



SPRING 2002

THE JOURNAL OF CANADIAN WILDERNESS CANOEING

OUTFIT 108

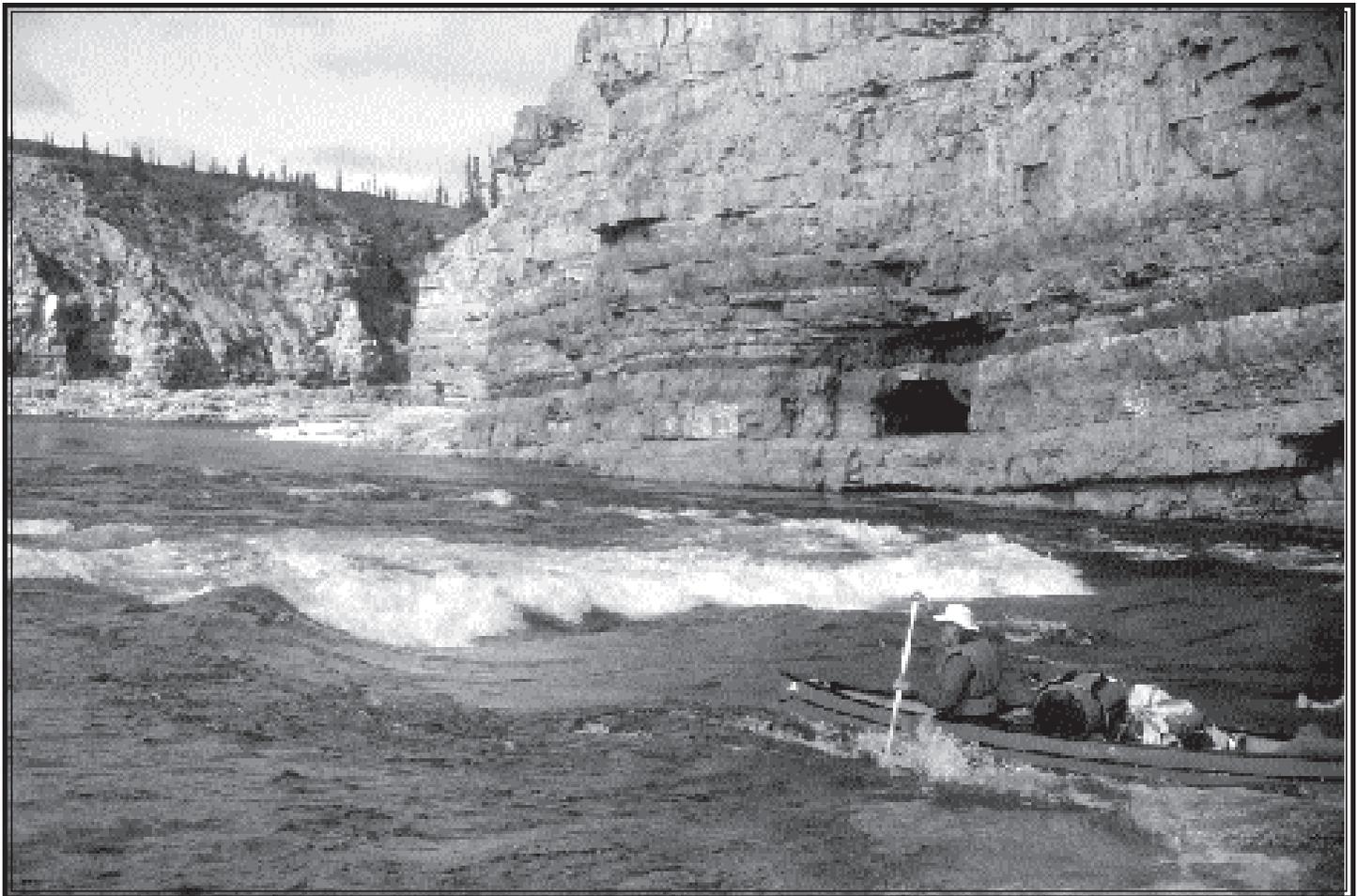


Photo: Brooke Yeomans

HORTON NEARS A HOLE-- Members of the John Lentz party who travelled the far north river, the Horton, last summer navigate a canyon section of the river that offers some room to move either side of the big white hole in the middle. See the full story starting on Page six.

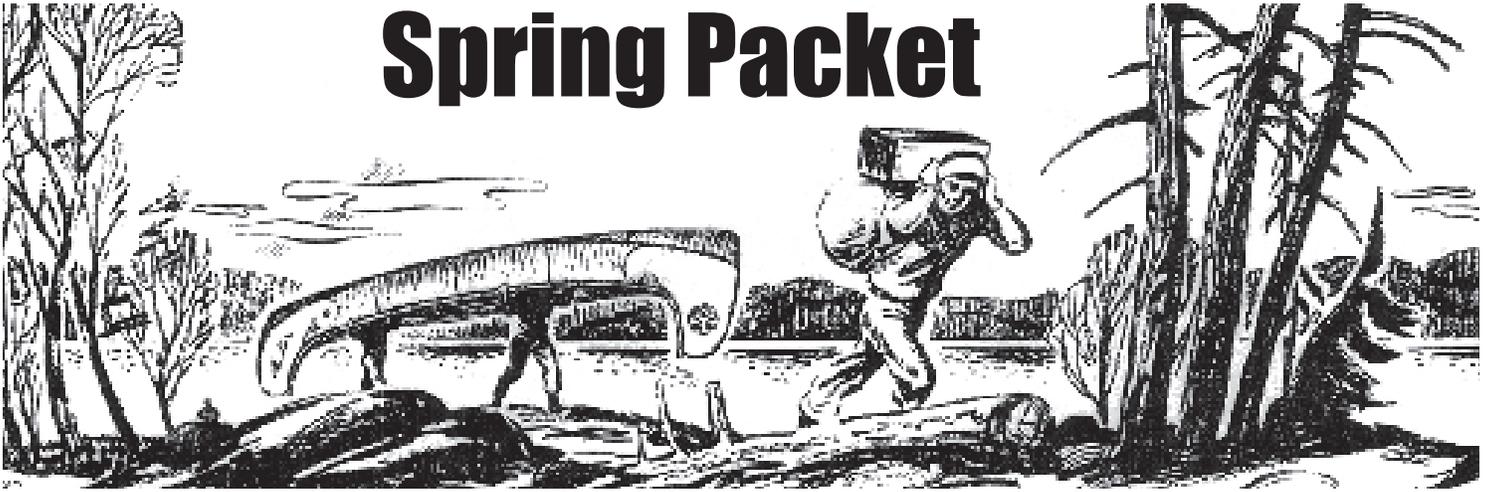
**Lentz do the Horton
Arctic Canoe Expedition**

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**Musings by Max
From his upcoming book**

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Spring Packet



We thought we would showcase a small letter writing campaign by Becky Mason that swirled around various e-mail addresses this Spring -

Dear friends:

It is not often that we ask for help but we are very concerned about the future of Nahanni National Park. Below is some information from CPAWS (Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society) on some of the immediate threats to this World Heritage Site and a sample draft letter you can send to the appropriate ministers.

