



## The Preservation of Natural Areas in Ontario

by  
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Last March, at the public meeting of The Standing Committee of the Ontario Legislature on Natural Resources, Fish, Wildlife and Mining, I made the following statement:

A short time ago I read an announcement that proudly stated that during 1965 there will be 90 provincial parks in operation in Ontario. The announcement could have gone on to state that the variation among the 90 is so great that it is in fact completely illogical to call them by the same name or to place them in the same category.

Consider the illogical aspects of including in the same category Darlington Park and Algonquin Park. The first is nothing

more than a lake-front area of poor farm land which, although providing short-term recreational opportunity for an area that greatly needs it, has little to offer that is worthwhile in a cultural or natural history sense. The other, Algonquin, is 5,000 times as large and is one of the most interesting natural areas in eastern North America. Just to be certain that my point is not clouded entirely by the size difference between these two parks, I would like to compare the natural significance of Darlington and Outlet Beach Parks. The two areas are about the same size — at that point, however, the similarity ends. In contrast to the mundane campground which is Darlington Park, Outlet Beach Park is a rare natural gem. It is a lake sand-dune area — one of the rarest natural environments of Canada. One could

spend weeks roaming around Outlet Park and never cease to learn of nature. It includes striking examples of geological processes, of plant succession and of how plants adapt to living under difficult conditions. In addition, it has one of the finest beaches in Southern Ontario.

In addition to their being included under the same name as Provincial Parks, there is much evidence that there is little differentiation in policy between the areas. I would like to give some examples:

Algonquin Park is almost entirely under timber licences. In relatively few years there will not be any significant forest areas, except the narrow fringe around the lakes, that have not been subjected to commercial exploitation. As a result of working in areas where the virgin hardwood stands have been removed, I have seen much evidence that the logging practices used by the timber operators are dangerously close to high-grading practices. After working periodically in Algonquin Park for the past six years, I have seen examples of other abuses that extend from the way the roadsides are cleared to the way garbage dumps are spawned, that leave little to be proud of.

In the case of Outlet Park, similar examples of lack of insight and understanding can be observed. When I camped there two years ago the only posted signs were those that warned of fire. There was not a single sign which suggested to the campers that sand dunes are fragile things and that digging in stabilized dunes can be extremely injurious to the plant community and to the dunes. In addition, the integrity of the area was being destroyed by the planting of exotic species and by the massive trampling of the fore dunes. The fill for some of the road construction was being taken from one of the precious dunes. I have perhaps said enough on this point. I am not trying to give a compendium of abuses but rather to illustrate the point that there is little evidence that the parks policy of the Department of Lands and Forests recognizes the difference between a piece of coal and a diamond among its parks, either by the use of descriptive names or by the nature of its programs.

The second point which I wish to raise is more specific in nature; I refer to the problems that are faced in preserving important natural areas in the face of mounting pressure for outdoor recreation. Before I go into any detail I wish to state that my personal answer to the question, "What is a provincial park?" is: A pro-

*vincial park is an area that is dedicated to the people for the prime purposes of outdoor recreation and the observation and study of nature. I consider that nature preservation should, at the very least, be accorded equal status with that of recreation in areas that warrant being called parks.*

A thoughtful Canadian who was born and brought up in Ontario recently wrote, "Parks are for people." I agree with this philosophy. I also agree with another part of his viewpoint which is that the use of natural areas by people should be conditioned primarily by what the areas have to offer and by the type of use that can be made of the areas without degrading them.

I would like to cite a specific example that suggests that Ontario's parks policy has a significant lack of balance between nature preservation and recreational use, that suggests that recreational and other commercial uses are likely to degrade the most significant natural areas in the province, areas that should be preserved in a natural state, in perpetuity. This example is the policy that has been stated for the development of the Sand Banks Provincial Park. The policy was first enunciated in the Department of Lands and Forests News Release of April 17, 1964. The release stated that development work would start in the spring and would include a bridge at Wellington to join the mainland to the tip of the Sand Banks. It further stated, "From there a paved road will meander through the dunes and at suitable intervals lookouts and parking lots will be provided." There is no question whatsoever that this type of development will destroy the natural significance of the dunes. You cannot build paved roads, parking lots and lookouts without taking action to prevent sand from blowing—and the significance of sand dunes is that there is *moving* sand.

The logical development of the Sand Banks would be to develop Garrat Island (which I believe is still privately owned) as a campground and to build a foot bridge at Wellington and parking lots at the east end of the area. The beach, the dunes and the campground could then be reached by foot or by boat. With such development the Sand Banks could still be used by thousands of people with diverse interests, and in a rational way that would not destroy the natural characteristics of the area.

The reasons why the Sand Banks Park should not be developed in the manner

that is proposed by the Department of Lands and Forests are many. Rather than to take your time enumerating them, I have attached two documents that state the case in more detail. The first is a copy of a letter that was sent last spring to Prime Minister Robarts by a number of scientists at the University of Toronto. The second is a copy of an article that I wrote and which appeared in the *PIC-TON GAZETTE* on June 10, 1964.

In summing up, Mr. Chairman, I will return to my main point: A parks system that does not have the preservation of natural environments as one of its guiding concepts is not worthy of the name. Some of Ontario's parks could logically be called "Provincial Recreational Areas", and some, "Provincial Forests", but few "Parks" (The concept of preservation is so foreign to our systems that the Parks Branch of the Department of Lands and Forests does not have a single person on its staff whose principal job it is to be concerned about, or to recommend areas within our parks for, preservation.).

