

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 20, 2009

Weekend Revellers Destroy Conservation Area Exhibit

The Lakehead Region Conservation Authority is looking for help from the public in determining who destroyed several educational interpretive displays at one of its Conservation Areas over the weekend.

Sometime during the late night hours of Saturday, May 16, 2009 vandals tore down five “Fibrelite” panels from the open air pavilion walls at Cascades Conservation Area on Balsam Street. The culprits then tossed the panels into a bonfire adjacent to the pavilion. The fire was intense enough to cause some heat damage to a portion of the pavilion roof. A metal garbage can was also destroyed. A number of empty beer bottles at the scene suggests several individuals participated in the criminal activity.

The panels had educational themes about trees, rocks, forest life and watersheds. A sponsors panel was also destroyed. The panels were manufactured in 2000 as a Millennium project. The cost of the project at the time was approximately \$30,000.00.

“This is a major disappointment in so many ways,” says LRCA Chairman Bill Bartley. “The destruction of these panels denies responsible visitors to the Cascades the opportunity to learn about the natural history of the area. It’s also an insult to the hard work of all the partners who raised money for these displays.”

Funding for the project came from the Millennium Bureau of Canada, Northern Ontario Heritage Fund, Thunder Bay Lions Club, Rotary Club of Thunder Bay, Lakehead Conservation Foundation and the Lakehead Region Conservation Authority.

The Authority is asking anyone with information about the individuals responsible for the vandalism to contact Thunder Bay Police or Crimestoppers.