Please circulate this message to anyone you think may be interested, anywhere. We also encourage you to print it out and hand it to friends that don't have email.

Thank you very much,
Becky Mason and Reid McLachlan

The Nahanni River (NWT) is in danger from mining exploration and development. The most critical threat is the Canadian Zinc mine on Prairie Creek. The mining infrastructure has been there for 20 years. This includes huge amounts of cyanide and diesel fuel stored in ageing containers beside the creek which is prone to flash floods and in an unstable earthquake zone. These pose an obvious and immediate threat to the Nahanni River downstream.

The mine is also gearing up to open and studies show that the ore present is laced with high levels of mercury as well as arsenic and antimony. The water contamination from the run-off could be disastrous

if the mine starts production. An all-season road is also proposed to be built to the mine, crossing fragile areas of tundra, permafrost and the world renowned Nahanni karst formations that Parks Canada has proposed to protect.

Other plans for the Nahanni River this season include oil and gas exploration. An "AIR CANON" will be floated up the Nahanni to the Park boundary, doing seismic blasts along the river floor looking for clues of underlying oil and gas potential.

Mining development and oil and gas exploration within the South Nahanni watershed threatens this globally recognized World Heritage Site.

The best way to protect this unique area is to expand the protected area to include the entire watershed. Currently there are land claims negotiations underway between the Deh Cho First Nation (they feel strongly about protecting this area) and the Federal Government.

Expanded protection of the Nahanni area is a real possibility if we help push for it.

Sending letters will make the difference. The Canadian Government needs to hear from you now.

For more information on the Nahanni National Park issue go to the Canadian Parks and Wilderness society national website <http://www.cpaws.org> and/or email Alison Woodley awoodley@cpaws.org Tel: CPAWS National office (613) 569-7226

Dear friends:

This proposed oil and gas exploration will directly affect the future of the Nahanni National Park. It has a looming deadline so send emails to address below by this Friday a.m.

Please circulate to anyone who you may think would be interested.

1- National Energy Board has approved the "air cannon" project.

2- The only way to reverse approval is to have the MacKenzie Valley Land and Water Board request an Environmental Assessment.

3-Deadline for the request for an Environmental Assessment is this

Friday April 5, 2002. After that the "air cannon" goes ahead this summer up the Nahanni River to the Park's border. I've been told this seismic process would make it almost impossible to expand the proposed park boundaries.

4-The only way that an Environmental Assessment will be done is if there is shown that there is potential for significant public concern for the "air cannon" procedure.

Dear Friends,

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board was swamped with hundreds of your emails calling for an Environmental Assessment on the proposed "air cannon" on the Nahanni river. I'm pleased to report that the Environmental Assessment was ordered Friday April 5, 2002. Thanks to all of you who helped to make this happen! Apart from the hopefully positive outcome of the EA this process will also buy some time for the land claim negotiations to be finalized. It will also send a strong message to both the National Energy Board and all other resource extraction interests to think twice before threatening to develop the Nahanni area.

Interest has been expressed by various Canadian Government departments for a full Environmental Assessment for all of the Nahanni Watershed.

When this process gets farther along there may be need for the public to express their concern.

If you want to you can get a head start on calling for a full environment assessment for the South Nahanni Watershed by emailing The National Energy Board, Chief Conservation Officer, Terry Baker, tbaker@neb-one.gc.ca

You can monitor the situation at The Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society website <http://cpaws.org> or at the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Im-



It's called the French but we called it the Drench River on an early May outing down the lower stretches of this historic voyageur route heading into Georgian Bay. Fortunately the sun was shining when we paddled into the Old Voyageurs Channel - at very high water - and we'll show you the sunnier side of things in Outfit

Here are their current lists of most major Nunavut and Nunavik species.

Species on the "endangered" list.

- Bowhead whale (Eastern Arctic): April, 1980
- Bowhead whale (Western Arctic): April, 1986
- Beluga (Southeast Baffin-Cumberland Sound): April, 1988
- Beluga (Ungava Bay) April, 1988
- Peary Caribou (High Arctic)

Species on the "threatened" list

- Beluga (Eastern Hudson Bay): April, 1988
- Peary Caribou (Low Arctic): April, 1991
- Peregrine Falcon: May, 2000

Species on the "special concern" list

- Beluga (Eastern High Arctic-Baffin Bay): April, 1992
- Polar Bear: April, 1999
- Grizzly Bear: April, 1991

Canoesworthy

mile all-weather road from Bathurst Inlet to the winter road on Contwoyto Lake and continuing on to the Izok Lake deposit, southeast of Kugluktuk (Coppermine).

A deep-water port, located at Bathurst Inlet, is the second component. The port will be complete with a wharf, a dock for barges and a storage facility.

Together, the road and port will give mining companies cheaper and easier access to the mineral-rich land. The Lupin, Diavik, Ekati, Jericho and Hope Bay mines are all potential users of the proposed all-weather road and deep-water port.

Inmet Mining Corp., owner of the Izok Lake property 250 kilometres south-east of Kugluktuk, is banking on the Bathurst Inlet road and port. The infrastructure would give the mining company a sure route to Izok Lake.

Next on the list is an environmental impact statement, which Keen said will likely be ready by December 2002. Construction on the \$215-million road and port is slated to begin in mid-2004 and that it could be operating by mid-2006.