I urge the establishment of a parks policy for Ontario that will bring about a reasonable balance between the preservation of natural environments and recreation and other uses; that will establish a classification for parks that will clearly separate the Darlington Parks from the Algonquin Parks, in name, in policies and in programs. I urge the development of an overall statement of policy for the province, and for each individual park, so that all may have the opportunity to understand the nature of the objectives and the guiding principles that are the basis for the parks system.

I recommend for your consideration the recent statement on national parks policy which was issued by the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources, and the system of parks classification that has been established by the Department of Recreation and Conservation in British Columbia.

I also draw your attention to a very pertinent article, *Canada's Neglected Parks*, by R. Y. Edwards, which appeared in the 1963 May-June edition of *Canadian Audubon Magazine*. It has much to say about parks that is vital to Ontario. I have appended a copy to my statement for your use.

What is the justification for such a critical statement about a parks system that is often highly touted

publicly? Why, if such criticisms are justified, have they not been stated before? Why should such a sorry state of affairs exist, with respect to the preservation of natural areas, in Canada's wealthiest province?

My principal objective in this article is to attempt to answer these questions. In doing so I will review policies of the Government of Ontario on the preservation of natural areas, both in and outside of parks. I will express some personal viewpoints on the reasons we have done so poorly. I will attempt to further illustrate why I am critical of the approach of the Government to the preservation of natural areas. I will show that within the Department of Lands and Forests, there is no guiding philosophy on the total role of parks in modern society.

#### **Nature Preservation — The Public Point-of-View**

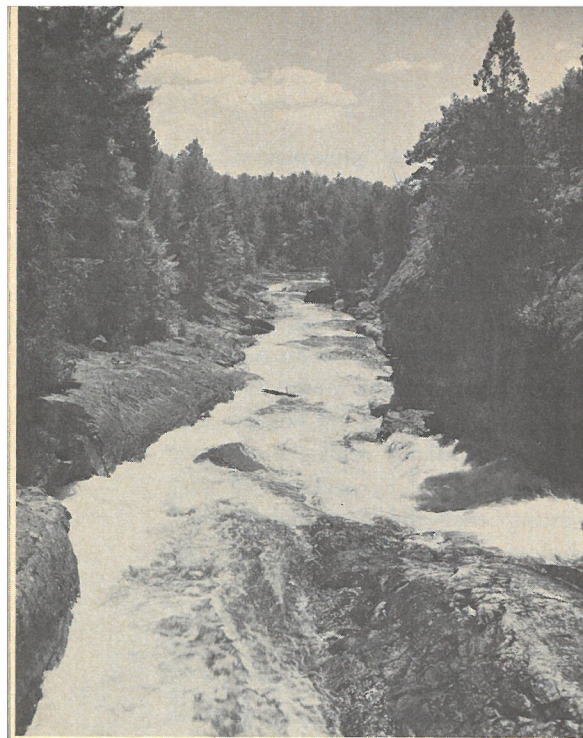
In the United States nature preservation is a much more popular concept than it is in Canada. The interest of the public is evidenced in many ways and perhaps most importantly by a high degree of political interest. For example, on February 8, 1965, President Johnson transmitted to Congress an important statement on the preservation of natural areas entitled, *A Message on the Natural Beauty of Our Country* (Document No. 78, 89th. Congress, 1st. Session). It has been widely acclaimed. Public awareness of, and interest in, the topic has been developed by the activity of outspoken

organizations (The National Parks Association, The Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, and The National Wildlife Federation) and of individuals who know what they want and who are able to present ideas and concepts so that they are understandable to the man in the street.

In the United States, prominent Americans have espoused the cause of preservation of natural areas in their speeches and through their writing. The book, *Quiet Crisis*, (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963) by Stewart Udall, Secretary of the Department of the Interior, and a recent article, *A Wilderness Bill of Rights* (Encyclopedia Britannica, Book of the Year, 1965), by Justice William O. Douglas of the U.S. Supreme Court, are examples of writing that has helped to inform and to arouse public opinion.

In Canada the situation is quite different. The reaction of a majority of Canadians to arguments for nature preservation ranges from indifference to outright hostility. To many, nature preservation connotes negative, conservative, or even reactionary, thinking on the part of people who want to "stop progress". We rarely hear of prominent public figures espousing the cause of national parks, wilderness areas or nature preserves. It is more common to find individuals to whom the word "nature preservation" is an anathema. There is, for instance, an important official in government who will go to great length to avoid using the

words "nature" or "preservation" and who will never use them in their normal association. Assuredly, however, were he asked the question, "Do you consider that Canadians should preserve their cultural heritage?" his mind would turn to the art gallery and to the museums where the artifacts of man are housed, and he would quickly reply, "I certainly do." He would never think of suggesting that the National Gallery dispose of the works of the Group of Seven to the highest bidder; on the other hand, it would be difficult to persuade him that a rare forest stand should be preserved as part of our cultural heritage, particularly if at the same time its exploitation was being proposed to "aid the economy". If you asked him, "Do you consider that scientific research is vital?" he would hasten to answer, "I certainly do." But it would be difficult to persuade him that the preservation of virgin stands of different forest types might very well present opportunities for research that would be vital to future management of the forest. If you asked him, "Do you consider that the state has responsibility to care for those with mental disorders?" he would answer, "I certainly do." It would, on the other hand, be extremely difficult to persuade him that the preservation of wilderness areas may in the future be very important to the re-creation of the spirit and to the reestablishment of the peace of mind of many people who are not inclined toward the intensely social type of existence which more



and more we are being forced to live.

