

‘We are Canada - United by Canoe’

...inspired by The Quetico Foundation in partnership with Quetico Provincial Park to connect Canada’s past, present and future, by uniting a cross section of Canadians representative of the diversity of Canada, through the quintessential Canadian experience of paddling a voyageur canoe!

The **objectives** of ‘*We are Canada - United by Canoe*’ include promoting understanding and appreciation for Canada’s rich diversity - historically, culturally, biologically, and geographically - breaking down barriers and building connectivity, while using canoes and Ontario’s wilderness as our educational tools. Additionally, the project will connect Canadians with our wilderness environment and values, and raise environmental stewardship to the level of national consciousness.

Our focus is on youth – Canada’s future leaders! The culturally diverse participants from Lac La Croix First Nation (LLCFN), Atikokan and Toronto, includes students from the Foundation’s scientific research and Ridley Wilderness Youth Programs, and the Mink Lake First Nations Youth Employment Program. The trip presents them with a unique opportunity to share their varied personal and historical backgrounds, academic interests, aspirations and vision for Canada’s future. The trip will be led by seasoned wilderness enthusiasts, including senior Park managers and indigenous members of the Lac la Croix community, offering a broad base of educational, scientific and cultural expertise, and adding an intergenerational dimension to the group.

Over the 6-day canoe trip, the group will experience the historical and cultural origins of Canada by tracing a **traditional Anishinaabe travel route** and the **later route of the voyageurs** through the Quetico–Superior region, including a section of the Path of the Paddle- the water segment of the Trans Canada Trail. The trip travels through the internationally recognized Heart of the Continent, concluding at the west end of the Boundary Waters Voyageur Canadian Heritage Waterway at Lac La Croix.

The trip **launches** with a community event at the **historic French Lake** in Quetico Provincial Park on Monday August 21, 2017 and will **culminate** at the **Lac La Croix First Nation annual Pow-wow** on August 26, 2017. Local and regional media are encouraged to participate in these events which will bring together politicians, residents, youth, community organizations and businesses from the Atikokan and Lac La Croix First Nation communities.

The success of ‘*We are Canada - United by Canoe*’ will build on the **strength of the partnerships** of The Quetico Foundation, Quetico Provincial Park, the Lac La Croix First Nation community, the Municipality of Atikokan, and Trinity Theatre. The sponsors and partners, who join us in our quest, are helping to shape the values of our forthcoming leaders, and the future of our country.

As a non-profit charitable organization with roots going back to 1949, The Quetico Foundation continues to uphold its original mandate “*to assist in every way 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 known as the Quetico area...*”

In the long term, the Foundation hopes that the value of projects such as the ‘**We are Canada - United by Canoe**’ will extend well beyond the boundaries of Quetico to all of Canada. Our diverse Canadian youth are our future leaders, steering the course for **Canada as an inclusive country with well understood historical roots, a strong cultural identity and appreciation for our natural wilderness!**

Follow us at queticofoundation.org and on facebook as our vision for Canada’s future unfolds!