The groups behind the Bathurst Inlet project-Kitikmeot Corporation, territorial and federal government departments, and Inmet Mining - have put \$6 million into studying the possibility of building a road and port.

Some wildlife groups have said construction of a road and a port could

➔ *Continued on Page 10*

A road to Bathurst Inlet would provide greater access to mineral-rich areas in the Kitikmeot area and spark the development of numerous mining projects. The project's organizers envision building an 180

From the Editor

Perhaps it was the cold and wet weather which delayed this Spring Outfit. It certainly hasn't felt hike Spring here in central Canada.

With no HACC expedition to look forward to (and plan for) this summer, there were other things that took away my time. One of which was a short and early canoe trip on the French River in northern Ontario, the site of the first true HACC trip 21 Springs ago.

In May of 1981, we set off down the French buoyed by a thorough dose of Bill Mason's recently released Path of the Paddle and the

seeming irresistible draw of the moving water. Parts of that five day trip can still be counted in the top of the most miserable/uncomfortable moments in HACC history. The photo of us at the river's historical marker half-way down confirms why. Many of us were clad in inappropriate gear for a cold and wet May. With cotton pants (!), leather gloves, synthetic hats, ancient rainsuits and an early and unreliable version of Gore-Tex (which brother Sean took to calling Leak-Tex) we were a bone waiting to be chewed when the winds of

November came six months early! Which they did. And we soon discovered

why rain and wind just above the freezing point is actually worse than snow. In addition, we had not perfected our waterproofing systems so that our future Chief Guide's sleeping bag resembled a well-used dish towel.

One score plus one year yielded a different result. Soaked packs did not leak. One day of heavy rain was followed by another of heavy wind.

Everything worked. Experience had taught us comfort, safety and the ability to put luck firmly on our side. At least this time.

Michael Peake



F-F-F-FRENCHED! Geoffrey, Sean and Michael Peake and Peter Scott.

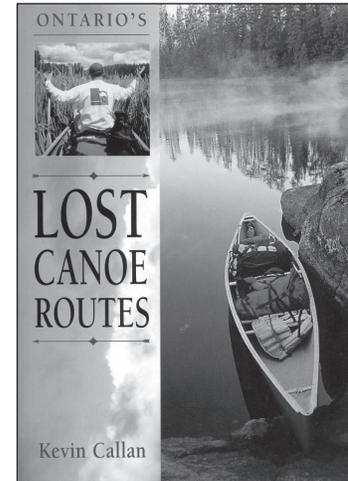
Ontario's Lost Canoe Routes

By Kevin Callan
 Boston Mills Press
 Toronto, 166pp. \$19.95
 ISBN: 1-55046-3888

This review appeared on Ottertooth.com which specializes in news on Temagami and northern Quebec canoeing areas.

Kevin Callan has written his sixth canoe-route guidebook. Not a cut-and-dried Frommer's Does Ontario by Canoe guidebook. No, this one has got attitude, the same attitude that have made his books so popular.

Ontario's Lost Canoe Routes contains 15 Ontario routes, three of which are in the Temagami region: Chiniguchi (chih-nih-GOO-chee) River, Thunderhead-Bob lakes and Marten River Park.



These Temagami routes are not as well known and, particularly in the case of the Thunderhead route, not well used. His goal for this book was to find and publish out-

of-the-way routes before they are lost.

And here is the dilemma. "How can a route be 'lost,' or better yet," he says in the introduction, "protected, if some wilderness pornographer like me writes about it in a guidebook?" This is the same dilemma Hap Wilson faced back in 1978 when he published Temagami Canoes Routes. In the end, both Hap and Kevin came to the same conclusions: use it or lose it. Publicizing them and getting canoeing traffic back on these old nastawgan puts the onus on the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) to protect them from industrialists and canoeists. (We won't get into the huge chasm

between MNR's and the wilderness canoeist's concept of protection.)

Those who write up canoe routes have been criticized by some canoeists who see them opening up their private utopia. But I disagree with them because, sadly, reality is a harsh teacher. Kevin's route books are fun to read and he doesn't gloss over his own misfortunes or mistakes, often with self-deprecating humour. On his Chiniguchi trip, he dropped his canoe on a portage and soaked his first-aid kit. To bandage a cut he "had to resort to holding a piece of gauze over the cut with a strip of duct tape." Ouch.

The book has plenty of photos and every route is clearly mapped with interesting features, portages and campsites. Fortunately, he maps an extension of the Chiniguchi trip through Evelyn Lake, but unfortunately doesn't flesh it out in the narrative. (Just can't get enough of this guy, I guess.)

There are a few minor factual errors in his research of some Temagami features. He attributed the Wakimika Triangle old-growth trails to Friends of Temagami, when they were built by Temagami Wilderness Society and Earthroots.

This book will help gain recognition for the 15 routes and provide some great choices off the beaten path. Even if you aren't intending to put your paddle in the water any time soon, the stories of his travels are so interesting that you will probably change your mind.

Routes:

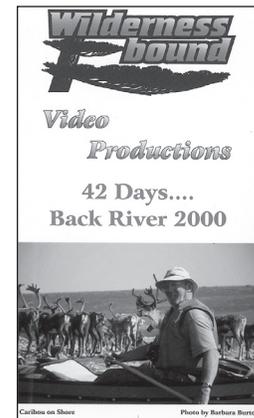
- Wabakimi Park (Smoothrock-Whitewater route)
- Steel River Loop
- Chapleau and Nemegosenda Rivers
- Wakami Lake Loop
- Ranger Lake Loop
- Bark Lake Loop
- Nabakwasi River Loop
- Four M Circle Loop
- Tatachikapika River
- Chiniguchi River
- Canton lakes (Thunderhead-Bob lakes)
- Marten River Park
- South River
- York River

42 Days... Back River 2000 22 min An Arctic Journey

Canoeing the Hood River. 38 min. Wilderness Bound Productions www.wildernessbound.com

Wilderness Bound is a small outfitting business in Hamilton, Ontario with some big multimedia capabilities.

Run by veteran guides, George Drought and Barbara Burton, Wilderness Bound not only runs exotic trips in the far north, they also publish superb



river guides and have two video productions on a pair of the north's most famous rivers, the Back and the seldom-travelled Hood.