I am convinced, and I believe most naturalists have similar convictions, that the preservation of natural environments in parks, nature preserves and wilderness areas has great significance to our society. We are not, however, succeeding in establishing this point in the minds of our many contemporaries who do not think of themselves as naturalists.

#### **Policy — Development and Definition**

The understanding of how policy is made and delineated is important to our discussion.

In the United States a policy on parks or wilderness areas, for example, is usually defined much more clearly in the acts that are passed by the legislative bodies than they are

in Canada. Here the basic legislation is of a much more general nature, providing great leeway to the Governor General, or Lieutenant Governor, in Council (the Cabinet) to establish the basic policies through regulations. Policy then is partly established by the basic act and partly by the regulations made under the act. Though it is little discussed, policies on important subjects can, in fact, be made in subtle ways. For example, hunting on Sunday was generally prohibited in Ontario for many years by the Fish and Game Act. However, through some form of internal discretion permitted the Department of Lands and Forests, this restriction was not enforced in northern Ontario. In this case the unofficial policy was the only one that mattered regardless of what the act stated.

A great deal of the initial work on the development of parks policy is done within the Department of Lands and Forests. A recommendation, let us say, to build a system of public roads in the interior of Algonquin Park, might originate with the Park Superintendent, at the district office at Pembroke, or in the Parks Branch in Toronto. The proposal would be made as a special memorandum (O.P. 54) to the Deputy Minister. It would be circulated to all branches. An individual branch chief might simply signify approval by signing it, or might append a detailed statement suggesting modification or rejection. Finally, the Dep-

uty Minister would receive it and would decide whether or not he would recommend the step to the Minister. If the Minister also approves, the matter would then be considered by the Parks Integration Board and by the Treasury Board before finally reaching the Cabinet.

Very often, of course, important matters of policy start with the Minister, as was the case with the proposal for the development of Sand Banks Provincial Park. In such cases where favored projects of the minister are involved, policy can develop into programs very rapidly.

The most satisfactory approach to the definition of policy is the one that was recently used by Mr. Laing, the Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources. He issued a statement of "National Parks Policy" (announced in the House of Commons on September 18, 1964). The statement is a specific declaration of the way in which the government intends to act on a wide range of questions from nature preservation to the presence of private dwellings in national parks. This approach is often unpopular since it tends to limit political and economic opportunism.

#### **Nature Preservation in Ontario**

An important thesis in my statement to The Standing Committee of the Legislature on Natural Resources, Fish, Wildlife and Mining, is that the government of Ontario has been paying lip service to the concept of the preservation of natural

environments. In The Provincial Parks Act (Chapter 314, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1960), nothing is defined specifically regarding the preservation of areas within parks. In a very fine example of legal double talk the act prohibits prospecting or the development of mines and then gives the Lieutenant Governor in Council the authority to permit and to regulate and control these activities. It also delegates the power to regulate "for the care, preservation, improvement, control and management of the provincial parks". In other words, complete control of the parks is vested in the Cabinet which holds all of its meetings *in camera*.

The only thing that is stated in the Regulations (Regulation 499, Revised regulations of Ontario, 1960, Vol. 3, pp. 420-1) about nature preservation is contained in Section 2: "No person shall (a) damage any plant, shrub, flower or tree, (b) deface or damage any bridge, building, structure, natural object, rock or any property of the Crown, within a provincial park." Indirectly the section pertaining to the occupancy of land is important since it prevents further cottage development in parks and will eventually eliminate it (Dymond, J. R., *A New Policy for Algonquin Park*. The Bulletin, No. 66, 1954, FON).

The Wilderness Areas Act (Chapter 432, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1960) permits the Cabinet to set apart any public lands as a wilderness area. It specifies, however, that the development or utilization of the re-

sources is permitted "in any wilderness area that is more than 640 acres in size". The act was enacted as a result of pressure for nature reserve legislation exerted by the FON and the Quetico Foundation. Basically, in spite of its name, it is nature reserve legislation, for wilderness areas should encompass thousands of acres, not just 640. The maximum size that is specified is not adequate even for nature reserves for there are occasions when they should be larger (It is impossible to preserve part of a bog, a marsh, or a lake, for example.).

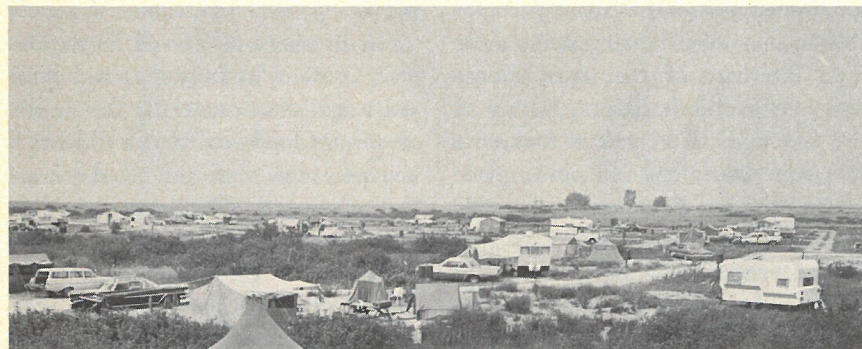
The Wilderness Areas Act is administered by the Lands Branch of the Department of Lands and Forests not by the Parks Branch. This is another indication that the role of the Parks Branch is purely a recreational one; that it is not concerned with the preservation of natural areas.

