

Executive Summary, Temagami Area Park Management Plan

Located 100 km north of North Bay, the Temagami area is renowned for its rugged landscape as well as its significant natural, cultural and recreational resources. Much of the area's 650,000 hectares is relatively remote, offering solitude and challenge for those seeking a backcountry recreation experience.

Five provincial parks covering 104,248 hectares lie in the western part of Temagami. Surrounding the parks are eight conservation reserves which make up an additional 42,836 hectares of protected area. Much of the remaining land base consists of unregulated Crown lands.

Temagami has been a tourist destination for over a century, with numerous lakes and rivers which offer excellent boating, canoeing and fishing. There are over 2,400 kilometers of interconnecting canoe routes and portage trails. Recreational use is quite high, with a 1994 survey estimating over 60,000 visitor days of wilderness canoeing and other backcountry use. The majority of travel into the wilderness and waterway parks occurs from access points a considerable distance away. Many canoe routes start or finish well outside of park boundaries on adjacent Crown lands.

The *Temagami Area Park Management Plan* was developed as part of a broader planning initiative. Temagami Integrated Planning (TIP) process was initiated in 2004 and combined three planning projects which were identified in the 1997 *Temagami Land Use Plan*. These three components were:

- management planning for five backcountry parks (wilderness and waterway);
- management planning for eight conservation reserves which lie adjacent to the parks; and
- a recreation plan for unregulated Crown lands in the Temagami administrative area (part of MNR's North Bay District).

These three planning components—provincial parks, conservation reserves and recreation management on Crown land—were integrated because there is a strong inter-relationship between them. All provide relatively remote recreational experiences, share similar patterns of access and use, as well as raise environmental and social concerns.

By combining all three components, the TIP process allowed the Ministry to consider how management decisions on one land base might impact on adjacent areas. While they were integrated into one process, each component has distinctive legislation, permitted uses and management requirements.

The TIP process produced three separate planning products: a park management plan for five parks, a resource management plan for eight conservation reserves, and a Crown land recreation plan for unregulated Crown lands. The recreation plan addresses specifically the recreational aspects of Crown lands; all other land uses will continue to receive direction from the 1997 *Temagami Land Use Plan*.

The *Temagami Area Park Management Plan* includes management direction for five provincial parks: Lady Evelyn-Smoothwater (Wilderness class), Makobe-Grays River, Obabika River, Solace, and Sturgeon River (all Waterway class parks). The five parks share a common theme in that they provide remote wilderness experiences. The intent of the management plan is to manage visitor use, protect significant natural and cultural

resources, and ensure that park operations are environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

The management plan was developed in accordance with the *Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies* (1992), and the *Temagami Land Use Plan* (1997). It serves as a working guide on which to base sound management actions into the future. While this plan provides overall direction for management, specific actions will be further developed in subsequent implementation plans.

Typically, management plans are developed for individual parks. In this case, the park management plan is combined for all five parks since they are physically connected to each other and share similar patterns of use. This plan format is termed a “parent plan”.

The management plan sets the direction for the zoning, management and operation within the five parks. The plan will be for a 20-year period. Every 10 years, or as required, the plan will be assessed to determine if an amendment to the plan is required. An amendment may also be considered in order to address specific issues or needs. Any amendments to the park plan will be undertaken with consideration to the adjoining planning documents covered in the Temagami Integrated Planning process.

The park management plan includes the policies and management direction for all five provincial parks. Management direction is consistent with the *Provincial Parks Act*, *A Class Environmental Assessment for Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves* as well as all related legislation, policies and guidelines.

All lands and waters within the wilderness and waterway parks are designated as one of four zone types: Nature Reserve, Wilderness, Natural Environment or Access; this provides a balance between the protection of natural and cultural features while supporting a range of recreational use of the park landscape.

Specific management direction, including permitted and prohibited uses, is provided for each zone. In addition, broader management direction is covered under policy statements for resource stewardship, park operations, development and implementation.

Implementation priorities are outlined under Park Operations and Development, Resource Stewardship, and Visitor Management

The five parks became operational in 2004 with the introduction of interior overnight camping fees and the hiring of interior wardens to undertake maintenance, education and compliance work along canoe routes. Fees collected cover the costs of maintaining portages, campsites, privies and overall compliance throughout all five parks.

Public input and review was an important part of the planning process. A series of open houses and meetings were held throughout all stages of the process. In developing the management plans, the planning team considered and evaluated extensive public input in addition to the provincial legislation and policies for these areas.