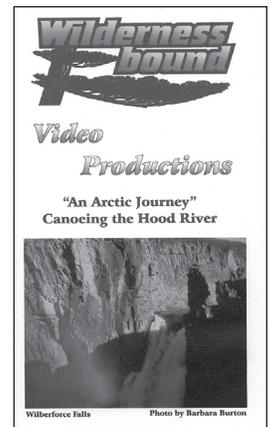
Now while these are amateur productions, they take good advantage of the great leaps in technology lately. And talk about synergies, the videos were shot

while leading groups of paddlers down these remote rivers.

No doubt these videos serve them well to attract new customers who will be impressed by their style - a non-macho, group participation effort with an emphasis on history.

And like the ground they sleep on, the videos are a little uneven but very watchable and nicely convey the feel and realities of a northern canoe trip. Though you certainly would like to have a bit more info about the river and more about the trip participants who provide most of the narrative.

The videos have some great nature footage, of caribou and muskoxen and even the extremely elusive wolverine (congrats!)
 -Michael Peake



Power struggles in northern Quebec

By MICHAEL PEAKE
Editor

We at *Che-Mun*, have always had a great interest in northern Quebec. It stems naturally from our canoeing experiences there plus the unique threat the region's rivers are under from that world class dammer Hydro-Quebec.

Our trips have taken us down the George River twice, across the Ungava Peninsula three times, as well as down the newly endangered Rupert River. In addition, in my role as a journalist, I have written about the James Bay hydro projects and toured the dams and towns and spoken with people on both sides of the issue.

It remains a remote region that crops up occasionally in the mainstream press. Nowadays, most interested parties have their own Web sites and the burgeoning *Ottertooth.com* site specializes in this issue.

Run by environmental activist, Camp Keewaydin paddler and historian Brian Back, the *Ottertooth* site is impressive in both its dedication to the issues, sophisticated use of maps and its insight.

And there's lots to report about as northern Quebec has regained the threatening focus of the Quebec provincial government and its agencies. While the natives and government were once bitter enemies, the two know seem to be on the same wavelength, as a couple of recent deals would seem to attest.

This is no small story and will doubtless spawn a raft of articles and books both scholarly

and otherwise. The fact is, the chickens are sleeping with the foxes and getting very well paid for it.

We have reported previously on the deal to renew damming of the James Bay rivers and thanks to one of *Ottertooth's* many superb maps,

Rupert will be diverted and headed north into the existing, and growing, La Grande megaproject. The new plan floods an area less than one-eighth the size of the 8,000 sq. kilometres that the NBR plan would have covered. In addition, any new Rupert work needs an Environmental Assessment which could take up to three years depending on political pressure.

A new group, the Chibougamau-based *Rupert Reverence*, has sprung up to protest the plan and is composed of Crees and northern Quebecois. They will paddle down the lower section of the river this summer from Nemaska to Waskaganish, at the mouth of the river, from July 20-30. That's a very steep paddle, by the way, with many huge rapids and long portages, some of which were destroyed by Hydro-Quebec's study of the river a quarter century ago.

Further north, things are getting interesting too. Quebec's Inuit just approved a half-billion dollar deal with Hydro-Quebec to study the hydroelectric resources there. There are currently no dams in Inuit Quebec, the furthest north part of the province but this deal will pave the way for them. It was approved with a 69% vote in favour but only 33% of the population bothered to vote which disturbs many people.

Since the defeat of the Great Whale project almost a decade ago, things have been pretty quiet in Quebec. Some have stated that the September 11 incidents caused

Quebec to move to insure all its homegrown power. But these ideas are old as are the motives behind them, which are mainly financial.

Megaprojects never die, they simply get tucked away in a drawer for future use. The scary thing is whenever they pull one bad one out—



(which admittedly look better in colour!) we can get a look at the latest plan to extract power from the Rupert and how it fits into H-Q's massive drainage plan. It differs from the original deal which would have melded the Rupert, Nottaway and Broadback rivers, dubbed NBR. Now the

Stalking Stef on Grizzly shores



by John W. Lentz

How to satisfy that stirring that draws me back again and again to northern Canada?

After 14 canoe trips over the past 40 years, a fair conclusion might be that it is time to hang it up and rest on supposed laurels. But not quite yet - planning another trip is still the only way to go.

As friends and I searched for a river early in 2001, one criterion was paramount - minimal portaging - to accommodate our less than youthful physiques. So it was not surprising that the Horton River came into focus with attractions such as meaningful (410 mile) length, even gradient with few apparent carries, reputedly wonderful scenery, and a varied animal population. The three of us from the Washington, D.C., area: Joe Lederle, Bob Schaefer, and myself had an average age of 65; while the "youngster" of the party, Anders Karlsson out of Calgary, was 45.

Western "discovery" of the Horton was on July 20, 1826, when the illustrious Sir John Richardson cruised by its mouth on an open boat exploration

between the Mackenzie and Coppermine rivers as the eastern detachment of Sir John Franklin's second Canadian expedition. Richardson named the river for Wilmont Horton, Great Britain's Under Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, noting that it was about 300 yards wide and that the presence of driftwood indicated it flowed through forested country. In 1848 Richardson again passed by the Horton, this time on one of the early and unsuccessful searching expeditions for the lost Franklin expedition. His book on the Franklin search contains no further comment on the Horton, partly as they traveled by during the middle of the night of August 11-12. Recreational paddlers began regular descents in the mid-1970s, and word quickly spread about its appealing qualities so that recently the river has accommodated about a dozen trips each season.

Jump-off points are usually Inuvik or Norman Wells. We chose the latter as the total air charter cost was lower, given that our destination was the upper Horton. There is a satisfaction about starting close to the limit of navigation so we were not heading for the usual put-in on Horton Lake, but an anonymous tundra pond that drained into the Horton about 30 miles above the

Expeditions

backwards then bailed out with cubs in tow. Future Horton travelers take note.

Progress slowed when we encountered the one section of heavy water on the Horton: two days of canyon country where 100-foot walls hemmed some challenging rapids. At least six drops of Class 3-4 whitewater had to be scouted, sometimes while inching along the craggy cliffside. Most were run on the less turbulent inside bend, but one heavy stretch forced us to carry around its climax for our only portage of the trip. When we paddled, peregrine falcons and bald eagles screeched at the intrusion from nests high above. At the inflow of a clear water tributary below the canyons, Anders caught a 23-inch northern pike that tried to grab one meal too many. The greedy thing already had two undigested fish in its stomach and was looking for its third when it hit his lure.