This review of the basic legislation indicates that preservation of natural areas does not appear to have been taken very seriously by the Government of Ontario. An assessment would not be complete, however, if it lacked an appraisal of how policies have been translated into programs. Although The Wilderness Areas Act prohibits preservation of any area that is more than 640 acres in size, it might be possible to use it meaningfully in a large park if enough areas were set aside. Since Algonquin is our largest, and most famous park, and since I know it better than any other park, I will

review some aspects of preservation there.

The area of Algonquin Park now exceeds 3,000 square miles. In ecological terminology, it is an ecotone, an area of intermixing and change between the northern hardwood and the boreal, coniferous, forests. The intermixing of the flora and the fauna of the two major forest belts, combined with the intricate network of lakes and streams in the western portion make it one of the most interesting parks in eastern Canada. In spite of this, no areas have been reserved in the park under the regulations of The Wilderness Areas Act since the Act became law in 1959 (The same thing is true of Quetico Park.). The only major area in Algonquin, which is not either under timber licence or in a timber management unit, that is subject to being logged, is the Wildlife Research Area. This area, originally known as "The Wilderness Area" was set aside by an Order-in-Council in June, 1944, on the recommendation of the FON (Circular No. 30, December, 1944, and Standfield, R.O., *The Wilderness Area, Algonquin Park*, The Bulletin No. 65, 1954, FON). The area now has no legal protection as the Order-in-Council no longer applies. A decision could be made by the Minister of Lands and Forests to issue cutting permits, or to place the entire area under timber licence; he would not have to consult his associates in the Parks Integration Board, or the Cabinet, to take the action.

There are other things about The



Wilderness Area that are worth mentioning; one is that a considerable portion of the area had been logged twice, for pine and hardwoods, before it was proclaimed by the Order-in-Council. The principal forest types that have not been logged are the bottom-land conifers which were not of commercial interest during previous logging eras. A second point is that an examination of the latest map of Algonquin Park shows a sharp V-shaped indentation in the northern boundary of The Wilderness Area. It represents several hundred acres that were withdrawn and placed in the adjacent timber licence after the legal protection of the Order-in-Council had lapsed. The forest stand within the V is comprised primarily of large red spruce. It is one of the rarest forest associations in Algonquin Park. A forest access road is now within a few miles of the area. Within two or three years, perhaps less, the red spruce will be represented only by stumps—stumps that should be preserved as

monuments to the disregard of the Government of Ontario for the preservation of the natural environment.

Sometimes very simple things are symptomatic of serious problems. Symptoms of the "no philosophy" disease are also evident in a simple story of the cutting of a tree in Algonquin Park. Until recently the Petawawa Forest Management Unit contained a very large, old, and hence rare, white pine tree. Although it was undoubtedly a sound tree in the pine-logging days, it had somehow been left standing. Although its top had been broken off, its great girth was very impressive and many people visited the area to see it. In 1959, when the International Botanical Congress was held in Canada, one of the parties comprised of world famous botanists included a visit to it in their itinerary, and were much impressed by it. A year or two later the big pine was cut by loggers. It stood in, and towered over, a grove of much smaller, younger pine and it, it was said, was a "wolf tree".

Translated out of forester's parlance this means that it was taking more than its share of the sun's energy and of the soil nutrients. If one of the functions of a park is that of a museum should the old pine's place in the sun not have been tolerated? If one of the functions of a park is that of a museum should the old pine not have been left standing for all to see and marvel at even after it had died? Should it not have been left, even after it had finally toppled, to become moss-covered and a drumming log for a ruffed grouse?

How is The Wilderness Areas Act being applied throughout the province of Ontario? In total, 40 wilderness areas have been proclaimed, ranging in size from 6.5 to 144,000 acres. Six, totalling 1,308 acres, are in Rondeau and Pinery Provincial Parks. If the two large ones, Pukaskwa and Cape Henrietta-Maria, are excluded (since they are above maximum size, they are subject to utilization and development of their natural resources and so cannot logically be included), the total area that is preserved under the Act amounts to approximately 14 square miles. The area of Ontario is 412,000 square miles. It will take 175 years to set aside one-tenth of one per cent of the total area if we continue at the present rate. In Southern Ontario, where the need is especially urgent, the only forest stand set aside, apart from Rondeau and Pinery Parks, is one that was contributed to the Crown by a private individual. Even on Crown Lands the need is

not being met. The timber limits of Gillis Brothers, in Tweed Forest District, contain, at least they did three years ago, some especially fine stands of climax hardwood forest. There is no indication that any of these are being reserved. The same thing applies to the rare red spruce stands that exist in the Haliburton Highlands area. The Federation of Ontario Naturalists has recommended three areas for preservation in Southern Ontario, none has yet been acquired or set aside under the legislation.

