



THE QUETICO FOUNDATION WILDERNESS PRESERVATION





## OUR MISSION IS CLEAR

The Quetico Foundation is dedicated to the protection of wilderness with a particular focus on Quetico Wilderness Provincial Park.

## OUR VISION IS ATTAINABLE

The Quetico Foundation will provide leadership in wilderness protection in Ontario and in Quetico Provincial Park and the border water States in particular. The Foundation will strive to be recognized as an influential and credible leader in education and research initiatives relating to the protection of wilderness values and the ecological integrity of Quetico Provincial Park and the surrounding area.



## OUR ROOTS ARE DEEP

In 1909, the Ontario Government had the remarkable foresight to set aside 1,148,000 acres of picturesque and unspoiled wilderness in north-western Ontario as a Game Reserve, now known as Quetico Provincial Park. In the same year, Minnesota matched Ontario with a tract of 1,400,000 acres of contiguous wilderness, the Superior National Forest — ultimately the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness.

This international track of land became a special place to many people over many years—historically, scientifically, recreationally and spiritually. The 1940s and 1950s brought greater awareness and recognition among prominent political figures, scientists and journalists of the day to the value of wilderness to society and to the individual. The Canadian Quetico-Superior Committee, established in 1949 with Canada’s Governor General The Right Honourable Vincent Massey as its Chair,

together with its US counterpart created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, promoted the protection and stewardship of this large wilderness area spanning the international border. The Quetico Foundation evolved from the Canadian Quetico-Superior Committee in 1954, under provincial charter by John R. Ridley, with a mandate to “assist in everyway possible, and particularly through education, research and promotion, protection of the great wilderness and historical values and development of the recreational usage of the section of north western Ontario ...commonly know as the Quetico area...”. The Foundation believes that appreciation of the scenic, historical, recreational and scientific values of wilderness is the best way of promoting these values, and preserving the wilderness for its own sake for all future generations. For 55 years The Quetico Foundation has stayed this course, ensuring the fulfillment of the vision of our founding predecessors — the celebration in 2009 of 100 years of wilderness protection!



## OUR Foothold IS STRATEGIC

Together Quetico Provincial Park and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness are unique — forming the largest international area set aside as protected wilderness in the continent. Accessible just west of Thunder Bay and north of Duluth spanning the Ontario-Minnesota border, and laden with unspoiled beauty in a maze of glistening lakes and rivers, together they offer an unmatched recreational paradise.

Surrounding the famed ‘Voyageurs Highway’, and sprinkled with an array of First Nations artefacts, together they offer an historical context reminiscent of our earliest forbearers. Spanning boreal, Atlantic mixed-wood and prairie ecological zones within the arctic watershed, together they offer an unmatched scientific research field. And geographically, together they enjoy a unique strategic pinning in the ‘heart of the continent.’



## OUR REACH IS BROAD

The Quetico Foundation's volunteer Board of Trustees and Trustee Emeritus continue to be distinguished people from varied walks of life and geographic origins throughout Ontario and the northern United States, who share a love of Quetico Park and a passion for the protection of wilderness in Ontario.

The Foundation places high importance on the value of liaison and influence in meeting its objectives, recognizing that credibility, connections, and broader support are critical to success. The Foundation's approach is to deliver positive outcomes, involving itself in issues where the stakes are significant and the Foundation's value greatest, and leveraging results through a broad base of far reaching networks and supports. We recognize the power of collaboration, fostering partnerships and relationships with organizations who share common interests and objectives including local, provincial,

national, and international interest groups, conservation organizations, institutions, businesses, government agencies, and the general public. And we strive to ensure that the way in which decision makers, users and stakeholders value the Quetico wilderness will ensure its preservation in perpetuity.



## OUR PROGRAMMING IS PROGRESSIVE

The Foundation knows that scientific research is fundamental to an understanding of wilderness ecology, sustainability, and management. As such the Foundation both supports and carries out conservation ecology and resource management projects in the Quetico area focusing on climate change, natural history, and ecology. Based on discussions in 1996 involving Ontario Parks, Lac La Croix First Nation and the Township of Atikokan, The Quetico Foundation's *Summer Student Research Program* was launched and continues to employ 6-8 university and high school students annually to undertake primary ecological field research in the Park under the direction of a proponent university professor or field biologist. A generous research focused bequest from the late Margery J. Warren in 2005 enabled the Foundation to broaden its research capacity with the creation of the *Biology Internship Program* offering an advanced university student the opportunity to gain hands on biological field experience in their chosen field, in addition to

the provision of financial support to third party proposals which further the quantity and quality of scientific knowledge of wilderness ecology.

The Quetico Foundation furthers in a number of ways, its concurrent belief that education is integral to wilderness protection and sustainability....not only of our current, but perhaps more importantly, of our future business and community leaders - Canada's youth! *The Shan Walsbe Memorial Bursary*, a post secondary education award, is offered annually to graduating Atikokan and Lac La Croix high school students who are pursuing an environmental field of study. Our *Summer Student Research Program* not only expands our scientific research but exposes many students, from the local community and beyond, to the value of ecological research in wilderness areas. And in 2006 the Foundation partnered with Quetico Provincial Park on the *Artist in Residence Program*

fostering the creation and broader exposure of art depicting the aesthetic beauty and tranquility of the Quetico wilderness.

It is this education objective, enabled by a bequest from the late Norma B. Ridley that has been the driving force behind the creation in 2006 of the *Ridley Wilderness Youth Program*. Partnering initially with Agincourt Collegiate Institute in Toronto and offering students enrolled in an Interdisciplinary Studies course: Environmental Leadership and Outdoor Education, the opportunity to take a week long canoe trip in Quetico Park, the Program exposes a broad spectrum of Canadian youth — truly representative of the Canadian cultural mosaic — to the value of the wilderness experience!

The seeds of youth based programming have been sown and our future outlook will continue to be youth inspired!



## OUR VALUE IS PROVEN

Over the years, The Quetico Foundation has been instrumental in influencing the way in which ‘wilderness values’ are portrayed in regulations, policies and management plans. The Foundation has embarked upon initiatives which have altered both our understanding of wilderness ecology within the scientific community as well as how we manage wilderness areas — mapping of forest fire data and management practices for the Park, vegetative mapping, benthic studies, shoreline assessment, heavy metal contaminant analysis, invasive species assessment, and augmentation of indigenous, genetically superior rust-resistant white pines in the Park. The Foundation has supported various local community initiatives including establishing the *John B. Ridley Research Library* in the Park in honour of one of the Foundation’s prominent founding members and various tree planting activities.

The publication of an array of highly credible scientific and educational publications, maps and resources related to Quetico have been made possible through the support of the Foundation. The Quetico Foundation has been instrumental in the creation and leadership of the new *Heart of the Continent Partnership*, involving over twenty five Canadian and US agencies and non profit organizations with a common interest in protecting and managing this exquisite wilderness area. And the lives of over 200 young people and their families have been forever changed due to their personal experiences working with the programs of the Foundation!



## THE FUTURE IS YOURS

The activities and programs of The Quetico Foundation are supported by the voluntary financial contributions of those forward thinking individuals, corporations and organizations who share our wilderness preservation values and believe in our vision for the future.

It depends on “all those who appreciate and cherish the restorative peace and serenity which is wilderness, to share in our efforts. Quetico, like other wilderness areas, needs the care and protection of young and old, of First Nations and more recent settlers, local and distant visitors, government and private interests, biologists and historians, the humble and the mighty. Nature draws no such distinctions, nor should we. Help us Restore a Memory, Preserve a Dream.” *A. George Fells.*

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