



MATTAWA RIVER AND LA VASE PORTAGES

10 Year Monitoring Report 2010-2019

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Mattawa River and La Vase Portages – Canadian Heritage River System Ten Year Monitoring Report 2010 - 2019

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Cover photo: Mattawa River Paresseux Falls
Photo taken by Paul Blakelock

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A note of gratitude to the late Roy Summers, a founding member of the Friends of La Vase Portages. Roy was instrumental in digging up old maps, photos and newspaper articles about the La Vase Portages route, significantly contributing to our understanding of the route's history and portage locations. In honour of his memory and the contributions he made, thank you.

Executive Summary

This report was prepared by Ontario Parks to fulfill two objectives:

1. To assess the current condition of the natural, cultural, and recreational values of the Mattawa River-La Vase Portages as part of the Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS); and
2. To document changes that have occurred to the river over its third ten-year term in the CHRS, from 2010-2019 (this is the second reporting period for the La Vase Portages, which was included during the second reporting period).

The values and integrity for which the Mattawa River was originally designated remain intact. The natural, cultural and recreational landscape through which the river flows continue to be enjoyed, appreciated and celebrated by area residents and visitors.

Key changes which have occurred in the past decade include the following:

- Creation of an Ontario Parks Protected Area Monitoring Program which includes Mattawa River Provincial Park. This program is dedicating administrative and field staffing resources to conduct monitoring, stewardship, and enforcement in all conservation reserves and non-operating provincial parks in the Algonquin Zone of Ontario Parks.
- Extensive inventory work of recreation values including all campsites, trails, portages, bridges, and signage is being conducted within this park.
- Installation of park boundary signage at high use access points, information signage outlining stewardship practices and unauthorized uses, as well as installation and maintenance of portage signage throughout the park.
- Upgrades to the Voyageur Museum in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park (now Mattawa River Visitor Centre) and an expanded Discovery Program to highlight the history, natural and cultural, of the Mattawa River.
- A land exchange along the La Vase Portage route resulted in 4.87 hectares of land being secured for public enjoyment along the historic Upper Portage at Brandy Lake.
- Ontario, Canada, and the Algonquins of Ontario finalized the Agreement in Principle (2016) which forms the basis for negotiating the Final Agreement, Ontario's first modern-day treaty.

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Figure 1: Summer day on the Mattawa River, Photo by Paul Blakelock (2019)

1.0 Introduction

The story of the Mattawa River is a story of trade and travel. From the Anishinabek to the European explorers and traders, until the present day with adventurers and recreationalists, the Mattawa River is a vital link connecting a land we now call Canada.

The designated section of the river is mostly within the boundaries of two provincial parks; Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain (Figure 2), which are managed by Ontario Parks. The La Vase Portages connect part of the designated La Vase Portages route within the La Vase Portages Conservation Area managed by the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority (NBMCA).

Mattawa River Provincial Park is a non-operating park with limited facilities, is free for the public to visit, and does not have regular staff on site. However, enforcement officers with Ontario Parks visit this park several times a year to monitor its state. Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park (SDCPP) is an operating provincial park and has park staff monitoring and managing the park on a continual basis.

The Mattawa River and La Vase Portages are located within lands encompassed by the Williams Treaties Clause 1, Robinson-Huron Treaty and the Métis Nation of Ontario Region 5, which includes the Mattawa Lake Nipissing Traditional Harvest Area. This river is important to local Indigenous people, both historically and presently.

The Mattawa River lies within the Algonquins of Ontario settlement area. This area is currently the subject of negotiations aimed at reaching Ontario's first modern treaty. The negotiations, which involve Ontario, Canada and the Algonquins of Ontario, reached a significant milestone in 2016 when the three parties signed an Agreement-in-Principle. This was a major step in the journey toward reconciliation and renewed relationships, signaling the beginning of the current phase of negotiations towards a modern treaty which will clarify the rights of all concerned.

As part of the treaty discussions, Ontario and the Algonquins of Ontario are developing new levels of Algonquin involvement in park management planning. Further discussions will also take place regarding recognition of Algonquin culture, measures to support Algonquin employment and training in protected areas, and the potential for an Algonquin steward program for protected areas in the territory.

In 1988, the Canadian Government designated a 33-kilometre segment of the Mattawa River as a CHRS. The first ten-year monitoring report for the river, covers the period 1988-1998, published in 1999. Following this report, the La Vase Portages, an 11-kilometre section of the historic canoe route, which crosses the height of land between the Mattawa and French river systems, was added to Mattawa River's Canadian Heritage River (CHR) designation in 2002. This section consists of three portages connecting a series of small lakes, bridging the gap between the greater Mattawa/Ottawa River system and the Great Lakes system. It is encompassed by a range of varying land tenures—private, municipal and provincial—all within the City of North Bay boundaries.

The second ten-year report covers Mattawa River's second decade in the CHRS, 1999-2009. During that decade the Mattawa River Provincial Park was expanded by over 10,000 hectares, increasing the total size of Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain provincial parks combined along this historic waterway to 16,692 hectares. The park addition provides a large buffer for the river by protecting significant headwater areas.

The purpose of this report is to outline changes that have occurred to the Mattawa River between 2010 and 2019 - its third decade as part of the CHRS. This report covers challenges and activities that may threaten or enhance cultural, natural, or recreational values for which the Mattawa River was originally designated as a CHR.

