

Introducing the Woodland Caribou



Photographer: Ted Simons

The woodland caribou in Ontario is in danger of becoming extinct. This magnificent animal is threatened in Ontario and is likely to become endangered unless effective action is taken to protect caribou and their habitat. Ontario's Woodland caribou live in the boreal forest north of Lake Superior. Woodland caribou have disappeared from areas that have

been logged and disturbed over the past century. Caribou have become locally extinct in PEI, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

A member of the deer family, caribou are dependent on large, undisturbed tracts of old growth forest. During the winter their diet primarily consists of ground and tree lichens. Lichens grow very slowly. A forest needs to be 80 to 150 years old in order to provide the woodland caribou with the necessary food.

A major reason for the woodland caribou's threatened status is industrial development. Caribou are particularly susceptible to population declines due to habitat fragmentation and destruction. Once found as far south as Algonquin Park, woodland caribou can now be mostly found in the intact boreal areas much further north. Its range has decreased by half. The caribou's habitat is continually being decimated by logging, mining and other activities. The roads created and used to service these industries further fragment caribou habitat and allow poachers, wolves, bears and other predators greater access.

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AGM Notice

Join Minister Ramsay to celebrate the new parks act.

When: November 28, 2006
 Where: Steam Whistle Brewery
 The Roadhouse
 255 Bremner Blvd.
 Toronto
 Time: 6:30pm



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Woodland Caribou **CONTINUED**



Photographer: Ted Simonett



Woodland caribou are also susceptible because they have extremely low reproduction rates. Females start having young at two to three years of age and they usually only have one calf each year. Calf survival rate is only 30% to 50%. A caribou's lifespan is approximately six years.

An indicator species, the woodland caribou's threatened status is indicative of how the boreal forest ecosystem is doing as a whole. If the woodland caribou is on the verge of extinction, this tells us that the way we as a society have been managing the forest is unsustainable. A current threat to woodland caribou, other animals and the boreal forest is the Victor Diamond Mine, a massive open-pit mine, being built by De Beers on the James Bay Lowlands approximately 90 kilometres west of Attawapiskat. The mine project will impact an area approximately four times the size of the City of Toronto. The site is in one of the earth's largest remaining intact wilderness areas. This area supports an abundance of wildlife including the threatened woodland caribou.

The diamond mine is being built in muskeg, involves draining and diverting huge quantities of water and will affect thousands of hectares of land. The equivalent of at least 40 Olympic-sized swimming pools will be pumped from the pit each day with the salty water being dumped into the Attawapiskat River. The open pit will be 220 metres deep and one to two kilometres wide. Considerable muskeg, trees and other plants will also be removed. The impact of this mine will result in devastating and irreversible environmental and social damages.

There is some positive news in the province. Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug (KI), a remote northern Ontario Aboriginal community, won a landmark decision forcing Platinox, an Ontario mineral exploration company, to halt mining operations in KI's traditional territory. This legal, precedent setting case empowers Aboriginal communities in Ontario and is a significant victory for nature. Premier McGuinty needs to keep his promise and implement a comprehensive land use planning process before development to protect the ecological integrity of the boreal forest and to respect the rights of Aboriginal peoples.

FunFact:

THE GUARD HAIRS OF THE WOODLAND CARIBOU ARE HOLLOW, TRAPPING AIR INSIDE. THIS PROVIDES GOOD INSULATION AGAINST THE COLD AND ACTS AS FLOATATION HELPING THE LARGE ANIMAL WHEN SWIMMING.

Caribou **CAMPAIGN**



Help Support our Caribou Campaign

Purchase a Cute 'n' Cuddly Caribou \$25.00 each + shipping

As a cousin of reindeer this cuddly caribou is a perfect holiday season gift for the children or grandchildren.

Please help support our caribou campaign by purchasing one of these adorable stuffed caribou.

Holiday Season Limited Offer

Talk to family members and friends. Ask them to join CPAWS Wildlands League for \$50, and we will send them a cuddly stuffed caribou and a tax receipt for \$38.00.



Parks Program Makes Leap Forward!

The Wildlands League saw the fulfilment of almost a decade of work in the passing of the new Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act which received Royal Assent on June 20, 2006. The Bill comes into effect once cabinet has proclaimed it. The major part of the new legislation is enshrining the concept of "Ecological Integrity" which will become the guiding principle in our parks. Nature will come first. This is a huge win for the environment and for those who want to see it protected. No other province has such a strong law that will prohibit industrial uses of logging, mining and hydroelectric development in parks and conservation reserves.

Although the new Act will help protect Ontario's wilderness, there are some outstanding issues. While logging will be banned in the parks and conservation reserves, it is still permitted in Algonquin Park. Existing hydroelectric facilities in parks will be allowed to



Photographer: Eva Ferrari

continue and proposals by remote communities off of the electrical grid will also be considered. Mining in protected areas will be prohibited in the new Act. Minor boundary changes by cabinet could provide a loophole to the prohibition.

