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Reflections on Living Simply in the Woods...

As we welcome the return of the hundreds of migrating birds that make their summer home in our backyard, it's like we are witnessing this glorious spectacle for the first time. This is what happens when you live with a toddler who is day by day discovering the wonders of the natural world and is absolutely ecstatic over the caw of a crow and the honk of a goose! And although he is not even two years old, we are very grateful for Finn's teachings: live in the now, be constantly aware of the wonder that surrounds us and embrace it!



Here's to being outside this summer! Enjoy! ...Jenny, Jim & Finn

Ministry of Natural Resources Decision Deferred. Phew...for now.

This spring marks the first victory in a battle to save the protected land that surrounds the Sundog Outfitters basecamp. The Vermillion River Delta Forest Reserve was destined to be eliminated from Ontario's Living Legacy list of protected areas due to perceived 'conflicts' with active mining claims. Given the protected land was the primary reason we established Sundog where it is today, we could not sit back and watch it dissolve into unprotected Crown Land. Therefore we launched a public awareness campaign that resulted in dozens of letters from the public to the Ministry of Natural Resources requesting that the protected status of the Forest Reserve remain intact. Thanks to many of YOU and the support from local media and environmental and tourism lobby organizations, the MNR has deferred making a decision on two local forest reserves including the Vermillion River Delta. Unfortunately we have yet to hear what the decision is going to be but we are hopeful that given the result of the public outcry and opposition to the proposal, the government will make the obvious choice and reconsider. We'll keep you all posted!



Vermillion River Delta Paddle: Sunday, May 28

You are invited to join Sundog Outfitters on a guided paddle of the beautiful **Vermillion River Delta Forest Reserve** in celebration of the recent decision to defer the removal of its protected status. As one of the only designated Provincially Significant wetlands in Greater Sudbury, birding and wildlife viewing in the springtime will not be disappointing! If you require a canoe rental, there will be a small fee of \$10 per canoe for the tour and canoe reservations must be made in advance. We have one solo touring kayak available for \$10 as well. Paddles and PFD's are included. If you have your own canoe, please join us free of charge. Bring along water,

snacks/lunch, sun hat, sun screen, bug repellent/jacket, rain gear, wind breaker, & water shoes. In the event of heavy rain or a thunder storm, the paddling tour will be cancelled. Start time: 9am at Sundog Outfitters. Tour is expected to be ~2 hrs. Please call or email to register and for directions to our location.

Directions to Sundog Outfitters from Sudbury: Travel West along Regional Road 35 or Elm Street (which turns into Highway 144 at Chelmsford) through Azilda, Chelmsford and Dowling. Turn left onto New Cobden Road, just West of Dowling. At the T-intersection and stop sign turn LEFT onto Simmons Road, travel 300 metres along Simmons Road then take your first RIGHT onto New Cobden Road where it continues once more. Travel approximately 4 km to the end of New Cobden Road. Take the RIGHT hand fork at the end of New Cobden Rd. (called New Cobden Road Extension). Continue along the gravel road and Sundog is located about 3 km after the fork. The gate into basecamp is located on the LEFT and just beyond that around the corner is our log house...the first building that you encounter on the gravel road. If there is no one at basecamp, please check in with us at the house by the lake.

Spring 2006 ORCA Moving Water Course a Grand Success!



Congratulations to all course participants who successfully completed the ORCA Moving Water 1A tandem course at Sundog this spring. Lots of fun and learning and a few swims were had all around...except for Beth and Darren who somehow managed to stay dry? The group of whitewater enthusiasts enjoyed paddling 'Guse Rapids' on the Vermillion River and a scenic river run down Bannerman Creek. Levels were just right and the weather was cool enough to keep the blackflies away and warm enough to keep everyone content...even in the drink! Surf the nurf and slice the white, man. Right on.



Spanish River Provincial Park Status Quo for 2006

Ontario Parks staff have indicated that the Spanish River will remain a non-operating provincial park for 2006. This means that **no park fees will be collected and no park permits will be required** in order to travel within park boundaries. The Spanish River has been a regulated provincial park for several years now, however, an approved Management Plan must be completed prior to the park gaining operating status. There will be some interior maintenance occurring throughout the paddling season to keep portages clear and campsites free of garbage (hopefully). So if you see Mike and Court, say a big Thank You to them for helping keep the Spanish the best river canoe route in Ontario!

Outfitting Tips for your Spanish River Canoe Trip

Many-a-paddler return to the Spanish River for their annual river canoe trip and there are many reasons why this is: the easy white water, the remoteness, the scenery, the rich cultural history, the big pine forests, the great canoe route infrastructure (access, campsites and portages), the flexibility in trip length, and of course, we can't forget the VIA Rail Budd Car experience! Sundog Outfitters has been outfitting and guiding paddlers on the Spanish River for 7 years now (holy cow time flies) and so when it comes to tripping advice, there's no doubt who you should call. Here are a few tips that will help you plan your trip:

1. Choose your timing and dates: the Spanish offers many canoe trip options, however, the train schedule may conflict with your schedule. The train runs north on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays so if you want to head to Bisco, Sinker Creek, the Forks, Sheahan or Pog, your schedule will have to coincide with the train.



2. Decide what type of white water trip you want: If it's easy white water and little to no portaging, the East Branch from Duke Lake all the way down past the Forks to the Elbow is a good choice. If you want a longer, more remote trip that includes easy portaging around highly technical rapids and waterfalls, then consider the West Branch from Bisco or Sinker Creek. Any trips that begin or extend beyond the Elbow will encounter the Graveyard Rapids - a series of 3 waterfalls that require short portages, however, the stretch between the Elbow and Agnew Lake, in our opinion, is the most scenic and feels very remote. The Provincial Park boundary ends at the mouth of the river into Agnew Lake.



3. Choose your paddling equipment wisely: We're not sure how many damaged and demolished Kevlar canoes we've seen on the river but all we can say is: USE ABS. The Spanish is runnable all season, however, swifts and rapids tend to get very shallow even in July and there is always some bumpin' and grindin' goin' on. That's why we rent ABS Royalex canoes that are made for rivers like the Spanish. Call us if you need one!

4. Be familiar with all safe boating regulations in Ontario. If you aren't sure of what these are, check with your local Ministry of Natural Resources or Transportation office or ask us! ALWAYS wear your PFD when paddling in fast water and rapids. Helmets worn during rapid running are also a good idea. Don't drink alcohol while whitewater canoeing...it's dangerous, plain and simple. If you want to enjoy a drink or two on your trip, save it for camp & please do not bring glass bottles.

5. Spanish River Valley Flatwater Routes: If you are into lake water paddling (and portaging) there are a multitude of trips you can take West of the Spanish River, all accessible by the Budd Car. Lose yourself in a pristine, rarely traveled wilderness for a couple of days on up to two weeks...all you have to do is call Sundog for details.

