

The Valley Artisans' Gallery is honored to be the premier gallery of choice for the Ottawa Valley chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS-OV) Fundraising Art Show.

Closing the Gap, Algonquin Park to Dumoine River Fundraising Art Show supports CPAWS, OV efforts at trail building and conservation actions. The opening ceremonies run Saturday, June 8th from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM on the grounds of the Valley Artisans' Gallery in Deep River and the art show will continue in the store until July 7th, 2024. The Saturday fresh air event will feature live music by Deep River singer-songwriter Marc Audet, artist demonstrations, a food truck, a raffle and art and craft for sale in tents.

Members of the Valley Artisans' Gallery as well as the CPAWS artists will be on hand to discuss their creative processes and the local Ottawa Valley that inspires many of the pieces.

In 2017, artist Aleta Karstad had approached John McDonnell of CPAWS, OV with the concept of bringing 15 artists into the wilds for a week of camping, hiking, canoeing and creating artwork, which is then donated to CPAWS, OV. Aleta calls the annual retreat "a dream come true," and a chance to communicate to the world the inspiration the artists feel in wild places. Since then, the Art Retreat has become an annual event where artists from all over Ontario and Quebec apply to participate. They camp in tents along the river, and can hike, paddle, help restore trails, and create artwork in the inspiring peace and beauty of one of Quebec's last undammed rivers. Their artwork and related events have raised more than \$36,000 in support of wilderness conservation and education in the Ottawa Valley region of Ontario and Quebec.

Their efforts worked, and CPAWS, OV was successful in having 126km of the Dumoine River and some of its watershed declared an Aquatic Reserve area. The next goal is to Close the Gap between Algonquin Park and the Dumoine River Aquatic Reserve. Protecting this 18 Km area in wilderness would strengthen the Algonquin to Adirondacks Initiative by extending a continentally significant migratory corridor running from New York State, through eastern Ontario, into the Boreal Forest of Quebec. CPAWS, OV is working to ensure the area remains as it is today - wild and free - so that you may continue to hunt, fish, camp, off road and snowmobile in the area while giving species the space they need to maintain healthy populations.

For more information visit their website cpaws-ov-vo.org or come to the opening tent event and chat with the artist participants and the CPAWS, OV folks. Valley Artisans Co-op Gallery, 33373 Highway 17 West, Deep River, valleyartisans.com.