

Microburst hits south arm of Lake Temagami causing major damage



Brothers Griffin (left) and Noah Juurlink of Lynx Tree Care were called in to assist with clean-up efforts when a powerful microburst storm hit the south arm of Lake Temagami on June 30. They are standing underneath the roots of a massive red pine tree as hundreds of red and white pine trees were uprooted with some falling on cottages and boathouses causing considerable damage, but the good news is that nobody was hurt in the incident. (Supplied photo)

Sue Nielsen
Local Journalism
Initiative Reporter

TEMAGAMI — It may have been the scariest hour of their lives for cottagers living on the south arm of Lake Temagami when a microburst storm descended on June 30.

On that day, Environment Canada had issued a weather warning for Northeastern Ontario, specifically for the Temagami region.

There was also damage observed on Red Cedar Lake in Marten River.

According to Environment Canada meteorologist Jean-Philippe Begin in a telephone interview, he said the weather system that hit the Temagami region at approximately 5:30 p.m. on June 30 was investigated by the Northern Tornado Project from Western University and classified as a microburst.

“This system brings winds of up to 180 to 220 kilometres per hour and the system is localized when a thunderstorm occurs. It was listed as an EF 2 (enhanced fujita scale) which is not a tornado,” he said.

The enhanced fujita scale is used by weather stations to rate tornado intensity.

Environment Canada defines a microburst as a sudden, powerful air current (down draft) bringing strong winds. They are violent, localized downdrafts that can strike without warning.

This severe weather system followed several days of high heat and humidity felt across the Temiskaming region and further afield which saw temperatures of 30 C and higher.

LAKE RESIDENT

Will Goodman, a summer resi-

dent on Lake Temagami, told The Speaker he received an emergency phone alert that day indicating a storm was rapidly approaching the area.

“My wife and I were in separate buildings on our island when the tornado or microburst hit and it was absolutely terrifying. Since none of the buildings have basements for potential shelter, we just held on for dear life. When the storm ended after about an hour we were able to assess the damage. Dozens of larger trees were downed, paths were completely blocked and our solar panels had been destroyed leaving us without power.”

He said roughly 30 islands and properties on the lake with cottages were severely impacted by the storm.

“Fortunately there was no serious injuries in a number of cabins when the tornado or microburst hit.”

He said two cabins on the lake were completely destroyed from the storm and many more had large red and white pine trees leaning on them making them nearly impossible to access.

“There were also several boat-houses that were destroyed.”

TERROR

Goodman indicated many of the cottagers who experienced damage to their property have been in touch with their insurance providers.

However, he said he was disappointed with the response from the Town of Temagami which he described as “minimal.”

“It needs to be understood that people down here were terrified and are now packing up the pieces of immense property damage and loss.”

Goodman said moving forward

there are issues that need to be addressed for the cottagers who experienced this severe storm.

“First and foremost, the amount of trees that are down is hard to comprehend and individual cottagers are on their own without any assistance from Temagami. Second, the contractors who have been hired to help are unable to meet the overwhelming demand for their services. The building approval process needs to be sped up for those cottagers who lost their cabins so that work can begin on their islands.”

CONTRACTOR HELP

Lynx Tree Care owner Tony Juurlink and his sons Noah and Griffin were quickly on the scene the evening that the storm hit. They had received a call from a long-time customer on the lake and “we were on the lake early the next morning on Canada Day.”

He said there were islands that had lost the majority of their mature trees and the scope of the damage shocked him.

“We saw crushed cabins, sheds and docks and many buildings were damaged, but it is the canopy loss that is so devastating.”

He said clean up after a severe storm like that varies based on the customer, the property and the extent of the damage.

“Some properties had only one tree uprooted or snapped, while others had hundreds. On some islands the priority has been trees on buildings and safety with clean up to be done at a later date. Other islands are already working at chipping and managing the wood. The clean up has been a combined effort from property owners, contractors, barge services and tree companies.”

