



# NEWSLETTER

June 2020



Hank Ostwald, Mary Jean Blaisdell, Michael Clarken, Steve Erikson. Dalton, Michell & out on Caribou. Last Wabakimi Project trip of the season, 2016.

## [JOIN US ONLINE!](#)

*Dear friends,*

*Inspired by “Uncle” Phil Cotton, we’re building a stronger Friends of Wabakimi. Please join us and/or encourage your friends.*

*We’ve increased our online presence and we’ll try to connect with you more that way in the future.*

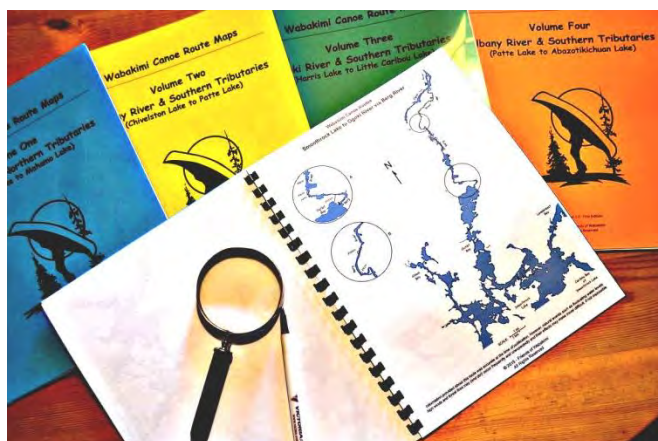
*We’re providing planning resources and encouraging expeditions to keep our canoe routes open and passable. We’re advocating for the resource, and actively engaging with park and forest managers.*

*Please join (or rejoin) us.*

*Vern Fish, President*

## In this Issue:

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(What we've done, Wabakimi.org website, Online Annual Meeting, Bylaws Update, Volunteers)
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**Online Map Store is Open!** PayPal, credit cards accepted! Member price discounts for map volumes and our Wabakimi Canoe Routes Planning Map



## President's Report

### By Vern Fish

#### Wabakimi in our Future

The *Canoeopia* that wasn't. Dave McTeague and I arrived in Madison, Wisconsin March 14th all set with our booth, maps, board planning and Annual Meetings, only to have it all cancelled at the very last moment. Shortly after, a buddy and I canoed the Devil's River

Wilderness in Texas, only to find the towns on the way home closed up and almost deserted; a surreal experience. The Covid crisis presents challenges (my own town is a major hot spot), but also a chance for us to regroup.

Now we're home, connecting in our virtual world. Friends of Wabakimi (FOW) was conceived by the late Phil Cotton to carry on the work of The Wabakimi Project, but also to advocate for conservation and protection of the entire Wabakimi Area.

Your FOW Board is making progress. Here's what we've done:

- Started work on a comprehensive Wabakimi Canoe Routes Guidebook\*
- Gained a seat on MNR's Armstrong Forest Advisory Committee\*
- Opened a positive dialogue with our Park Superintendent
- Updated and reprinted our Canoe Route Map Volumes
- Published 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Wabakimi Canoe Routes Planning Map
- Expanded our Board of Directors
- Launched our new Website with tons of information
- Implemented an Online Membership program & Map Store\*
- Published newsletters with trip reports

\* See related stories

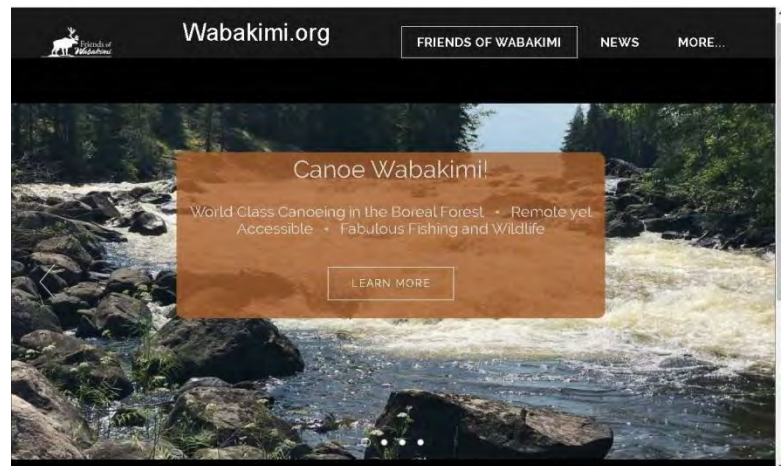
#### Website – [www.wabakimi.org](http://www.wabakimi.org)

