

# ANNUAL REPORT

2016

## Path of the Paddle Association

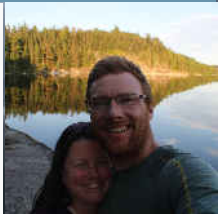


Photo credit: Paul & Hadley

For the development, stewardship and sustainability of water trails, including the Trans Canada Trail, in Northwestern Ontario. For paddlers now, and for the generations after us.



---

1200

Kilometers of water trail

---

170

Kilometers of Trail Gap

---

86 %

Completed

---

# About Path of the Paddle

The Path of the Paddle water trail in NW Ontario spans from Great Lakes to the edge of the prairies and includes the world's largest inland sea, historic waterways that have been traversed by canoe for thousands of years and soaring eagles, sweeping white pines and lakes teeming with fish.

Path of the Paddle Association is a volunteer driven not-for-profit, tasked with completing the Trans Canada Trail in Northwestern Ontario from Thunder Bay to Manitoba, a 1200km water trail for canoes and kayaks.

Providing on the ground volunteer support are Regional Trail Committees in Thunder Bay, Atikokan, Dryden and Kenora that provide on the ground volunteer support. The Board provides oversight with day to day operations being taken care of by General Manager Carrie Nolan and Administrative Assistant Alexa Haberer. With the combined efforts of the Board, Regional Trail Committees and Staff, the trail is more than 3/4 completed.

***Renowned paddler and filmmaker Bill Mason grew up learning to paddle in the vicinity of Path of the Paddle which is why our trail is named in his honour, aiming to provide an optimal recreation experience for paddlers and promote this area as a paddling destination.***

This summer, we are launching two Trail Ambassadors to share the trail through their eyes and experiences as they canoe its entire length. To follow their trip and learn more, please visit our website:

[www.pathofthepaddleassociation.com](http://www.pathofthepaddleassociation.com)



Like on us Facebook  
Follow us on Instagram:  
[path\\_of\\_the\\_paddle](https://www.instagram.com/path_of_the_paddle)  
Follow us on Twitter  
[@paddlepath](https://twitter.com/paddlepath)



## A Message from our Chair



What a great year for the Path of the Paddle (POP)! It was a banner year; our best yet. Two outstanding and critical events this year were the epic transits of the entire Path of the Paddle. First, Carrie (our General Manager) and her husband, Jon, had a wonderful adventure paddling, assessing and correcting, signing, upgrading and documenting the POP. Second, we hired Student Trail Ambassadors, two highly experienced paddlers and outstanding young folks: Hadley Burns and Paul Schram. Hadley and Paul met some fascinating fellow paddlers, the good folks of Thunder Bay, Atikokan, Dryden, Kenora and First Nations during their fascinating voyage along the Path of the Paddle, through the very heart of marvelous northwest Ontario.

A trail crew from the Atikokan Regional Trail Committee (RTC) completed ~100 km of a trail with first-class portages, and the Kenora RTC route to the Manitoba border was finalized, and, of course, paddled. Our engaging and large Path of the Paddle trailhead signs with maps were placed at Fort William Historical Park and at Rushing River Provincial Park outside of Kenora.

The POP Association (POPA) Annual General Meeting was held at a rented house just off the Path of the Paddle on Lake of the Woods near Kenora. This was a perfect opportunity and venue to concentrate on issues of the Path of the Paddle. Peter Sorenson is a new member of the Board for the Atikokan RTC. Peter has a long history of trail making and paddling. In fact, he, as Clara Butikofer, can see our trail from his home.

I wish to thank the Board and Carrie for their excellent work. The POPA is clearly at the brink of completing our trail this year and we are making strong progress for its perpetuation.

