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WIDDIFIELD FOREST PROVINCIAL PARK (P146)

FACT SHEET

January 2003

Background

On July 16, 1999, the Ontario Government released the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy to guide the planning and management of Crown lands in Central and parts of Northern Ontario. A major part of the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy was a government intent to establish 378 new protected areas. This commitment marks the biggest expansion of provincial parks and conservation reserves in Ontario's history. Following public and aboriginal consultation in the winter of 1999 on refining the boundary of the Widdifield Forest Provincial Park, Ontario Regulation 951 of the Provincial Parks Act was amended on December 7, 2002 by Ontario Regulation 311/02 to formally establish this provincial park.

Size and Location

Widdifield Forest is located within the northern portion of Widdifield Township extending into the southern part of Mulock Township. The 2,170-hectare site is 20-km northeast of North Bay just west of the village of Redbridge.

Area Highlights

This site is a diverse area of landforms and representative vegetation communities. The hilly glacial deposits of sand, clay, silt and rich soils are covered by mature stands of sugar maple, yellow birch and eastern hemlock. Some trees in the forest have been found to be from 120 to 170 years old, remnants of a much older forest. The deep loamy soils present here are uncommon for this site district (5E6). These site attributes have created an uncharacteristic combination of landform and vegetation not found in other locally protected areas. The most northerly portion of the Widdifield Forest consists of a large wetland which is comprised of marsh, poor fen and conifer swamp. The centre of the forest contains small, shallow, beavercontrolled lakes and ponds, which provide water to several small lakes to the north and the low-lying wetland. The cold waters of these lakes are also an important source for three major brook trout streams the North River, Widdifield Creek and Redbridge Creek systems, which flow into the Mattawa River. This site, combining its unique landforms and at least 20 distinct vegetation communities, is important habitat for waterfowl, large mammals and several rare and uncommon species of plants.

Land Use Intent

Provincial parks are areas of Crown land set aside by regulation under the Provincial Parks Act. The Land Use Strategy establishes the Ministry's intent to manage this park as a natural environment class provincial park. Provincial parks protect Ontario's representative natural areas and special landscapes. They provide opportunities for outstanding recreational activities. Most recreational activities (e.g., hiking, hunting, fishing, skiing, tourism related uses, nature appreciation) that have traditionally been enjoyed in the area will continue, provided that these uses do not impact on the natural features needing protection. Natural environment parks incorporate outstanding recreational landscapes with representative natural and historical features to provide high quality recreational and educational experiences. Visitors to these parks will enjoy spectacular landscapes along with interesting natural and historical features, as well as an impressive variety of things to do such as hiking, canoeing, swimming and camping. Natural environment parks often contain developed recreation facilities, but their rich and varied environments are the main reason for their establishment. Activities permitted in this classification of park range from backcountry travel and camping in larger park interiors such as Algonquin and Lake Superior to camping, hunting, fishing, boating, hiking, picnicking, biking and swimming. Commercial timber harvesting, mining, aggregate extraction and commercial hydroelectric development are prohibited in provincial parks. New private access roads and new resource access roads are not permitted in provincial parks unless a prior written commitment has been made, with the exception of necessary access to existing mining claims, leases and patents enclosed by the provincial park. The establishment of this provincial park addition does not extinguish existing Aboriginal and treaty rights.

Next Steps

In the future, Ontario Parks will prepare an Interim Management Statement to document the known values and uses of the area. This will provide custodial management policies until a detailed park management plan is prepared. Planning, management and the uses permitted within this park will be consistent with the commitments of the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy and Ontario Provincial Parks Planning and Management Policies (1992). Planning, management and permitted uses within this provincial park will be consistent with the commitments of the Ontario's Living Legacy Land Use Strategy.

For More Information

For further information on the Widdifield Forest Provincial Park, please contact: William Kershaw, Management Planner, Ontario Parks, North East Zone, 4th Floor Government Building, 199 Larch Street, Sudbury, ON, P3E 5P9, Phone (705) 564-3168, Fax (705) 564-3171. You may also visit the Ministry's Internet website at www.ontarioslivinglegacy.com for information about Ontario's Living Legacy. Cette fiche de renseignements est également disponible en français.