Chuck Clise, Amy Funk and Dave McTeague have been working to update and modernize the website. Check out our News, Conservation, route maps and newsletters! Wabakimi.org has all our resource information. [JOIN US](#) online now! *We need your Wabakimi Trip Reports & Photos!*

**We're a volunteer organization.** Barry Simon recently updated our Map Volumes; Bill Pyle & Kris Reed are filling U.S. map volume orders; Debbie Doyle-Sargent fills the Canadian map orders and deposits checks into our Canadian account; Ken Babinchak oversees our Facebook page,

newsletters and now directs map orders to the right distributor; Mary Jean Blaisdell is a membership manager, accepting the U.S. mail-in memberships and logging those into our online database. Dave McTeague oversees the new Wild Apricot member/contact system and fills U.S. Planning Map orders. Ray Tallent chairs our Conservation Committee. Secretary/Treasurer John Holmes keeps board meeting minutes and financial accounting in order.

(President's Report continued on Page 6)



## Don Elliot, [Mattice Lake Outfitters](#)

By A. Funk, Cedar Queen

The Wabakimi Project has an extensive history with Don Elliot, owner of Mattice Lake Outfitters. Wabakimi Project founder, Phil Cotton, first used the outfitter for two personal trips into the area in 2004. From the beginning of The Project in 2005 to the final trip in 2018, Mattice Lake Outfitters handled all the flights. Don did much more than provide flights according to long-time Project member, Ken Babinchak. Ken says, “Don stored canoes, provided fuel and oil for the Huskie, shuttled beer for every extraction flight, provided parking for our vehicles, let us stay in his cabins at the lake if flights were cancelled, and, if Phil asked nicely, gave us lovely hats every year. He knew the area intimately and was always helpful and made suggestions. The whole family was helpful, wife, Annette, daughter, Yvonne, son, Austin, and grandsons”

Given this extensive history, many on the Board have been wondering about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Mattice Lake and the Armstrong area. See below for an interview with Don.

### **How are things going at Mattice Lake?**

We’re a non-essential service so we’re shut down until at least May 31. We can’t even go into the cabins to fix a door or a dock on the cabins with the Ontario Parks closed. We’ve had no indication things are going to open up and expect the shut-down to be extended.



Photo: Ken Babinchak

I’ve seen several Ontario Province’s plans to start the economy. Each one is a little different. We just don’t see too much hope, as new cases continue to appear. We don’t know if or when people are coming this season.

The vast majority of our business is from the United States. We’re just too far from most Canadian markets. Chicago, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee are closer than Toronto. When will the border open? No one knows.

### **Are you hearing from clients?**

Oh yeah, every day we have emails and phone calls. We had to reschedule all of May and the first three weeks of June. People are either booking for later in the year or rebooking next year. One of our greatest fears is that are we going to have call of these people back to reschedule again.

You hear a lot of different reactions to reopening. A lot of our guests are over seventy-year-old and will be reluctant to travel. The other day, I had an 80-year old man call and tell me he’s coming fishing as soon as everything opens. So, it depends on where the client is calling from.



Are they calling from New York or North Dakota? It makes a difference.

### **Is the government offering any assistance for businesses like yours?**

The two I have heard of are (1) wage subsidies and (2) interest free loans. What people don't think about is the amount of bills we are sitting on for continued expenses. Everything from running the airplanes to keeping the cabins maintained. Right now, I have a bill for almost \$70,000 just for insurance. You know, just because we are not in operation right now, doesn't mean we don't have to keep our insurance. There are millions of little costs like that we are juggling.

People are wondering, "Are businesses going to survive?" The answer is, "it depends on how long this thing lasts". You read so many different reports. For example, one article will say 12-14 months to a vaccine while another will say 4 years. There's a big pile of unknowns.

### **Have you heard of businesses closing in the Armstrong area?**

I'm not sure of restaurants and things like that. Those smaller places will struggle more. As far as the outpost camps, most people already own their properties. Annette and I are one of the only owners that live here year-round. People from the United States and other areas of Canada own a lot of property. So, I think they will survive, depending on how long it lasts. In the 2008 recession, not many outposts went under. I did hear that some owners had to get other jobs outside their business.

### **Do you have any cases of COVID-19 close to Armstrong?**

In Gull Bay just down the road, there have been about 7 confirmed cases. These originated from a mine in Thunder Bay. The mining conditions are similar to the meat-packing plants we are hearing about. There are two unconfirmed cases on the reserve in Armstrong.