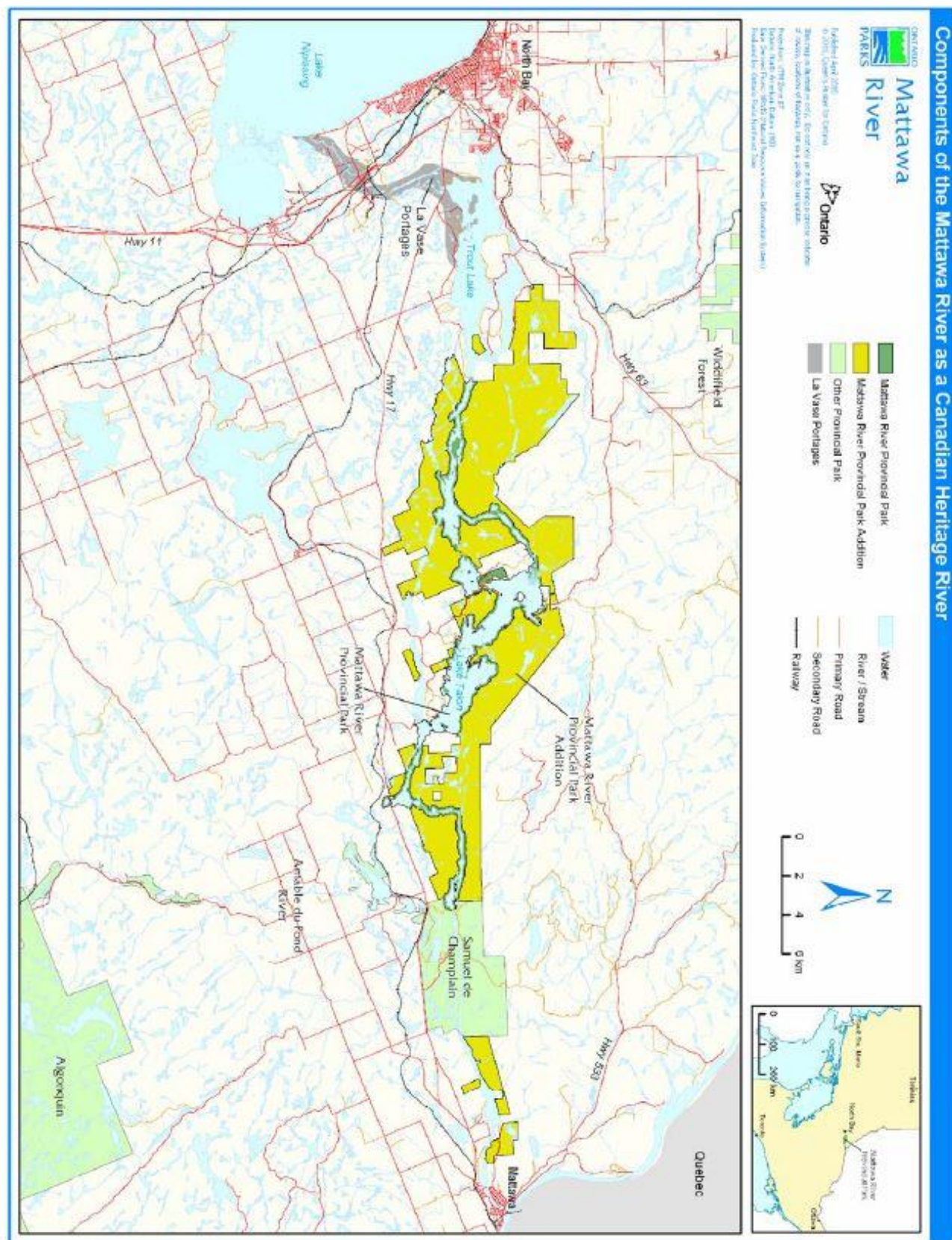


Figure 2: Map of Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain Provincial Parks. La Vase Portages is indicated in grey. (2020)

2.0 Chronology of Events, Actions and Research

This section is a chronology of significant events, actions, and research that have occurred along the Mattawa River and La Vase Portages from 2010-2019.

Table 1: Chronology of Events, Actions and Research between 2010-2019

Year	Title of Event/ Action/ Research between 2010 and 2019	Brief Description of Activity
Ongoing	Mattawa River Canoe Race	• This race has occurred annually since 1976 and attracts paddlers from across North America. • This race took place each year of this report and is intended to continue for years to come. • It is a one-day, 64 km race by canoe, kayaks and stand-up paddleboards from Trout Lake, North Bay to Mattawa Island Conservation Area. • Following the historical Voyageur route travelling the Mattawa River between the Great Lakes and the Gulf of St. Lawrence (NBMCA 2020).
Ongoing	Voyageur Adventure Tour Program	• Visitors of SDCPP can take part in the <i>Voyageur Adventure Tour</i> program where ten participants spend 1.5 hours paddling a replica voyageur canoe on the Mattawa River. • Participants get firsthand experiential learning and gain an appreciation of Canada's history, while developing a connection with the Mattawa River.
Ongoing	La Vase Portages Canoe Day	• Each July the Friends of La Vase Portages organize a one-day canoe day event to provide many with the experience of travelling the same paths used by voyageurs, fur traders, and Indigenous Peoples from centuries ago. • The Friends guide a group of canoers across the entire portage route and explain historical and current landmarks.

Year	Title of Event/ Action/ Research between 2010 and 2019	Brief Description of Activity
Ongoing	Canoe Night	• The Friends of La Vase Portages host an annual canoe night to announce the beginning of the canoeing season. • This event provides an opportunity for outdoor enthusiasts to connect and learn about this route. • This event includes guest speakers and presentations relevant to the La Vase Portages, canoeing or local history.
Ongoing	La Vase Portages Group Crossings	• The Friends of La Vase Portages host various individuals and small groups crossing the portages every year – sometimes as part of a cross-Canada expedition.
Ongoing	Partnership with the Lake Talon Conservation Association	• Lake Talon Conservation Association's partnership with Ontario Parks to maintain campsites and portages on Lake Talon. This partnership has been successful in reducing the amount of trash on campsites and in protecting the waterway's natural environment.
Ongoing	Blanding's Turtle monitoring program	• Park staff monitor the presence of Blanding's turtle and their nest sites.
2012 - 2016	Algonquin Land Claim Agreement-in-Principle	• In December 2012, a Preliminary Draft Agreement-in-Principle was made available for public review to support consultation efforts associated with the Algonquin Land Claim negotiation process. • The final AIP was signed by all three parties in October 2016. • The AIP forms the basis of negotiations towards a Final Agreement that will clarify the rights of the Algonquins in the Settlement Area.
2016 – ongoing	Algonquin Land Claim Treaty Negotiations	• Ontario, Canada and the Algonquins of Ontario are currently engaged in the final stage of treaty negotiations. If the negotiations are successful, the end result will be a Final Agreement that will take the form of a modern-day treaty.

Year	Title of Event/ Action/ Research between 2010 and 2019	Brief Description of Activity
2016 – ongoing	Enhanced Protected Areas Monitoring Program	- Improved work planning, reporting and monitoring/inspections by the protected areas monitoring staff. Monitoring included Mattawa River Provincial Park. - This program will be ongoing for years to come. - Program includes tasks such as: - Inventory of all tenure, roads, trails, bridges, hazards, unauthorized occupations, campsites, access points, signs, portages, invasive species and other relevant items as identified. - Replace pit privies at designated campsites as required. - Communicating park values, rules, and regulations to park visitors.
	Beaver Baffle and Bridge Installation at La Vase Portages Conservation Area	- NBMCA installed a beaver baffle in the La Vase Portages Conservation Area to manage the water levels and beaver activities. - A bridge was installed for the trail which crosses the location of the beaver baffle.
	Trail Expansion and Updates at La Vase Portages Conservation Area	- A small trail was created, and a bench was added at the end of this trail to overlook one of the ponds on the portage. - Improvements were made in signage, parking lot and gates installed to manage access to the parking lot. - Hazard tree management and trail maintenance is undertaken on an ongoing basis in partnership with the volunteers who are members of the Friends of La Vase Portages and NBMCA.
	12.03 acres (4.87 hectares) of land along the La Vase Portages route secured in public hands, managed by NBMCA	A land exchanged with a neighbouring landowners resulted in 4.87 hectares along the La Vase Portages route being secured for public enjoyment and is now managed by the NBMCA.
2011	Completion of the New Mattawa River Visitor Centre	This Visitor Centre is located within SDCPP and depicts historical, cultural and natural features with interpretive panels, artifacts, exhibits including a Voyageur canoe.

Year	Title of Event/ Action/ Research between 2010 and 2019	Brief Description of Activity
2015	Hired a Lands Technical Specialist	Ontario Parks employed a Lands Technical Specialist on a permanent basis to coordinate the Protected Areas Monitoring Program, manage land tenure, and review work permit requests in Mattawa River Provincial Park along with many other provincial parks.
2015	DRAFT Stage 1 Background Study covering the area of Mattawa River Provincial Park and Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park	- A draft stage 1 background study archaeological assessment has been completed. - This report includes all lands and waters within Mattawa River and SDCPP.
2015	Approved Source Protection Plan	- The NBMCA coordinated the development of a Source Protection Plan aimed at protecting the source of the City of North Bay's municipal drinking water on Trout Lake at the head of the Mattawa River system. - This plan contains policies to address activities that could pose a threat to sources of drinking water. The objective is to ensure that such activities either never become, or cease to be, significant drinking water threats.
2015	Reconnaissance Life Science Inventory of Camp Island, Mattawa River Provincial Park	This report contains a detailed inventory of Camp Island to determine the life science features of the island and assesses the overall condition of the island, which was deemed good to excellent ecologically.
2015	NBMCA Integrated Watershed Management Strategy 2015-2035	- The entire Mattawa River subwatershed is within the NBMCA's jurisdictional area. - This strategy was prepared by the NBMCA to plan and coordinate the management of the subwatersheds within NBMCA's jurisdiction for the next 20 years. - This document provides information on anticipated impacts that may influence this subwatershed, weighing environmental and social values, and outlines information gaps for this system.
2015	Friends of La Vase Portages recognition	The Friends of La Vase Portages were recognized with a "Lieutenant Governor's

