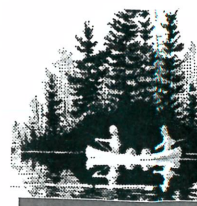


wilderness legacy



The Quetico Foundation

□ by Rob Kesselring

Two-thousand fourteen marks the 60th anniversary of the Quetico Foundation; its true history began a few years earlier. Prominent political figures, scientists, and journalists had become increasingly aware of the value of wilderness. These Canadians were avid canoeists who not only enjoyed their time in the park, but wanted to make certain that its wilderness character was preserved. In 1949, a Canadian Quetico-Superior committee

was established by Canada's Governor General, the Right Honorable Vincent Massey. In 1954, this committee evolved into the Quetico Foundation under a provincial charter led by John D. Ridley. Its mandate was to "assist in every way possible," but particularly through education, research and promotion to protect the wilderness, historical values, and to develop the recreational usage of the section of Northwestern Ontario, known as the Quetico area. The

founders believed cultivating appreciation for the scenic, historical, recreational, and scientific values of wilderness was the best way of protecting it. They paddled it, knew it, and supported efforts to preserve and restore the area. For 60 years, the Quetico Foundation has stayed this course, ensuring fulfillment of the vision of their founding predecessors.

One of the key accomplishments of the Quetico Foundation is



BRENT NOTBOHM

Paddling up to a Quetico Park ranger station means you are on the verge of the finest wilderness canoeing experience in the world. The Quetico Foundation has helped make this happen for all of us for the past 60 years. (Cache Bay, Saganaga Lake)

having a strong influence on how wilderness values are portrayed in regulations, policies, and management plans. They've done this by providing advocacy, insight, and contributions to numerous policy and regulatory initiatives. In 2015, the Quetico Foundation hopes to work with the park to develop a video similar to the orientation video BWCAW canoeists view before entering the wilderness.

The Quetico Foundation has supported many scientific studies. These studies have included shoreline assessments, invasive species assessments, and heavy metal contaminant analysis. They have also been active in the development of blister rust resistant white pines. The Quetico Foundation has supported local community and park initiatives, including the John B. Ridley research library (in honor of one of the foundation's founding members). This library is located in the lower level of the Quetico Park Information Pavilion, which can be found at the Dawson Trail campground. Established in 1986, many of the resources found in the library are unique to Quetico Park. The history files and oral history recordings are an invaluable resource of unpublished information on the area. The visual image database includes photos and slides covering a wide range of topics from aboriginal history and culture to the natural history of the Quetico (see *BWJ* Fall 2013 for much more on John Ridley Library).

The Quetico Foundation has supported the publication of numerous esteemed scientific and educational publications, maps, and resources. It was a major partner in the creation and leadership of the Heart of the Continent Partnership—a coalition of over 25 Canadian and United States stakeholders whose mission is to enhance

DARRYL BLAZINO





Classic Quetico: a canoe glides below the Canadian Shield granite cliffs and pine forest of Ted Lake. You can give something back to this special place by supporting the efforts of the QueticoFoundation.org



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The Quetico Foundation

*Protecting wilderness with a focus
on Quetico Park since 1954.*



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international efforts at improving communication to better protect the Quetico-Superior wilderness.

The foundation has also provided opportunities for youths through various internships, outreach, and

camping programs. Every summer, the foundation employs university and high school students to conduct research in Quetico Park. Directed by scientists and supervised by experienced team leaders, participants learn

wilderness skills, contribute to research, and bond with teammates. The information collected contributes to the park's bank of ecology field data and hopefully creates lifelong canoe country advocates.

The Ridley Wilderness Youth Program provides opportunities for urbanized, culturally diverse youths to experience and understand the Canadian wilderness.

The Quetico Foundation employs one post-secondary student every summer to assist park biologists with crucial field research. Past interns have accomplished fascinating and invaluable work on invasive species, at-risk species, bear activity, and pine tree health. The Foundation awards bursaries to select students from Atikokan and Lac La Croix high schools. To receive a grant, students must demonstrate strong leadership abilities and be accepted at post-secondary institutions for environmental, biological, or related studies.

The current chair of the Quetico Foundation is Richard Kelly. Rich is the first American to chair the Quetico Foundation. One thrust of the Quetico Foundation is to increase its American presence. An objective to open a Twin Cities office is one example of this expansion.

The Quetico Foundation is one of the most respected conservation organizations in the world. In an understated, Canadian way, the foundation has been a key player in the protection, promotion, and understanding of canoe country for 60 years. All this information and more can be found on the foundation website at QueticoFoundation.org.

Anyone interested in helping with the new Minnesota office, contact RichKelly@msn.com. □