

To: John Winters, Superintendent of Algonquin Provincial Park

To: Adair Ireland-Smith, Managing Director of Ontario Parks

Subject: Google Maps' provision of driving directions to backcountry locations over Algonquin Forestry Authority restricted logging roads.

The Algonquin Backcountry Recreationalists is hereby reporting to both Algonquin Provincial Park and Ontario Parks, its concern over the practice of Google Maps of providing online driving directions to Algonquin Park backcountry locations via Algonquin Forestry Authority's logging roads.

The Google website address involved is .. <http://maps.google.ca/maps?hl=en&tab=wl>

We have concerns for a couple of reasons ...

- Use of these roads detracts from the wilderness-like environment that legitimate canoeing and hiking recreationalists enjoy in the park's backcountry. The AFA provides operations schedule and summer haulage route maps so that their equipment and vehicle noise may be avoided when recreationalists plan their trips. In addition, the ABR recognizes that First Nations harvesters are allowed access to some of the logging roads. However, the ABR believes that Google Maps providing vehicular driving instructions to remote backcountry locations by way of restricted logging roads can only detract from the backcountry's wilderness-like nature and is contrary to the park management plan's intent.
- Also, the ABR believes that Google Maps' provision of public online driving directions along the restricted logging roads may encourage members of the general public to disregard warning signs and to put themselves in harm's way. Logging trucks, specially when fully loaded, have a limited capability to stop quickly. Abrupt hills and blind curves could very easily result in a terrible head-on collision. As well, the rough conditions that sometimes exist on the logging roads could easily result in single vehicle accidents or breakdowns miles from emergency services.

For these reasons, the Algonquin Backcountry Recreationalists request that Algonquin Provincial Park and/or Ontario Parks contact Google Maps and insist that any and all references to restricted logging roads be excluded from their online map service.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. We appreciate receiving any updates relating to it.

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