Year	Title of Event/ Action/ Research between 2010 and 2019	Brief Description of Activity
		Ontario Heritage Award for Excellence in Conservation” for their efforts in 2015.
2017	La Vase Portages Turtle Nesting Site Construction	• NBMCA in partnership with students from Widdifield, West Ferris and Chippewa Secondary Schools constructed an artificial turtle nesting mound to provide a safe nesting site for turtles. This project was funded by the Great Lakes Guardian Grant. • The mound is monitored by trail cameras.
2017 – ongoing	Algonquin Land Claim – Environmental Evaluation Report: Proposed Settlement Lands	• As part of the Algonquin Land Claim treaty negotiations between Ontario, Canada and the Algonquins of Ontario (AOO), several parcels within and adjacent to Mattawa River Provincial Park have been identified to be deregulated and transferred to AOO. Indigenous, public, and stakeholder discussions are still ongoing. • Any proposed changes to the boundary of the river system will be addressed according to the CHRS Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines (PPOG) if they do occur due to the deregulation and transfer process.
2018-2020	Mattawa River Signage Project	• Installed new, and replaced old, signage at main access points, popular areas and on portages. • Signage including park boundary signs, portage signs, permitted activity signs, and access point signs. • Tracked locations of signage by including each sign in the Mattawa River Sign Plan for ease of maintaining signage throughout this park.
2018	Mattawa River Provincial Park Monitoring	• Inventoried roads • Erected and replaced signage

Year	Title of Event/ Action/ Research between 2010 and 2019	Brief Description of Activity
		• Checking for illegal dumping • Checking for illegal encroachments / unauthorized occupations / boat caches • Review floating dock applications • Monitored activities on Camp Island • Inspected trail bridges • Portage maintenance
2019	Snowshoe Day	• This is a newer event organized by the Friends of La Vase Portages. • This event includes snow shoeing the trails through the La Vase Portages area experiencing the winter beauty and history of the area firsthand.
2019	Mattawa River Provincial Park Campsite Inventory	• Ontario Parks wardens conducted a full inventory of all campsites found throughout this provincial park. • The purpose of this work is to provide a comprehensive overview of all known and found campsites within this park, to update mapping, ensure maintenance of permitted campsites into the future and provide data for future land use planning.

3.0 Changes and Threats to Natural, Cultural and Recreational Values

3.1 Natural Heritage Values

Background

More than 500 million years ago, tectonic forces ripped open the Earth's crust to form the Ottawa-Bonnechere Graben, of which the Mattawa River Valley is the shortest arm. Over a series of ice ages, glaciers scraped the landscape down to bedrock. When the last Ice Age ended, roughly 10,500 years ago, the Mattawa became a spillway for the glacial Lake Algonquin, which would leave behind areas of Glaciofluvial Outwash. Some examples of these provincially significant glacial spillway features found along the river include extensive boulder pavement, abandoned river channels, riverbeds, and rapids. In some instances, post glacial river features are now elevated 12 metres above present river levels such as the potholes at Talon Chutes (Fig. 3).

The Mattawa River Valley became a corridor through which plants, animals, and people followed the receding ice to establish themselves in the new territories. By 5,000 years ago, the plants and animals we see today were living in this region, such as the vibrant red Cardinal flower that grows along the path of long melted glaciers (Fig. 4).



Figure 3: Glacial pothole observed near Talon Chutes, photo by Paul Blakelock (2018)



Figure 4: Cardinal flower in bloom along the Mattawa River by Heather Stern (2020)

Condition and Changes since Last Report

Overall, the condition of Mattawa River and La Vase Portages remain good with few significant changes or threats since the previous report.

There is an increase of invasive species identified along Highway 17 and Highway 11 which closely follows the Mattawa River and intercepts the La Vase Portages respectfully. There has been a drastic increase in European Common Reed (*Phragmites australis subsp. australis*) in the City of North Bay and along the highway corridors mentioned above. There have been several unconfirmed reports of it along the edge of Trout Lake which, while outside the CHRS designated area, remains along the Mattawa River. While European Common Reed has not been identified within the area of the Mattawa River and the La Vase Portages designated as part of the CHRS, if left untreated this will likely not be the case in ten years' time.

Similarly, several locations of invasive purple loosestrife above and below Paresseux Falls have been identified by recreational campers within the CHR area. Large patches of purple loosestrife are also along the Amable du Fond River within SDSPP. There is a risk of these seeds spreading down the river to where it joins the Mattawa River. Staff at the park monitor the patches closely and do removal when and where appropriate.

In the spring of 2019, the Mattawa River experienced unnaturally high waters and flooding. An above average winter snowpack and slow start to the melt, with cool temperatures in the first three weeks of April, combined with substantial precipitation over the Easter weekend, resulted in substantial flooding throughout the Mattawa River watershed. The Mattawa River below the Hurdman Dam experienced back flooding from the Ottawa River. In response to this flooding, the Municipality of Mattawa declared a State of Emergency on May 6, 2019. The Ottawa River rose 4.25 metres between April 17th and May 11th, a significant portion of which occurred within 48 hours of the Emergency Declaration due to incoming runoff water from upstream reservoirs on the Ottawa River. The circumstances surrounding the flooding and the management of the forecasting and warnings led to discussions with the Ontario Flood Advisor, Doug McNeil, appointed by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to review the province's current flood management framework. The Flood Advisor's report addresses a number of factors related to flood forecasting along the Mattawa/ Ottawa River basin.

Table 2: Changes and Threats to Natural Values of the Mattawa River

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
1. Hydrology			
1.1.1 Water Content: clear water (0-50mg/l) low turbidity & dissolved solids Mattawa River subwatershed had overall rating of excellent in the NBMCA 2018 watershed report card Water quality, based on measurements of phosphorus in the Mattawa River watershed scored an A for Trout Lake, Turtle Lake, Smith Lake and a B for Lake Talon and Earl's Lake.			NBMCA published a watershed report card in 2013 and 2018. The report card data standards were set by a Conservation Ontario working group of technical experts.
1.2.2 Seasonal Variation temperate spring peak	Relatively short river with single peak. It is anticipated that spring peaks will increase in magnitude. Spring 2019 water level increase was significant and caused flooding throughout the water basin.	Increased water levels and discharge in the spring is related to increased precipitation and spring melt. Impacts from climate change is the likely cause.	NBMCA has prepared an Integrated Watershed Management Strategy to plan and coordinate the management of the subwatersheds within NBMCA's jurisdiction for the next 20 years: 2015-2035.
1.3.6 Drainage Basin	No change Atlantic Ocean Basin-St.		

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
	Lawrence River System.		
1.4.7 River Size: 62-71 m ³ /sec; stream order >2	No change Flow is managed in accordance with water management plan and dam operation plans for three dams along this river: Turtle, Talon & Hurdman.		
2. Physiography			
2.1.4 Hydrogeology	Impervious gneisses and granites of Canadian Shield throughout area have not changed along this CHR.		
2.2.2 Faulting	Mattawa River Fault, forms northern boundary of Ottawa Bonnechere Graben and has not changed since the designation of this CHR.		
2.2.4 Volcanism. Amphibolite and other dykes throughout area	No change.		
2.2.5 Metamorphism Region was subjected to high grade metamorphism in Ottawa-Bonnechere Graben. Brucite mining in 1950s magnesium-largest deposit in N.			Prospecting, staking mining claims, developing mineral interests or working mines is prohibited within all provincial parks including the Mattawa River and SDCPP.

