



## Wilderness Canoe Trip Ethics

Envision a pristine lake, the shoreline waters gently churning with ducks, mergansers and loons, while chickadees and gray jays scurry to collect food. Sitting against an ancient pine, the sun's rays cast warmth and brightness on the entire scene as worries and cares drift slowly away. These scenes are why so many people take a canoe trip to the Boundary Waters (BWCA) or Quetico Park each year.

A wilderness experience can be many different things. Some love the solitude, others the fishing, still others crave the challenge of travel and exploration. One common thread that runs through everyone's trip is the love of the outdoors. The opportunity to see wildlife, hear the enchanting cry of the loon and feel the warmth of an evening campfire, draws visitors from around the world to visit this wilderness area.

### NOISE

When planning a canoe trip, leave behind the music, telephones and other electronic gadgets of the 21st century and prepare to enter the world of yesterday. There are no schedules, deadlines or needs here. The lack of noise producing gadgets will allow one to fully appreciate the solitude. Speaking in a regular voice as opposed to yelling or shouting will also provide a pleasant atmosphere. It's amazing how sound travels across the water!

### FIREWOOD

A skilled woodsman is thoughtful and courteous not only to his neighbor, but to the next traveler to visit a campsite. Leaving campsites cleaner than found with a small stack of firewood near the fire grate are silent ways to show courtesy to future visitors.

### PORTAGE

Portaging can either be an easy experience or a disaster. Try to plan in advance who will be carrying specific items and make each person accountable for getting the assigned items across the portage. Don't plan to stay on the portage any longer than necessary. If a break is needed, paddle away from the portage and pull up along the shoreline. Eating meals or taking breaks on portages creates a bottleneck and makes it difficult for others to portage through. Also, keep all gear, canoes and equipment together. Items are easily left behind or mixed up with other groups when not kept in one central location.



### "GOLDEN RULE"

Although visitors are drawn here for different reasons, each person doing their part can create an atmosphere that is enjoyable and appreciated by all. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," is an old motto with a very real message for today's wilderness travelers.