### **Any last thoughts to share on COVID-19 and Mattice Lake? Can paddlers assist in anyway?**

I can't think of any way to help. Life is so disrupted for everyone. This will affect us for years to come, no doubt. I think the biggest problem for us, for clients, for everyone is the uncertainty. No one knows where this thing is going. No one knows what the response will be when things open up again. We all have to hunker down. Do what it takes to stay afloat.

*We hope to see you soon, Don!*

### **Author's notes:**

This interview was conducted on May 5<sup>th</sup>. According to a recent cbc.ca news article, there are 81 cases in the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (a large area that includes Thunder Bay and the Wabakimi area-see map below). [May 20 Thunder Bay Area COVID Update](#)



Related story on the Gull Bay cases referenced by Don: [Gull Bay Story](#)

## FOW engages with Armstrong Forest Planning

The Armstrong Forest is currently revising the next ten-year Forest Management Plan (FMP). Recently FOW President Vern Fish was accepted as our representative to the Armstrong Forest Local Citizen Committee (LCC). Board member and Thunder Bay resident Shawn Bell was accepted as our Alternate. They replace Phil Cotton who was appointed shortly before he passed.

**Volume 5 Canoe Routes.** There are many canoe routes in the Armstrong Forest which [The Wabakimi Project](#) improved and documented in [FOW Maps Volume 5](#) as well as several major points of entry into Wabakimi Provincial Park. Logging and road development in this Crown land forest will impact the area's habitat and canoe routes.

Vern attended his first meeting on May 27<sup>th</sup>. This was the LCC's first online meeting, a change which greatly helps our involvement. Vern reports:

**"New Logging road.** The dominant issue was the location of a road to haul logs out of the northwest corner of the Armstrong Forest. (See the Dalton Road Extension map. The logging company refers to the road as the Dalton Road Extension but the locals refer to it as the Big Lake Road.)



**The Crown Forest Sustainability Act (1994) states that Ontario's Crown forests will be managed for sustainability while supplying social, economic, environmental needs for present and future generations. Local Citizen Committees involve the public in forest management planning (FMP) for each forest plan.** (Big River photo by Ken Babinchak)

Alternative #1 would push the existing Big Lake/ Dalton Road north from Armstrong passed Big Lake, Dalton Lake and up to Linklater Lake. At this point the road will swing to the west around the northeast corner of Caribou Lake. From this point the road could go west somewhere south of Campbell Lake and then turn north to gain access to AB-3 (an area bordering Wabakimi Provincial Park).

Alternative #2 (Hollingsworth Road) would push a new road west from the existing McKinley Road and south Hollingsworth Lake. This road would then turn north to AB-3. (However, the February meeting minutes noted that staff had recommended that the McKinley Road be closed north of the Whitesand River crossing. This would include the removal of all man-made structures such as coverts.) Based upon the discussion at the meeting, I do not believe this alternative is still on the table.

Alternative #3 is an option that came out of the meeting discussion. This would push a road north from the NE corner of Caribou Lake on east side of Hollingsworth Lake and then turn west to reach AB-3. This route would protect a Brook Trout spawning area on Fletcher Creek which is south of Hollingsworth Lake. I am assuming that this route would follow the Dalton Road Extension north pass Big Lake up to northeast corner of Caribou Lake.

To cover the costs of upgrading the existing Dalton Road Extension to handle the logging traffic, MNRF staff recommended that the Dalton Road Extension be given the status of a *primary road*. The primary status opens up significant funding sources but implies that this road will have a more “permanent” status. There were concerns voiced about the longevity of primary roads. Once they are built, “they never go away”. It was also noted a road up into AB-3 will make the Caribou Lake region “less wild”. This could have negative impacts on tourism. All of these road options could impact the Raymond River Canoe Route.”

It was also noted that the Trail Lake Road which travels west from HWY 527 south of Armstrong would also receive upgrades and realignment. This will provide logging access to AB-1 and improve vehicle access to Tamarack Lake and the Boiling Sand River in southeast corner of Wabakimi Provincial Park. It is very likely that this road will stay on the landscape for a long time.”