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
America; potential for feldspar & mica extraction.			
2.2.6 Glacial scouring: Paresseux Falls area	No change.		
2.2.7 Glacial retreat. Kames and eskers found throughout river corridor	No change.	Industrial aggregate pits exist outside parks to the south.	Extracting aggregate, topsoil or peat is prohibited within Mattawa River and SDC Provincial Parks.
2.2.10 Glacial melting: Lake Algonquin drainage outlet (10,500 B.P.)	No change in this value of gravel deposits; abandoned river channels. Potholes of varying sizes and cataracts at Talon Chute to Pimisi Bay remain; boulder pavement at Pine Lake/ McCool Bay.		
2.3.3 Physiographic Region: Canadian Shield – Laurentian Highlands	No change.		
2.4.6 Topography: Moderate gradient, middle section of river. Drop of 50 metres over approximately 43 km from Trout Lake to eastern boundary of SDCPP	No change.		
3. River Morphology			
3.2.3 Lake influences river system by Turtle, Talon and	No change.		n/a Ongoing positive protection by protection of

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
other lakes along length of system			headwater areas and ground recharge areas.
3.3.2 Boulder rapids: Des Roches	No change, located within SDCPP.		
3.3.4 Cascading rapids: Champion, La Rose	No change. La Rose portage remains flooded by installation of dams; water clearance over submerged portage continues to vary by season and water level.		
3.3.5 Chutes: Talon Chutes	Increased public use observed for recreation leading to increased garbage (beer cans, floatation toys, fishing line, etc.).	Increased advertising of site on social media by Park staff and public.	Increased monitoring by Ontario Parks staff, clean-up of garbage and educating visitors on park values Area was posted as no camping as a management effort to address safety concerns and curb use.
3.3.6 Waterfalls: Paresseux Falls	No change.		
3.4 Fluvial Landforms			
3.4.2 Deltas, outwash plains, fans: Tombolo in Shields Bay, deltas at mouths of North River, Purdy Creek and Moore Lake	No change in values, the Tombolo is privately owned. Moore Lake delta is in a nature reserve zone which receives the highest level of protection in the provincial park system.		

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
3.4.4 Meanders, oxbows: oxbow lakes and blind channels near mouth of North River	No change.		
3.4.10 Gorges: Main channel, The Gut, Purdy Creek	No change.		
3.4.11 Potholes: Large pothole on north shore of Talon Chute	No change (see Figure 3).		
4. Biotic Environments			
4.1.2 River System: Middle zone (entire designated section of river)	No change.		
4.1.6 Oligotrophic Lakes (Talon, Turtle & Long Lakes)	No change.		
4.1.7 Mesotrophic Lakes (Robichaud & Moore Lake)	No change.		
4.1.10 Bogs (outlet of Long & Gem Lake)	No change.		
4.1.12 Swamp forests (Silver Maple complex in Rice Bay wetlands)	No change.		
4.2.9 Ecozone: Boreal Shield	No change.		
5. Vegetation			
5.1.3 Old growth hemlock and hardwoods (Northern part of SDCPP)	An increase in recreational trails created by individuals and the Voyageur Multi-use trail system for cycling, ATVs, and snowmobiles involving tree		Increased presence of Ontario Parks staff to monitor trail creation, usage, and to educate users on Park rules and regulations.

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
	removal and the cutting of live growth.		
5.1.7 Significant plant communities	An increase in species inventorying and monitoring has occurred since the implementation of a Protected Areas Monitoring Program.	Management action within Ontario Parks.	Increased monitoring and inventory work.
6. Fauna			
6.1.1 Significant fish populations (Lake Trout in Turtle & Talon lakes; spawning areas). Trout and Turtle Lakes are well known provincially for their Muskellunge populations (FMZ 11 MP draft). The river does contain a small population of Lake sturgeon, however there is no open season on them as they are classified as a species at risk	No change.		Draft Management Plan for FMZ 11 released in 2019, the purpose of this plan is to improve conservation and management of fisheries and the habitat on which fish communities depend and promote, facilitate and encourage fishing as an activity that contributes to individual well-being and the social, cultural and economic well-being of communities in Ontario.
6.1.2 Significant mammal populations. Moose populations in this area (WMU 41) are currently below its population objective range.	No change.	Wolf hunting is prohibited in the south-central portion of Mattawa River for the protection of the Algonquin Wolf, a species at risk.	The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) is proposing changes to improve how moose are managed, action such as reduction in adult

NATURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
Evidence of White-tailed deer yards on Camp Island and along shore of SDCPP, which is the second largest in Ontario. Black bear, timber wolves, Algonquin wolves.			moose validation tags is likely to occur.
6.1.4, 6.1.7 Significant reptile populations	All species of turtles found in this area are now currently listed as Species at Risk in Ontario. Sizable population of Blanding's turtles remains in this area. Sizable population of snapping turtles remains in this area.		Continued monitoring of turtle populations and continued implementation of mitigation measures for projects within turtle habitat such as installation of turtle fences, and tarping sand piles in construction areas during nesting season.

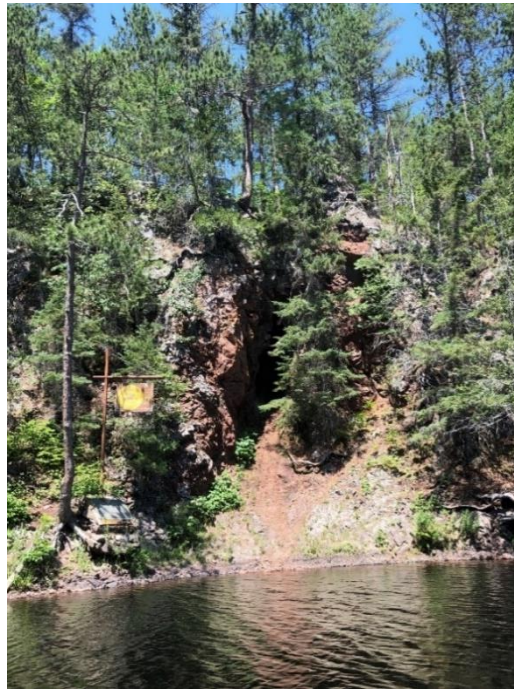


Figure 3: Porte de l'Enfer cave photo by Paul Blakelock (2019)

3.2 Cultural Heritage Values

Background

As part of an extensive Indigenous trade network, the Mattawa River connected the local Algonquin and Nipissing nations to Indigenous groups around the continent. This allowed them to trade for items like copper and flint from the west, and corn, beans, and tobacco from the south and east in return for Red Ochre. Archaeological evidence has shown that Red Ochre, or iron oxide, was an important trade item for the Algonquin. It was used for clothing dyes and pigment for pictographs (rock paintings) and was mined along the shores of the Mattawa River near Paresseux Falls. This site is significant as it is one of only two known Red Ochre mines in Ontario. There are several significant Indigenous sites along the river. Figure 6 shows the many sites along the river that hold cultural significance to the Indigenous people of the area.

