

# Wilderness area proposed for N.B.

Late in 1975 a group of interested people pulled together an idea to create a wilderness area in the heart of N.B. The group consisted of a fisheries biologist, a plant ecologist, a lawyer, an environmental planner and a Federal park naturalist. They approached the Conservation Council of N.B. with their concept and the council agreed to support it and sponsor the research and development of a wilderness area proposal.

The idea is catching on like wildfire. "Wilderness is a special kind of thing," says Anne Marceau, a part-time UNB student, who works promoting the wilderness area project devoid of man's manipulations no logging, no mining, no road construction -- a wilderness area remains purely natural. For the individual, a remote area of wilderness, offers a unique opportunity to experience emotions that otherwise might never be discovered in our hectic pace of day-to-day life. For some and for those who directly experience a wilderness, it can be a spiritual rejuvenation.

One primary justification for

maintaining a wilderness area is to preserve our heritage for the future. New Brunswick is heavily wooded, but the pulp & paper industry cuts heavily and quickly into the resources of the Province. "A wilderness area, protected from industrialization, would give people in the future a chance to see N.B. as it once was," says Anne Marceau. "We preserve art, Historical Sites, Old Books -- Why not our wilderness?"

There is some scientific value to preserving a wilderness area, although this is not stressed. The area could be used for comparison purposes with developed ecosystems.

The idea, though, is to set off a number of acres and to leave them untouched.

The area excitedly being proposed at present is 130 sq. miles dead center of the Province north of what is called the Renous Highway, between Plaster Rock & Newcastle.

It is known as the Kennedy Lakes Area - a mountainous area with lakes interconnected by a river system, and an undulating scenic landscape. It is crown land under lease to a lumber company but untouched as yet and called "absolutely beautiful" by the project workers.

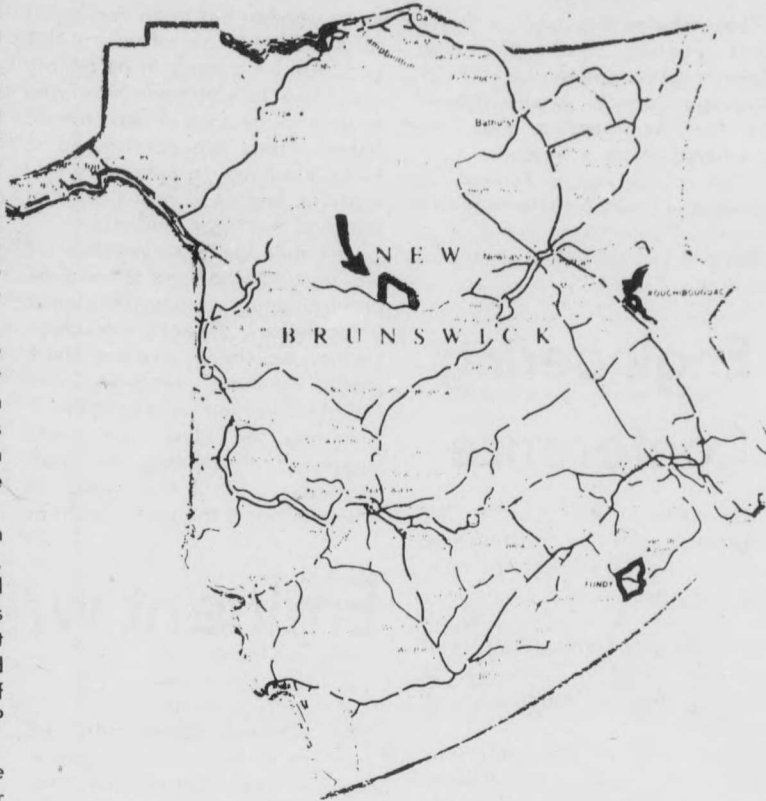
The Conservation Council and

its Wilderness Proposal has its work cut out for them. For now, promoting the concept to the public is the primary focus. Displays have been set up and a questionnaire formulated with the hope of citizen input. "All types of people are saying yes," says Anne Marceau, "even some people who probably would never even use the area, but people who like the idea that they're not going to develop the whole of New Brunswick."

A long-range goal is to persuade the government of New Brunswick to pass legislation protecting forever a wilderness area. Similar legislation has been passed in Ontario, Alberta and the U.S.A.

The logistics of such legislation have to be determined first, though. Who will manage it? Will there be roads or just the trails and portages as is? Will forest fires be extinguished or allowed to diffuse naturally? What types of recreational use will there be? Will there be facilities?

The wilderness area goes one step further than a Nation or Provincial park, a game refuge, or an ecological reserve. It is wild land -- forested, pristinely, watered, and barren of man's tamperings. It is an experience as well as a place.



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## Cancer soars near nukes

The most powerful evidence yet to support the claims of anti-nuclear advocates has surfaced. A recent survey concludes that residents of states with nuclear power plants face a sharply increased chance of dying from cancer.

Working with Department of Health, Education and Welfare cancer-mortality rates, Dr. Ernest Sternglass of the University of Pittsburgh medical school has presented material to a Congressional group showing that increases in cancer rates are greater in relatively unpolluted, heavily nuclearized states than they are in highly urbanized areas with bad air. According to an

article by Michael Harris in the New Hampshire Times, the report indicates that radioactive releases from nuclear plants not ordinary pollutants are now playing the greatest role in cancer deaths.

The greatest increases in cancer deaths have occurred in states like Washington, Tennessee and South Carolina, where the largest nuclear facilities are located, and in areas with reactors that have recently released large amounts of radioactive material. Washington's cancer-mortality rate rose by 5 percent in three years; Connecticut's (where the Millstone reactor had a leakage problem) is up 8.6 percent; and Tennessee sustained an 8.1 percent increase. The study compares figures like

these with sharply declining rates in states that have no nuclear reactors: cancer deaths are down more than 10 percent in Alaska, 4.4 percent in Montana and 2 percent in New Hampshire (for now).

Meanwhile, growing numbers of atomic power plant workers are refusing assignments in radiation areas. The scene of the biggest recent protest was the Indian Point reactor in New York.

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