

Toronto Star Update On Wolf Lake: Still Very Much Howling At The Door

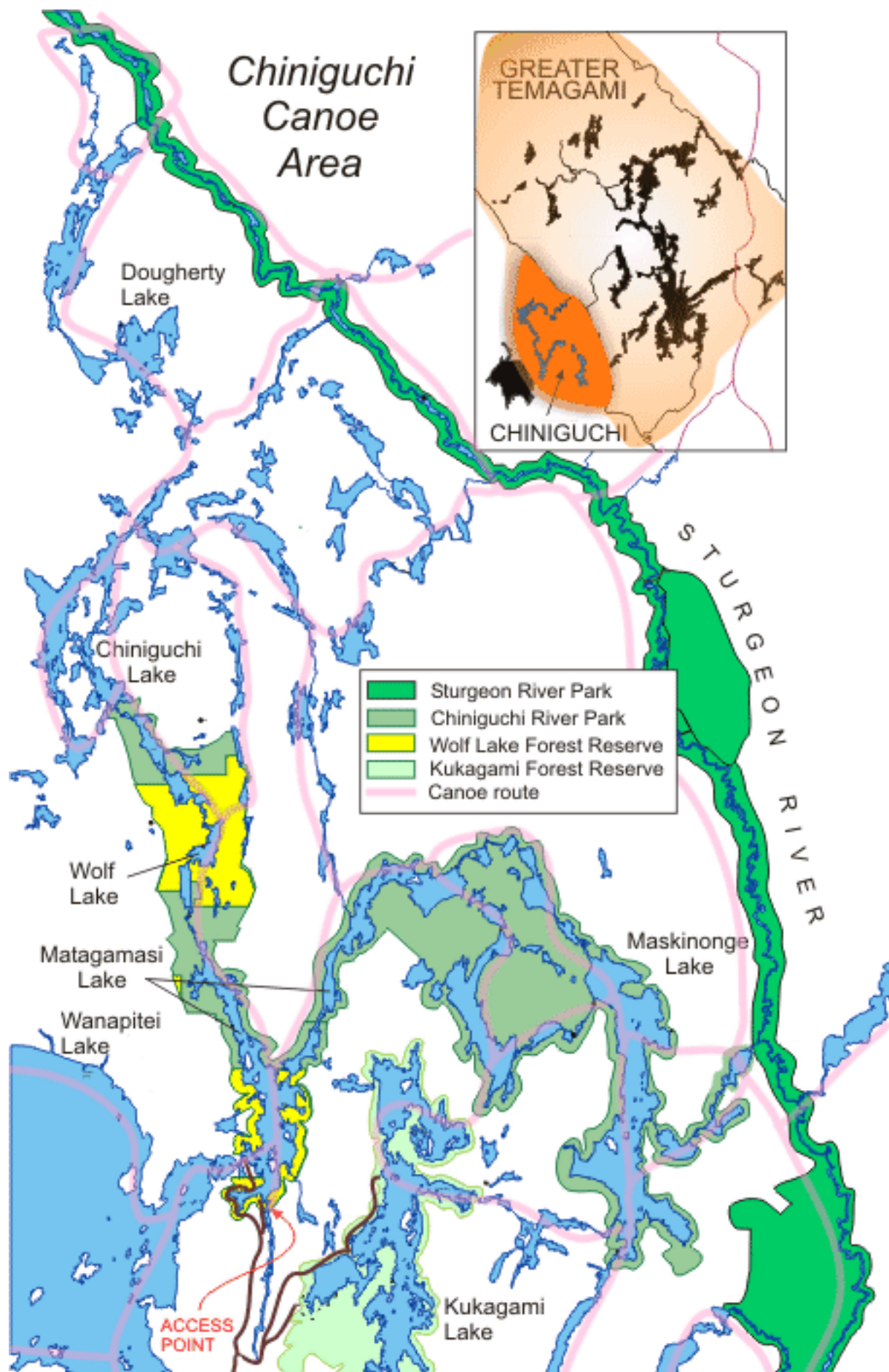
December 12, 2011 in

Archibald Lampman captured and put to words his Temagami vision of beauty, fierce nature, and mystery:

### Temagami

**"Far in the grim Northwest beyond the lines That turn the rivers eastward to the sea, Set with a thousand islands, crowned with pines Lies the deep water, wild Temagami: Wild for the hunter's roving, and the use Of trappers in its dark and trackless vales, Wild with the trampling of the giant moose, And the weird magic of old Indian tales. All day we saw the thunder-travelled sky Purpled with storm in many a trailing tress, And saw at eve the broken sunset die In crimson on the silent wilderness." - by Archibald Lampman (1861-1899)**

Temagami is one of my favourite areas....an amazing area....rich with a beautiful panorama of water, trees and rock....Native culture, heritage, history and tradition....colourful characters like Grey Owl....canoe tripping....several youth camps....a place still largely wilderness....with very special spots like old growth forests....Maple Mountain....Ishipatina....Chiniguichi....and so much more....



