



17 October 2015

Mr. Jeff Leavey, RPF
Chief Forester
Algonquin Forestry Authority
222 Main Street West
Huntsville, Ontario
P1H 1Y1

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AFA Huntsville

Dear Jeff:

Almost from the time Algonquin was established as Ontario's first "national" park in 1893, it has occupied a sacred place in the province's natural legacy. While its origins were primarily attributable to a desire to protect the lumbermen's interest in the area's valuable upland pineries from the inevitable ravages of settlement, the province's citizenry quickly embraced it as epitomizing all that was to be celebrated in Ontario's woodlands. It is hardly surprising, then, that disagreements arose over how the jewel in our provincial park system ought to be managed. In fact, the late 1960s saw Algonquin Park become the site of a pitched battle between the loggers and those who wished to see the end of timber harvesting there. The government managed the conflict by carrying out investigations into and preparing reports on the matter. In 1973, the reigning Conservative government announced that it would implement one of the main recommendations it had received, namely to take control over forestry operations in the park out of the industry's hands and vest it instead in a Crown agency. The "Algonquin Forestry Authority" was thus born (officially) on 1 January 1975, with Vidar Nordin, the dean of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Forestry, appointed its inaugural chairman. Nordin would occupy this position for 8 years, and his skill in overseeing the AFA's activities was crucial to returning a semblance of peace to Algonquin and restoring faith in how its woods were being managed.

As chairman of the Forest History Society of Ontario, I am delighted to congratulate the AFA on celebrating its 40th anniversary and for having upheld so superbly the principles that were intended to guide its activities. Having personally overseen a small treeplant in Algonquin Park roughly fifteen years ago, and having researched the history of the forestry policy in Ontario for over two decades, I know first hand how well its forests are being managed.

Our best wishes on this most momentous occasion, and we look forward to many more celebrations in the future!

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark Kuhlberg
Chairman, FHSO
Professor of History –
Laurentian University