In summation, the restriction on the size of areas that can be protected and the unimaginative way that the Wilderness Areas legislation has been applied during the past six years are other symptoms that bear out that the Government of the Province of Ontario has little regard, or appreciation, for the preservation of natural environments.

#### **Natural Areas and People**

The question I posed in the introduction, "Why does such a sorry state of affairs exist in Ontario, with respect to the preservation of natural areas?" is obviously not a simple question. There are a few aspects, some obvious and some not so obvious, of the answer that are worth considering.

Since governments in democratic countries are elected by the people, it follows that if people generally are indifferent, or do not understand the importance of expressing their viewpoint on any subject, governments

are likely to take the line of least resistance in the formulation and implementation of policies. As I mentioned in the introductory portion of this essay, I believe that we do not have the degree of public awareness of, or interest in, the preservation of natural areas that exists in the United States. Why is there the difference between the level of interest in the two countries? One of the factors is the illusion of untrammelled space. Canada and Ontario seem so vast and so undeveloped, as we are constantly being told, that it is difficult to feel a sense of immediacy about the need for the preservation of natural areas. Another factor is that everyone knows, for example, that over 90 per cent of Ontario is Crown Land. "Surely we do not have to worry about preservation of areas when the government owns the land," we are likely to say.

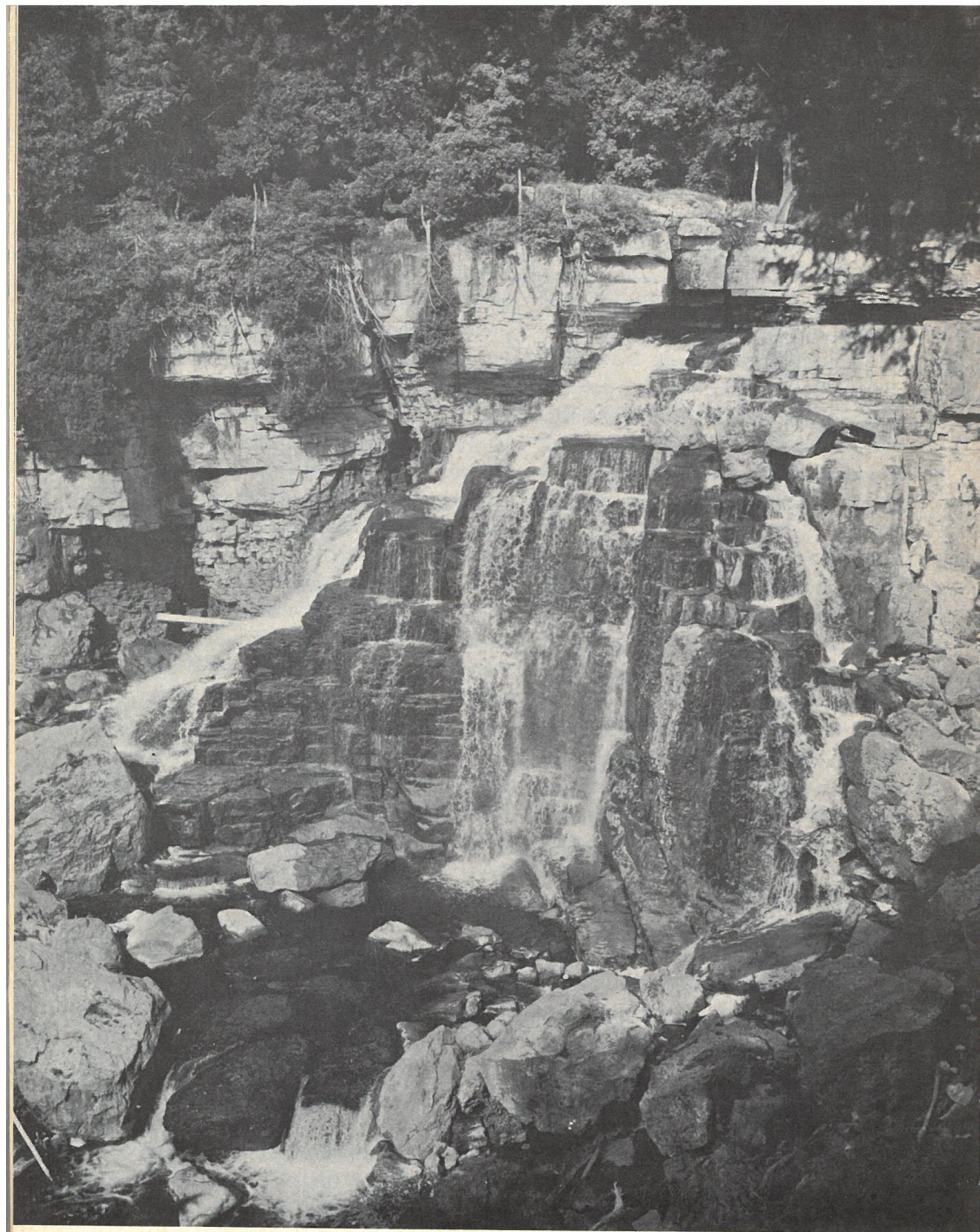
The matter of leadership, or rather the lack of it, has been an important factor in the relatively slow development of a public conscience and voice. In a paper prepared for the Resources for Tomorrow Conference, W. Winston Mair referred to the need for greater public participation in Canada. Although he referred principally to the wildlife area of the resource spectrum, his remarks are equally applicable to the preservation of natural areas that I am discussing. In his paper, *Elements of a Wildlife Policy*, Mair stated (Resources for Tomorrow Conference, Vol. 2), "Wildlife is a public resource and thus a government re-

sponsibility. It is no criticism of government agencies to say that they cannot move far in advance of public thinking, that they cannot properly place before the public, thoughts essential to the formulation of progressive policies and government action, that they cannot speak for themselves respecting hostile pressures nor solicit support from favorable quarters." He went on to say, ". . . there is an urgent need in Canada for a citizens' organization dedicated to the development and furtherance of concepts and philosophies in the wildlife field."