*Ed Shields*

## With thanks to Funders, Sponsors & Partners



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Ed Shields**, Chair  
Thunder Bay, 2013-Present

**Brian Miles**, Vice Chair,  
Dryden, 2013-2016

**Robert Onysko**, Secretary,  
Kenora, 2013-Present

**Paula Sanders**, Atikokan,  
Treasurer, 2013-2015

**Clara Butikofer**, Thunder Bay  
2015-Present

**Michelle Savoie**, Atikokan  
2014-Present

**Vic Prokopchuk**, Atikokan  
2013-2015

**Jack Harrison**, Dryden  
2013-2015

**Jennifer Findlay**, Kenora  
2013-2016

**Peter Sorensen**, Atikokan  
2015-Present

And to our donors including members and supporters of the Lake of the Woods Trails Committee, who kept the vision alive.

---

***“When one dreams of paddling, it is of this place that one dreams.” ~Carrie Nolan~***

---



## **Carrie Nolan**

General Manager

Recognized as a Kickass Canadian in 2012 for her work on and for waterways, Carrie comes to Path of the Paddle as an experienced paddler (having paddled across the country and guided for Black Feather) and manager (having worked in higher education, in the classroom and as an administrator). She loves working with people that are attracted to such a visionary task as the Path of the Paddle and the Trans Canada Trail. Carrie began working with the Path of the Paddle as General Manager in the Fall of 2014 and hopes her efforts will see the trail both completed and well known!

## **Alexa Haberer**

Administrative Assistant/Risk Manager

With a combination of extensive wilderness experience with Outward Bound and Black Feather Wilderness Adventure Company and a Masters in Education, Path of the Paddle lucked out to get Alexa on board, helping in the summer with risk management and currently helping to keep 'the boat afloat' so to speak by taking care of communications and administrative tasks.

## **Erik Bertram and Brynley Hanson-Wright**

Trail Ambassadors

Brynley comes to Path of the Paddle having canoed the Coppermine and Keele Rivers in the NWT as well as the Bloodvein River. She is a second year student in Integrated Science at MacMaster University and a part of the rowing team there.

Erik has summited Mt. Kilimanjoro and paddled the Coulonge and Noire Rivers with Outward Bound. He is a fourth year Kinesiology student at MacMaster University and also part of the rowing team.

Together, this pair impressed Path of the Paddle with their creativity, love of challenges and high accolades from those that have seen them in rugged conditions. We look forward to sharing in their journey on our trail this summer.