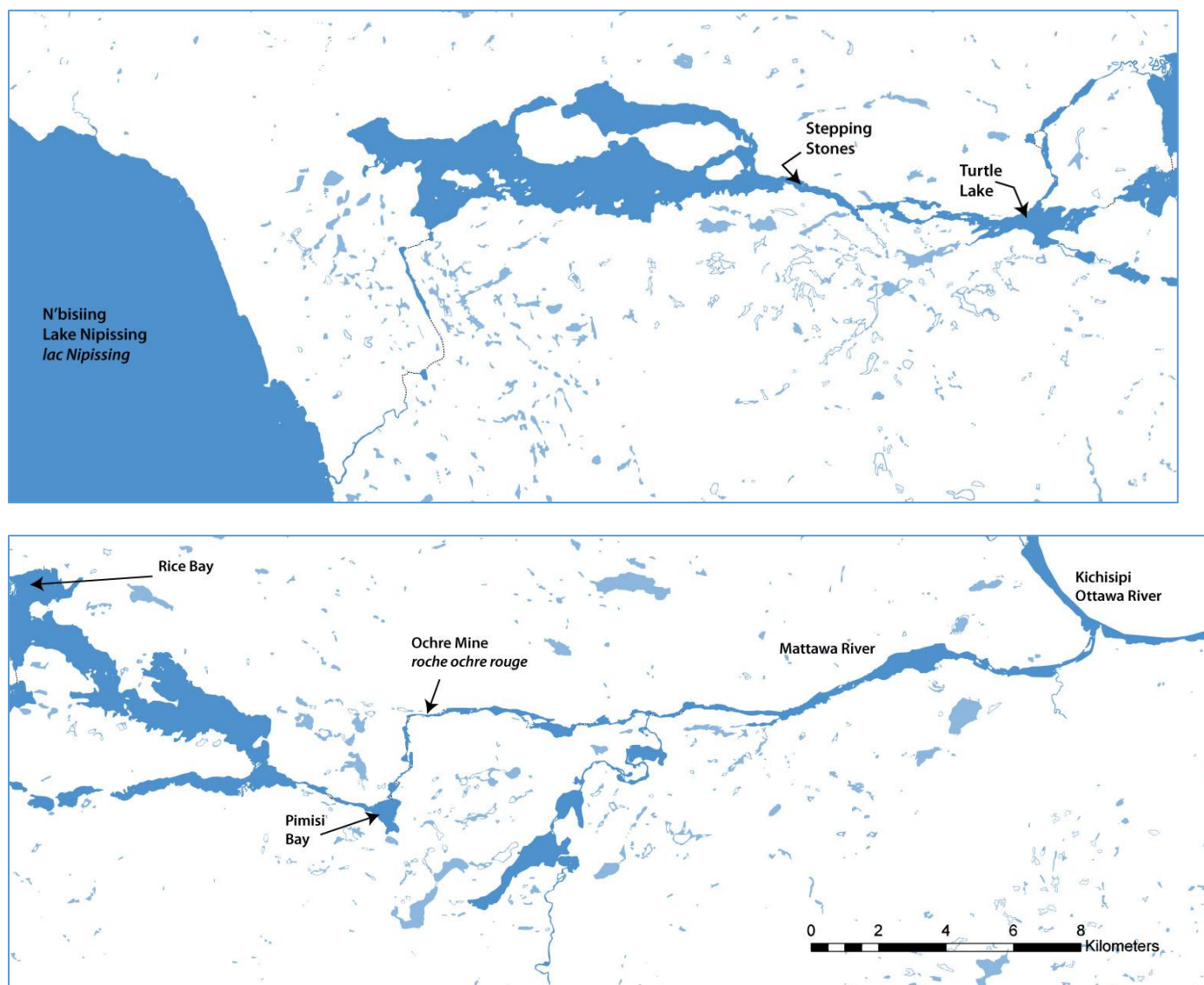


Figure 4: Anishinabek culturally significant sites along the Mattawa River, from Mattawa River Visitor Centre (2011)

Both the Algonquin and Nipissing have lived along and near the shores of the Mattawa River for thousands of years. In pre-contact times, they were seasonally migratory nations. In spring and summer when resources were plentiful, they would gather in large groups along the shores of Lake Nipissing to fish, hunt, socialize, and trade. In the fall, as resources become scarce, they would disperse further inland in smaller family groups to better find food for the winter. The Mattawa River provided easy transportation in their birch bark canoes for this biannual journey.

The first known European to travel the Mattawa River was Étienne Brûlé in 1610 who was shown the route to the Great Lakes from the Huron with whom he lived. Brûlé later showed this route to Samuel de Champlain who was searching for a path to the Pacific

Ocean. While he did not find the Pacific, Champlain's exploration along the Mattawa River and La Vase Portages formed an important western link in the historic canoe route from Montreal to the upper Great Lakes. For more than 200 years it was used by Coureurs des bois, and later voyageurs, to push further into the West in search of the finest beaver pelts.

Once the frenzy of the fur trade had ended in the mid-1800s, the Mattawa River had already begun to be used to access stands of large white-pine, and as a transportation link to move the immense loads of timber down river to the mills. The Mattawa River ceased to be a valuable route of transportation after 1881 when the TransCanada railroad was constructed in the area.

Condition and Changes since Last Report

In 2011, the scheduled upgrades to the Mattawa River Visitor Centre were completed. The upgrades included a new layout, displays for artifacts and the replica Montreal canoe, and a more complete history of people who have and still, rely on the Mattawa River. A new change also accompanied this shift in focus from a strictly voyageur history, from The Voyageur Museum to The Mattawa River Visitor Centre.

The Mattawa River is significant to the Algonquins of Ontario and is included in the Algonquin Land Claim Settlement Area. In consideration of the importance of this river to Indigenous communities, a letter was sent on January 21, 2021 to all known Indigenous groups who may have an interest in providing input on this report. Indigenous communities who were contacted include:

- Algonquins of Ontario
- Metis Nation
- Wolf Lake First Nation
- Kebaowek First Nation
- Nipissing First Nation

Significant flooding caused by spring run-off in 2019 caused significant degradation of the Log chute and camp remnants at Paresseux Falls. This site continues to be monitored by park staff annually.

Table 3: Changes and Threats to Cultural Heritage Values of the Mattawa River

CULTURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
1. Resource Harvesting			
1.1.1 Indigenous fishing sites; Elm Pt., Grasswell Pt., Camp Is., Dugas Bay.	Recreational camping has disturbed several sites; dams have flooded others.	An increased interest in free camping and word of mouth by recreational campers has increased the use of many sites along the Mattawa River.	Increased Ontario Parks staff presence through the Protected Areas Monitoring Program to help educate recreational campers and to monitor sites.
1.3.4 Quarrying stone; La Porte de l'Enfer: Indigenous ochre mine and refining site. Site in Historical Zone SDCPP. Brucite (hydrated oxide of magnesium) deposit near Talon Chutes is nationally significant. The River is within Métis Nation of Ontario Region 5 harvest area.	No change. Entrance into La Porte de l'Enfer: Indigenous ochre mine remains prohibited for safety reasons.		
2. Water Transport			
2.1.1 Navigable Channel: Indigenous trade route for Early, Middle and Late Woodland cultures. 14 historic portages, 11 still intact. European fur trade route of the North West Company and Hutson Bay	No change. Ontario Parks crews continue to maintain all portages in Mattawa River Provincial Park. Several of the signs designating the historic portages (e.g. Portage de la	Weekend use and use from canoe race; Increase in promotion and marketing on social media.	Annual maintenance trip by Ontario Parks staff. Ontario Parks staff have replaced signs where possible.

CULTURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
Company. Commemorative plaques (HSMBC, OHF) La Vase Portages are provincially significant.	Rose) along the route have been damaged or lost since 2009.		
2.1.2 Human powered freight.	A new replica <i>canot de maître</i> in the Mattawa River Visitor Centre, and Voyageur Adventure Tour offered through SDCPP. An expanded Discovery Program at SDCPP in 2017 allowed for greater in-person interpretation and theatrical re-enactments of experiences on the Mattawa with human powered freight.	Increase visitor experience and knowledge of the area's cultural heritage.	Mattawa River Visitor Centre located in SDCPP had extensive upgrades completed in 2011 to improve visitors' experiences and knowledge on human powered freight.
2.1.5 Cargoes.	A replica <i>canot de maître</i> in Mattawa River Visitor Centre in SDCPP.	Increase visitor experience and knowledge of the area's cultural heritage.	2011 exhibit upgrades in Mattawa River Visitor Centre.
2.3.1 Log running: log driving route for square timber and lumber industry.	Deterioration of log chute and camp remnants (1855) at Paresseux Falls; dam remnants.	Natural deterioration, expediated by 2019 high spring floods, leaving few remains left.	Site is monitored by the Protected Areas Monitoring Program to identify the extent of natural deterioration and note any major changes on an annual basis.

CULTURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
3. Riparian Settlement			
3.1.3 Shoreline seasonal settlements: Indigenous camp sites at Palframan Camp, Grasswell Pt., and Campion Rapids.	High use recreational campsites have impacted the Indigenous camp at Grasswell Pt. Impacts have included an increase in waste and signs of vegetation removal.	The quantity of garbage removed from these sites each summer indicates an increase of use by the public.	Detailed campsite inventory was conducted in 2018/19 to verify authorized site locations within Mattawa River Provincial Park, document the extent of use and document any values found. Protected Areas Monitoring Program staff continue to monitor these sites to ensure park rules and regulations are being followed. Signs have been installed outlining prohibited activities.
3.2.1 Archaeological evidence of shoreline Indigenous settlements: Pits, rock cairns, 28 archaeological sites (e.g. Pimisi Bay, Campion rapids).	Recreational camping threatens some sites near shoreline due to overuse.		Detailed campsite inventory work and monitoring of campsites along Mattawa River.
4. Culture & Recreation			
4.1.2 Spiritual sites: Watchdog rock.	Has remained unchanged during the time of this report. 3-hour Voyageur Adventure Tour offered through SDCPP continues to take participants past Watchdog rock		

CULTURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
	and contains interpretation of the site.		
4.3.4 Literary accounts: Literature such as; Diaries of Daniel Harmon, Gov. George Simpson, Alexander Mackenzie. Natural heritage books by Louisa de Kiriline Lawrence, Eric Morse (Fur Trade Canoe Routes Then & Now).	Upgraded Visitor Centre at SDCPP featuring an upgraded Voyageur Museum exhibit. Interpretive panels were updated with the history of the Mattawa River and consulted on by Indigenous communities and includes excerpts from many literary accounts and expanded to include Indigenous history.	Enhance visitor's experience and knowledge of the area's history.	n/a
5. Jurisdictional Uses			
5.1.1 Official exploring parties: Exploration; Brule (1610), Radisson & Groseilleurs, Champlain (1615), Henry (1764), MacDonnell, Marquette & Jolliet (1673), la Verendrye (1731).	Upgraded Visitor Centre at SDCPP featuring an upgraded Visitor Centre exhibit including updated interpretive panels on the history of the Mattawa River including information on explorers. An expanded Discovery Program at SDCPP in 2017 allowed for greater in-person interpretation and theatrical re-	Enhance visitor's experience and knowledge of the area's history to remember exploring parties.	n/a

CULTURAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
	enactments of explorers' experiences on the Mattawa River.		
5.1.4 Commercial exploration: Mackenzie (1779), Simpson	As above.		
5.2.1 Indigenous conflict: Conflict between Iroquois and Nipissing.	Upgraded Visitor Centre at SDCPP with a focus on Indigenous presence on the river over time, and conflict between different Indigenous groups and Indigenous groups and Europeans.	To present a more accurate history of the Indigenous cultures that relied (and rely) on the Mattawa River.	An expanded Discovery Program at SDCPP.

3.3 Recreational Values

Background

Today, we still closely follow this historic route as the TransCanada highway travels the path of the Mattawa River between the City of North Bay and the Town of Mattawa in Ontario, while the river itself is used primarily for recreational purposes, such as: boating, canoeing, kayaking, stand-up paddle boarding, fishing, swimming, and hiking.

The Mattawa River Canoe Race is a 64km race from Trout Lake on the Western end of Mattawa River to the Town of Mattawa at the east (Figure 7). This annual event remains popular and usually involves around 70 groups of competitors. The fastest the route has been completed was in 1995 with a time of 5 hours and 27 minutes, though on average most competitors complete the race in 9 - 11 hours. In 2019, the mixed men and women group winners set a new record of 6 hours and 50 minutes!

For those people interested in paddling the path of the voyageurs' song along the Mattawa River and La Vase Portages at a more leisurely pace, there are approximately 25 first-come-first-served campsites that include space for a tent, a designated firepit, and a thunder-box nearby.

The Voyageur Adventure Tour offers participants the opportunity to truly paddle like a voyageur in a replica Montreal Canoe from Pimisi Lake to Talon Chutes and back (Figure 8). Guests can walk the portage, without the burden of the canoe, and imagine what it would have been like in the 1790s. In 2017, additional staffing at Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park meant an expanded Discovery program allowing for this tour and other similar tours, to be offered daily.

Fishing along the Mattawa River remains a highlight for many local fishermen with excellent spots for catching lake trout, brook trout, walleye, largemouth and smallmouth bass, and northern pike.

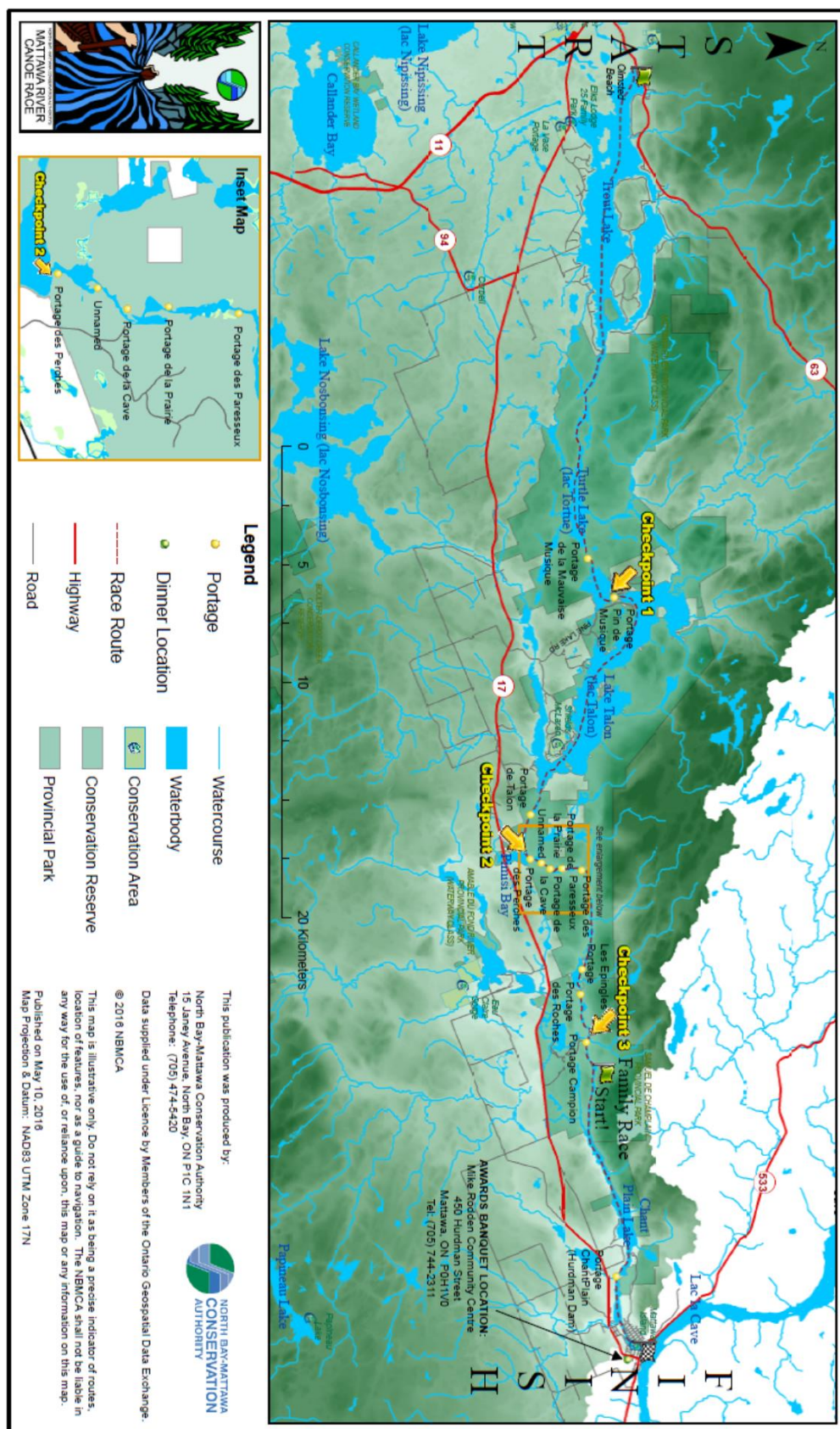


Figure 7: NBMCA annual Mattawa River Canoe Race Route



Figure 8: Replica Montreal Canoe at Talon Chutes by Heather Stern (2019)

Condition and Changes since Last Report

Beginning in 2017, a greater emphasis was placed on marketing the Mattawa River as an adventurer's paradise; a great place to paddle, fish, and hike, away from the crowds of more popular spots like Algonquin Provincial Park.

