

Algonquin Interior Canoe Trip

Sept 2025



Camp slippers are an essential part of any canoe trip

Preface

We got off to a late start, so we took the AO Water Taxi rather than paddle in and camp halfway up Opeongo Lake. What was planned to be a 6 day canoe trip was shortened to 5 days and 4 nights due to other commitments that cropped up last minute.



In hind sight, if we had paddled in, we might have found the things we were looking for on our last day of paddling. But who knows. In reality, taking the shuttle assured us that we scored getting an awesome site in the North arm (Win/Win) and was a great decision seeing the trip had been reduced to 4 days.



Ingress

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025

The AO Shuttle was much quicker than paddling and our driver took us to our base camp near the portage to Proulx, knowing it was still available and likely the best for our needs. We planned to base camp on Opeongo's North arm and day trip to nearby lakes.

Arriving at the site around 5 pm, it was before sunset, so we were able to set up camp in day light and then have an awesome Steak Fajitas supper with a glass of red wine during dusk's fading daylight. There was adequate wood on site for evening campfire therapy, which was a bonus as we had no time that day to find firewood. We turned in early to bed by 10:30 pm after a short fire pit therapy session with a small scotch night cap.



Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025

We awoke at 7 am. It was chilly (low teens), but Rob got the coffee on asap. The day was already brightening despite the chill and overcast. Breakfast was coffee, porridge and toasted English muffins with Peanut Butter & Jam (PB&J).

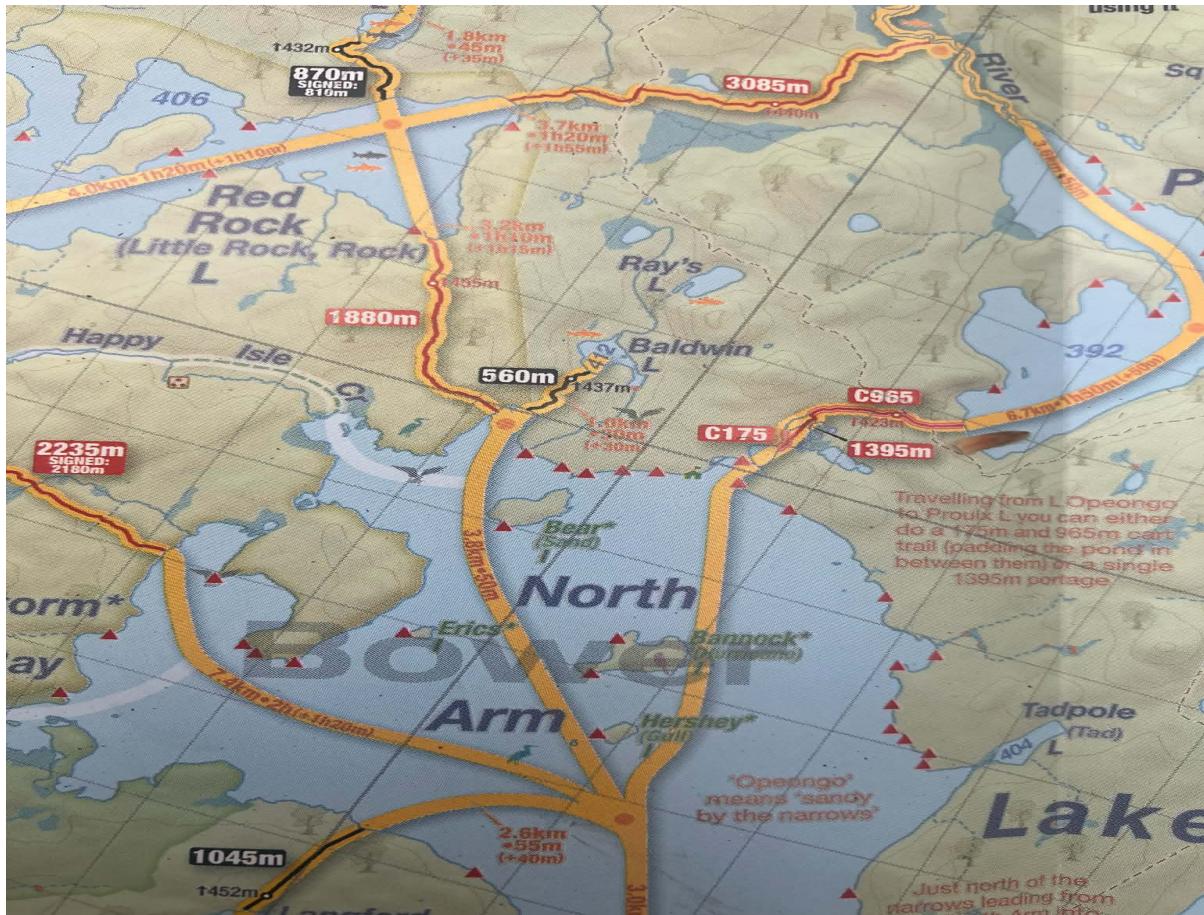
We were on the water by 9:30 am and on Proulx by 10:30 am. We fished Proulx Lake from the ingress portage to the end of the lake and then back stopping only for lunch around 12:30. Easy lunch today consisted of a shared beer, 2 hot dogs each and Ramen noodles with a granola bar and tea as the dessert.



