, or trapping, contributes to the economic well being of Ontario's economy and is a tool in ensuring the sustainability of this renewable resource. Trapping also represents an important part of Ontario's cultural heritage, particularly for Aboriginal trappers and communities. Permits for traplines are issued under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. Phase out applies only to the portion of a trapline within a park.

Commercial Bait Harvesting

Anglers in Ontario have a long tradition of using live bait. Commercial bait operators are required to have a valid commercial bait harvester or dealer licence issued by the MNR under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. Phase out applies only to the portion of a bait harvest area that is within a park.

Commercial Wild Rice Harvesting

Commercial wild rice harvesting occurs by licence issued under the *Wild Rice Harvesting Act*. There are no wild rice licences affected by the phase out policy.

Commercial Fishing

Commercial fishing occurs by licence issued under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*. There are no commercial fishing licences affected by the phase out policy.

Activities Not Affected by Phase Out

Activities that are not part of the phase out policy review include:

- Cottage leases in Rondeau and Algonquin, which are subject to phase out in 2017 per a Cabinet-approved regulation;
- Temporary hunt camps in Algonquin Park, mostly in Clyde and Bruton townships, authorized by special permit under the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*,

- Any commitments to continue traditional uses in Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park;
- Nineteen camps which have lifetime tenure granted in the Temagami Integrated Plan (2007). When the policy review is completed, implications for these camps will be considered, including consideration of any appropriate revisions (i.e. if the review results in a decision that is more favourable).
- Tourist operators within wilderness class parks harvesting bait for use in park;
- Other tenure not covered by the phase-out policy (e.g. commercial tourism, communication towers);
- The broader array of permitted use policies (aircraft landing, use of ATVs, motorboats, etc.) which are not subject to a phase out date.

Next steps

A policy proposal is also posted on the Environmental Registry, <http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/>, registry number 010-8203.

For more information or to submit comments, please contact:

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Comments on the Environmental Registry posting must be received by **December 14, 2009** and we are seeking your feedback by that date as well. Please provide your email address (if available) with any correspondence, as our preference for future correspondence will be email.

Once consultation is concluded the input received will be reviewed and the policy will be finalized and approved by the Ministry. Notification of the final policy will be sent to the project mailing list and a decision notice will be posted on the Environmental Registry.

Appendix 1: List of Provincial Parks with Activities Affected by Phase Out

	Provincial Park	Park Zone	Activity Affected		
			Private tenure	Trapping	BHA
1	Agassiz Peatlands (original and addition)	Northwest		X	
2	Algonquin	Algonquin	X	X	
3	Arrowhead Peninsula	Northwest		X	
4	Bonheur River Kame	Northwest		X	
5	Boyne Valley	Southwest	X		
6	Brightsand River	Northwest	X	X	X
7	Castle Creek	Northwest			X
8	Chapleau-Nemegosenda River (original)	Northeast	X		
9	Charleston Lake	Southeast			X
10	Cranberry Lake	Northwest		X	X
11	Daisy Lake Uplands	Northeast		X	
12	Devon Road Mesa	Northwest		X	
13	Divide Ridge	Northwest			X
14	Dividing Lake	Central		X	
15	East English River	Northwest	X		
16	Egan Chutes	Southeast	X	X	
17	Esker Lakes	Northeast			X
18	Frederick House Lake	Northeast		X	
19	French River (original)	Northeast	X	X	
20	Gem Lake Maple Bedrock	Northeast		X	X
21	Goose Island	Northwest			X
22	Greenwater (original)	Northeast		X	X
23	Hicks-Oke-Bog	Northeast		X	
24	Hockley Valley	Southwest	X		
25	Hope Bay Forest	Southwest	X		
26	James N Allan	Southwest	X		
27	John E Pearce	Southwest	X		
28	Kabototikwia River	Northwest			X
29	Kaiashk	Northwest		X	
30	Killarney (original)	Northeast		X	
31	La Cloche	Northeast	X		
32	La Verendrye	Northwest		X	X
33	Lake Abitibi Islands	Northeast		X	X
34	Larder River (original)	Northeast		X	
35	Little Greenwater L.	Northwest		X	
36	Livingstone Point	Northwest			X
37	Lower Madawaska River	Central	X	X	
38	MacMurphy Township End Moraine(original)	Northeast		X	X
39	Makobe-Grays River	Northeast		X	
40	Mashkinonje	Northeast		X	X
41	Matawin River	Northwest		X	X
42	Mattagami River Beach and Aeolian Deposit (original)	Northeast		X	
43	Minnitaki	Northwest		X	
44	Missinaibi (original)	Northeast	X	X	
45	Mississagi Delta (original)	Northeast	X		
46	Mississagi River	Northeast	X		
47	Mono Cliffs	Southwest	X		

	Provincial Park	Park Zone	Activity Affected		
			Private tenure	Trapping	BHA
48	Nagagami Lake	Northeast			X
49	Obabika River	Northeast		X	
50	Ojibway	Northwest		X	X
51	Otoskwin-Attawapiskat River	Northwest			X
52	Oxtongue River	Central	X		
53	Pan Lake Fen	Northeast		X	
54	Pichogen River Mixed Forest	Northeast			X
55	Pokei Lake/White River Wetlands	Northeast		X	X
56	Potholes	Northeast		X	X
57	Pretty River Valley	Central			X
58	Quetico	Northwest		X	
59	Round Lake	Central		X	
60	Sable Islands	Northwest			X
61	Sandbanks	Southeast	X		
62	Short Hills	Southwest	X		
63	Solace	Northeast		X	
64	South Bay	Central	X		
65	Spruce Islands	Northwest			X
66	Sturgeon R	Northeast		X	
67	Thackeray	Northeast		X	
68	The Massasauga	Central	X		
69	Trout Lake	Northwest		X	X
70	Turtle River-White Otter Lake	Northwest		X	X
71	Wabakimi	Northwest	X	X	X
72	White Lake Peatlands	Northeast		X	
73	Whitesand	Northwest			X
74	Wildgoose Outwash Deposit	Northeast			X
75	Windigo Bay	Northwest			X
76	Woodland Caribou	Northwest	X	X	X