You can follow their trip at <http://pathofthepaddleamb.wix.com/brynleyanderik>



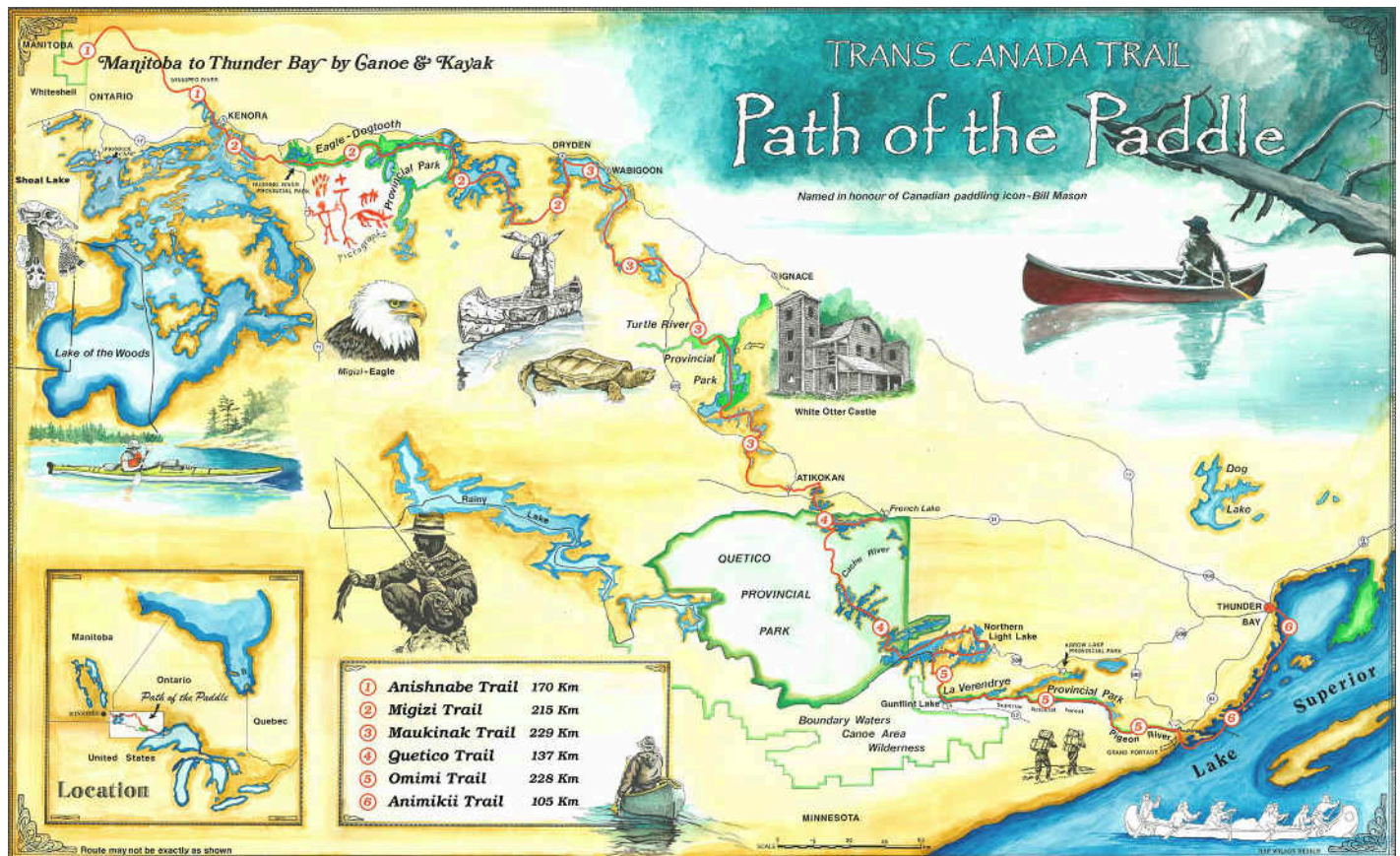

---

*Trying to sit down and memorize formulas [for final exams] is next to impossible when all we can do is dream about campsites on silent lakes, surviving portages, and meeting incredible people along the way.*  
~Brynley & Erik~

---



# Our Trails



Path of the Paddle consists of six connected trails from Thunder Bay to MB

## Animikii

Thunder Bay to  
Grand Portage  
National  
Monument  
Length: 114km  
Gap: 0km  
Complete: 100%

## Omimi

Grand Portage  
National Monument  
to Quetico  
Provincial Park  
Length: 184km Gap:  
0km  
Complete: 100%

## Quetico

Quetico  
Provincial  
Park to Atikokan  
Length: 208km  
Gap: 0km  
Complete: 100%