### **Logging Roads, the Good and the Bad.**

Closing the McKinley Road north of the Whitesands River is a good thing for habitat restoration. However, this particular closure will prevent vehicle access to the Big River canoe route coming out of Lower Pawshowconk Lake. On the other hand, upgrading the Trail Lake Road will improve canoe access to the southwest corner of Wabakimi Provincial Park. The Dalton Road Extension could improve canoe access to both the Raymond River and the Big River Routes. However, this access will reduce the wilderness feel of this area. **(See map on Page 7)**

In our previous response to the [MNRF Desired Benefits Survey](#), we said, “*Our priority is protecting identified canoe routes and the forest's wildlife, habitat and ecological resources. We do not want to see any more roads than absolutely necessary encroach on the greater Wabakimi wilderness area. However when a road is created and maintained for long-term usage, it should be available to the public...to give paddlers affordable access to existing canoe routes.*”

As noted in park biologist [Shannon Walshe's recent article](#), “*Today, (woodland caribou) numbers are dropping dramatically. At least half of the caribou's range has been lost due to activities that disturb and fragment their forest habitat, such as road building.*” This area is also included in [Ontario's Woodland Caribou Conservation Plan](#). [Key forest planning documents](#) have a goal of harvesting so as to mimic natural processes as way of protecting habitat integrity.

The FOW now has two board members serving on the Armstrong LCC to represent the recreational community and fulfill our mission “*to advocate for the protection and preservation of the diverse natural, cultural and historical resources of the Wabakimi Area*”. We need more involved members. You can join our Conservation Committee discussion, with your [membership Online Profile](#) or email us at [friendsofwabakimi@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofwabakimi@gmail.com)

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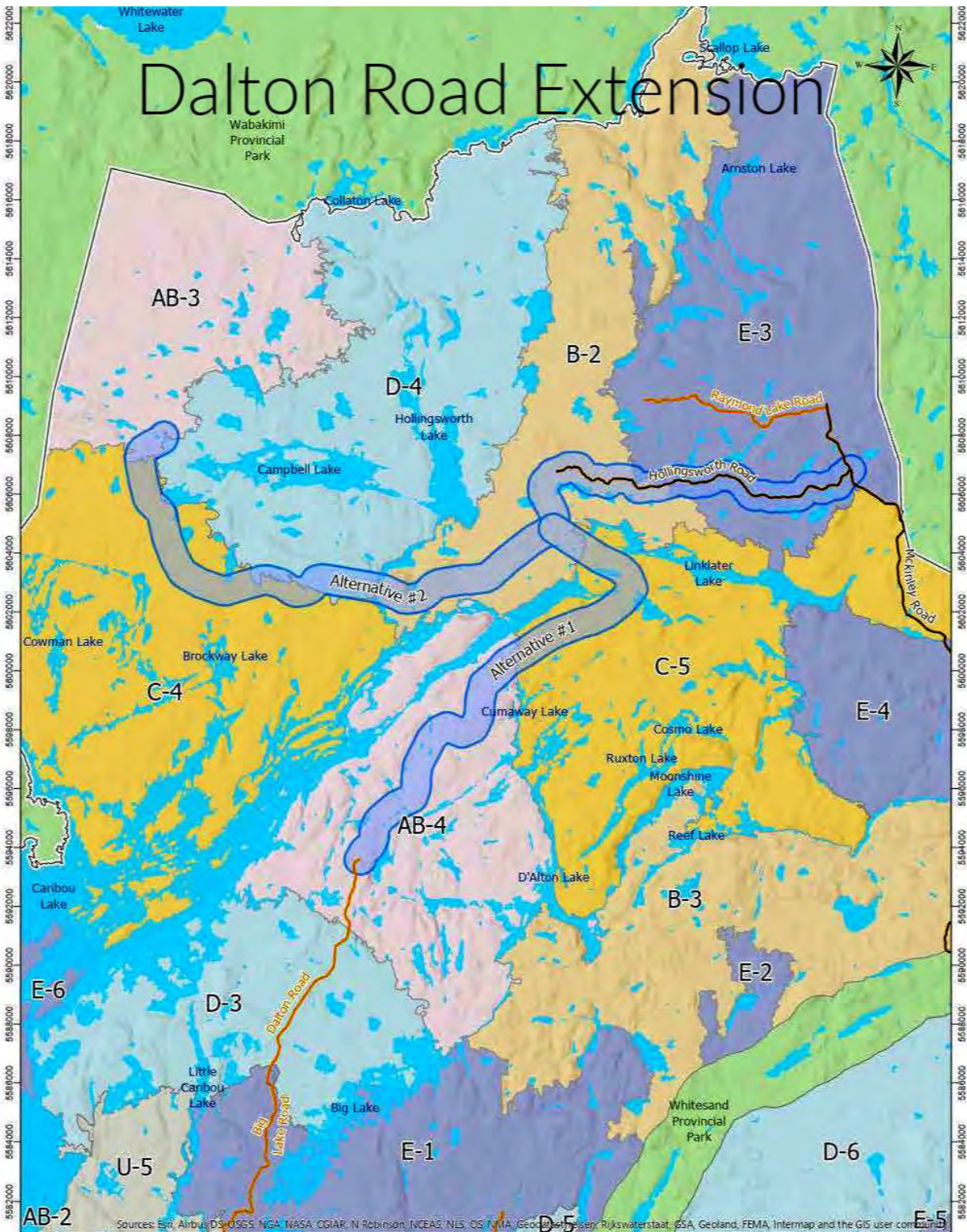
[President's Report Continued...](#))

