

# A Conversation with Safe Quiet Lakes AGM

Presented by Stephen Sprague

Float Homes not Vessels Coalition

November 22, 2023



Float Homes not  
Vessels Coalition

# Welcome to your “New Neighbours”





The solution exists elsewhere...

Do you see any difference in these 2 pictures?



# Issue and Implications

- Floating homes in Ontario have a “pending” classification as a vessel by Transport Canada.
- As a vessel they are completely regulated by the Canadian Shipping Act 2001. They are immune to any regulation by all ministries, agencies, and yes... municipalities have no control.
- The implications “Float Homes not Vessels” pose:
  - a) Avoid building code adherence – permitting, standards, and approvals
  - b) Avoid regulatory control of location, mooring, creating navigational issues for public
  - c) Avoid shoreline works (boathouse and dock) permitting and control
  - d) Avoid assessment and municipal taxation revenues, yet they consume municipal emergency services
  - e) Avoid environmental control.... Yes, as a vessel they can locally discharge grey water

# The solution is taking shape....

As a float home not a vessel, three levels of government will be able to collaborate

1. At the municipal level, they will have the right to create bylaws on provincial waters within their boundaries to control and regulate floating homes.
2. At the provincial level, MNRF has passed new regulations governing float homes and specifically – they are not able to “camp” overnight on provincially controlled waterways
3. At the federal level, Parks Canada retains control over Trent Severn Waterway and has agreed with Transport Canada that Parks Canada has control over shoreline works (docks and steel spuds)

**...but we aren't there yet. Key to achieving our outcomes and mutual interests, we need to continue to advocate and petition Transport Canada to get this right**

# The Solution already exists in British Columbia

**The problem is that Transport Canada got it right in 2001 in British Columbia when they declared that float homes ARE NOT VESSELS... Ontario is asking for the EXACT SAME POLICY. We have petitioned Transport Canada to reclassify both new and existing float homes within Ontario as Float Homes not Vessels.**



- Municipalities, property associations and thousands of individual residents are deeply concerned by the potential damage including environmental, social, economic and public safety impact(s) unregulated float homes in Ontario can cause to our waterways, if left unregulated.
- The Ontario Government has recently consulted Ontarians on this matter and appears willing to bring these floating homes under regulation. But its hands are tied, they need your support to enact changes per the recommendation set out below.
- The problem is that in Ontario, Transport Canada classifies such structures as “vessels”, while in British Columbia, Transport Canada classifies them as “float homes”. There is, accordingly, a lack of national consistency in Transport Canada’s oversight of these structures.
- As a result, in Ontario, as a "vessel", these structures are currently exempt from all forms of provincial and municipal oversight and regulation, including building code adherence, environmental protection, public safety, taxation and location management.
- In British Columbia, where Transport Canada classifies them as “float homes”, these structures must conform to strict building standards and can be duly regulated by the province and municipalities to ensure environmental protection, building code adherence and use/location management.
- Once this change has been made, municipalities will be enabled to create bylaws to control float homes in a manner consistent with provincial and municipal standards.

**We, the undersigned, citizens of the province of Ontario, call upon the Minister of Transport to:**

Respectfully request that your Department classify both existing and new float homes within Ontario as float homes not vessels, in a manner consistent with the precedent your Department established in British Columbia in 2001.

Signatures	Address
Canadian citizens or residents only Please sign your name, do not print Note: 1 signature per property address only	Note: the use of any address format that clearly establishes the place where a signatory resides is acceptable

# Our 3 Phase Strategy is working

## Phase 1 – Create our Voice



- Grassroots Coalition formed
- Engaged 40+ cottage associations; 35+ Mayors; 5 MP's and 1,000's of cottagers

## Phase 2 – On a Political Level



- Engaged Minister Graydon Smith (MNRFF); