

# **Peisk Lake Park Addition**

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**The purpose of this information package is to present for your review the preliminary management direction for Northern Peisk Lake Park Addition**

**Rationale:**

The Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas Land Use Strategy (June 2006) is the result of a three-year dialogue between Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. The dialogue involved a consultative planning process to consider a full range of environmental, social and economic factors to develop land use direction that balances new opportunities for resource-based economic renewal and protection, remoteness and cultural heritage. One outcome of the land use strategy is the dedication of the northern portion of Peisk Lake as wilderness park addition to Woodland Caribou Provincial Park. This dedication complements the designation of the southern portion of Peisk Lake as a wilderness park addition, as recommended in Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (1999).

Park management planning for Woodland Caribou Provincial Park and the wilderness park additions recommended through Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy has been carried out in conjunction with Woodland Caribou Signature Site Strategy planning and has met the requirements of Ontario Provincial Parks: Management Planning Manual (1994). Now that land use intent has been established for the northern portion of Peisk Lake through the Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas Land Use Strategy, management planning for it can occur.

The management direction contained in this paper will be reflected through amendment of the Crown Land Use Policy Atlas which is the Ministry of Natural Resources repository of current area-specific land use policies for Crown lands in the central part of Ontario. It identifies the basic land use intent and permitted uses for each of the designated areas. The intended direction for the Peisk Lake Park Addition (north half) to be reflected in the Crown Land Use Policy Atlas is included in the table at the end of this document.

**Name:** Peisk Lake Park Addition (north half) (P2370a)

**Size:** (3076 hectares)

**Boundary:** (also see map)

The Peisk Lake Park Addition (north half) is immediately adjacent to the northeastern portion of Woodland Caribou Provincial Park. This area includes the northern portion of Peisk Lake and extends north following a natural boundary that is a dominant cliff feature. Including this in the boundary of Woodland Caribou Provincial Park will improve the watershed and feature integrity of the park and enhance the associated recreation and tourism opportunities.

**Values:**

The most notable natural landscape feature of the Peisk Lake Park Addition (north half) is the Peisk Lake Cliffs which include a near bald granite rock buttress which rises up roughly 70 meters at the north side of Peisk Creek. Archaeological sites were identified through joint investigations carried out by Pikangikum First Nation and Ontario Parks. During the Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas Land Use Strategy process, numerous significant cultural sites were also identified through intensive Indigenous Knowledge data collection. Upland areas are covered primarily by jack pine dominated forest, or have been recently burned. Current woodland caribou wintering habitat occurs in the northern part of the addition, and a specimen of the Lapland Buttercup (a regionally significant plant species) has also been found here. This area is rich in common juniper, pin cherry, drought resistant vascular plants, and Cladina spp. lichen, the latter being found on open bedrock. The Peisk Lake Park Addition (north half) includes a portion of the headwaters of the Bloodvein (Canadian Heritage) River.

### **Existing uses:**

Currently this area supports remote outpost camps, but is otherwise undeveloped. Management boundaries that cover this area include baitfish blocks, bear management areas, traplines, and a wildlife management unit. The Pine Ridge Forest access road terminates approximately 10 km from Peisk Lake and could influence activities in the Peisk Lake Park Addition in the future. Recreational use of the area includes ice fishing with access by snowmobile and/or aircraft. Opportunities for new eco-tourism, recreation, and appreciation of boreal ecological and cultural landscape activities may exist in the area.

### **Proposed Zoning**

In order to blend with zoning proposed in the Woodland Caribou Provincial Park Preliminary Management Plan, the Peisk Lake Park Addition (northern half) will be zoned wilderness and seasonal access. Two seasonal access zones are identified. As11 (Peisk Lake) will be zoned snowmobile and aircraft access and As12 (trail) zoned for snowmobile use. The remainder of the park addition will be zoned Northern Wilderness, Bloodvein Wilderness and Central Wilderness.

As11 and As12 are seasonal access zones that permits aircraft and snowmobile access. As11 complements As1 in the Peisk Lake Park Addition (southern half). Seasonal access zones are intended to support existing activities, such as hunting and snowmobiling, while protecting natural and cultural features as well as wilderness values. Access by aircraft or snowmobile will be permitted between September 12 and March 31 of the following year, when hunting and ice fishing mainly occur.

The Bloodvein River will be zoned as Bloodvein Wilderness Zone. The headwaters of the Bloodvein River will be protected by the Peisk Lake recommended park addition (north half), the Peisk Lake recommended park addition (south half) and the Pipestone Bay-McIntosh Enhanced Management Area. The Bloodvein River, of which 106 kilometres lies within Woodland Caribou Provincial Park, was designated as a Canadian Heritage River in 1998.

The area north and east of the Bloodvein River Wilderness Zone and As11 will be zoned as Northern Wilderness Zone. This area is relatively remote and is mainly accessed through a combination of float plane and/or water travel. The Northern Wilderness can be entered from the Bloodvein or Chukuni River systems or from the Musclow and Keeper River systems to the north.

The area south of the Bloodvein River Wilderness Zone and As11 will be zoned as “Central Wilderness Zone”. The Central Wilderness Zone is characterized by a network of small lakes connected by portages which provide linkage between the Gammon and Bloodvein River systems. This area has good potential for canoe route expansion. It can be accessed from outside of the park via Pipestone Bay (Red Lake) or through the current Johnson Lake entry point via Douglas and Hatchet Lakes.

### **Proposed Management Direction**

Proposed management direction is in accordance with the Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas Land Use Strategy (2006) and Ontario Provincial Parks: Planning and Management Policies (1992). This proposed direction is intended to harmonize with the proposed direction in the preliminary park management plan from an operational and resource management perspective. Readers can refer to that document for details about proposed management policies. Section numbers mentioned in this paper refer to sections in the preliminary park management plan which is also available for review at this time. A summary table is provided at the end.

### **Hunting**

Hunting is not permitted in the existing Woodland Caribou Provincial Park. However, hunting is permitted in the recommended Woodland Caribou Park Additions with consideration for safety and conservation. The Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas Land Use Strategy also permits hunting in the Peisk Lake Park Addition (north half). At the time when the recommended park additions are regulated a subsequent regulation under the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act is also required.

Existing Bear Management Areas located in the recommended park additions can continue. No new bear hunting operations will be permitted.

Hunting in the recommended park additions depends on a suitable access strategy. Seasonal access zones (section 8.4.2) have been created which will support hunting, while also protecting park values. Seasonal access zones will be in effect between September 12 and March 31 of the following year.

### **Trapping**

Existing commercial fur harvesting will be permitted to continue in the wilderness park addition indefinitely. No new traplines will be permitted in the existing park or recommended park additions. Vacant traplines will be allocated to First Nations with traditional use in the park. Allocation will be done in consultation with First Nations. Any

relocation or construction of trails and cabins will be subject to ecological principles and consideration of park values

### **Tourism**

There are two commercial outpost camps. Existing tourism operations in wilderness parks and related activities (e.g. motorboating) will remain but are subject to considerations such as horsepower restrictions. The Park Superintendent may authorize improvements to existing facilities and services on a case-by-case basis. New tourism operations may be considered provided they are consistent with wilderness park policies and objectives. Transfer of existing tourism operations under LUP or Crown Lease tenure will be subject to review and approval by Ontario Parks/MNR.

Additional conditions on commercial tourism operations under Land Use Permit or Crown lease may be applied should sustainability of the resource be at issue.

### **Sport Fishing**

Sport fishing is permitted. All fishing activity will be subject to the policies and regulations of the appropriate fisheries management zones as set out by the Ontario Fishing Regulations.

### **Commercial Fishing and Bait harvesting**

Commercial fishing does not presently occur and new operations will not be permitted. Existing commercial bait harvesting will be permitted to continue in the recommended wilderness park additions indefinitely. No new commercial baitfish operations will be permitted in the recommended park additions.

### **Motorboats**

Motorboats are used in Woodland Caribou Provincial Park for commercial tourism, resource harvesting, sport fishing, and access to private property. Motorboats are also used by First Nation people carrying out their traditional activities. Motorboats may be used for commercial tourism operations within wilderness and access zones in wilderness class parks, with restrictions on motor size.

Motorboats used in commercial tourism operations in Woodland Caribou Provincial Park will be permitted on specific lakes with horsepower restrictions. A maximum of 10 horsepower will apply for all watercraft on Peisk Lake.

Motorboat use by private residents is not permitted. Personal watercraft (jet skis) is currently not used for recreation in the park and will be prohibited based on manufacturer standards which exceed the maximum horsepower permitted.