## Maukinak

Atikokan to  
Dryden Length:  
228.5km  
Gap: 0km  
Complete: 100%

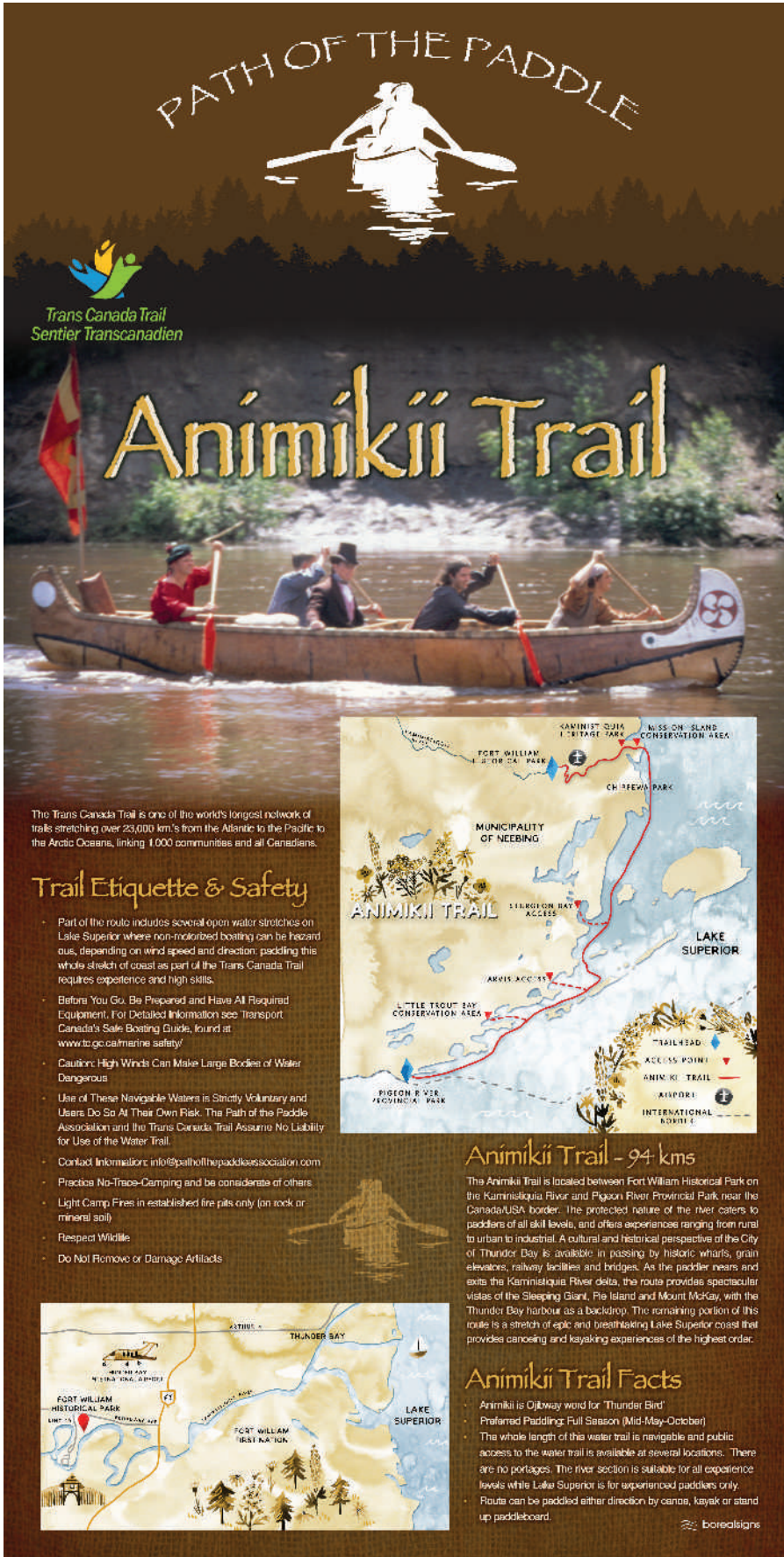
## Migizi

Dryden to Kenora  
Length: 229km  
Gap: 0km  
Complete: 100%

## Anishinabe

Kenora to  
Whiteshell  
Provincial Park  
Length: 170km  
Gap: 170km  
Complete: 0%





**PATH OF THE PADDLE**


Trans Canada Trail  
Sentier Transcanadien

# Animikii Trail

The Trans Canada Trail is one of the world's longest network of trails stretching over 23,000 km's from the Atlantic to the Pacific to the Arctic Oceans, linking 1,000 communities and all Canadians.

