



<b>HOW IT RATES</b>		<b>37</b>
ADVENTURE THRILLS	6/10	
LONGEVITY	10/10	
PAY	6/10	
OUTDOOR TIME	8/10	
FREEDOM	7/10	



## BACKCOUNTRY WARDEN

**Patti Walker, 45, Jasper, Alberta**

Patrolling nearly 200 kilometres of Jasper National Park's North Boundary Trail with one riding horse and two pack horses, Walker's workweek lasts 15 days. Her duties as a backcountry warden include monitoring wildlife and wildflowers, clearing deadfall from trails, greeting hikers and campers, taking note of damaged bridges and watching for carcasses that might attract hungry bears. And each night, she curls up in a rustic backcountry cabin.

### WHAT SHE LOVES ABOUT HER JOB

From responding to visitors in distress to just wearing her uniform as an advocate for Canada's National Park Act, Walker likes it all. "I love turning back the clock," she says. "Horses created these trails. I get to be a huge part of the cultural heritage of Jasper National Park. Also, it's a very physical job. I don't have to get a gym pass."

### WHAT SHE DOESN'T LOVE ABOUT HER JOB

The abundant bugs. "Horseflies really irritate the horses," Walker says. "And if your horses aren't having fun, it makes your day a bit more difficult." Also, privy cleaning isn't glamorous, but fortunately her patrol area is so remote that there's rarely much to clean.

### BEST MOMENT

Walker has worked in Jasper for the past eight years, but she treasures her first stint as a warden when she was posted in the Yukon's Ivvavik National Park. While there, she patrolled part of the park by boat—alongside Inuvialuit people fishing for beluga whales on the Beaufort Sea. "There's a community feast once a month, with dances and games," she recalls. "They still really live on the land, and retain their cultural ways."

### RIGHT STUFF REQUIRED

Becoming a backcountry warden takes a natural science degree, plus experience in public safety and resource protection. Beyond that, skiing, horseback riding, snowmobile and watercraft skills are useful too. "You need to be personally suited to the role," Walker says. "It's hard work. You have to be resourceful, physically fit, dedicated and able to work on your own in remote wilderness—you can't stay in the cabin when it's raining or snowing. And you have to like horses—it's me and my three buddies."

### SHOW ME THE MONEY

The salary for a senior Parks Canada warden like Walker is \$60,000.

—LM

## OUTFITTER

**Dave Adler, 34  
Lower Prospect, Nova Scotia**



When Dave Adler started his sea-kayaking guiding business, he had to lead all his trips. But now that East Coast Outfitters is going strong in its sixth year, Adler gets to pick his own assignments. "I still guide, but if I'm on the water guiding a group from a cruise ship it means a gross scheduling error has occurred," explains Adler. When he arrived in Halifax to study oceanography in 1997 he only spent two weeks in town before finding his way to Lower Prospect, a fishing village that was no longer hauling in many fish. He's since brought some employment and added a splash of colour to the town, with his fleet of red and yellow sea kayaks filling the sheltered harbour from June to September.

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LONGEVITY	10/10	
PAY	5/10	
OUTDOOR TIME	5/10	
FREEDOM	9/10	

### WHAT HE LOVES ABOUT HIS JOB

Because he lives right beside his operation, he gets to go down to the racks to pick out a kayak to paddle in his free time. "I also love going out for a paddle with my radio on my PFD and listening to a half-dozen guides discussing plans and making the same decisions I would have made. Then it's like me leading six trips—but not as hard."

### WHAT HE DOESN'T LOVE ABOUT HIS JOB

The grind. "There is a lot of anxiety involved in running a business. You'll never be able to delegate everything and there are endless details to manage, from making sure that the marketing material is distributed to keeping the vehicles working."

### BEST MOMENT

One day he wanted to go for a paddle but all 50 kayaks were on the water. "It was great to know that so many people were out enjoying the beautiful harbour."

### RIGHT STUFF REQUIRED

No matter how many staff you have you need to train them well and trust them. The people who hire staff and then don't know how to step away are going to micromanage themselves right out of business, says Adler.

### SHOW ME THE MONEY

Adler earns \$17,500 over a five-month season, but supplements that by training guides, for a total income of \$42,000. —IM

ABOVE LEFT: COURTESY PATTI WALKER; ABOVE RIGHT: IAN MERRINGER

## JOB STATS

» In 2001, Canadians worked an average of 1,791 hours. (Americans worked 1,821 hours, while the Dutch worked 1,327 hours.)

SOURCE: jobquality.ca