

FAIRY LAKE WAVE-CUT NOTCH

UTM Ref. 17TPA436199

Brunel Township, Huntsville
Status: Recommend Heritage Site

Area: 5 ha

Site Characteristics

A wave-cut notch and foreshore platform of glacial Lake Algonquin is well developed on the south shore of Fairy Lake about 0.5km east of Timber Bay. The notch is best seen in a cleared pasture on the east side of the cottage road leading to the lake. It is difficult to trace beyond the clearing. The notch, which occurs at an elevation of 335m ASL, has been eroded into dense, blocky, glacial fill flanking a bedrock outcrop can be found. The foreshore platform is about 100m in width and slopes very gently to the north. Up to 1m of fine nearshore sand overlies glacial till on the platform. The northern edge of the platform is bounded by a steep, bedrock-controlled descent of 50m to the shore of Fairy Lake.

Standing at the top of the bluff, viewing northward into the lowland now occupied by Fairy and Peninsula lakes and beyond to the highland north of the lakes, one can envisage standing on the shores of a narrow estuary of Glacial Lake Algonquin, a lake which occupied this valley some 11000 years ago. Deposits of varved silt and clay, now exposed along the north shore of Fairy Lake, were laid down on the lake bottom at depths easily comprehended from the site. For these reasons, the Fairy Lake wave-cut notch and foreshore platform has excellent potential as an interpretive geological site.

Significant Natural Values and Selection Criteria Met

1. **Distinctive Landform** - (A1) This shoreline fragment of glacial Lake Algonquin is unusual in Muskoka, since an extensive archipelago of islands fringing the shoreline probably damped the effects of nearshore processes, and since any shoreline features that did develop are difficult to trace in heavily forested terrain.

Ownership, Disturbance and Sensitivity

The site is privately owned, with a new house recently constructed just above the wave-cut notch. Further development on or adjacent to the bluff should be discouraged. The bluff should not be graded, nor should aggregate material or fill be removed from the site.