

Give provincial parks a boost on Parks Day

July 20, 2007



Sign our online petition at www.saveontarioparks.ca

Saturday, July 21 is Parks Day across Canada. To mark the day, OPSEU president Smokey Thomas is calling on park lovers everywhere to voice their support for Ontario's provincial parks by signing the online petition at www.saveontarioparks.ca.

"Last summer, members of our union spoke out loud and clear against cuts to park staff," Thomas said. "The result of that campaign was an increase in provincial funding for our parks, but it was not enough.

"We are calling on everyone who loves our provincial parks to join our campaign and help making funding for parks and the great outdoors an issue in the Oct. 10 provincial election."

In a guest editorial today in the Peterborough *Examiner*, Thomas noted that Ontario's protected areas cover nine per cent of the province but receive just \$15.3 million a year in operating funds from Queen's Park.

"Ontario's park system raises 78 per cent of its total budget from user fees and other charges," said Thomas. "This is by far the highest rate of any province in Canada.

"Parks funding must be an issue in the Oct. 10 election."

Buy the t-shirt!

The cool new Save Ontario Parks t-shirts are in! They are white with the Save Ontario Parks logo (above) and cost \$15. To order yours, contact Mary-Anne Di Adamo at mdiadamo@opseu.org. Locals may buy in bulk and have the cost deducted from local rebates.

Join the OPSEU Eco-Net!

Further to OPSEU's 2006 report, *Greening OPSEU* (see <http://www.opseu.org/notices/greeningopseu.htm>), OPSEU green campaigner Dave Fluri has set up the OPSEU Eco-Net on Facebook, a leading social networking site on the web. It's open to everyone interested in environmental issues. Sign up to www.facebook.com and look for the group called OPSEU Eco-Net.

Watch Gord Miller videos!

In 2006, OPSEU operated highly successful web sites at www.saveontarioparks.ca and www.savethemnr.ca. Both sites have been completely re-vamped to get ready for the upcoming provincial election campaign. The new sites include a lot more information from *Doing Less with Less*, the recent report of the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario. Visitors to www.savethemnr.ca can view videos of Commissioner Gord Miller talking about his report.