### **Annual Membership Meeting Reset for June 14th**

Our Annual Meeting has been rescheduled for 7:00 PM on Sunday, June 14. This will be a “*virtual campfire*”. Current FOW members have been invited to participate in our first large group Zoom meeting. The by-laws will be amended at the Annual Membership Meeting on June 14 to increase the size of the Board of Directors to 15 and eliminate term limits. This will make it easier to recruit and maintain volunteers. By law the board must be at least 25% Canadian.

The Membership will be asked to approve 12 members at the Annual Membership Meeting to serve on the Board of Directors (see [bios on our web page](#)).





#### Planned Roads

■ New Primary Road Corridor

#### Existing Roads

— Forest Industry Primary Road

— Forest Industry Branch Road

— Railway

— Hwy 527

#### LIO Base Data

■ Waterbody

■ Conservation Reserve

■ Provincial Park

■ First Nation Community

#### Blocks Open for Harvest Period

■ A - 2103-2123

■ AB - 2021-2033

■ B - 2021-2043

■ C - 2043-2063

■ D - 2063-2083

■ E - 2083-2103

■ BF - 2123-2143

■ U - Open

#### Dalton Road Extension

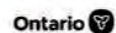
Date Created: 2020-02-19

0 1.25 2.5 5 KM

Scale: 1:125,000

NAD 1983 UTM Zone 16N

This map should not be relied upon as a precise indicator of routes or locations nor as a guide to navigation. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry and NorthWinds Environmental Services shall not be liable in any way for the use of, or reliance upon, this map or any information on this map.



NorthWinds Environmental Services

# Planning a 2020 Trip?

Currently Ontario provincial parks are now open to backcountry use. We're still hoping the U.S./Canada border opens enough to allow overnight trips yet this year. Your trip could help to our **Wabakimi Canoe Routes** guidebook project.

If you plan to take a trip into Wabakimi or adjacent Crown Lands in 2020, you could help us document and confirm draft guidebook routes. Please note this is a self-guided trip and is not an "official" FOW sponsored trip. (A more formal program for 2021 is being considered.)



Dave, Scott, Debbie, Mark, Chuck and Ken on Peninsula Lake, 2019.

[Self-Guided Reconnaissance Expeditions](#) Open this link or go to [Wabakimi.org](http://Wabakimi.org).

**First**, we need you to document your trip by filling out our **Trip Report Outline** (See [Phil's Form](#)). It requests that you assess portages and document the current status of the route. We would like as much detail as you have time to provide.

**Second**, we need photos from your trip. Hopefully, you can capture important features like waterfalls, cliffs and rapids. We also want photos of people and wildlife.

**Third**, if you're willing and able, some portages may need improvement. Please note, you can only use hand saws within the provincial park boundaries.

**Finally, we want trip report that we can post on our website.**

*In return, we will provide a folded planning map and any route maps necessary for your trip, as well as any other information we're able to gather specific to your route plan.* There's more information on at [Wabakimi.org/2020 Trip Program](http://Wabakimi.org/2020%20Trip%20Program); or email us at [info@wabakimi.org](mailto:info@wabakimi.org).

## Potential Guidebook Routes

Any route is fair game because it could be included in a future issue of the Wabakimi Canoe Route guidebook. This is a listing for discussion purposes. There are numerous options and variations on these routes.