In 2017, Ontario Parks worked with a fishing influencer, Ashley Rae from SheLovesToFish to highlight some of the amazing fishing opportunities throughout Ontario Parks. One of her stops in October 2017 was to Lake Talon on the Mattawa River where she and her friend were able to catch a *large* largemouth bass, some nice northern pike, and some smallmouth bass. Ashley Rae posted about her experience to her social media accounts and wrote an article for the Ontario Parks Blog which was posted in November 2017 and again in November 2018. The increased marketing for

fishing in the area has increased daily fishing related questions received at The Mattawa River Visitor Centre.

Several blog articles for the Ontario Parks blog were written to highlight the Etienne Trails in SDCPP as exceptional fall hikes. These trails closely follow the shoreline of the Mattawa River and provide stunning vistas of the rugged landscape.

In 2015 the Ontario Parks Protected Areas Monitoring Program was developed. This program dedicates park staff to conduct monitoring, stewardship, and enforcement in several provincial parks including Mattawa River Provincial Park. These staff have been working hard to complete an extensive inventory of recreation values within the park including inventorying all campsites, trails, portages, bridges, and signage. They are continuing to install park boundary signage at high use access points, install information signage about appropriate uses in this park, and complete maintenance on portage signage throughout the park.

With increased camping along the route, there has also been an increase in the amount of litter left on campsites, portages, and at access points. In the summer of 2019, staff in the Protected Areas Monitoring Program removed items such as: a chest freezer, wires, lumber from docks and dams, clothes, inflatable water toys, garbage bags, and many water bottles and beer cans.

Starting in 2009 and implemented in 2011 the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority partnered with the Friends of La Vase Portages to acquire private land along a portion of the historic 'Upper Portage'. This has allowed the Friends to make several improvements along this portage including adding signage and trail maintenance. Additionally, NBMCA has expanded the hiking trail system within the La Vase Portages Conservation Area. This has increased public awareness of this historic route, as a result an increase in year-round and varied use of the trails such as hiking, and snowshoeing has been observed.

Table 4: Changes and Threats to Recreational Values of the Mattawa River

RECREATIONAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
Canoeing: 43 km canoe route managed by Ontario Parks, including 11 portages, 3 high use	Consistent river use by paddlers, canoe and kayak. Increase in stand-up paddle boarders (SUP)	Recent social trend toward SUPs has likely contributed to more people trying	Installed new signage at all major access points and points of interest for Mattawa River Provincial Park.

RECREATIONAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
access points and numerous backcountry campsites.	along calmer sections of the river (e.g. Pimisi Lake).	the sport along rivers.	Ongoing monitoring of campsites and use for compliance. Park wardens conduct an annual canoe routes maintenance trip along the route taken for the annual Mattawa River canoe race (Figure 9), to clear portages and maintain existing campsites.
Camping: SDCPP has 216 designated campsites and group camping. Mattawa River PP has approximately 25 backcountry campsites dispersed along the river.	An in-depth campsite inventory project was carried out in Mattawa River Provincial Park. This project provided a comprehensive overview of all campsites within the park to determine the condition of each campsite, estimated level of use, compliance concerns and sensitive values.	To assist with identifying authorized campsites, and campsites which should potentially be considered for restoration and others for improved maintenance.	Work is ongoing to assess the data provided from this inventory project.
Natural heritage appreciation: Spectacular scenery along Mattawa River Fault; numerous picturesque rapids and falls; significant floral communities, vulnerable	An expanded Discovery Program at SDCPP in 2017 allowed for greater in-person interpretation such as guided hikes and guided paddles to discuss geological	A push to be able to offer daily programming at SDCPP during peak operating season (July & August).	Natural and cultural interpretive topics continue to be popular in SDCPP; self-use and planned programs/ facilities are offered.

RECREATIONAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
ecosystems; evidence of glacial scouring and melting; wildlife viewing.	sites, flora and fauna, and to appreciate the beauty along the Mattawa River.		
Human heritage appreciation: Exploration and fur trade are major interpretive themes for both parks.	Updated Mattawa River Visitor Centre in SDCPP houses replica Montreal canoe and fur trade artifacts. School programming to be offered at SDCPP beginning in 2020, looking at the Life of the Voyageur and his experiences on the Mattawa River and La Vase Portages.	Updated Voyageur Museum to Mattawa River Visitor Centre to better highlight artifacts in an inclusive way. A provincial push to offer more school programming in Ontario Parks in 2019, with the hopes of getting more kids out in parks in the future.	As above. More time dedicated to the research and creation of programming at SDCPP and Pimisi Lake access to Mattawa River. A SDCPP School Programming plan was developed in the fall of 2019.
Hiking: SDCPP offers seven hiking trail loops (Forestry Research, Kag, Wabashkiki Trails, and the Etienne Trails: Geology, History, Nature, and Red Pine Loops). Mattawa River Provincial Park contains numerous	Ongoing trail maintenance and improvement by SDCPP staff. Increased marketing of the trails as a fall destination.	To highlight the stunning fall vistas along the Etienne Trail system.	Inventorying the trail system in Mattawa River Provincial Park is ongoing. Ontario Parks Blog posts, social media posts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram.

RECREATIONAL VALUE	DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE IN VALUE SINCE 2009	REASON FOR CHANGE	ACTIONS TAKEN IN RESPONSE
trails that may be used for hiking.			
Boating: Within SDCPP boat launch facilities are at Jingwakoki campground, Long Lake and Campion Rapids.	Numerous unmaintained boat launches exist within Mattawa River Provincial Park.		Signage was installed at all major access points within Mattawa River Provincial Park notifying users that they are in or entering a provincial park and some of the prohibited activities within this park.
Sport Fishing: Lake trout, brook trout, walleye, bass, and northern pike are commonly fished in this area.	Greater marketing of the fishing along the Mattawa River by Ontario Parks staff. Ontario Parks worked with Ashley Rae in October 2017.		A blog post highlighting fishing opportunities along the river in November 2017 and again in November 2018.



Figure 5: New signage installed at popular areas, photo by Wesley Hornby (2018)

4.0 Integrity Guidelines

Majority of the CHR designated portion of the Mattawa River is located within two provincial parks. These provincial parks provide a buffer between the river, including a portion of its headwater, from developed areas. Activities which could have major negative impacts on the natural, cultural or recreational integrity of values along this river would typically not be permitted in provincial parks. *The Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, 2006*, states that maintenance of ecological integrity is the first priority in the planning and management of Ontario's provincial parks and conservation reserves.

Although the majority of the shoreline along the CHR designated portion of the Mattawa River is in a natural state, there is cottage development on private inholdings in the CHR area (but not within park boundaries).

The portages and campsites along the river continue to be well utilized by the public showing a continued interest in travelling this historic trade route. The Mattawa River

and La Vase Portages continue to meet the integrity values for which this system originally received its designation. Through the Protected Areas Monitoring Program, bridges within provincial parks are inventoried and inspected to ensure they are safe. If a bridge is found to be unsafe, it is closed. Work permits for replacement or maintenance of authorized structures are considered. Authorized bridge work follows hydrology guidelines and best practices for working in water.

No new dams have been built along this river system. The three pre-existing operating dams within the CHR designated area; Trout Lake, Talon Chutes, and Hurdman dams continued to be managed and operated by MNRF for the reporting period in accordance with the Hurdman Dam Water Management Plan.