The need for organizations is rapidly being met. At the national level there is the Canadian Audubon Society, the Canadian Society of Wildlife and Fishery Biologists, and chartered since the Resources For Tomorrow Conference, The National and Provincial Parks Association, The Nature Conservancy of Canada, and The Canadian Wildlife Federation.

The formation of organizations is not enough. As Mair points out, the need is for organizations dedicated to the development and furtherance of concepts and philosophies. To this I would add, "and dedicated to the development of a public conscience and to the dynamic expression of it."

The Federation of Ontario Naturalists, one of the oldest preservation-minded organizations in Canada, has a provincial charter and centres its interest on conservation topics primarily at the provincial level.



Parks and nature preserves have had a priority in its programs since its inception. There is little doubt that accomplishments in nature preservation in Ontario have come primarily as a result of the interest that has been developed and the pressures that have been exerted by the Federation. Since it has long been the primary organization in Ontario, I would like first to review its programs and its approach as a developer of "concepts and philosophies" and of "a public conscience" on matters pertaining to the preservation of natural areas; and secondly, I will discuss the role that the federation has played in expressing these to the public and to the government of the day.

Soon after its formation, the FON issued its first publication in which the guiding principles of the new organization were outlined (FON Publ. 1, undated). The creation of sanctuaries for the preservation of flora and fauna was stated as one of the implications of the principles. Three years after its formation it published a statement called, *Sanctuaries and the Preservation of Wildlife in Ontario* (FON Publ. 2, Feb. 1934). The opening statement, "In most civilized countries today sanctuaries are being set aside for the preservation of representative samples of the natural conditions includ-

ing the plants and animals characteristic of those countries. This movement for the preservation of nature as a whole has important points of difference from the conservation movement as a whole. This statement combined with a section that was headed, "The Naturalists' Views on Nature Preservation" outlined the viewpoint of the naturalists on the need for the preservation of natural areas. Five thousand copies of this statement were published and it was distributed widely. For the next three years, 1935-37, the FON presented a memorandum on sanctuaries to the Fish and Game Committee of the Legislature (*Conservation Efforts and Accomplishments of the Federation*, Dymond J. R., The Bulletin, No. 71, FON Feb., 1956).

In 1939, the Board of Directors adopted the recommendations of a Sanctuary Committee to replace the term "sanctuary" by the term "nature preserve".

By the early 1940's, FON had decided that the Government, in the face of lack of public recognition of the need for, and value of, nature reserves, was unlikely to set aside reserves outside of parks. "Efforts were therefore directed towards having such reserves established within parks" (Dymond, op. cit.). These efforts resulted in the setting aside of The Wilderness Area and of some white pine stands in Algonquin Park. These, as I mentioned earlier do not now have any legal status since they have not been established

Opposite — Inglis Falls, on the Niagara Escarpment

under The Wilderness Areas Act. The FON also played a role in the establishment of the nature reserves in Rondeau Park and Point Pelee National Park.

An upsurge of interest in parks and nature reserves occurred in the 1950's. A Parks' Committee was formed in 1952 and appears to have sparked the revival of interest. The work of this committee culminated in the brief, *Outline of a Basis for Parks Policy for Ontario* which was presented to Premier Leslie Frost in December, 1958 (Park News, FON, March, 1959). This policy outline which contained sections on nature reserves and their management, created considerable initial interest and undoubtedly was a factor in the passing of The Wilderness Areas Act in 1959. The FON attempted to bring about changes in the bill, including a change in the title (A brief from the FON to the Legislative Committee on Lands and Forests, March 16, 1959, 4 pp. mimeo). The efforts, however, were not successful. In 1961, possibly as a reflection of the dissatisfaction with The Wilderness Areas Act, the FON developed *A Statement on Nature Reserves for the Province of Ontario* (FON, 1961, 3 pp. mimeo), which defined its concept of nature reserves.

Following the presentation of the briefs on Parks' Policy, and on The Wilderness Areas Bill, the activity of the Parks' Committee virtually terminated. The work of the Board of Directors, that pertained to natural

areas, was devoted to the formation of The Nature Conservancy of Canada, to the establishment of the Dorcas Bay Nature Reserve and to the preparation of statements on areas that the FON wished to recommend for preservation under The Wilderness Areas Act.