### **Snowmobiles**

Recreational snowmobiling will be permitted within seasonal access zones, such as As11 and As12, on authorized trails in the park addition. Management planning has resulted in the direction to eliminate over time recreational snowmobile use in the existing park

where it is a non conforming use. The elimination of recreational snowmobiling in the existing park is consistent with wilderness park policy and provides added protection for threatened woodland caribou which require large, undisturbed habitats for survival success. This action will be phased-in over a ten year period upon approval of this document.

### **All-Terrain Vehicles**

ATVs will not be permitted for recreational use in Woodland Caribou Provincial Park. ATVs will be permitted for use associated with commercial outpost camps on Peisk Lake but will be restricted to the tenured boundary of the operation.

### **Private Aircraft**

Use of privately owned aircraft is a non-conforming use in most zones within wilderness class parks. A phase-out of this activity in wilderness, nature reserve and historical zones will be implemented upon approval of this plan. Figure WCPP-18 in the preliminary park management plan illustrates the phase-out strategy. Following the phase-out, private aircraft will be permitted in As11.

### **Air Access**

All aircraft landing in the park will require prior authorization through a valid aircraft landing authority from Ontario Parks. Daily or seasonal vehicle permits will apply.

Air access by commercial air services will be permitted in access zones which are designated for aircraft landing (section 8.4), at commercial tourism facilities in wilderness zones, at private property and at authorized remote boat cache locations in wilderness zones.

Private air access will be permitted in year-round and seasonal air access zones only, such as As11, following a four year phase-out strategy (section 10.2.4). Private aircraft owned by landowners and immediate family<sup>1</sup> will be permitted for access to their private property.

Resource harvesters are permitted to use private and commercial aircraft to access their operations.

### **Seasonal Access**

Seasonal access zones are located at the periphery of the park and have been created to support approved activities in the recommended park additions as a result of the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy and Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas Land Use Strategy. Seasonal access zones will have timing restrictions applied (e.g. access permitted between September 12<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup> of the following year). Activities in seasonal access zones will be monitored and should sustainability of the resource be at risk, quota-based entry regulations may be applied.

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<sup>1</sup> "Immediate family" as defined in the *Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation Act* (Regulation 665/98).

For the proposed policies for the following topics, please refer to the preliminary park management plan which is available for review.

Vegetation	Section 9.1.1
Fire	Section 9.1.2
Mining	Section 9.1.5.1
Private Recreation Camps	Section 9.1.5.3
Water Management	Section 9.2.2
Cultural Heritage	Section 9.3
Backcountry Travel	Section 10.1.1
Campsites	Section 10.1.2
Litter	Section 10.1.3
Shorelunch areas	Section 10.1.4
Road Access	Section 10.3.2
Boat Caches	Section 10.4
Pikangikum First Nation/Ontario Parks Partnership	Section 10.6.1
Portages	Section 11.1

**Previous consultation:**

Postings on the Environmental Bill of Rights registry PB03E100 occurred throughout the planning process for the Whitefeather Forest and Adjacent Areas. Terms of Reference, Background Information, Objectives and Opportunities, and Draft Strategy were shared with a wide range of local, regional and provincial audiences.

**Permitted Uses Table – Northern Peisk Lake - Woodland Caribou Provincial Park Addition (P2370a)**

<b>Commercial Activities</b>			
<b>Aggregate Extraction</b>		No	
<b>Bait Fishing</b>			
Existing:		Yes	
New:		No	
<b>Commercial Fishing</b>			
Existing:		No	
New:		No	
<b>Commercial Fur Harvesting</b>			
Existing:		Yes	
New:		No	
<b>Commercial Development</b>	<b>Hydro</b>	No	
<b>Commercial Timber Harvest</b>		No	
<b>Facility-based Tourism</b>	<b>Commercial</b>		
(e.g. outpost resorts/lodges)	outpost camps,	Yes	Existing authorized tourism facilities/operations and related activities will remain but are subject to considerations.
Existing:		Maybe	New operations may be considered provided they are consistent with park policy and wilderness objectives.
New:			
<b>Backcountry Services</b>	<b>Outfitting</b>	Yes	
<b>Energy Transmission and Communications Corridors</b>		No	
<b>Mineral Exploration and Development</b>		No	
<b>Wild Rice Harvesting</b>			
Existing:		Yes	
New:		No	
<b>Land and Resource Management Activities</b>			
<b>Crown Land Disposition</b>			
Private:		No	No new land disposition for the private use of individuals is permitted, except for minor dispositions in support of existing uses (e.g. reconstruction of a septic system). Renewal of existing tenure for authorized uses is permitted.
Commercial:		Maybe	Land disposition for commercial use may occur under the authority of a land use permit or lease, provided they are consistent with park policy and wilderness objectives. Existing tourism facilities may be eligible for enhanced tenure.
<b>Fire Suppression</b>		Maybe	Until such time that a fire management plan for the park is approved, fire management within the park will be carried out in accordance with the <i>Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario</i> .
<b>Fish Habitat Management</b>		Maybe	In the absence of a fisheries management plan, management actions (e.g. habitat restoration) may be implemented where need is identified.
<b>Fish Stocking</b>			