In 2013 - 2014, two energy projects were announced near the North Bay – Mattawa area: The Energy East Pipeline proposal, to convert an existing natural gas pipeline to transport oil, and a proposed wind farm from the company Innergex. Both proposed projects were cancelled a few years later.

Few integrity values reported have experienced change.

Table 5: Changes to Mattawa River Integrity Values based on the CHRS Principles, Procedures and Operational Guidelines, Appendix F (2017)

NATURAL, CULTURAL OR RECREATIONAL INTEGRITY VALUE	CHANGE IN INTEGRITY VALUE	THREAT OR STRESSOR	ACTION(S) TAKEN TO ADDRESS THREAT	THREAT STILL PRESENT?
4.1 NATURAL INTEGRITY VALUES				
CHR is of sufficient size to include significant representation of all of the natural processes, features, or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding natural value.	No change.			
CHR includes those ecosystem components which contribute significantly to the provision of habitat for species in need of protection.	No change – an extensive mapping exercise to organize and show species inventory data for Mattawa River Provincial Park occurred in 2018.			
There are no human-made impoundments within the nominated section.	No new impoundments, there are three pre-existing dams on this system.			
All key elements and ecosystem components are unaffected by impoundments located outside the nominated section.	Freshwater jellyfish in Pine Lake (2003-2016), Talon Lake (2002-11) & Rainbow Smelt in Lake Talon (1995), Turtle Lake (1990); Purple Loosestrife near Paresseux Falls (2019).	Invasive species		

NATURAL, CULTURAL OR RECREATIONAL INTEGRITY VALUE	CHANGE IN INTEGRITY VALUE	THREAT OR STRESSOR	ACTION(S) TAKEN TO ADDRESS THREAT	THREAT STILL PRESENT?
The water in the CHR is uncontaminated to the extent that its natural aquatic ecosystem is intact.	No change. Water continues to be monitored by NBMCA and is intact.			
The natural aesthetic character of the nominated section is free of, or not adversely affected by, human developments.	No change.			
4.2 CULTURAL INTEGRITY VALUES				
The CHR is of sufficient size to include significant representations of all of the features, activities or other phenomena which give the river its outstanding cultural value.	No change.			
The visual character of the CHR enables uninterrupted appreciation of at least one of the periods of the river's historical importance.	No change.			
The key artifacts and sites comprising the cultural values for which the river is designated are unimpaired by impoundments and human land uses.	Ongoing maintenance of historic portages and campsites occurs annually by Ontario Parks staff.			
The water quality of the designated section does not detract from the visual character or the cultural experience provided by its cultural values.	No change.			

NATURAL, CULTURAL OR RECREATIONAL INTEGRITY VALUE	CHANGE IN INTEGRITY VALUE	THREAT OR STRESSOR	ACTION(S) TAKEN TO ADDRESS THREAT	THREAT STILL PRESENT?
4.3 RECREATIONAL INTEGRITY VALUES				
The river possesses water of a quality suitable for contact recreational activities, including those recreational opportunities for which it is nominated.	No change.			
The river's visual appearance can provide river travelers with a continuous natural experience, or a combined natural and cultural experience, without significant interruption by modern human intrusions.	No change.			
The river can support recreational uses without significant loss of, or impact on, its natural and cultural values or its visual character.	No change.			

5.0 Designation Document Recommendations and Current Status

The nomination of the Mattawa River and its subsequent designation as a CHR is tied to the Mattawa River Provincial Park Management Plan (1988). A minor amendment to the Mattawa River Provincial Park Management Plan was approved in 2007 to address the addition of over 10,000 hectares, mainly on the north side of the river. This amendment supplements (not replaces) direction in the original plan. Recommendations or Key Actions listed in Table 6 are directly from the implementation priorities identified in the original management plan, although no implementation priorities were applicable to the CHR area.

Table 6: Achievement of Recommendations and Actions from Designation Document

RECOMMENDATION OR KEY ACTION	Degree of Achievement	COMMENTS
Prepare a park operating strategy.	Completed.	Ontario Parks maintains a park operation plan to provide staff with the necessary direction to manage the park on a day-to-day basis. The park operations plan includes such topics as budget, staffing, maintenance schedules, enforcement and emergency management.
Work with the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries (formerly the Ministry of Culture and Communications) to identify archaeological and historical sites for their protection.	Underway.	A Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment for the entire Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain Provincial Parks was drafted in 2015 and is currently being reviewed.
Coordinate visitor services needs with the preparation of the Samuel de Champlain visitor services plan.	Ongoing.	Visitor services at SDCPP complement the recreational values for Mattawa River Provincial Park and provides information on the cultural heritage of the river.
Encourage research.	Ongoing.	Facilitating scientific research and providing points of reference to support monitoring of ecological change on a broader landscape is a core objective of provincial parks.
Provide marketing of the park in concert with SDCPP.	Ongoing.	Working with Ontario Parks marketing department to use social media to increase day-use and overnight trips along the River and to address visitor management issues such as garbage and camping etiquette.

RECOMMENDATION OR KEY ACTION	Degree of Achievement	COMMENTS
Provision of visitor services information, interpretive and recreation services and structures at MacPherson Drive and Pine Lake.	Not yet initiated.	
Agreements will be sought with other agencies to establish interpretive and information structures at key points outside of park like Trout Lake, Blanchard's Landing, Pimisi Bay and Mattawa Island.	Ongoing.	A working relationship with the local municipalities has been maintained for access points that are outside the boundaries of Mattawa River and Samuel de Champlain Provincial Parks. Work with local outfitters to provide information on the river has been ongoing. Improved boundary and enforcement signage at access points has been initiated with the development of the Protected Areas Monitoring Program. It was recently confirmed that Blanchard's Landing is within the boundary of Mattawa River Provincial Park.
Portages, hiking trails and historic site monuments will be maintained.	Ongoing.	Annually maintained by Ontario Parks staff.
Canoe/boating camp sites will be maintained.	Ongoing.	Annually maintained by Ontario Parks staff.

6.0 Summary of Benefits and Costs since Designation

Mattawa River has experienced numerous benefits since its designation, many are described in Table 5. Most of the designated portion of the Mattawa River is within regulated provincial park boundaries or the La Vase Portages Conservation Area. Being part of protected areas and being designated as a CHR has preserved this river system's natural, cultural, and recreational values.

Table 7: Benefits to the Mattawa River since Obtaining its Designation

Type of Benefit	Description
Environmental Benefits	Increased conservation efforts.
Cultural Benefits	- Improved awareness of historic and current Indigenous use of the river. - Improved awareness of historic Voyageur route. - Improved knowledge of historic portages and canoe route.
Recreational Benefits	Improved campsites and portages for users.
Improved Knowledge	- Improves general knowledge of the river's history and significance. - Improves awareness of protected spaces within the province. - Improved awareness and appreciation of protection objectives for this river.
Stewardship	Ontario Parks, the Lake Talon Conservation Association, the Friends of La Vase Portages and the NBMCA all have played an important role over the years protecting the values of the river, organizing events, maintaining a clean environment for generations to enjoy.
Community Engagement and Collaboration	- Increased engagement between Ontario Parks and the NBMCA. - Increased engagement between Ontario Parks and Lake Talon Conservation Association.
Education	- Development of heritage plaque, Voyageur portage signage unique to this river system. - Updates to the Mattawa River Visitor Centre at SDCPP. - Improved educational programming and Voyageur Adventure Tours.

There have been no known or significant downsides to the Mattawa River and La Vase Portages receiving the CHR designation.

7.0 Overall Assessment

The designation as a Canadian Heritage River should

☒ remain in place

☐ be reviewed by the board due to the following concerns:

- Not applicable

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Figure 6: Paresseux Falls, photo by Paul Blakelock (2019)

