



"cahep (Community Arts and  
Heritage Education Project)"  
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a>

05/20/2013 12:01 PM

To

cc

bcc

Subject Canadian Heritage Rivers Initiative

Dear Stakeholder,

We have been actively pursuing a Canadian Heritage Rivers Initiative for the Northern Route Boundary Waters-Voyageur Waterway for the past five years and are now seeking your support to move the project forward.

Through this initiative we have presented to many interested stakeholders, hosted the David Thompson Brigades throughout the proposed waterway and presented the project to the Bi-National Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) Conference. A draft document has been submitted to the CHRS for review and we continue to compile information for the nomination.

We are appealing to you, as a stakeholder in this initiative, to write a letter of support for this project.

Please find attached a synopsis of the proposal and an example of a letter of support. We would like to receive letters by mid June.

If you have any further questions, would like a presentation on the project or wish to have a copy of the complete draft please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,  
Pam Cain, Chair,  
Steering Committee  
807-964-2323  
info@cahep.ca



CHRStakeholdersSupportfinal.docx

Canadian Heritage Rivers Initiative  
Northern Route Boundary Waters-Voyageur Waterway  
c/o Community Arts and Heritage Education Project(CAHEP)  
Rm 261A 1450 Nakina Drive  
Thunder Bay, Ontario  
P7C 4W1

Dear Stakeholder,

We have been actively pursuing a Canadian Heritage Rivers Initiative for the Northern Route Boundary Waters-Voyageur Waterway for the past five years and are now seeking your support to move the project forward.

Through this initiative we have presented to many interested stakeholders, hosted the David Thompson Brigades throughout the proposed waterway and presented the project to the Bi-National Canadian Heritage Rivers System (CHRS) Conference. A draft document has been submitted to the CHRS for review and we continue to compile information for the nomination.

We are appealing to you, as a stakeholder in this initiative, to write a letter of support for this project.

Please find attached a synopsis of the proposal and an example of a letter of support. We would like to receive letters by the end of May.

If you have any further questions, would like a presentation on the project or wish to have a copy of the complete draft please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Pam Cain, Chair,  
Steering Committee  
807-964-2323  
info@cahep.ca

## **The Boundary Waters ~ Voyageur Waterway Supplementary Heritage Designation Initiative**

The *Boundary Waters-Voyageur Waterway (BWVW)* achieved its CHRS designation in 1996. The waterway extends from the western tip of Lake Superior to Lac La Croix in Quetico Provincial Park. The BWVW achieved its designation because it encompasses superlative natural heritage, cultural, and recreational values. For millennia, the BWVW served as one of the primary travel corridors connecting eastern and western North America. The archaeology and oral histories document long and extensive use of the BWVW as a trade route and as a fertile source of sustenance support sustained settlement by First Nations. The route also served as the primary conduit to the west by fur traders, explorers and European settlers; eventually the lands encompassing the route became the hub for the development of a diverse array of affluent communities. BWVW also manifests a geological history, which is billions of years old. This ancient and unique landscape includes innumerable mesas, cuetsas, waterfalls, irregular shaped lakes, gorges and canyons unrivalled in their beauty. Although frequented by people for thousands of years, much of the BWVW retains its pristine character and is considered a recreationist's paradise by the many who visit the area each year.

The BWVW, however, is only one chapter in the story which connects eastern and western Canada. A more complete tale of that river-based heritage requires the supplementary nomination of the Northern Route: from the mouth of the Kaministiquia River at Lake Superior to Lake of the Woods. This historic waterway, with its many waterfalls, rapids and portages, weaves across the Canadian Shield to join the Great Lakes to the Prairies.

For the past decade, interest to extend the BWVW designation in order to include its northern counterpart has been gaining momentum. Community partners and stakeholder interests along the route have come.

### **Proposal**

To formally include the "Northern Route" as an additional component to the Boundary Waters ~ Voyageur Waterway (BWVW) Canadian Heritage River Systems (CHRS) designation.