The new Act does not have a "Good Neighbour Clause" that would require "neighbours" or activities outside of parks and conservation reserves to be responsible for their actions that cause damage to these protected areas. The Wildlands League is pushing for at least including the Good Neighbour Clause in changes to policy. That would be a good first step. While the Provincial Parks and

Conservation Reserves Act offers considerably better protection, we need to continue fighting for Ontario's wilderness. The Wildlands League will continue to lead the public and environmental community by pushing for the following:

- New regulations and a policy manual for park and conservation reserves based on the new Act.
- A review of logging in Algonquin Park.
- A Good Neighbour policy with a view to amending the act ultimately.

Take Action

The woodland caribou is the canary in the coal mine of the boreal forest.

Where forests have been transformed through logging, mining, roads, and other human activities, woodland caribou have steadily declined - or disappeared altogether. They require large areas of undisturbed forest both to avoid predators and to find the old-growth dependent lichens that are the mainstay of their winter diet. So if the caribou are disappearing, this means the forest is unhealthy.

The Ontario government has delayed taking the necessary steps to halt the decline of woodland caribou and it has not committed to protecting the critical habitat of caribou in the long term.

The Ontario government must protect caribou. It is time to show leadership in the boreal forest and for endangered species.

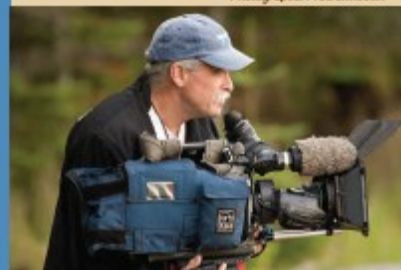
Please send a letter to Premier Dalton McGuinty, or David Ramsay, Minister of Natural Resources

Personal letters are highly meaningful to decision makers.

Dalton McGuinty
Premier
Legislative Building
Queen's Park
Toronto ON
M7A 1A1

Hon. David Ramsay
Minister of Natural Resources
6th Floor, Room 6630
Whitney Block
99 Wellesley St., West
Toronto, ON
M7A 1W3

Photographer: Ted Simoes



Supporter Profile



“Let’s get a sense of ownership and pride in what we have, our natural resources.”

TED SIMONETT

What caused you to get involved with CPAWS Wildlands League?

I saw the *Globe and Mail* ad for the Nahanni Forever event last fall and thought it would be interesting. At the event I talked with the National FSC Program Director, Chris Henschel, and Wildlands League’s Executive Director, Janet Sumner, about your work and was immediately engaged by the issues. And the timing was right as I was looking for a volunteer opportunity. I have an interest in the stewardship of our natural resources. I am fascinated in and feel responsible for taking care of what is ours in a reasonable and effective way. I want to raise the bar with people on our responsibility.

Why is conservation important to you?

I grew up in Sharbot Lake north of Kingston, population about 400. So it stems from growing up in rural Ontario and loving every second.

What would you recommend our other supporters do, aside from their financial gifts, to help?

Talk about it to people. Participate in raising awareness about our natural resources. This has become a topic of conversation for me. I bring the issues up and chat about them at dinner parties. I hadn’t done this before getting involved. A lot of people don’t know that Ontario and the northwestern part of Manitoba form the biggest chunk of intact boreal forest left in North America.

I ask people to be aware of the issues. Let’s get a sense of ownership and pride in what we have, our natural resources. Often people think “oh northern Ontario, it’s so far and doesn’t affect me”. Well, it’s not far away. I take pride in these wonderful natural resources and am concerned that we are not managing them well.

Our Forest’s Health

Approximately 90% of the area logged in Canada is done by clear-cut logging. Current logging practices are often unsustainable, destroy old-growth forests and damage ecosystems. The Wildlands League Forest Program improves public forests through numerous projects including:

- **Protecting Woodland Caribou:** By pressuring the provincial government to address the impacts that industrial logging and other activities have on the woodland caribou and their habitat. We are working to ensure the caribou’s survival and the health and protection of Ontario’s wild areas.

- **Encouraging FSC Certification:** The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) sets standards for responsible forestry and puts greater emphasis on protecting areas including old-growth and intact forests. We work with leading industries to obtain FSC certification

and we are working with FSC Canada to produce a new FSC standard for forests within the Great Lakes St. Lawrence ecosystem.

- **Improving Harvesting Practices:** Through extensive research we provide alternative, sustainable harvesting methods that significantly reduce the impacts on forests.

- **Highlighting Problems Within the Forest Industry:** Significant problems that need to be addressed within the forest industry are uncovered and publicized.

- **Working With Northern Communities:** By discussing the link between long-term forest health and long-term economic prosperity with northern Ontario communities, we help to ensure protection for ecosystems and communities.

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