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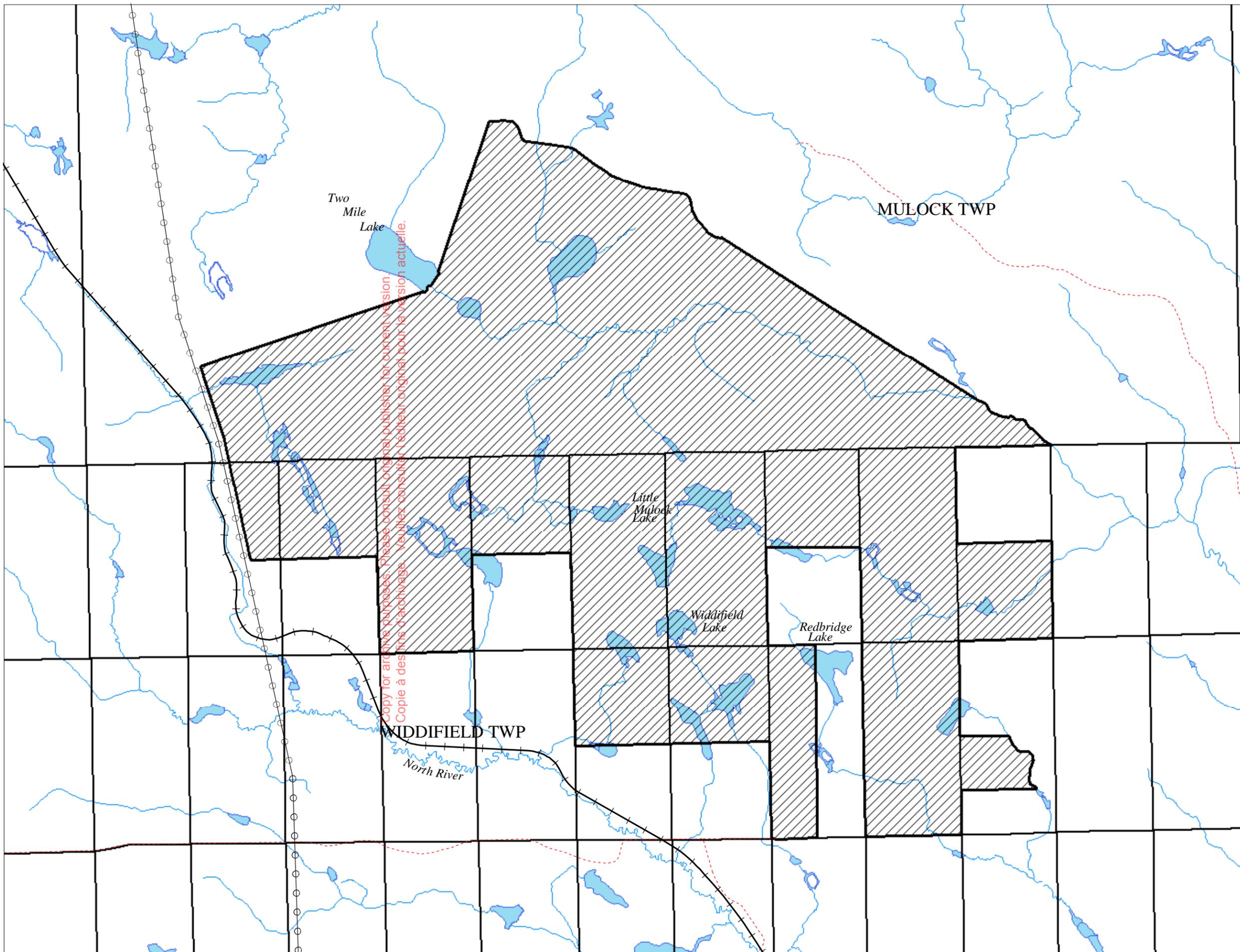
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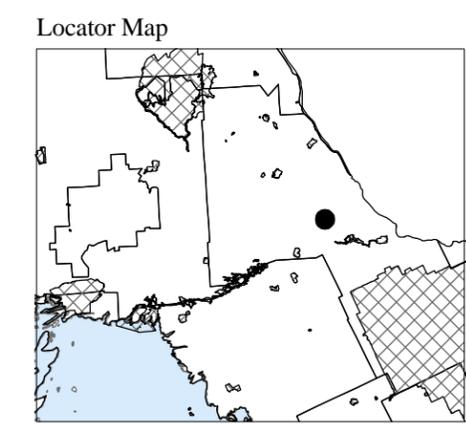
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Approved Boundary
Public Notification Map
Widdifield Forest
Provincial Park
P146



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-  Widdifield Forest Provincial Park
-  Forest Reserves
-  Existing Protected Areas
-  Lakes
-  NS - Excluded from Approved Boundary
-  Streams
-  Lot Lines
-  Townships
-  Roads
-  Utility Lines
-  Railroad Tracks



This map is illustrative only. Do not rely on it as being a precise indicator of routes, locations of features, nor as a guide to navigation.

This map is not a legal survey. For a more precise description of the boundaries of this provincial park, refer to the plan known as P146, Widdifield Forest Provincial Park, filed on the 7th day of December, 2002 in the office of the Surveyor General, Ministry of Natural Resources.

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