During the thirty-four years of its existence, how effective has the FON been in the development of concepts, philosophies and conscience among its membership and among the public? How effective, how dynamic has it been in developing the active support of its federated clubs, of its members and of the general public for the cause of preservation of natural areas which it has espoused? A review of the various publications suggests that the approach of the FON has changed from that of a dynamic organization determined to develop public opinion in support of the preservation of nature to one of an organization that is primarily interested in educational and aesthetic aspects of nature and secondarily interested in its preservation. There are many indications that the approach of the FON has changed from one of developing public interest and support to one of quiet diplomatic action by the Board of Directors; this in spite of the fact that an article by Sadler (*We've been thinking—about where we are going*, Bull. No. 81, FON Sept. 1958) suggested that the Board of Directors was pondering questions about its relationship to the public and to public bodies. What is my justification

for stating that the FON has largely lost the original concept of itself as an organization to develop and organize public support for the preservation of fauna and flora? The following are among the facts that have influenced my thinking.

(1) The FON has not been using its publication media effectively to inform either its own members or the public on the problems and the issues of the day (The publication of Park News, to inform on the need for parks in the Metropolitan Toronto area was somewhat of an exception, however even in this case there was no effort to review the problem, the issues or the role that the FON was playing).

(2) The FON has not adequately publicized or disseminated the important statements of policy that it has formulated. For example, the *Outline of a basis for a parks policy for Ontario* received an initial flare of interest when it was presented to Premier Frost, and then was soon forgotten. A student organization, which last year was attempting to define the concepts of nature preserves and wilderness, had considerable trouble locating a copy of it and of *A Statement on Nature Reserves for the Province of Ontario* that was issued in 1961.

(3) The FON has failed to act as a critic of government programs or policies. For example, in spite of its dissatisfaction with the Wilderness Areas Act and in spite of the lack of a realistic program to establish areas under the act in Southern

Ontario, where FON has stated that the need is greatest, there have not been any statements made before the appropriate committee of the Legislature since the act was passed in 1959.

To sum up, there is a great need for a reappraisal of the role of FON in the community as a whole. There is a real question as to what extent it is filling the need for an "organization dedicated to the development and furtherance of concepts and philosophies" and dedicated to "the development of a public conscience and to dynamic expression of it."

Another of the problems in Ontario has certainly been that there has been a very strong opposition ranged against the concept of preservation of natural areas. This ranges from the opposition of mining and forest industries to that of foresters and mining engineers in government departments. These opposition forces will never permit a reasonable program of preservation of natural areas until it becomes evident that such a program has strong public support, support of many individuals, not just the support of the executive boards of one or two organizations.

#### GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

In this article I have, to this point at least, primarily assumed the role of the critic in discussing policies and programs that pertain to the preservation of natural areas in Ontario. In theory, at least, it would be possible to determine some of the policies I think we should work for

simply by transforming the negative criticism to a positive assertion. I would, however, like to be more direct in my approach and briefly outline the rudiments of policy, some of which have already been proposed by the FON, that I think we should work for in Ontario:

(1) *The establishment of National Parks.* As a resident of Ontario and a citizen of Canada, I feel that I am being cheated by the failure of the Government of Ontario to deal seriously with the matter of the establishment of national parks. I propose that we work to have one per cent of our land area dedicated to national parks. The minimum size of these should be 1,000 square miles, and one should border on Lake Superior.

(2) *A Revision of the Provincial Parks Act.* This should include a statement of the function and role of Provincial parks (1) in the cultural sense of being outdoor museums, (2) in the preservation of natural areas, (3) in providing a wilderness environment and (4) as natural recreational areas of a more civilized nature.

(3) *A detailed statement of the basic elements of Provincial Parks Policy.* This would follow the lead of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources in making public a statement of National Parks policy.

(4) *A Classification of Parks and Recreational Areas.* The system of classification used in British Columbia parks and the system proposed at

a Federal-Provincial Parks Conference (National Parks Branch, *Proposed Basis for a Park Classification System*, Litho. 1963) are more detailed and more adaptable systems than the one proposed by FON. They should be considered in developing a system of classification for Ontario.

(5) *The development of more "Wilderness type" Provincial Parks.* The parks that have been developed during the recent years have been almost entirely of the family camping type, e.g., Sibbald and Darlington. There is need for further development of more of the Quetico and Algonquin type in Northern and Northwestern areas of the Province. The present Chapleau Crown Game Preserve, for example, is an area worthy of consideration. There



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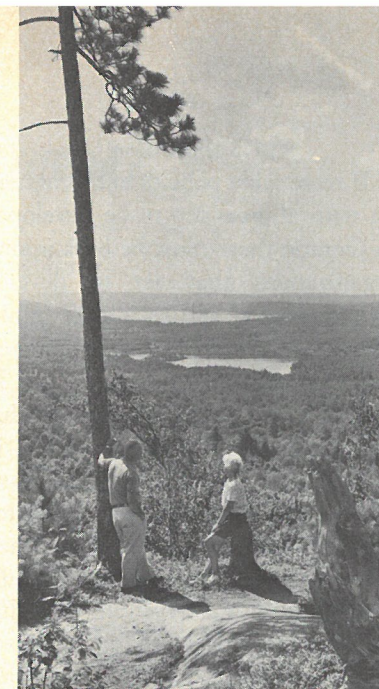
should be a selection and designation of desirable areas in inaccessible parts of the north so that if timber licences are granted reasonable reservations can be made for natural areas and to preserve the wilderness environment of the parks.

(6) *A Natural Areas Act.* This would replace the present Wilderness Areas Act and would primarily recognize the concept of the preservation of natural areas. It would permit the complete reservation of areas of up to 5,000 acres instead of the present limit of 640 acres. It would permit natural areas to be established for research purposes and it would permit manipulation of the environment in these areas. The Act would be administered by the Parks Branch of the Department of Lands and Forests.

