



Provincial Parks Policy

Background

Provincial parks legislation is currently under review. Furthermore, there have been concerns expressed by the tourism industry over the abrupt cancellation of the differential fee charged where interior camping in wilderness parks is accessed through a tourist outfitter. As parks plans are amended and new parks plans are developed, there has been significant concern expressed over the impact of Provincial Parks, particularly Wilderness Parks on local communities. Currently, Provincial Parks are expected to operate on a self-sustaining business model, that is, parks revenues go into a Special Purpose Account, and parks are expected to generate sufficient revenue to cover their expenses. This model does not take into account the broader economic and social impact of parks on their communities and has led to individual parks management decisions that are seen as highly detrimental to communities.

Policy

- Provincial Parks must be seen as an economic resource for local communities and parks policies should reflect this role
- Local communities, the tourism industry the local business community must be engaged as partners in park planning and policy development
- MNR should immediately initiate such a consultation in communities served by wilderness parks, with NOTO as a partner and co-facilitator
- The policy of funding parks from a special purpose account should be reviewed to see if this is leading to decisions that benefit individual parks at the expense of local communities and overall provincial revenue through other sources

Adopted by the NOTO Board of Directors February 7, 2005.