
In The News



The province plans to renew leases for recreational properties to 2038 in Algonquin Park. This is incompatible with protecting the ecological integrity of the park.

They are seeking comments from the public.

Comment period ends December 13.

[Submit comments on the *Environmental Bill of Rights Registry*.](#)

The province is proposing to renew cottage leases and that “new lease conditions” (e.g. limits on development) and eligibility requirements (e.g. fees and taxes paid up to date)

and suggesting these would reduce environmental impact of the cottages while making sure that leaseholders are paying their fair share. This is all suggested in the absence of any plan for managing the ecological integrity of the park.

There are over 300 cottages in Algonquin on approximately 123 hectares of land.

The phase-out policy has been on the books since 1954. Ontario Regulation 347/07 describes the expiry date for all cottage leases in Algonquin Park:

13. (2) No person shall occupy land for non-commercial residential purposes in Algonquin or Rondeau Provincial Park except under a lease granted before July 2, 1954 or a renewal or extension of such a lease that does not extend beyond December 31, 2017.

But the major concern is that the government is required to manage every park for ecological integrity. It’s the law. It’s not a matter of how helpful individual cottage owners are to lost travelers; it is matter of protecting the ecological integrity of Algonquin.

Wildlands League is worried that this latest move by the government is symptomatic of a larger problem: the province is turning its back on ecological integrity—which is the stated priority of its own *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*—which is the stated priority of its own *Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act*—an act that was widely applauded by Wildlands League and others when it was passed in 2006. When recent government actions are examined altogether—proposed renewal of cottage leases in Algonquin, the failure of plans to lighten the footprint of logging in the park, the stubborn silence on the ecological harm of more than 5,000 km of logging roads in Algonquin and the failure to phase out cottage leases in Rondeau Park—they point to a deeply troubling provincial trend.

Algonquin must be managed for Ecological Integrity. We need a plan to do this. Not one-off proposals to renew leases for cottages for private use in the park.