

ALGONQUIN PARK LIGHTENING THE ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT

In November of 2007, the Ontario Parks Board prepared a draft report for the Ministry of Natural Resources entitled “Algonquin Park Lightening the Ecological Footprint”. This report was apparently prepared in response to pressure from environmental organizations and other interest groups that were mostly if not entirely from outside the County of Renfrew, County of Hastings and District of Nipissing.

The draft report centered on the proposed reduction of forestry operations within the Algonquin Park boundary. When the draft report was presented to the Algonquins of Ontario in late 2007 as part of the Consultation Process, the Algonquin Negotiation Representatives and their Technical Advisory Group expressed serious concern with the extent and potential impact of the proposed recommendations on Algonquin rights and interests.

In February of 2008, the Minister of Natural Resources asked the Ontario Parks Board together with the Algonquin Forestry Authority, to prepare a new report which included consultation with key stakeholders and the Algonquins.

A meeting was subsequently convened by the Ministry of Natural Resources in 2008 between the Parks Board, Algonquin Park Forest Authority and the Algonquins of Ontario wherein:

1. The Ontario Parks Board and the Algonquin Forest Authority Chairperson shared background information and clarified the goals and objectives.
2. The Algonquins of Ontario tabled a Briefing Note providing a preliminary list of Algonquin Issues and Concerns subject to additional community input.
3. A Working Group was established to provide for improved communication and advancement of a revised draft report which more adequately addressed Algonquin Issues and Concerns.

There has been considerable dialogue between Ministry of Natural Resources and the Algonquins of Ontario in this regard. A Work Program and Funding Agreement providing for comprehensive review, analysis and response by the Algonquins of Ontario to proposals for Lightening the Ecological Footprint in Algonquin Park has now been approved.

A fundamental component of this Work Program is obtaining Algonquin Community member input and opinion. We anticipate there will be several steps to obtaining this community input in addition to normal on-going discussions and feedback:

- Step 1 Prepare and forward “mail out” providing background of the Lightening the Footprint review process and outlining preliminary issues and concerns (our Algonquin technical analysis will be on-going from February 2009).
- Step 2 Lightening the Footprint will be the agenda item at a joint community meeting of the AGGLFN & BAFN on Sunday June 7, 2009, 1:00 PM at the Pembroke Legion.
- Step 3 Community input will be incorporated into Algonquin formal written response to Ontario Parks Board and Algonquin Forest Authority by July 2009.
- Step 4 The Ontario Parks Board and Algonquin Forest Authority reaction to the Algonquins of Ontario submission will be shared at community meetings in July/August of 2009.
- Step 5 The communities will provide instruction as to next steps, if any.

Your Algonquins of Ontario Negotiation Representative, Technical Advisory Group and Principal Negotiator look forward to receiving any community input on this very important issue.

Please feel free to contact me directly with any comments you might offer on the attached preliminary summary of Algonquin Issues and Concerns. chief@greatergoldenlake.com

BRIEFING NOTE TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS

**ALGONQUIN PARK “LIGHTENING THE FOOTPRINT”
PRELIMINARY ISSUES AND CONCERNS
APRIL 2009**

BACKGROUND

This Briefing Note has been prepared by the Algonquin Negotiation Representatives (“ANR”) to summarize Algonquins of Ontario (“AOO”) Preliminary Issues and Concerns related to “**Lightening the Ecological Footprint of Logging in Algonquin Provincial Park**”.

These issues and concerns will be modified if and as required based on Algonquin Community Input and Technical Analysis and will form an important component of the Algonquin response to Ontario Parks Board and the Algonquin Forestry Authority.

The proposed consultation work program for Lightening the Footprint contemplates the following phases:

| | |
|---------|--|
| Phase 1 | Information Sharing/Preliminary Review |
| Phase 2 | Technical Analysis of Lightening the Footprint related documents and data base |
| Phase 3 | Identify Algonquin position in a Synopsis Report (including Community input) |

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

- The AOO will work together with the Ontario Parks Board, Algonquin Forestry Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources and others to ensure a mutually satisfactory and beneficial future for this important resource. A Working Group should be established at the outset that would support the achievement of objectives for both Ontario and the Algonquins in Algonquin Park based on a cooperative and mutually respectful exchange of ideas between equals.
- We would remind all concerned that the lands currently comprising Algonquin Park have been a part of traditional Algonquin territory since time immemorial and as such, form an integral part of the Algonquin culture and Aboriginal rights. The entire Algonquin Nation is profoundly impacted by any activity or potential policy related to Algonquin Park.
- Unless a properly resolved and funded consultation process is initiated the advancement of the Lightening the Footprint document represents an alienation of Algonquin rights and cultural/economic interests within the Land Claim area.
- The AOO together with non-native communities in the region are very concerned with the potential impact of Lightening the Footprint recommendations on employment and economic development in the area and believe that further advancement of Lightening the Footprint recommendations should be deferred until all parties are satisfied that comprehensive and accurate base data is being utilized.
- The AOO will be concerned with and require input into the protection of Native Values within Algonquin Park.
- The AOO seek to protect Mother Earth and believe that proper protocols and policies for both the Forest industry and Tourism industry can be ecologically sustainable and contribute to the economic development of the region. Any initiatives to “Lighten the Ecological Footprint” in Algonquin Park should perhaps integrate all sectors of Algonquin Park activity in a comprehensive strategic review not just focus on logging.
- The AOO will require the opportunity to analyze and provide input into the nature and extent of proposed “protection zones”.

- The AOO will require input into the proposed Actions to Reduce Impacts of Logging Operations.
- The AOO are concerned with maintaining vehicular access to traditional hunting, gathering and cultural areas and will require a role in any review of road/watercrossing standards and/or road/watercrossing abandonment and/or road/watercrossing improvement and/or road/watercrossing restoration strategy for Algonquin Park.
- The AOO will have an interest and require input into matters related to the proposed use of aggregate resources within Algonquin Park.
- The AOO will participate in the 2010 – 2020 Algonquin Park Forest Management Plan.
- The AOO seek to participate in any Park Management Planning Manual (2004) revisions.

CONCLUSION

Algonquin Nation priorities will be identified in an **Algonquin Position Paper** based on comprehensive analysis and Community input.

For the purpose of this briefing note and at this preliminary stage it is the ANR Algonquin Park Working Group's **priority to ensure that a consultation process is implemented that will adequately address the Crown's duty to consult and accommodate** and provide the AOO with the time and resources to produce a fully considered response to the Ontario Parks Board recommendations for Lightening the Ecological Footprint in Algonquin Park.

The AOO through our Algonquin Park Working Group and their Technical Advisors will work diligently in cooperation with the Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Parks Board, Algonquin Forestry Authority and others to address this very important issue.

Patrick Glassford
chief@greatergoldenlake.com
613 757 0765