

2010 Bull Moose Camp News

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Hello to everyone... past, present and future guests and friends! This is the time of year to reflect on the memories of the season past and extend our thanks to everyone who visited and helped make our 21st summer at Bull Moose Camp a special one. As well, we hope you had a wonderful Thanksgiving and would like to wish you all the best for a safe and happy holiday season!

The Season Past

On May 14th we flew aboard one of Green Airways de Havilland Otters with about 1500# of gear and supplies as well as our dogs Popcorn and Peanuts. It was a sunny and warm spring day and below, the breeze made little ripples on the lakes. Spring came early this year and there wasn't a bit of ice in sight anywhere. As we got to Mamakwash, it was clear the water was quite low because we could see rocks exposed that should be well under in the spring. It was just before noon as we pulled up to the dock which was about 4 feet above water as opposed to the normal flush or underwater spring dock! How odd that just last July 31st the lake was 5 ½ to 6 feet higher as we experienced an unusual flood with water clear up around the cabins. Over the winter, most of the precipitation stayed south of the 49th dumping on the mid west but leaving Canada short on snow. It melted early and leaves were budded and even the grass was green! Regardless of the water level, it was a great way to start out the season as we hauled things up from the dock and quickly did an assessment of how things fared the winter. Everything looked just as we'd left it in the fall so we quickly fired up the generator and got busy getting the water on and stowing groceries. After repeated attempts to get the pump to pull water from the lake, it became clear that with the low water, as the ice sheet moved around with the wind after it had melted back from the shores, it had broken the water intake. Nothing a couple of hours and two trips into waist deep water with the waders didn't fix so I again appreciated the warm gentle south breeze and sunshine! By this time Shara had much of the personal gear and office stuff unpacked and put away and we took some time to enjoy a break. Next was getting the phones and Internet service going because obviously we can't run without communications. Within minutes the satellite system for the Internet was up and running but the satellite system dedicated to the phones would not work. It sucks when tech support wants you to call and the phones don't work. As it turned out it took a couple of days to trouble shoot the fact that the service provider had not activated the modem correctly! How nice.

In the next days we opened cabins and dug out equipment from the sheds and buildings in order to get everything ready for the first guests. Cabins cleaned, beds made and dishes put out and water lines sterilized, flushed and running to mention only some of it. Boat ramps, boats, equipment and outboards all hauled down to the beach and assembled and then mixing fresh fuel so everything is ready to fish. At this point it was time to venture out on the lake with the workboat and retrieve the floating dock. We always take it around back in the bay south of camp to hide it behind some islands and protect it from being hit by the moving ice sheet in the spring. Our fixed dock is built like a Sherman Tank and holds up to the ice fairly well but the floater would either be crushed or pushed up on shore where it would be impossible to easily get back in. As I rounded the island where I'd left it last fall, my heart sank a bit to see it sitting almost high and dry where I'd left it anchored in 6 feet of water. The thing is 16 x 20 feet and was perched square on top of a rock and the water was from 2 to 4 inches deep around it. I had high hopes but sadly it only spun in circles when I pulled with the boat. Even after returning with a second outboard motor on the back of the boat and pulling at full throttle, it was hopeless! There were still too many other things to do so I gave up for the time being.

Just around noon on Thursday the 20th our first guests arrived to yet another nice warm sunny day, quickly got their gear stashed and went out fishing. Obviously with so little water in the lake there wasn't much going on in the river and they fished more typical summer spots and did very well. With no sign of rain the water would only get lower so I got out and marked some rocks and even the sandbar out front of the camp which was at less than 3 feet below surface which gets close to where a pontoon could drag in rough seas. Another spot just north of the second island was less than a foot

deep and we never even knew it was there! Going the other direction towards Mamakwash, just around the corner and into the river those rocks right in the middle where actually sticking out a good couple of inches! I decided that it was time to rescue the floating dock so I loaded up some lumber and a couple of 4 foot jack-alls to lift up the back side of the dock and work it off the rock. As I worked in the muddy water and sank up to my knees I smiled and really appreciated the sunshine and warm gentle breeze. It is always nice when you think about those times you had to do something similar in freezing weather and wind! After about an hour and a half it was free and I was on my way back to camp with the dock in tow.

We finally got a little rain on May 23rd but the really fantastic news was that it poured just south of us. With our lakes basically draining an area of about 30 x 50 miles we benefited from that when all kinds of water started flowing in and raising the lakes. Over the next weeks this pattern continued and on June 1 it was up 4", June 2 – 6.5", June 6 -11" and by June 21st we had 18 inches to bring us up to pretty normal summer levels. With the continuing pattern of rain staying south of us, great temperatures combined with more south wind right through August we enjoyed a wonderful season with noticeably fewer mosquitoes than ever!

As far as the fishing went... 2010 was certainly up to par and as an example, one of our regular gangs runs a daily 100 inch contest where you need to get 4 walleye that add up to 100 inches or more. Of the 6 guys in the group, 4 of them made it and in our book, that is pretty darn great! Shara and I even did a bit more fishing this season than most years. On one of our 4 hour excursions on a nice sunny afternoon at the first of July, we had 57 fish of which 4 were decent sized keeper pike, two 20" and one 23 ½" walleye and the remaining 50 were all 16 to 17 inch eater walleye. What fun and the eaters we took in sure made a great supper!

The population of bald and golden Eagles continues to thrive on Upper Goose and Mamakwash. It is sometimes hard to tell the difference between the immature bald and the golden but regardless they're great creatures to watch. On occasion they'll spot a fish in the water and swoop down right close to one of the boats and that's a sight to remember! Though not as frequent as we like, the occasional moose and caribou sightings are other extra thrills and this season we even had one caribou swim out off the point west of camp just as the sun was setting!

The season ended cooler and with more rain in September but it wasn't too bad especially after the entire season of fantastic weather.

Preparations for the upcoming season

Lock in 2010 rates by booking your fishing vacation and paying your deposit by December 31st!

As we prepare for the 2011 season, it appears that the combination of fuel, aviation, insurance and the US dollar exchange rate will require a rate increase of around 5%. That said, we've offered our booked guests the option to lock in the 2010 rates by paying their deposit by December 15th and, in giving the matter some thought, we've decided to make that offer to everyone on our mailing list and extend the deadline to December 31st! If you've been thinking of getting back to Canada for a fishing vacation then it may just be time for you to give us a call or send us an email. As we prepare this letter we've got openings for late May, the first week of June, late July and all of August yet so don't delay!

Thank you! Tom & Shara