On the subject of digestion, a few days later we witnessed a grizzly's lunch. The bear was loping intently along the river's edge with its nose to the ground. No interest was shown in our canoes so we kept pace, only to see a ground squirrel make a mad dash uphill for its den. There was no contest. The lightning-swift bear caught up to it in two bounds and came down on lunch with both front paws. Wisely, we decided not to get closer, and even had the good sense to take our own meal on the opposite bank.

We pulled ashore on July 16 where Coal Creek dribbled into the Horton. In this area the renowned Arctic explorer and ethnographer, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, together with Dr. Rudolph Anderson, a zoologist, and ten Inuit, passed the winter of 1911-12. Stef and Dr. Anderson had been in the north since 1909 on assignment for the American Museum of Natural History, New York. This was Stef's second expedition to the north and preceded his leadership of the Northern Party of the Canadian Arctic Expedition of 1913-18 that discovered some of the most remote islands in Canada's Arctic archipelago. Working from whaling ships off the coast, they were familiar with the Horton, having sledged almost its entire length during the previous winter on a journey south to Great Bear Lake. The decision to come part way up the Horton and establish a winter camp in 1911 was based on an interest in experiencing a winter in the interior to further their research. In Stef's book, *My Life With The Eskimo*, published in 1913, he indicated the cabin was about a mile up Coal Creek and even included a picture taken by Dr. Anderson of him crouching inside what looks like a pretty wobbly structure.

With copies of this photo in hand, we all set out to search for the cabin remains. Anders and I took the south side of Coal Creek, while Bob and Joe scouted the north. After a few hours of getting nowhere, I heard Bob shout from his side. I joined the others to find them around the flattened cabin timbers in a nondescript area of dense spruce about 100 yards inland from Coal Creek. The photo we carried showed positively that this was the cabin

site, though much overgrown - possibly caused by new growth after Stef's original clearing as well as greater forest density due to global warming. A search revealed no artifacts in the immediate area. Bob took a GPS reading, then we returned to the one item of interest that had been located on the way in.

When ascending Coal Creek, we had noted an old piece of sheet steel tangled in a thick patch of willow along the bank. We retrieved it and carted the thing all the way back to Inuvik where it was left with the government's Aurora Research Institute for delivery to the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Centre in Yellowknife. What exactly had we found? It

was an unmarked rusted section of sheet steel 3.5 feet high and 1 foot in diameter with two holes 10 inches in diameter cut out one above the other. In this context, it was quite probably stove siding, an essential item for passing a remotely comfortable winter. That Stef carried such a piece is apparent from the entry in his field notes for 1911 that I obtained in photocopy from Dartmouth College Library (see illustration). It read, "Sept. 26th. Tuesday: Finished meat rack, put in stoves for fireplace in house." The Prince of Wales Centre believes it is very possible that we found a piece of Stef's equipment, but, lacking markings, cannot be certain. Only time and more work will tell if we located a historic artifact, but at least the piece is in good hands rather than rusting away beside the creek.

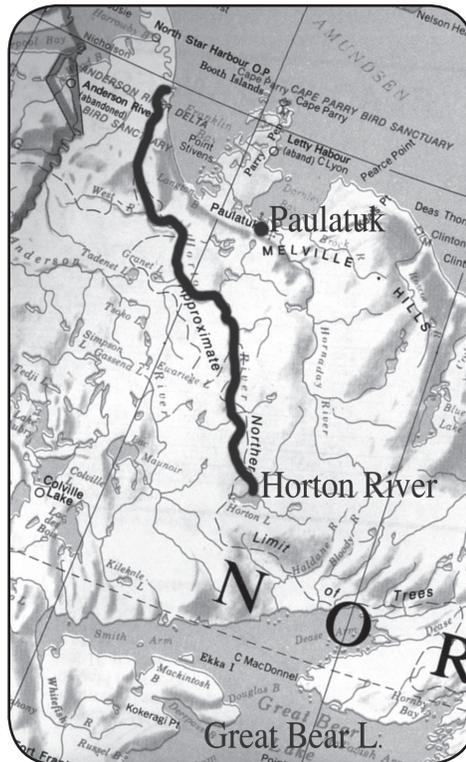
After Coal Creek the country changed. Trees faded out at 69 degrees, 33 minutes N. latitude, which we believe is the most northern forest in the western hemisphere. Bob and I briefly discussed our good fortune in being able to observe the limit of trees in both hemispheres, the other being on a 1990 trip in northern Siberia. We were paddling by the Smoking Hills. This is a literal naming as lignite deposits have been spontaneously combusting there long before being first described by Richardson.

These and other minerals have created a region devoid of vegetation that engenders an eerie other-worldliness.

On July 24 we turned down the last bend of the Horton to look out on an ice-choked Arctic Ocean. In terms of ice on the water, it brought us full circle from our landing lake. As we passed under a prominent hill on that final stretch, I looked up to see a lone caribou silhouetted against the azure sky. Was it a symbolic farewell from all those northern animals whose paths I've crossed?

My take is that it was just an au revoir from the Horton; I'll return to the country.

John Lentz, a financial analyst living in Bethesda, Maryland, has been canoeing down wilderness Canadian rivers since 1962. He is a regular contributor to Che-Mun.



Expeditions



A Horton party member checks out the remains of Stefansson's cabin on Coal Creek (inset), the site of which is now well grown over after almost 90 years.

lake's inflow. I had some doubts when Warren Wright of North-Wright Airways brought his Twin Otter over our landing lake and we found it half full of ice, but he set down smoothly on the liquid part. It was July 2nd. We were certainly abiding by that northern maxim "start early." In another few weeks falling water levels would make this upstream section near impossible for water-borne travel.

July or not, the willows were still in bud and little new growth was apparent on the tundra. Dragging and wading through ice-packed shoreline shallows made for frigid travel to the outlet. There we found good volume in a creek that would carry us to the Horton itself. Clusters of six to eight caribou were everywhere, the sun was out, and life looked good. That is until Joe spotted a mother grizzly and cub coming toward us! It's one thing to sight bear from the relative safety of a broad river, but quite another when working down a channel just a foot wider than our canoe. With nowhere to hide, we watched *ursus horribilis* rapidly closing in. I think Anders muttered something about a "bear banger" being at the bottom of his pack. Happily, mom caught our scent some 50 yards off and steered her cub to more desirable ground. For the rest of the trip, Anders kept his banger close at hand.