Map from Ottertooth,  
<http://www.ottertooth.com/Temagami/Sites/chiniguchi.htm>.

As Brian Black describes Chiniguchi, in  
<http://www.ottertooth.com/Temagami/Sites/chini1.htm>, as:

*There are plenty of canoeists who have never heard of Chiniguchi — Temagami West. They've missed the royal-blue lakes and relatively easy portaging between its good-sized lakes.*

*Crystalline lagoons, old-growth red pine, aboriginal pictographs, and hilltop lookouts keep most canoeists on an easy-to-reach band of lakes — Chiniguchi, Wolf and Matagamasi — at the core. A quartzite band of rock running from Chiniguchi to Wolf Lake makes it reminiscent of Killarney, but without the travel restrictions of a park. Get off these often-bustling destinations and the rest of the area is yours.*

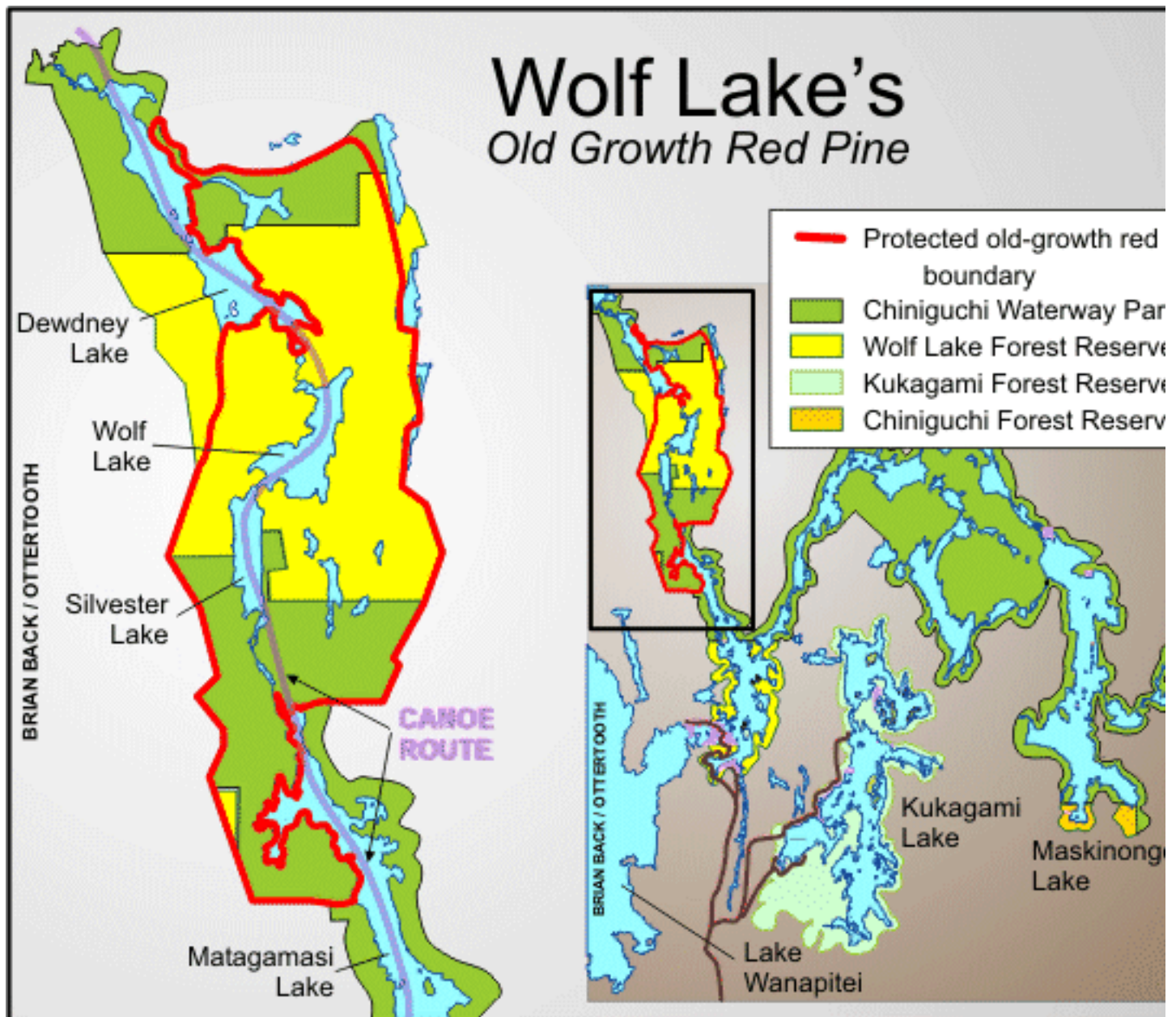
In one of my favourite Temagami haunts, Chiniguchi, lies WolfLake....this article from Ottertooth.com describes the old growth red pines found around WolfLake, <http://www.ottertooth.com/Temagami/Sites/chini5.htm>. In this article, Brian Back wrote:

*THE WORLD'S LARGEST remaining old-growth red pine forest surrounds Wolf Lake, containing trees between 140 and 300 years old. Canoeists paddle through, captivated by the rugged ridges, crystal-clear water and quartzite scarps, oblivious to the ecological treasure surrounding them.*



Wolf Lake looking east, photo by David Bourdelais, from  
<http://www.ottertooth.com/Temagami/Sites/chini5.htm>.

# Wolf Lake's Old Growth Red Pine



Map of Wolf Lake's old growth forest, from <http://www.ottertooth.com/Temagami/Sites/chini5.htm>.

It is interesting to me that earlier today I posted about a teaching around life....involving a story of two wolves....and incorporated into a picture by Norman Knott called *Howling Wolf*....and I have written several times here about the situation involving Wolf Lake....in fact usually saying something in those posts about *The Wolf Howling At The Door*....this Toronto Star article, <http://www.thestar.com/news/article/1100528-ontario-breaks-temagami-pledge?bn=1>, published online today pretty well touches on many of the highlights of the story (I have chosen to post the entire article):

***Ontario breaks Temagami pledge***

*Moira Welsh Staff Reporter*

*Ontario is planning to kill its promise to protect an ecological gem — an old-growth forest near Temagami.*

*The Ministry of Natural Resources wants to change the "forest reserve" designation for 340 hectares around Wolf Lake to "general use," which puts a greater focus on mining instead of forests and recreation.*

*The only company drilling in the region is Alberta's Flag Resources, which has been delisted or forced to stop trading on stock exchanges across the country. It is currently not trading anywhere.*

*Located some 50 kilometres northeast of Sudbury, Wolf Lake lies in the area commonly called Temagami. It is beloved by hikers and canoeists for its soaring stands of 300-year-old red pines and deep blue lakes.*

*Ontario's Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller said he's "greatly disappointed" by the ministry's plan to backtrack on a long-held agreement to protect Wolf Lake, which would have eventually turned it into parkland.*

*"There is a uniqueness to these forests. They stand for hundreds of years, and they are very important here in Ontario," Miller said.*

*More than double the size of Toronto's High Park, the 340 hectares in question encompass the area where Flag Resources' two mining leases exist.*

*The problem, Miller said, is a "policy conflict" between the natural resources ministry (which is supposed to protect Crown land) and the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (which supports the mining and logging industries).*

*Last spring the northern development ministry renewed Flag Resources' mining lease until 2031. A second 21-year lease is up for renewal next May.*

*A ministry spokesperson said in an email it renewed the lease because "Flag Resources has been exploring in Ontario for over 30 years. Their exploration record in Ontario is in good standing. (This ministry) is unaware of any violations of the Mining Act provisions."*

*If the government did not renew the lease, Wolf Lake could have become protected parkland under its "forest reserve" status. Miller said there is no requirement that the lease renewal be jointly discussed by the two ministries — another example of bad environmental policy.*

*In 2009, he called for changes to the Mining Act that would allow the government to buy out mining claims when there are "clear ecological consequences." No action was taken.*

*"So in the end," he said, "the government's response is this one. They are going to make it general use and open it up."*

*A spokesperson for the Calgary-based Flag Resources, which holds the only two mining leases around Wolf Lake, said there is potential for gold, copper, cobalt and palladium mines. Flag has drilled 200 exploratory holes there since the 1980s, the spokesperson said.*

*"We just finished the holes in the past year," Murdo McLeod said by phone from Calgary. "I am telling you, for god sakes, we've spent over \$8 million there. We're not fooling around."*

*"The ministry (of northern mines and development) is very happy with our work. And the environmentalists have no concern about us. You better make that clear. We've cleaned up everything. There's not a goddamned bush that has been disturbed and we've never had one formal complaint after 200 drill holes."*

*David Sone, of the environmental group [Earthroots](#), said members have complained to the Ontario government for years that mining in general should not be allowed in the Wolf Lake region. The rules concerning clearing land and digging trenches, for example, are just too lax for sensitive land, Sone said.*

*"Instead of protecting the old-growth forest, they are trying to encourage investment in a company that even the stock exchange won't list," Sone said.*