- Allanwater River, with many options
- Flindt River
- Nemo River
- Lookout River
- Boiling Sand River
- Albany River
- Kopka River
- Brightsand River
- Kawaweogama/Brightsand loop

- Pashkokogan/Rockliff Lake loop
- Little Caribou/Berg/Whitewater loop
- Smye Lake entry routes

## Armstrong Forest Routes:

- Little Caribou to McKinley Road
- Caribou/Linklater Lake loop
- Vale Creek route
- Collins River



# Wendell Beckwith - and the Best Island cabins

*(Excerpt from our draft Wabakimi Canoe Routes Guidebook, Laurence Mills, lead author)*



Wendell Beckwith was a native of Whitewater, Wisconsin and, like his father, was an engineer and inventor. As chief development engineer for the Milwaukee Electric Tool Co. he designed and patented several pieces of equipment and later as a freelance consultant to Parker Pen, one of his major clients, he received four patents covering writing apparatus and machinery. However, he did not invent the ball-point pen as is sometimes suggested.

In 1961, in his search for a place of solitude in which to conduct his research, he moved to Best Island on Whitewater Lake at the invitation of his friend Harry Worth, and remained there until his death in 1980 at the age of 65. He welcomed visitors and the site became a popular stopover for canoeists, particularly groups such as Outward Bound. This was actually a key reason for the breakdown of

his relationship with Harry.

The main cabin, the only structure not completely designed by Beckwith, was equipped with a cooler, a box lowered into the ground to keep food cold and a sizeable homemade birch bark canoe lashed to the south wall.

He found the large cabin too difficult to heat in the winter, so built a smaller cabin into the hillside that he called "The Snail." It was exceptionally heat efficient, with a skylight over a sunken stove, which had a rotating conical shield to direct the heat and a chimney stack designed to create maximum draft. In all, a total of five structures were built, including three cabins, a storage shed and the 'snail' and all were connected by a flagstone walkway and surrounded by a decorative cedar-rail fence. Each structure was designed perfectly, and every shingle and floorboard cut precisely. Elaborate carvings adorned entranceways and even the cupboard hinges and doorknobs were intricately carved from wood.



The "snail"

Beckwith's status in Canada was not formalized until 1974. It seems he refused to apply for landed immigrant status, describing himself as a "citizen of the world". But because of his "great assistance to the Indian population of the area" he was granted ministerial permission to stay. Similarly, his refusal to apply for a land use permit, until 1977, led to protracted negotiations with the Ministry of Natural Resources. By agreement with the Ontario government, he bequeathed his research notes, papers and experimental apparatus to the people of Ontario on his death.

Filmmaker Jim Hyder, who knew Beckwith, has partnered with the Thunder Bay Museum to make a film of Wendell's life. The film will ask who was Wendell Beckwith? It will explore his skills, his relationships, his legacy and his science. It should be completed by the end of 2020.

<https://www.facebook.com/wendellfilm>

# NEW!

## Online Membership & Map Store

Dave McTeague, Board Chair

The Friends of Wabakimi now has a Wild Apricot online membership system & map store. Go to [Wabakimi.org-JOIN US!](http://Wabakimi.org-JOIN US!)



Morning mist on Smye Lake

Terry Isert photo

This automates our new member and renewal system, and has other interactive features which will support volunteers, involvement, donations and communication going forward.

Interested persons can easily [Join FOW](#) and support our efforts. Existing and past members can renew online. Many members will start receiving renewal notices in this August. We hope more people will renew for up to three to five years.

We now have a Family membership option. The one signing up is the “bundle administrator” who can then add immediate family members, at the time or later.

Members can log in and access their [profile](#). You'll need to request a password. You can upload trip reports and photos too. (Please also give us a description of your photos -who, where, when...hey, we might use them in our newsletter, photo gallery, or [Facebook page](#)).

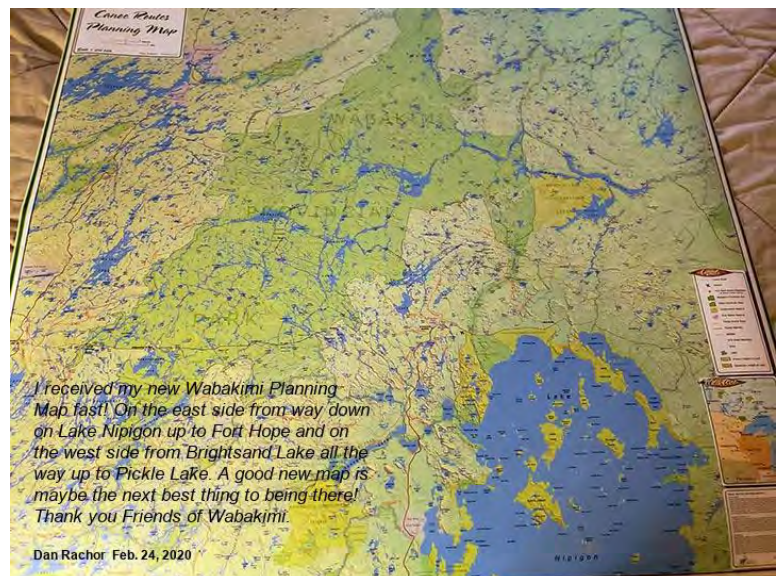
FOW members have access to a [membership directory](#). You can see the other members, whereabouts they are and you can message them directly. Members can edit their profiles to add or exclude items that others can see.