We joined the Horton that afternoon to find it about 30 feet wide and running quickly. A put-in further upstream might have been possible, yet we were within 10 miles of its absolute headwaters and landing lakes there looked questionable. Our first camp was at a Class 2 rapid surrounded by snowbanks and with caribou crossing nearby - a northern paradise. Next morning we encountered first trees, then a habitation. It was a tepee frame of great age and almost primitive construction. Although the spruce poles were firmly locked together at their peak, they showed no use of an axe or saw. This lack of European tools would not have been unusual for the remote Hareskin Indians who formerly lived in the timbered country north of

Great Bear Lake. As tourists, descending the Horton in plastic canoes with freeze-dried food and a satellite phone, we had little idea of the harsh conditions endured by native peoples within the past century.

The Horton carried us forward much as we had anticipated: lots of riffles and Class 1-2 rapids as the river cut a path between hills rising almost 800 feet. The inflow from Horton Lake produced a jet of clear, cold water, but things soon changed. On most outer bends, massive clods of humus were being clawed away, often dropping before our eyes. The champagne-clear waters of the upper river turned an opaque brown that was less than helpful through which to view rocks, mediocre for fishing, though not harmful to ingest.

We caught a break from the heavy prevailing headwinds so could clock 30 miles daily with time off for stunningly beautiful afternoon hikes out of the valley. Up on high ground, we could see how the river was often exactly on the tree line with timber on the west bank and tundra on the east.

We passed three other parties on the river, the most notable of which was the one man expedition of Brian Dodds. He and Anders were pleasantly surprised when it turned out they were both from Calgary and had paddled the Thelon on separate trips a few years ago. Brian's gear was a model for the solo wilderness paddler with everything for a month, even down to orange tabs on gear so stuff would not be lost, packed neatly in his Mad River canoe. We shared one campsite, and possibly should have kept him company a bit longer. A few days after we parted, Brian hosted some unwanted midnight visitors. A grizzly mother, followed by two cubs, somehow became attracted to his camp (Brian's a handsome fellow), pushed at his tent wall, and sat on him! In less time than it takes to tell the tale, Brian shoved her aside, bolted from his bedroll and out of the tent, then let go a blast of bear spray when the possibly frustrated female charged. According to his Christmas letter, which makes exciting reading, she did a double somersault

Why the Heck, indeed

We present an excerpt from CANOEING A CONTINENT, a new book by the peripatetic Max Finkelstein - due out this spring and reviewed in our next issue.

Before heading farther west, let's eddy out for a few moments and ponder this question: Why the Heck do we do this? Why do some people undertake long canoe journeys. Everyone who undertakes a long voyage, no matter what the means of transportation, shares similar challenges and rewards. There is the mixture of thrill, fear and excitement of entering the unknown.

This is as true for the modern canoeist equipped with maps and Geographic Positioning Systems (GPSs), as it was for Mackenzie, although the uncertainties Mackenzie faced would seem overwhelmingly daunting to us mollycoddled modern explorers. All explorers and adventurers also share, I believe, a selfish, egotistical desire to experience places and feelings that most other people don't, either through choice or circumstance. They (and I'm chagrined to say that I include myself in this group) see themselves as apart from most others. Not superior, but different, and a little bit privileged. Speaking for myself, I feel that I have experienced through my canoe trips beauty and feelings of well-being that have been so complete, so satisfying, that I have felt close to God. This gives me a strong sense of self, of accomplishment, meaning, purpose, identity, and, yes, it makes me feel just a little bit above the crowd. But I also know that others achieve these same feelings through others activities and passions. Canoeing is just my route to the same place.

There's more. The biggest part of any adventure is, as the famous epithet says, not the destination, but the journey. To be a truly satisfying journey, it MUST involve physical discomfort, deprivation, extreme exertion, and elements of DANGER (real or imagined). That is why driving to the top of a mountain doesn't pack the same sense of satisfaction as climbing there. A road takes away all the key elements of adventure - danger (although it could be argued that driving is the most dangerous activity we undertake, but we all share this danger, so that negates its value), physical exertion, deprivation, and hardship. Although the same beautiful view is there at the mountaintop, the value of the view is diminished if we drive there. The thrill is gone is, at least for me, for Mackenzie, and for many others like us.

Big journeys are exclamation points in our mundane little lives. Completing them, or just surviving them, gives us memories we use to define, or redefine ourselves. I am a canoe tripper, a voyageur in training. I look back on my canoe journeys, and look forward to more, with happiness and not just a little bit of pride. The value of any canoe trip grows in proportion to the effort expended, the danger involved, the challenges overcome, and the deprivation endured. I'm not sure which of these is most important. It depends on the individual circumstances and the state of mind of the paddler. But if we were to take a survey of everyone who has goes repeatedly on long canoe journeys, when the talk runs high in the local tavern, it focuses mainly on ...c'mon, reader, take a guess: The beauty of the northern sky at night, the terror of listening to a grizzly bear snuffle around your tent, the bone-wrenching weariness during a day of repeated portages, or the thrill and satisfaction of eating French fries, followed by apple pie (made with canned pie filling) and ice cream at a greasy spoon restaurant at the end of the trip. My bet would be on the last.

All canoe trippers thrive on deprivation. I am not a masochist. I don't actually enjoy being wet and cold and weary. I don't like putting on frozen shoes and gloves in the morning. I don't like rationing my Mars bars, eating one-quarter of a Mars bar when my body craves a 12-pack. But a little deprivation makes the value of things we take for granted increase exponentially, which makes life a very thrilling, rich experience indeed. A hot cup of coffee, an entire Mars bar, a dry sleeping bag...ecstasy. Kings and Queens could know no greater happiness. You just don't know what'cha got 'til you don't have it.