SENSE OF LOSS

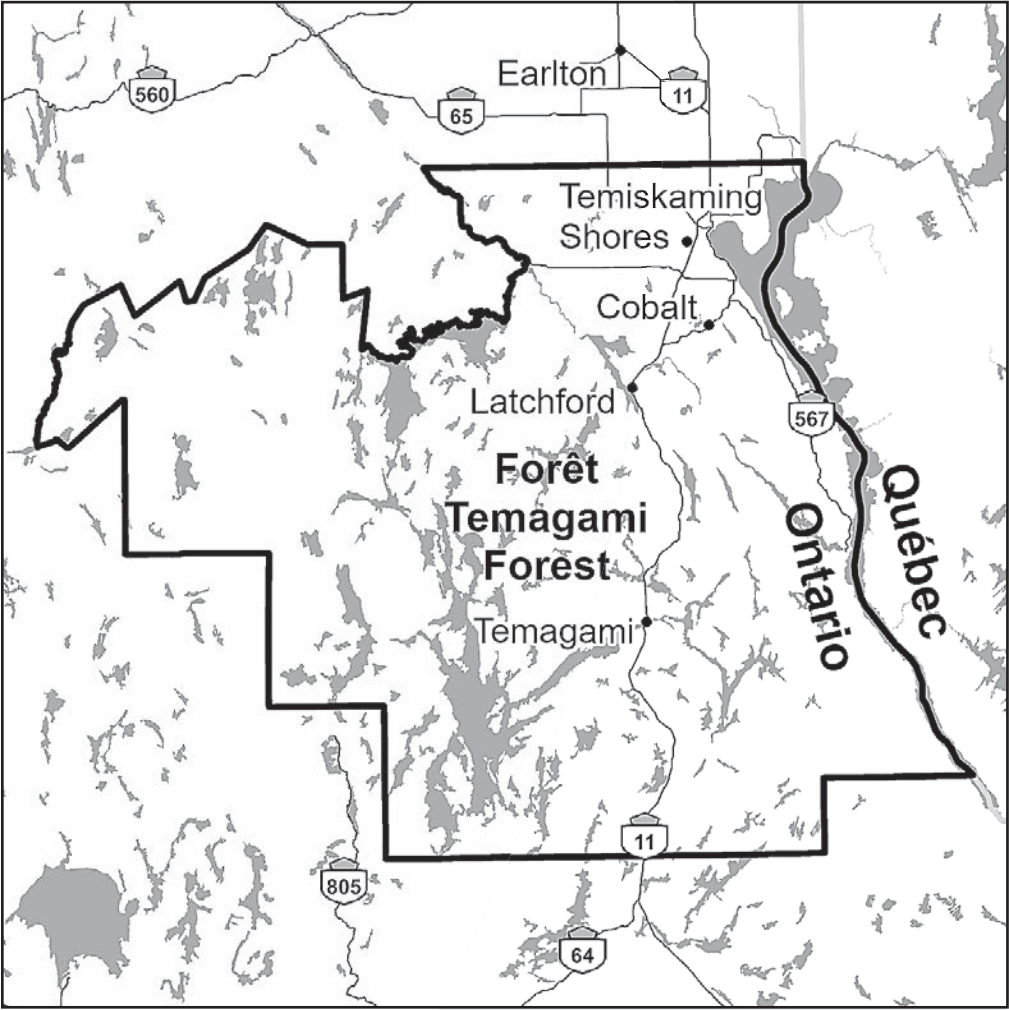
Juurlink said cottagers expressed to him that the first few days after the storm hit all they saw was the damaged trees, but then they started seeing trees that had survived and the saplings that have been waiting for more sunlight.

“It’s devastating to see the loss of so many beautiful healthy mature trees. Even knowing that it’s part of nature, it’s difficult to not feel a sense of loss when looking at the damage. However, in nature, when there is a loss there is always growth.”

Inspection

Inspection du projets relatifs aux herbicides pour la forêt Temagami

Le ministère des Richesses naturelles (MRN) de l'Ontario vous invite à inspecter un projet de traitement herbicide planifié pour la saison 2026. Dans le cadre de nos efforts continuels en vue de régénérer et de protéger les forêts de l'Ontario, des peuplements sélectionnés de la **forêt Temagami** (voir la carte) seront arrosés d'un traitement à l'herbicide pour contrôler la végétation concurrente à partir ou autour du : **5 août 2026**.



La description et le plan du projet d'herbicide sont accessibles par voie électronique aux fins d'inspection en communiquant avec le **Temagami Forest Management Corporation** et sur le Portail d'information sur les richesses naturelles à l'adresse ontario.ca/plansforestiers à compter du **5 juillet 2026 jusqu'au 31 mars 2027** à l'expiration du calendrier annuel de travail. Veuillez noter que **l'opération d'épandage aérien d'herbicide** aura lieu dans une zone spécifique de la **forêt Temagami** et pas dans toute l'unité de gestion forestière. De plus amples renseignements sur les lieux de l'activité dans la **forêt Temagami** peuvent être obtenus par l'intermédiaire du Portail d'information sur les richesses naturelles à l'adresse ontario.ca/a151a. Des opérations sont prévues dans les municipalités de Barr, Firstbrook, et de Lundy.

Les communautés des Premières Nations ou des Métis et les personnes et organismes intéressés et affectés peuvent organiser une réunion avec l'équipe du MRN en ligne ou en personne afin de discuter du projet de traitement herbicide. Pour en savoir plus, veuillez communiquer avec :

Personne-ressource du MRN
Adrienne Pierre, F.P.I.
Aménagiste forestier
Ministère des Richesses naturelles
875 chemin Gormanville
North Bay (Ontario) P1B 8G3
tél. : 705 475-5501
courriel : forestry.nbdistrict@ontario.ca

Information in English: mnr.northbay@ontario.ca

Personne-ressource de l'entreprise
Glen McDonald
Adjoint administratif
Temagami Forest Management Corporation
C.P. 274
Temagami (Ontario) POH 2H0
tél. : 705 622-7844
courriel : admin@tfmcforestry.ca