After logging in, the [map volumes and planning map](#) store will have the reduced member pricing. But anyone can purchase our maps.

There's a [sign-up page for our newsletters and updates](#). You don't have to be a member for this...but we hope you will join eventually. You'll become one of our Contacts...and we'll stay in touch.

Our Wabakimi Forum is coming. We'd like to have sections for Trip Partners, Canoe Route discussions, Conservation issues, and Member/Contact information.

We're still working to integrate the Wild Apricot site into Wabakimi.org. Let us know if you run into any problems with this. Email us at [info@wabakimi.org](mailto:info@wabakimi.org)





# *Caribou, Linklater to MacDonald Lakes, via Linklater Creek*

## *Friends of Wabakimi Trip Report*

*Week 2, June 6 – June 13, 2015.*

Participants: D. Rodgers, B. Pyle, K. Wick. Leader and report author: John Holmes

1: Saturday, June 6th:

Introductions of new participants. Safety orientation meeting held. The new participants were provided with an update on our progress last week, and the plan for the upcoming week was discussed. Spotted a caribou swimming across Lake Caribou from west to east, just north of our campsite. After a snack, we paddled up into the NE arm of Caribou Lake to search for the next portage. We located it a little further west into the arm than indicated on our maps. It is well blazed and appeared to require a small to moderate amount of work to clear. We fished on the way back to our camp and caught 2 northerns for dinner.



Day 2: Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>:

The day began with light drizzle and low cloud. J. Holmes decided that the team should pack up and move as there was little wind, warm temperatures and only intermittent drizzle. We cut the portage and carried all the equipment over by 1:00pm. The north end of the portage is quite wet and boggy. It enters the unnamed lake east of the small bay indicated on the map. The chainsaw work was completed and about an

hour of hand work remained. The decision was taken to set up camp at the site expected to be on the north shore of the unnamed lake, at the beginning of the portage into Linklater Lake. There was indeed a site on the esker on the north shore. After lunch, we cleared 2 tent sites, set up camp and created a fire



B. Pyle on boggy section of portage.



Unnamed lake north of Caribou Lake.



ring on gravel and mineral soil. An investigation of the next portage into Linklater Lake showed that it becomes quite indistinct, but does exist. Evidence of use by snowmobiles, and cut logs were found. J. Holmes followed the original blazed route, which diverged from the new route at about the halfway point. This original route is badly blown down beyond this point, and leads into a dense area of alders. The decision was taken to cut the newer route tomorrow.

### Day 3: Monday, June 8th

Rose to early morning mist and light winds, clearing to partly sunny during breakfast. We returned to the southern portage to complete the hand clearing work and measuring. This portage measured 473m. Returned to the campsite for a snack and a bit of a rest before beginning work on the northern portage. Approximately half of the portage was cleared by lunchtime. A very warm, sunny day requiring lots of water. The remainder of the portage was cut by 3:30 PM, including some corduroy work over wet areas and holes in the northern end of the portage. This portage was measured at 828m. Large, recent wolf scat was observed on the north end of the trail, along with an abundance of woodpeckers near the campsite. K. Wick and D. Rodgers fished the unnamed lake without success. Localized thunderstorms in the evening, with changing wind direction.



Wolf scat



Esker portage on north shore of unnamed lake.