Native Species:	Maybe	In the absence of a fisheries management plan, stocking of native fish species may occur where required to supplement threatened native populations.
Non-Native Species:	No	Stocking of any non-native species is prohibited.
<b>Insect and Disease Suppression</b>	Maybe	Non-native infestations which threaten park values will be actioned. Native infestations which threaten park values may be actioned.
<b>Inventory and Monitoring</b>	Yes	
<b>Personal Wood Harvesting</b>	No	Only dead material may be used for firewood.
<b>Prescribed Burning</b>	Maybe	Until such time that a fire management plan for the park is approved, fire management within the park will be carried out in accordance with the <i>Forest Fire Management Strategy for Ontario</i> .
<b>Roads</b>		
Existing:	No	
New:	No	
<b>Vegetation Management</b>	Maybe	In the absence of a vegetation management plan, management actions may be implemented where need is identified. Non-native infestations which threaten park values will be actioned.
<b>Water Control Structure</b>		
Existing:	No	
New:	No	
<b>Wildlife Population Management</b>	Maybe	Wildlife management will be addressed in conjunction with MNR wildlife management objectives.
<b>Science, Education and Heritage Appreciation</b>		
<b>Historical Appreciation</b> (self guided)	Yes	Support facilities may be identified through Natural Heritage Education planning.
<b>Nature Appreciation</b> (self guided)	Yes	Support facilities may be identified through Natural Heritage Education planning.
<b>Photography and Painting</b>	Yes	
<b>Research</b>	Yes	Subject to authorization.
<b>Wildlife Viewing</b> (self-guided)	Yes	Support facilities may be identified through Natural Heritage Education planning.
<b>Recreation Activities and Facilities</b>		
<b>Aircraft Landing</b>		
Private:	Yes	Aircraft landing is permitted with the authorization of a valid aircraft landing authority. Private aircraft landing will be phased out over four years following approval of the Park Management Plan, except for landings in designated air access zones (year-round and seasonal) and for access to private property by the patent land owner and immediate family. Resource harvesters will be permitted to use private aircraft for the purpose of resource harvesting.
Commercial:	Yes	Commercial aircraft landing is permitted in designated air access zones, at commercial tourism facilities, at private property, and at approved remote boat cache locations.
<b>All Terrain Vehicle Use</b>		
On Trails:	Yes	All terrain vehicle use is permitted in association with commercial tourism operations, restricted to the tenured boundary of the operation.

Off Trails:	No	
<b>Camping</b>	Yes	In the absence of a visitor management program, backcountry camping is permitted in wilderness zones on authorized campsites.
<b>Hunting</b>	Yes	Not in nature reserve zones.
<b>Motor Boat Use</b>		
Private:	No	Private motorboat use is not permitted except for owners of patent land on designated lakes (non-conforming use).
Commercial:	Yes	Horsepower restrictions will apply. Use associated with commercial tourism operations is permitted within wilderness and access zones. Horsepower restrictions will apply.
<b>Non-motorized Recreation Travel</b> (e.g. canoeing, kayaking, hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing)	Yes	
<b>Private Recreation Camps</b> (e.g. hunt camps)		
Existing:	No	There are no existing private recreation camps.
New:	No	
<b>Snowmobiling</b>		
On Trails:	Yes	Snowmobile use on authorized trails can continue through seasonal access zoning.
Off Trails:	No	
<b>Sport Fishing</b>	Yes	Consult the Ontario Recreational Fishing Regulations summary for specific local details.
<b>Trail Development</b>	Maybe	If there is increased interest, hiking trails may be considered where compatible with wilderness values and in association with the Natural Heritage Education plan.