I can't resist telling you about an experience, one of those epiphanies of life, that happened to me many years ago, on my way home from a 75-day canoe trip in the western Arctic. I was on a flight from Inuvik to Yellowknife, back in the days when passengers were treated really well. The flight attendant (they called them stewardesses in those by-gone days) offered all the passengers complimentary coffee with liqueur, which she called "fancy coffee", and a Mars bar. I was reveling in my good fortune, dipping the Mars bar in the coffee, and licking the melted chocolate, then taking a sip of coffee. Each sip and lick was bordering on orgasmic. Then, fingers firmly tapping on my shoulder broke into reverie. "Sir", said the flight attendant impatiently, "you'll have to put up your tray and finish your coffee".

"Why", I asked, blinking like someone had hit me in the nose.

"Because we're landing in Yellowknife".

I looked around at the other passengers. Not a sign of coffee or Mars bars. Trays up. Seat belts fastened. I had been enjoying this treat for over an hour. If only we would relish all life has to offer us like that, how rich life would be. Perhaps that is the goal, and the motivation, of eastern mystics. To experience the joy in small, everyday things is a darn good reason to keep on going out into the wilderness. Not the only reason, but a darn good one.

Perhaps Sir William Logan, the founder of the Geological Survey of Canada in 1842 and one of Canada's most renowned scientists, best stated why people go on long canoe trips: "I have dined with lords and ladies, chatted with Queen Victoria, and have been formally received by the Emperor Napoleon III. Yet my most cherished memories come...from a leaky tent, a bark canoe...and the vast and mysterious wilderness of Canada." Right on, Sir William, except for the bit about the leaky tent.

But let's get back to those crazy mad fools who paddle across continents, for whatever reason. Mackenzie was the first European to reach the Pacific travelling overland by canoe and foot. He and his party hiked the last 215 miles following a traditional native trading path over the Coast Ranges from the Fraser River. The path was established for the eulachan trade. Eulachan, or candlefish, is an oily fish that lives in the Pacific. The oil was a valuable trading item for oil-poor inland tribes. Today, we'd build a pipeline and pump the eulachan inland.

Mackenzie's route to the Pacific was so difficult that it seems few followed it, especially his route over the Continental Divide. But we are a species driven to explore, and it wasn't long before others were pushing their way to the Pacific. Their obvious motivation, like Mackenzie's, was wealth, control and empire building. But in their hearts, they were explorers.

Canoesworthy

CANOESWORTHY Continued from Page 3

Nunavik and Quebec signed a major package deal on economic development this week that will see at least \$900 million of Quebec City's money flow into Nunavik over the next 25 years.

Beneficiaries of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement will vote within the coming month on the deal in a Nunavik-wide referendum.

Nunavik leaders describe the pact as a renewal of the 1975 James Bay and Northern Quebec agreement that finally implements the James Bay Land Claim's vision for northern Quebec.

Bernard Landry, Quebec's premier, described the deal as a mark of Quebec's "absolute respect" for Inuit and a sign of the trust between Québécois and Inuit. He said an inukshuk erected near Quebec's parliament building will symbolize the friendship between Quebec and Nunavik.

The deal is intended to speed up development of the region's hydroelectric, mining and tourism potential.

In it, Quebec and Nunavik agree how to share the financial benefits of this development, and the residents of Nunavik get better public services and improved infrastructure.

The agreement's 14-page preamble defines it as a "nation-to-nation" agreement, strengthening political, economic and social relations between Quebec and the Inuit of Nunavik.

About 30 per cent of Quebec's native peoples have struck similar deals with the separatist Parti Québécois government. But Landry said the Nunavik agreement differs from the \$3.5-billion mega-deal that Quebec signed in

February with the James Bay Cree.

"There's a big difference, because with the Crees there was a quarrel, so we called it 'a peace,'" Landry said during a stopover in Kuujuaq. "Here, it's a partnership, an agreement."

Some delegates to the signing wondered whether their aboriginal rights could be diminished by the deal, and expressed worries about the environmental impact of hydroelectric projects on marine and animal life.

But the overall reaction was positive. Delegates gave members a standing ovation in recognition of their negotiation efforts. The new deal is scheduled to be formally approved by summer.

A crucial season of exploration, which will help determine whether the Coronation Gulf region hosts profitable diamond deposits, is now underway.

Preliminary results from the region are comparable to early diamond counts from the Lac de Gras area of the Northwest Territories, where diamond mines are now in production or under development.

Meanwhile, the promising results have touched off a staking rush. More than 2,500 claims covering about 5.9-million acres have been staked south of Coronation Gulf. Leading the search are Kennecott Canada (in partnership with Tahera Corporation), Ashton Mining, and Rhonda Corporation, which all made significant diamond discoveries on their properties last year before winter weather closed in on the region. Collectively, the trio is expected to

OUR BACK PAGES

The following back issues of *Che-Mun* are available at \$5 each (which includes postage).

Outfit 44 Bill Mason & the Dog R., Athabasca letter
Outfit 45 Pipe River by Eric Morse, River flow chart
Outfit 48 Freshwater Saga - Morse River memoirs, slide fest
Outfit 50 Royal couple canoe the Hanbury/Thelon
Outfit 53 Chubb Crater in Ungava, Hubbard & Wallace
Outfit 54 Povungnituk 88 - Ungava, Sleeping Island rev.
Outfit 55 Memories of Bill Mason, Twin Otter gone
Outfit 57 North American Canoe Symposium, book reviews
Outfit 58 Churchill River trip, The Lonely Land rev.
Outfit 59 Tyrrell brothers, Water & Sky, Alberta Pulp wars
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Outfit 63 Canoeing in the 1930s, Hydro-Quebec chairman
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Outfit 87 Across the Barrens to Arctic Sound. Dr. John Rae, Cree wisdom
Outfit 88 Great Whale River, Elliott Merrick's last words, Paddling the Web
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Outfit 91 Across Canada paddle, Schwatka's Last Search rev., Arctic Unravelled
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Outfit 95 Lost art of Arthur Heming, Mackenzie & the Rockies, Barrows Boys
Outfit 96 MacFarlane R. trip report, Tom Manning profile, Nunavut book rev
Outfit 97 Ellice River report, Winisk online preview, Bill Mason in hall of fame
Outfit 98 Winisk to The Bay report, Book review: McGuffins, Callans & Kraikers
Outfit 99 LastList; Best of the Century, 1955; Moffatt & The Voyageurs
Outfit 100 The Back River 1962 by John Lentz, Readers 'Best Of' List
Outfit 101 Back River 1962 Part II, Dog River & Bill Mason, book reviews
Outfit 102 Pierre Trudeau remembered, R.M. Patterson book rev & Nahanni info
Outfit 103 Repluse Bay to Baker Lake, Lower Churchill R. update, Mason video
Outfit 104 1912- The Last Great Year. Steel River Loop, Oberholtzer book review
Outfit 105 Paddling to The Bay in 1925, Arctic Crossing & Fatal Passage reviews
Outfit 106 Labrador Odyssey 2001 report, Angus Scott remembered
Outfit 107 North from the Thelon exped., Saglek station 1955, Que-Crees deal

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spend an estimated \$10 million in 2002.

