



August 2023 Update to Ontario Cottage Associations

Executive Summary

Given we have been collectively working hard for 3 months, a summary to each of our member cottage associations is appropriate. There are three key processes that must be continued to ensure success:

- 1) **Speak with your local mayors; determine if they connected to the coalition and if not let the coalition team know. We will ask Mayor Peter Koetsier of the Township of Georgian Bay to reach out to the mayor.**
- 2) **Strongly encourage your members to speak to their local MP's in both their cottage and home residence constituencies to ensure MP's are made aware of the issues and are advocating for change on our behalf.**
- 3) **Sharing of information is crucial to ensure a consistent message. Keep your membership informed.**

Phase 1 – Objectives and Achievement

| Objectives | Achievements |
|---|--|
| a) Create a groundswell of public support | Individual letter writing campaign to the Minister of Transport – approximately 1,000 letters sent |
| b) Educate our 1,000's of cottage members and dozens of cottage associations in the coalition | Petition signing campaign to Minister of Transport - result approximately 2,500 signatures |
| c) Engage our municipal leaders | Peter Koetsier, Mayor of Georgian Bay and Mike Burkett Mayor of Severn Township have taken the lead and are soliciting support from mayors of municipalities bordering water resources in Ontario – 30 plus mayors engaged to date |
| d) Engage our MP's | Contacting Liberal MPs of ridings bordering the lakes and rivers of Ontario to advance the goals and objectives with Transport Canada – 8 engaged to date |
| e) Engage FOCA | Director Terry Rees has been instrumental in promoting the issue within FOCA |
| f) Earn credibility to move forward with more aggressive and politically focused activities | Have engaged discussions with ministries, municipalities and the media specifically CBC news |

State of the Nation at the end of Phase 1

Phase 1 outcomes both positive factors and challenging issues that lay the groundwork for Phase 2.

| Positive Factors | Challenges |
|--|---|
| 1. Critical mass and credibility has brought legitimacy and credibility to third parties | 1. Transport Canada's Ontario bureaucracy is wholly disengaged as it refuses to participate in any meaningful dialogue |
| 2. Successful partnering with FOCA and Mayors of Georgian Bay and Severn Township bring a united credible voice to municipal | 2. Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) legislation effective July 3rd barring float homes from overnight camping on |



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| stakeholders, government ministries and cottage associations | Crown land is ineffective due to the vessel designation |
| 3. Have engaged and are working with Parks Canada as a viable change agent. Parks Canada is now willing to take action against LOTB. | 3. Given Trent Severn Waterway and Rideau Canal are federally governed, collaboration with Parks Canada and the Ministry of the Environment & Climate is essential for achieving a resolution |
| 4. Freedom of Information request has been submitted to gain an understanding of the nature and frequency of communication within the Ministry of Transport regarding float homes. Response is expected in October | 4. Reports of float homes appearing in other jurisdictions such as Georgian Bay and the Kawarthas is evidence the issue is not going away |
| 5. Recently, at the Association of Municipalities Ontario meeting (AMO), our lead Mayors Peter Koetsier and Mike Burkett (Township of Georgian Bay & Township of Severn) have engaged mayors to support their in person appeal to the Minister of Transport; Graydon Smith, Minister Natural Resources and Forestry is aligned and onboard with us. | 5. The manufacturer of float homes in Port Severn continues to aggressively violate rules and regulations to the extent that MNRF has removed itself from dealing with any federal waterway issue and Parks Canada is restrained from initiating corrective action due to the vessel designation |

Summary of Phase 2 activities:

Phase 2 Context and Strategy Overview

The focus in Phase 2 is to facilitate and participate in multiple political conversations with engaged mayors, MP advocates, the agents of change in the multiple supportive government ministries and the media that will direct their communications to the Minister of Transport and demand a change in the classification of floating homes from vessels to float homes.

We'll accomplish that with multiple strategies, as follows:

- i. Aggressively build our mayor coalition so that the volume and number of municipalities engaged demands the Minister's attention and action.
- ii. Engagement and political pressure directed to and within the ministries of Environment (federal and provincial); Parks Canada; Ministry of Municipal Affairs (Ontario); Oceans and Fisheries (federal); Minister of Resources (federal); Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (provincial).
- iii. Continued updating of our coalition of cottage associations to have their members speak, communicate, demand their respective MPs at home and cottage pay serious attention to this issue.
- iv. Continued and accelerated use of media resources including messaging through the FOCA platform; more frequent interviews of mayors and politically recognized resources in the press (CBC, Global, Toronto Star).
- v. Sourcing and implementing lobby resources on a pro bono (volunteer basis) to increase our effectiveness and penetration of key targets.



- vi. Continued use of videos and pictures to these target agencies to continue the message that these things are not going away.
- vii. Based on the complexity of federal control over the TSW and Rideau Canal, a focused reach out to all municipalities that border each of these federally controlled waterways.

Phase 2 will occur over the fall and winter of 2023 and early 2024.

Stay tuned for more details on next steps!

For any follow-up questions feel free to reach out to any of the Coalition Leadership Team

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