*The TSX Venture Exchange in Toronto delisted Flag Resources in 2005 for failing to meet listing requirements, an exchange spokesperson said. In 2006 the company was ordered to "cease trading" on Alberta and British Columbia exchanges as well.*

*In a letter sent to McLeod at the time, the TSX Venture Exchange said it found McLeod "unsuitable" to serve as a director and officer of a publicly traded company.*

*In 2010, the Alberta Securities Commission upheld the interim order to stop trading of Flag Resources and "permanently prohibited" McLeod from acting as a director of any publicly traded company in the province. The company's appeal was later denied.*

*In the reasons for its decision, the commission cited "serious flaws in (Flag Resources') financial reporting and disclosure practices."*

*The Alberta Commission said McLeod "displayed a disregard" for Alberta securities laws and dismissed rules around financial disclosure "as being, in his view, excessive, not necessary or inappropriate for junior mining companies."*

*But the 84-year-old McLeod described the enforcement as a vendetta against his company and claimed that he, and Flag Resources, had done nothing wrong.*

*"And now as far as us being delisted and everything else, that is an ongoing situation and I would suggest you don't go into it or you are going to have a real legal hassle on your hands," he said.*

*He said the hearings were biased from the start. "We believe that someone is trying to grab a hold of this company because of its potential value."*

*"They will not show us a damn thing we've done wrong."*

*But now, McLeod said, the company has 3,000 shareholders across North America focused on the gold in the ground. He said he has nine potential mining sites with samples of gold and copper in several.*

*If Flag Resources continues with drilling or starts mining, McLeod said he has no plans to build more roads, just "trails" that are wide enough for a truck. "When we are done, it will all go back to the way it was before."*

*The Ministry of Natural Resources changed Wolf Lake's designation without any lobbying from his company, McLeod said.*

*"Hell, no. I didn't know about it until you (asked) about it. I had nothing to do with it."*

*McLeod said he only deals with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, which is mandated to build a prosperous economy in the resource-rich region.*

*The ministry website states: "A treasure trove of minerals lies buried beneath Northern Ontario's stretch of the Canadian Shield. . . . Ontario's known mineral deposits are rich — nickel, gold, silver, platinum, diamonds — and much of the Far North has yet to be explored."*

*The natural resources ministry controls the land's designation. Spokesperson Jolanta Kowalski called the plan a "compromise" to manage the long-term mining claims on the land.*

*The plan was [posted last June](#) on the government's Environmental Registry for a 47-day public review. Kowalski said it does not have a timeline for its final decision.*

*As a compromise, she said the ministry would give a "forest reserve" designation to a piece land farther north. It would "eventually" be larger than Wolf Lake. That region, called Chiniguchi Waterway Provincial Park, has comparable old-growth trees, she said.*

*But Earthroots' Sone and environmental commissioner Miller say it is facetious to suggest Wolf Lake's ecological treasures can be replicated. "You can't just add a bunch of acres that are different or not of the same quality and claim to be satisfied," Miller said.*

*An earlier report commissioned by the ministry concluded Wolf Lake "may be the largest remaining contiguous, old-growth red pine-dominated forest in North America." Miller warned that the "general use" designation will allow forestry companies to start pressuring the government to allow logging. The ministry has said logging would be prohibited, but Miller said the general use designation could overrule a government "promise." "If you want to make an economic argument for employment, it would be an area where you could make a lot of money cutting trees in a time when nobody is making any money cutting trees." "And you are looking at old-growth red pine — meaning it is really good-quality wood."*

*Miller said 88 per cent of the land in question was handed over for industrial use and 12 per cent — regions with unique ecological status — was to be protected.*

*"The rings of those trees contain a history of the climate, and there is a legacy in that," Miller said.*

*"They are our museums, our universities ... there are not a lot of them around and we just can't grow more, mostly because we've already cut them all down."*

So the wolf is still howling at the door....as in the story of the two wolves, which wolf will win????....depends on which one is fed....will it be the one based on exploitation of the natural resources????....where 'trails' (not roads) for trucks will be cut????....or will it be a place of natural beauty????....of water, rocks and trees????....especially old growth red pine forest????

I found this translation on the Ottertooth site for Chiniguchi (*/chi-ni-goo'chee/*):

**Nishnabai translation:**

*Chini-koo-jee-shing*

guts off to the side

If we don't do something to protect this very special area of Wolf Lake, we will be possibly allowing the literal 'gutting' of a natural treasure....we could end up seeing just the 'guts' left lying 'off to the side' where once there was beautiful old growth red pines towering.

Please support groups like the Friends of Temagami....and Earthroots....in preserving this amazing piece of our natural heritage....

Paddles up until later then....and help keep the evil wolf at bay....and from spilling the guts of Wolf Lake....

Like