### Day 4: Tuesday, June 9th

A warm night and a hazy morning with high overcast and east winds suggested poor weather was on the way. An early start allowed us to carry the portage and begin paddling Linklater Lake by noon. The entire west end of the lake was explored. Two good campsites were noted on the south shore in the area west of the portage. The site closest to the portage did not show evidence of previous use as a campsite, but showed the better potential of the two sites. The western most site did have an old rock ring. The remainder of the shoreline yielded only one potential site as we paddled east. It is located on the north shore, just west of the large island. It requires some work but does have a rock ring. It began to rain just as we landed for lunch on a thin rock spit at the east end of the large island. Two large animals, moose or caribou, were observed swimming from the large island to the north shore. Low visibility meant we could not positively identify them. We decided to press on for the Thunderhook cabin (used with permission) at the east end of the lake instead of searching for a campsite and setting up in the rain. Light winds, warm temperatures and

good rain gear made for a pleasant hour and a half paddle in the rain to the cabin. The cabin reeked of death, but the discovery and removal of a tipper trap full of a dozen or more rotting mice in a few inches of water, along with open windows and a roaring fire in the woodstove, soon turned the cabin into a welcoming place. Wet packs were arranged on a groundsheet inside and we settled in as the wind rose and the weather deteriorated.



Thunderhook cabin, east end of Linklater Lake.



Paddling in the rain on Linklater Lake.

Day 5: Wednesday, June 10th

No work was completed today. Strong west winds, rain, large waves and cold temperatures made paddling too risky to attempt. Shore fishing during breaks in the rain proved fruitless. Drying gear, planning for the next few days and studying the maps was about all that could be accomplished.



Wind bound on Linklater Lake.



Warm fire on a cold, windy, rainy day.

Day 6: Thursday, June 10th

Had an early start and paddled out into the fog by 8:30am, equipped with lunch and our cutting and safety equipment. We found the start of the first portage on river right above the first swift. Exploration of the forest on this shore revealed a confusing collection of blazes that yielded no coherent trail. At some point in the past, a trail may have existed that bypassed the next two downstream pools. This would be a long portage through some blow down areas. Before committing to this, we broke for lunch under clearing skies and then



cleared the portage as far as the first downstream pond. The portage measured 154m. We paddled across the pond to river left and found a well blazed trail that bypassed the next downstream pool. We cleared this portage and measured it at 229m. We headed back over the 2 portages back into Linklater Lake. A bit of fishing yielded 2 pickerel at the outlet of the lake and then we raced back to the cabin ahead of an approaching thunderstorm. Had a good fish dinner after the storm had passed. Lots of mosquitoes out at dusk.



Linklater Lake sunset



First 2 portages south out of Linklater Lake on Linklater Creek (looking west)



Day 7: Friday, June 12th

Bright sunny day today with light winds. We paddled out Linklater Lake and into the outlet, carried the canoes and cutting gear over the two portages we cleared yesterday and headed further south on Linklater Creek. There are 3 obstacles to negotiate before reaching the last open body of water before MacDonald Lake. The first is a swift with shallow rocks that can be lined or carried on river left. The next swift can be run up or down. The third one should be carried on river right and measures 20m. Do not attempt to run this swift as it has a 1m drop at the end. We found a blaze on river right above the next swift. A potential campsite exists on river left above this swift and could be used as a base for clearing the portage into MacDonald Lake. The portage does not follow the creek as shown on the preliminary Wabakimi canoe routes map. We spent a fair bit of time looking for blazes in the forest. The first set that we found correspond to a mining claim boundary and do not mark the portage. After bushwhacking over to MacDonald Lake, Pyle and Holmes found a blazed tree on the shoreline. From here, Holmes climbed the ridge and found a string of blazes down from the ridge towards our initial landing area. These were all flagged. Further exploration of a possible portage route from the southwest corner of the unnamed body of water should be explored before the partially flagged route is committed to. After lunch we headed back north through the 3 swifts and 2 portages into Linklater Lake. The northeast arm of Linklater Lake was explored for campsites. Called Phil in order to verify our pickup time in the morning.



Day 8: Saturday, June 13th

Went out for a sunrise fishing expedition without result. Canoes were stripped of yokes, sponges and throw bags, then tied down behind the cabin. Any remaining wet gear was dried and packed away. The cabin was cleaned and the furniture rearranged to reflect how we found it. Windows were closed and the door clipped closed. Reset the tipper trap. Flew out to Mattice Lake outfitters.

The following items were left at Mattice Lake Outfitters: Gas

and bar oil in red containers

5 green ropes Chainsaw

Safety chaps, helmet with ear protection and safety glasses.

Orange fire pack

4 carrying yoke pads and hardware 2

bailing sponges

2 throw bags

4 sitting pads

5 rolls of flagging tape



Holmes, Wick, Pyle, Rodgers

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