

COFAN CABIN

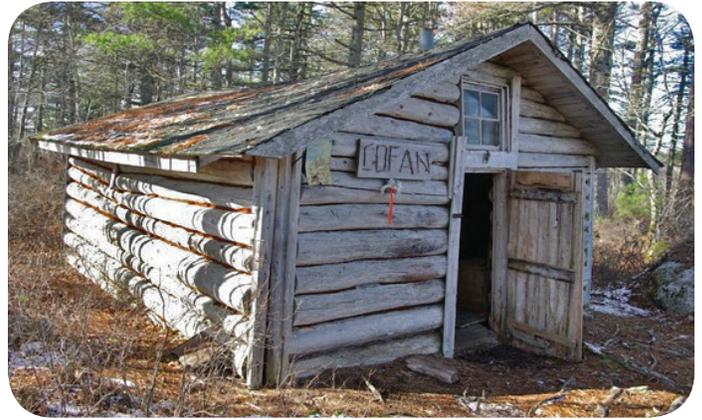


PHOTO: Visitors can begin at Kejimikujik and travel up river to Cofan cabin or down river through the Tobeatic to reach the site. Many rest or overnight at the cabin.

Cofan cabin has stood on the shores of Sand Beach Lake, Tobeatic Wilderness Area, since the late 1920s. It was used by Lands and Forests, and later the Department of Natural Resources, for sanctuary patrols, wildlife research, and other work. The province maintained it until the 1980s.

Now the cabin is deteriorating and needs repair. The province is partnering with Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, a local non-profit group, to rehabilitate this element of cultural heritage central to the history of the Tobeatic.

The cabin, which is associated with Mi'kmaq encampments and transit routes, is part of wilderness and recreational heritage identified in the management plan for Tobeatic Wilderness Area. Recommendations from the province's 2008 heritage evaluation of the structure will guide this project.

CREATING PARTNERSHIPS

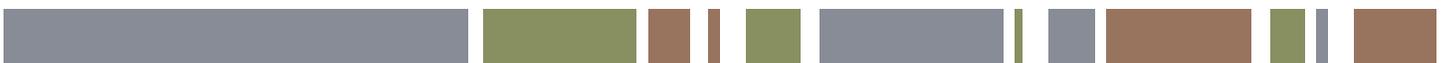
Mersey Tobeatic Research Institute, with the generous financial support of private donors, is sponsoring repairs. A formal management agreement and construction plan will guide this partnership of the cabin.

The institute has assembled a group of volunteers with professional expertise in log construction and other key skills. Nova Scotia Environment and DNR will contribute staff time and resources.

RESTORING A TREASURE

During summer and fall of 2014, a trained team will replace several rotting logs to rehabilitate the cabin, using red pines harvested from the area. Local harvesting is cheaper than flying in materials by helicopter, respects the traditional method of construction and maintenance of the cabin, and reduces the risk of introducing disease into the area through imported logs.

Work on the cabin will include relocating and enlarging a window for fire safety and installing a CSA-approved wood stove and stove pipe.



PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

No plants of special concern were found in a rare-plant survey of the area around the cabin.

All materials and substances for construction will be verified safe for the environment and for people:

- Borax, an all-natural wood preservative, will be used to help prevent insects from burrowing into the logs used for the cabin. This natural borate mineral salt is very safe for both the environment and people (sold under the product name Tim-bor).
- Construction waste will be removed from the site, then sorted, recycled, and disposed of at an approved waste management facility.
- A mobile composting toilet, known as a thunderbox, will be installed to manage human waste. The thunderbox will be located away from any watercourse, and the associated pit will be excavated in mineral soil.

PROTECTING PEOPLE

This project will unite community volunteers and regional experts to improve the safety and lifespan of a favourite stopping place for wilderness travelers.

The construction plan requires that all persons respect applicable health and safety legislation and safe work practices, and participate in a safety briefing before work begins. A work plan will be in place for working in remote places, including a first-aid station, phone access, and other ways to communicate in case of emergency.

FUTURE USE OF THE CABIN

Once renovated, the cabin will continue to be used by government staff on patrol and to support research and monitoring for generations of Nova Scotians. Wilderness travellers will continue to enjoy this favourite stopping place as they journey the Shelburne Heritage River and take in the spectacular natural beauty of the Tobetic.

QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS

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