We arrived back to base camp by 6:30 pm. But since daylight is limited this time of year, we ended up cooking and eating in the dark by flashlight to conserve our limited fire wood we had brought back from the day trip today, for a small fire therapy session later. Supper was an awesome stew that Robert had made and it was washed down with a glass of red wine. It turned into a chilly night once the sun disappeared. The fire was small, so an early turn-in just past 10 pm allowed for an awesome 9 hour sleep occasionally interrupted by the call of nature or the call of the loons. I decided to wear my long johns to bed that night and I was warm til morning :-).

Friday, Sept. 19, 2025

Breakfast on morning 2 just after 7 am was coffee, porridge and bagels or English muffin with a melted cheese slice and bacon on one portion and PB&J on the other. Today we had a second coffee and then planned our outing for the day.



Red Rock via the direct portage from Opeongo was chosen but first we decided to check out the adjacent black portage to Baldwin Lake. We walked it first and decided the portage was too rough to bring in a canoe. So maybe next time with a pack canoe, this lake could be tried again ?

The 1900 m portage to Redrock Lake was a steep up from Opeongo and then down hill at the Redrock end.

We paddled Redrock slowly to the north shore, trolling both shallow without any sinkers as well as deeper using a home made 3 swivel down rigger. Sadly I had forgotten to bring my Dipsy Diver so it is definitely on my check list for next year!

Lunch today was another shared beer and roast beef sandwiches with some cheese and carrots on the side. The weather was decent as in the high teens / low twenties but still a tad chilly with the slight wind from the lake, so the hot tea and cookies was a welcome dessert before departing for base camp.



We decided to return via Happy Isle even though it meant almost twice the portage kms and the same for paddling.

However, we knew these portage were a lot flatter (easier) than returning via the steep portage we had come in by.



We arrived on Opeongo Lake around 4 pm and decided to paddle back to base camp rather than go exploring for Hailstorm Creek or the Langford portage. The return trip to base camp took about two hours because we trolled back leisurely.

Robert had to air out his boots and feet as we had worked up a lot of foot sweat in the Kms of portaging we had done that day and he carried the canoe so obviously his load was heavier than the 80 lb pack I carried and hence he had sweatier feet.

Apparently, sweaty feet is something that affects a bow paddler's paddling ability so we trolled back and I graciously agreed to do all the paddling but insisted he at least pump some water using the MSR water filter.

I was extremely grateful for a slight tail wind that kept the foot stink forward of the canoe as Robert had peeled off his socks to start airing his feet and as a bonus we arrived with adequate fresh filtered water.



Once at camp , little time passed until foot inspection took place.

Saturday, Sept. 20, 2025

Having fished all the lakes the previous days we had planned, we decided today to check out Opeongo Lake (Hail Storm Creek and Langford Lake). We again had a leisurely breakfast again on toasted bacon and cheese sandwich plus an English muffin with PB&J as well as two cups of french pressed coffee.

We were excited to check out Hail Storm Creek as we heard there were moose sightings earlier that week and we had hopes for catching some trout in Langford Lake, seeing it was a stocked lake.

We paddled and paddled in search of Hail Storm Creek entrance as well as for the portage to Langford Lake but somehow were unable to find the location of either of these places. We stopped for lunch, disappointed that the creek and stocked lake had not been found. Today we each had a beer , another roast beef and cheese sandwich, Ramen doodles and then tea and some cookies.

We slowly trolled Opeongo back to base camp in hopes of catching at least a laker, seeing the

Specks were being elusive. On the paddle back we picked up some more camp fire wood and kindling and arrived back at base camp by 4 pm. Rob decided we were due a 4 pm scotch and then we had a short snooze until 5 pm. Supper tonight was Kraft Dinner with dehydrated ground beef, carrots and buns. We then brewed a pot of tea and had a few cookies with tea to finish off the meal.