Kennecott, a division of multinational Rio Tinto, is already drilling the diamond-bearing Anuri kimberlites on Tahera's Rockinghorse property and will test another 15-20 kimberlites as part of a \$1.5-million program.

Meanwhile, the partners will continue work on the more advanced Jericho diamond project, which - although too small at this stage - could develop into Nunavut's first diamond mine if more resources can be found.

Rhonda is awaiting results of a nine-tonne sample taken from the Knife pipe last spring by joint-venture partner De Beers. The junior recently raised \$1.8 million to explore the adjoining Inulik property, where it is currently flying a geophysical survey to generate kimberlite targets for drilling.

But despite the frantic land grab, a patchwork of about 1.7 million acres of ground within Coronation Gulf remains untouched: This is Inuit-owned land, 36 distinct parcels on which Inuit hold mineral rights. Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI) is currently revamping its standard agreement for companies that want to explore there.

"Our ground is sitting like islands in the middle of a sea of staking," says Wayne Johnson, senior advisor on minerals and oil and gas for NTI's lands and resources department. "We may have missed some of the fever, but people who are serious about finding diamonds will be talking to us."

The standard agreement for companies exploring Inuit-owned lands includes small payments and work commitments plus a 12 per cent net profit royalty on any future production.

In the Coronation Gulf region, where the demand for ground is high, NTI will revise the agreement so that the Inuit corporation retains a carried interest in the properties.

Tourism, a key economic activity in Nunavut, has the potential to play an even greater role in strengthening Nunavut's economy and creating jobs. Nunavut Tourism says the big challenge now is to make three things happen in the tourism industry at the same time - destination marketing, product development, and training.

Nunavut's tourism industry has set itself a full agenda for the next few years. Additional priorities include developing industry standards, and increasing revenue and product development in most types of tourism.

A growing specialized market is the cruise ship industry. Ships currently visit communities like Pond Inlet, Cape Dorset, Kimmirut and Pangnirtung.

The Conference Board of Canada, in its Nunavut Economic Outlook published last year, found that at each community visited, passengers spend about \$5,000 on arts and crafts, and food and interpretive events. Nunavut Tourism is working on a management plan to develop an infrastructure to increase these revenues.

On the horizon is the completion of the Canada's North Tourism Partnership, an agreement between Nunavut Tourism and the Yukon and NWT tourism organizations. The partnership would work on joint projects, including joint marketing promotions, and shared contracting for trade shows and advertising. The relationship would not stop Nunavut from working in other jurisdictions and with other partners.

Several years on, talks are still continuing at several levels on the proposed Nunavut-Manitoba road. Money from Ottawa may be forthcoming once Nunavut meets several conditions. One of the two key items Ottawa is looking for before committing funds, that of a letter of support passed by Nunavut's cabinet, is expected to be issued very soon.

Ottawa's other requirement is the backing of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. The Nunavut-Manitoba road is one of three routes the Nunavut government views as current priorities - the other two being the Bathurst Inlet road and a proposed road from Iqaluit to Kimmirut. The Bathurst Inlet project is seen as a model to follow.

The Manitoba government views a road linking it with its northern neighbour as no less than nation building, calling the projected \$20-million cost for a winter road, together with an estimated \$7 million in annual maintenance "very cost-effective nation building."

All Manitoba communities are now connected by winter road. "Winter roads are a permanent feature for Manitoba," Ashton said, adding that it's good planning to adopt the same route for a winter road as for an all-weather road.

Two of the five proposed routes link Rankin Inlet, Whale Cove and Arviat to Churchill and Gillam, connecting at Gillam to Manitoba's highway network.

The other three routes swing further west to hook up with the provincial highway system at Lynn Lake. Extensions of the road from Rankin Inlet to Chesterfield Inlet and Baker Lake are also envisioned, as well as a possible ice road from Churchill along the west coast of Hudson Bay.

Three years ago, much to the alarm of local residents, several houses located in the far northern Quebec village of Salluit's new suburb started to slide. Since then, all 20 houses have been relocated to new places, on more stable land within the community.

Taking a cue from this incident, Quebec has been making plans to move buildings in other Nunavik communities where melting permafrost may cause havoc.

Provincial authorities say nine communities in Nunavik have structures built on a deep layer of permanently frozen clay or mud that is at risk of thawing.

Quebec wants to identify alternative sites and put plans in place if it's necessary to move buildings in the future, as the permafrost's temperature has already increased by two degrees which has been called "substantial."

When permafrost melts, it's likely to cause anything built on it to move in a kind of slow motion. The life of people doesn't change, but the structure does. It could take one or two weeks, so we would have time to react.

Since 1978, a body called the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, or COSEWIC, has kept lists of wildlife and plant species they believe to be in danger of extinction in Canada.

Right now the committee has no legal mandate. But under Ottawa's species at risk bill the committee would get its direction from a new federal-provincial ministers' body called the Canadian Endangered Species Council.

The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami fears that if the National Aboriginal Council on Species at Risk is not provided for under the new act, then Inuit and other aboriginal people may have little say about how wildlife species are listed.



photo: Brooke Yeomans

The price for getting good water on the main Horton River (see Page 6) is to arrive early when the water is still solid. Here the Horton River 2001 party works their way along one of the icy feeder streams towards the main Horton River. Their early July start would pay off later on with great water along the big river on its trip to the Arctic Ocean.

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Che-Mun
Founded in 1973 by Nick Nickels
Rates; One year \$20, two years \$36
US subscriptions in US dollars
Published by the Hide-Away Canoe Club

Che-Mun
The Journal of Canadian Wilderness Canoeing
Please visit our Web Site:
www.canoe.ca/che-mun
Michael Peake, Publisher.