## Trail Etiquette & Safety

- Part of the route includes several open water stretches on Lake Superior where non-motorized boating can be hazardous, depending on wind speed and direction; paddling this whole stretch of coast as part of the Trans Canada Trail requires experience and high skills.
- Before You Go, Be Prepared and Have All Required Equipment. For Detailed Information see Transport Canada's Safe Boating Guide, found at [www.tc.gc.ca/marine/safety/](http://www.tc.gc.ca/marine/safety/)
- Caution: High Winds Can Make Large Bodies of Water Dangerous
- Use of These Navigable Waters is Strictly Voluntary and Users Do So At Their Own Risk. The Path of the Paddle Association and the Trans Canada Trail Assume No Liability for Use of the Water Trail.
- Contact Information: [info@pathofthepaddleassociation.com](mailto:info@pathofthepaddleassociation.com)
- Practice No-Trace-Camping and be considerate of others.
- Light Camp Fires in established fire pits only (on rock or mineral soil)
- Respect Wildlife
- Do Not Remove or Damage Artifacts




### Animikii Trail - 94 kms

The Animikii Trail is located between Fort William Historical Park on the Kaministiquia River and Pigeon River Provincial Park near the Canada/USA border. The protected nature of the river caters to paddlers of all skill levels, and offers experiences ranging from rural to urban to industrial. A cultural and historical perspective of the City of Thunder Bay is available in passing by historic wharfs, grain elevators, railway facilities and bridges. As the paddler nears and exits the Kaministiquia River delta, the route provides spectacular vistas of the Sleeping Giant, Pelee Island and Mount McKay, with the Thunder Bay harbour as a backdrop. The remaining portion of this route is a stretch of epic and breathtaking Lake Superior coast that provides canoeing and kayaking experiences of the highest order.

### Animikii Trail Facts

- Animikii is Ojibway word for 'Thunder Bird'
- Preferred Paddling: Full Season (Mid-May-October)
- The whole length of this water trail is navigable and public access to the water trail is available at several locations. There are no portages. The river section is suitable for all experience levels while Lake Superior is for experienced paddlers only.
- Route can be paddled either direction by canoe, kayak or stand up paddleboard.



[www.boredesigns.com](http://www.boredesigns.com)

## In 2015, Path of the Paddle:

- ❖ Installed 2 Trailhead Signs
- ❖ Installed wayfinding signs on portages on Animikii, Quetico, Maukinak, Migizi and Anishnabe Trails
- ❖ Re-routed the trail through Quetico
- ❖ Created 27 portages
- ❖ Created 48 campsites
- ❖ Hired Administrative Assistant
- ❖ Hired Trails Officer and Three Trails Technicians
- ❖ Hired Two Trails Ambassadors to paddle trail (second trip of entire trail, first being GM Carrie and husband Jon)
- ❖ Hosted the Reel Paddling Film Festival in Kenora and Dryden
- ❖ Presented at Canoeconopia, Thunder Bay's Outdoor Recreation show and at Wilderness Supply in Thunder Bay and Winnipeg
- ❖ Had multiple publications do pieces on the trail, including Northern Wilds Magazine, Kenora's Stuff Magazine, Heart of the Continent Newsletter, Thunder Bay Chronicle, Atikokan Progress, Kenora's Daily Miner, the Dryden Observer and the Winnipeg Free Press
- ❖ Entered 10 minute documentary film on Jon and Carrie's trip in Water Walker Film Festival and won 'Best Inspirational Film' 2016
- ❖ Had over 45,000 engagements on social media with various posts on the trail

## In 2016, Path of the Paddle will:

- ❖ Install 7 Trailhead Signs
- ❖ Install Wayfinding Signs on Omimi Trail
- ❖ Create/Upgrade 7 portages
- ❖ Create/Upgrade 70 campsites
- ❖ Hire two more Trail Ambassadors paddle trail
- ❖ Hire Trails Officer to lead campsite development on Lake Superior, in the Dryden area and on the Winnipeg River
- ❖ Write Guidebook
- ❖ Create Map Series



P.O. Box 33023 Red River PO  
Thunder Bay, ON P7B 0B1  
[info@pathofthepaddleassociation.com](mailto:info@pathofthepaddleassociation.com)