Lots of wood tonight so we had a longer campfire therapy session until 11 pm.

After brushing teeth and dousing the fire we went to bed content because of just having spent a few days and nights in Algonquin Park or perhaps the extra scotch or two that night might of helped us as well :-)

Sunday, Sept. 21, 2025

Today was our last day and our shuttle was arranged for noon so we had time for a leisurely breakfast of toasted Bagels and PB&J plus an english muffins with melted cheese and bacon.

Turned out our return shuttle was a shared shuttle with two other parties, which reduced the cost.

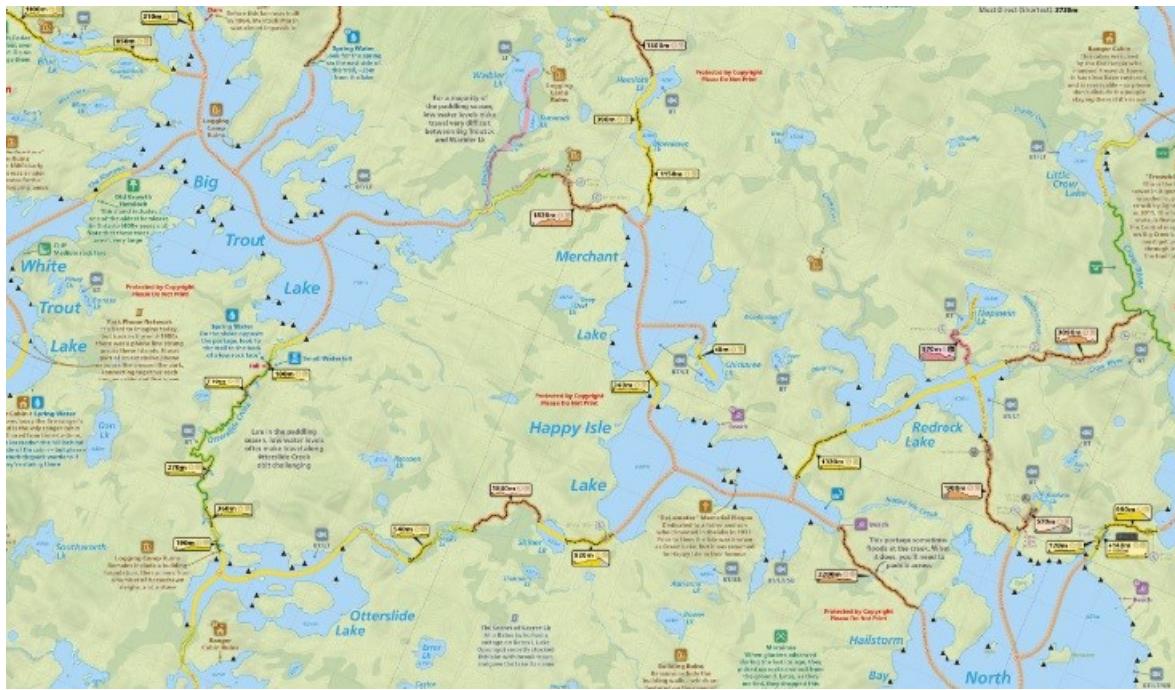
Turned out in talking with these other parties on the return shuttle, that the illusive Hail Storm Creek was in fact still there and they were treated to numerous moose sighting the previous morning but they too had caught no fish in any of the lakes we had also fished.

We had an uneventful return shuttle back to the docks and AO store. The gear was quickly unloaded from the canoe and put in Robs SUV.

We were on the road by 2 pm and arrived home back at my cottage before 6 pm with a coffee stop or two on the way back to the cottage to unload our gear .

But regardless of being skunked, this was a good test for my new hip (Dec. 2024) and Robert's earlier heart racing issues which more or less had disappeared or been reduced after a pace maker was suggested as a cure.

Now, we are planning our next Spring and Fall canoe trips to more interior lakes renowned for trout (e.g. Big Trout) and possibly doing the Hail Storm Creek during our ingress towards Big Trout to check out any moose.



All in all, I had a great trip with my best buddy Robert, despite us not catching a single trout.

And I'll still continue to look forward to canoe trips as long as my body allows, even if it is just base camping on Opeongo Lake.

In closing , I must say:

The goal of any wilderness canoe trip should be to collect enough canoeing and camping experiences to last the whole year if you only do one trip that year. And this trip exceeded that goal.

Now its time to start planning our 2026 canoe trips and I am hoping to return again to Big Trout and try some lake on the west side of the park.