-Whereas, the 250 km long BWVW is presently designated as a Canadian Heritage River, amending the current designation to include the Northern Route will more fully and accurately represent the entire route's historical significance in pre-contact First Nation's culture, French and English exploration, the fur trade, Canadian politics and military matters, North western Ontario's economics and international boundary negotiations;

-Whereas, the proposed CHRS area can be divided into the following two sections:

- I. The currently designated southern BWVW Canadian Heritage River;
- II. The northern route from Lake Superior to the terminus of the Rainy River at Lake of the Woods;

-Whereas, the currently designated BWVW and the Northern Route share the following key attributes: representations of pre-contact culture; early occupation and exploration by the French; a significant role in the fur trade from 1670 to 1821; and the role as a main conduit to and from western Canada. By amending the current designation, the CHRS will be acknowledging the importance of the waterway's cultural heritage;

-Whereas, the Northern Route spans various biologically significant ecotypes including Prairie, Great Lakes/St. Lawrence and Boreal ecozones, which support the habitats of threatened and endangered plant and animal species, including the Lake Sturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) and the

-Whereas, a large portion of the Northern Route is currently protected by the following provincial parks aiding in the management of its heritage values: Silver Falls, Kakabeka Falls, Quetico, Sable

Island, Sandpoint Island, Rainy Lake Islands Conservation Reserve and Goose Island Nature Reserve;

-Whereas several times in the past six decades both the BWVW and Northern have constituted all or part of the route followed by groups celebrating and re-enacting the history of cross-continental canoe travel in Canada. Typically, they proceeded with logistical support and media attention from the nearby communities. Some of the well-known of these events were the "Quetico Foundation Voyageurs (1954), the "Centennial Cross-Canada Canoe Race" (1967), the Quetico Park 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Heritage Canoe Trip (1984), the David Thompson Brigade (2008), and the Heart of the Continent Partnership (2009). Also, almost each summer one or more unaffiliated individual or small group paddles the route (s) and in so doing receives local attention, support, and reportage.

-Whereas, the inclusion of the nominated supplementary section will enhance recreational opportunities and facilitate a more diverse array of activities, such as canoeing, kayaking, motor boating, bird watching, hiking, cultural edification and fishing. In addition, the inclusion of the nominated Northern Route will allow enthusiasts to explore both routes, the nominated and designated, in a comprehensive loop;

- Whereas, numerous initiatives and organizations have sought to highlight the area and its historical significance. These include: Fort William Historical Park, Quetico Provincial Park, Fort Frances Museum, Rainy Lake Conservancy, Voyageurs National Park and their voyageur themed interpretive centre, Path of the Voyageur, Trans-Canada Trail and Heart of the Continent;

-Whereas, the height of land where the Arctic and Atlantic watersheds diverge is a major feature of the Northern Route as a historic marker of achievement for those travelling west. Situated along Highways 11 and 17 are height of land rest stations which increase the heritage appreciation of the area to a high volume of travellers. The height of land found in the nominated supplementary section also complements the acknowledged height of land found along the BWVW;

Therefore, it is recommended by the Province of Ontario that, upon completion of a management strategy within three years of the acceptance of this supplementary nomination, the amended BWVW be designated to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System for the purpose of recognizing, protecting, celebrating, and conserving the river's outstanding cultural, natural and recreational heritage values.

# Lakehead

## UNIVERSITY

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Peter Boyle,  
Manager, Program Development and Implementation  
Fort William Historical Park  
1350 King Road  
Thunder Bay, Ontario  
P7K 1L7

RE: Application to the Canadian Heritage Rivers System for Nomination (Extension) of the Boundary Waters ~ Voyageur Waterway to include the "Northern Route"

July 3, 2012

Dear Mr Boyle,

I have read the nomination report (July 2012 draft) to include the "Northern Route" as an additional component to the Boundary Waters ~ Voyageur Waterway (BWVW) Canadian Heritage River Systems (CHRS) designation. I am familiar with the nomination report through my contact with the "Heart of the Continent Partnership," whose mission "to sustain and celebrate the health, beauty, diversity and productivity of the natural and cultural resources of the border lakes region through collaboration to meet the needs of present and future generations" the university supports.

I recognize both the natural and cultural significance of the "Northern Route," and strongly support your efforts to have the nomination of the BWVW designation extended to include it. For their part in our collective natural and cultural heritage, the ecosystems in the border lakes region have not only a significance for all Canadians but also for the United States. My research includes collation of information on past activities on both sides of the border to investigate and manage the forests of the region; I can endorse your summary of the justification for the CHRS designation based on this extensive set of information that backs the designation. My own research also includes new investigation of the lake sturgeon populations of the Namakan River portion of the "Northern Route" that illustrates the significance of this species to the region's natural and cultural heritage. Please let me know if you need further information as you submit your application to the CHRS; allow me also to offer you my best wishes for its success!

Yours truly,  
Brian McLaren  
Associate Professor  
Graduate Studies Coordinator