
From:
To: <info@tswpanel.ca>
Cc:
Sent: August 31, 2007 1:42 PM
Attach: Trent Water Way 2.doc
Subject: Written submission to the TSW panel

Dear Panel members;

I attended the August 14th meeting in Minden. I was veery impressed with the scope of knowlege and background of the panel. I feel that a fair and equitable solution will be reached at the end of the process. Attached is the written submission from the Haliburton Lake Cottage Assn. of which I am the president. We have put a lot of thought into our paper and thank you for taking our input into consideration.

Dianne Kelly

Haliburton Lake Cottage Association (526 cottages represented)
Dianne Kelly -President

I would like to thank the members of the TSW study panel for the onerous task you have taken on. I had the privilege to attend the August 14th meeting in Minden and was very impressed with the diversity of your experiences and interest in the TSW and its RAFT lakes. It is only through such collaboration that studies like this can be successful. I felt that you were all there to listen and act upon what was being presented. Thank you for that!

I represent the Haliburton Lake Cottage Association. A committee, from the Board of Directors has sat and compiled the following report for your consideration. We have mainly focused in on Haliburton Lake but also expand our comments to help the County as a whole.

PHYSICAL AND BACKGROUND

Haliburton Lake was originally known as Crooked Lake in the late 1800's and in the early days of the 19th century when it supported at least 2 or 3 working logging camps and sawmills. The name was changed shortly before the original lake development started in 1954 and there were still 2 working sawmills on the lake. In the present time logging still plays a major part in the economy of Haliburton County but there are no longer log booms or sawmills to be seen at the water's edge.

Haliburton Lake statistics:

- * Second and largest lake in the Gull River Watershed (RAFT)
- * Surface area: 2502 acres.
- * Mean depth: 57.2 feet
- * Shoreline Perimeter: 18.7 miles
- * Clarity to 22 feet and slightly alkaline
- * Approximately 526 existing cottages with 42 more lots proposed to be developed
- * From the 2006 lake boating survey - 694 motorized boats
 - 424 non-motorized
- total - 1118 boats
 - potential for 100 + more boats with the development of new lots
 - giving approximately 2.2 acres of water/ boat
- * There is 1 Public Beach, which is well used for recreational activities and also supports both Red Cross and Life Saving swimming and Boat Safety programs.
- * The lake is serviced by a marina at Fort Irwin with a boat launch

- * There are 2 Public boat launches
- * The lake supports a growing full time residential population as well as a large summer population

NATURAL AND ECOLOGICAL

1. It is our mandate as property owners of Haliburton Lake to improve and maintain the quality of the eco-life of the lake, the fish and wildlife habitats. We seek to preserve and improve the spawning beds and fish habitats of the diverse fish population (lake trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, white sucker, burbot, brown bull-head, rock bass, yellow perch and lake white fish) in Haliburton Lake. We are greatly concerned with the preservation of the "Kingscote Trout" which spawn in Percy Lake and often swim down river to Haliburton Lake.
2. For a number of years we initiated a rock throw (supervised by the MNR) in order to build up and create new spawning beds for Lake Trout in particular. If the water levels change too drastically the spawning beds will be or are left high and dry and the fish population will die off. The trout spawn during the first part of October and if the water level isn't at its lowest level by then, the trout eggs are left high and dry to die as more water is let out of our system.
3. Right now we sport a very healthy loon population. At any given time we can see between 10 and 50 loons gathering to fish. If the level of the water is such that the fish can't spawn, hatch and grow then we will loose our loons. There are also a number of small lagoons dotting our shore line where the loons nest. With the drastic water level changes this summer our nesting areas were depleted of water early only to have the water level rise suddenly and destroy any nests that were there.
4. There are a considerable number of small marshy areas connected with the lake. These are home to a wide variety of frog species, newts, minnows, turtles, water plants and heron. They also provide nesting areas for wood ducks, mallards, loons etc. When the water levels change these are the first areas to dry up, leaving our reptile population in danger.
Haliburton Lake as one can see has a very diverse wildlife population that depends on a constant level of water in order to keep its eco-system working.
5. Shoreline erosion is another area of concern to us. As water levels become higher in the spring and waves splash along the shore, many properties experience soil erosion. Thus undermining banks and creating dangerous overhangs of land that can break away when someone or something stands in it. There is also the concern that with shoreline erosion comes the destruction of shoreline animal habitats. We have

had beaver, mink, otters, weasels and muskrats make their homes along the lake's edge waters.