The Wilderness Areas concept would be recognized through the Provincial Parks Act rather than through this act.

(7) *Preparation of a basic statement for each park and natural area.* For every area in the province that has been or is set aside as a park or natural area, a complete statement would be prepared and would be available to the public. The statement would contain details about the flora, fauna, and geology of the area and would outline particularly significant aspects of these. It would state the primary purpose that the area was designed to serve, and in the case of a park, would outline general plans for its development.

This system is in use in Great



Britain where such statements are available for all areas that are under the control of the Nature Conservancy. They are, in fact, prepared as part of the background to the acquisition of areas by the Nature Conservancy.

(8) *The establishment of a Natural Environments Section in the Parks Branch.* The Parks Branch should contain a section staffed by ecologists and geographers. Their primary responsibility would be to consider the protection and preservation of natural areas. Members of the section would develop a comprehensive statement on the natural environment in Ontario. They would prepare recommendations for the preservation of significant elements of all biotic communities and of geologic and landscape features.



### In Summation

If reasonable policies and programs on natural areas are to be developed in Ontario there must be background organizations that act to develop public opinion and to muster public support. FON is the logical organization to assume a primary role. In speaking of this, Douglas Sadler has made some significant comments in the *We've been thinking* column of the Bulletin. In 1962, he stated (Bulletin No. 96) "... as naturalists we need now to become the champions of Preservation. This has been a spurious word even among ourselves. And I do not pretend that it will invite immediate acceptance

among the public or even among conservationists. This is not necessary, however, since our role is, as always, that of leaders and pioneers. If we take a stand and a lead in this, we may well find public support in time. But it will never come without us." Unless we, the naturalists and ecologists in the community, are willing to make the effort and eliminate our "apologetic pussyfooting in this realm" (Sadler, op. cit.) we will not have much cause for pride in the natural areas that are left to succeeding generations of Canadians.

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### ASSURING THE FEDERATION'S FUTURE

Your membership dues and gifts, together with income from sales and grants, make possible the work of your Federation. As year by year demands on the Federation increase, increased budgets must be met.

Many members and friends of the Federation find it impractical to contribute to its educational activities during their lifetime, yet desire to leave a gift in the form of a bequest. The form suggested below is proper for most purposes. Bequests may be made in money, or in property or securities. So far as practicable, bequests are invested to provide permanent income that will assure the Federation's future. Such bequests to the Federation are deductible for succession duty purposes.

"I hereby give, devise and bequeath to the Federation of Ontario Naturalists the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ dollars (or otherwise describe the gift) to be used by the Federation to further the purposes for which it is organized."

## MEXICAN SATURDAY

by ERIC WALTER BASTIN

It might be difficult to imagine a more colourful, lively scene than meets an alert eye in Chapultepec Park, given a mild, sunny day in late February. As I recall my impressions of that large, green oasis which offsets so well the bustling traffic, crowded streets and flashing neon signs of Mexico City, I speculate that that overworked adjective, "Kaleidoscopic," is, for once, justified in use.

Four of one's senses were actively involved in that crisp, bright setting. The old fortress, scene of battle nearly a hundred and twenty years ago, but later a museum, brooded over its broad acres at an altitude of about seventy-five hundred feet above sea-level. The air at that season was clear and dry, with light breezes bearing the fragrance of nearby eucalyptus trees. It occasionally was lent accent and interest by a tempting aroma of frijoles and the ubiquitous tortilla, drifting across from a vending-barrow beneath a clump of pepper trees.

I had walked a long way, pausing to watch part of a pick-up soccer match, then stopping to observe while a troop of gray-shirted "Scouts de Mexico" had built and tested a suspension bridge of ropes across a gully thirty feet wide. Finally I had sought rest on a hard bench under a giant Bald Cypress, whose limbs, reaching perhaps a hundred and ten feet upward, were draped modestly with veils of *Tillandsia*, or Spanish moss. A dense thicket of dark green

shrubbery, with lemon-yellow, star like flowers, screened the bench; I later identified the shrub, with its opposite leaves and wiry, squarish stems, as a species of jasmine. Half a dozen brick-red, sun-streaked House Finches were darting about or taking dust baths in its shade while three sleek Inca Doves, barely eight inches long but surprisingly unafraid, walked about my feet beneath the bench. Their long, slender, white-tipped tails and "scaled" plumage made recognition simple.

The birding had been good that day. I had seen a tribe of tiny Black-eared Bushtits, all superlatively busy and twittering rapidly but quietly in high-pitched tones, working its way through a grove of Australian pine near the boating-lake. They had led my attention to a Pileolated Warbler in an adjacent Bald Cypress; that is a race of the species which includes our familiar Wilson's Warbler, and it wears the same, round, black crown-cap. Brown Towhees, Bewick's Wrens and Rufous-backed Robins had been numerous in the undergrowth and I had rejoiced in identifying, a few minutes earlier, my first Black-headed Grosbeak, a female. It had reminded me strongly of our female Rose-breasted Grosbeak, but showed a clear, tawny breast and, in flight, rather conspicuous yellow wing-linings. A Yellow-crowned Night Heron had been sighted briefly as I stood watching