6. In the treetops and rocky ledges of the shores of Haliburton Lake Turkey Vultures, Osprey, Bald Eagles, Great Horned Owls and Red Tail Hawks make their nests. These birds of prey depend on a healthy fish and small animal populations to survive. By having the water levels of our lake fluctuate drastically, which again affects the fish and wildlife populations, we are in danger of losing these endangered birds of prey.

NAVAGATION

Haliburton Lake is unique in that it's water draw-down is finite as it is the second lake at the headwater. In order to somewhat compensate for this property owners must put in floating or movable docking systems.

In a typical season the draw-down is 6 feet if the water level in the spring is at its highest level.

The Haliburton Lake Cottage Association and its stakeholders are completely aware of the need for the lake's water to fluctuate on a variety of reasons, one of them being to supply the Trent Severn Waterway System with some water. To that avail we operate on a volunteer basis, a simple marker system, which identifies major rocks, shoals, sandbars and routes through bridges and channels between islands and into the marina. These markers are consistent in colour with the markers on the TSW and Transport Canada' Safe Boating Guide- red and green for channels and yellow to identify water hazards.

The types boats travelling on our land-locked lake consist of pontoon boats, ski/wake board boats, 12 to 16 ft inboard and outboard pleasure boats, aluminium fishing boats, personal water crafts, small sailboats, canoes, kayaks, and paddleboats.

Our main problem occurs when water levels become too low too fast. Access to and from these areas especially the marina, is then limited to small shallow craft.

At this point in time (2nd week of August 2007) boating for some cottagers is finished. Either they can't dock their boats because the water is too shallow in front of their cottages or they can't get under the bridge to get to the marina.

There is also the problem of "new" rock hazards popping up as the water levels reach October lows in the middle of August. At this critical time the cottagers who live in the South Bay section of Haliburton Lake are having to take their pleasure boats out of the water as the water level is so low, they can't get their boats under the bridge to access the main lake, the marina and the boat launch. Damage to lower ends and propellers can become very expensive.

Haliburton Lake stakeholders are heavily taxed re "Waterfront Assessment", receive very little for their tax dollar - except for the pleasure of being at "the Lake", and are at the mercy of wildly fluctuating water levels. Their summer

enjoyment on the water is shortened with having to move, relocate or add to their docking systems on a daily or weekly basis. Imagine a stakeholder who has been away from the lake for a week, returns to his cottage/home to find there has been a major (6 inch) draw down. His dock is now on dry land or a foot of water and the lower end of his motor is dangerously buried on the lake bottom (either rock or sand or silt). How frustrated would you be?

Recommendations and Summary

We would like to present the following recommendations for your consideration:

1. The summer season extending from June 1 to September 15 should support the economic dependence of Haliburton County on the tourism industry. This meaning that the RAFT lakes' water levels should remain within acceptable depth limits in order to sustain the increased summer population of the region. People come to the Haliburton area for their vacation just as the owners of large boats are drawn to the TSW for their vacations. During these prime times of vacation water levels and enjoyment need to be equitable to everyone.
2. Some form of advanced warning needs to be established in the Haliburton RAFT lake systems so that stakeholders don't suffer from drastic water level changes. This could be in the newspaper (Echo or Times), posted on sign-boards in affected communities etc.
3. It was stated at the August 14 meeting in Minden, that the water level fluctuation in the main working parts and waterways of the TSW is as little as 3cm where as the lakes in the RAFT systems experience up to 14 metres of water fluctuation. Surely there is not the need to keep the water levels to that volume in the TSW system. By lowering the draft depth in the canal we could be saving the RAFT lakes a lot of grief.
This would also mean that the "season " of water depletion in the RAFT lakes would be shorter.
4. Shortening the actual boating season on the TSW would also help the RAFT lakes' water supply. Shorten the summer daily hours of operation of the locks. Boating and lock operation could be restricted to 4 out of 7 days a week before June 1. This would save water wastage to draw a parallel to not being able to water grass in the summer droughts.
5. At the present time locks operate and often let one or two boats pass through a lock thus calling on a large amount of water pass through the system. A friend was having lunch overlooking the locks in Fenelon Falls in the middle of August. During the hour and a half that they were there, the locks operated twice to let 2 boats pass through each time. What a waste of our water! Perhaps there should be a minimum number of boats using a lock at a time - i.e. 6 - 8 boats and a posted schedule of the times the locks operate to

let boats pass. This should help in the prime summer months when the stakeholders of the RAFT lakes want to enjoy their water time as well.

6. The TSW needs to recognize and compensate for the cost to monitor and maintain the marker systems on the RAFT lakes just as it does in the TSW canal system.
7. Please remember that all of us want to enjoy our boating experiences. Whether it be in a large cabin cruiser floating up and down the TSW or in an inboard/ outboard motor boat watching a child triumph with her first attempt to waterski.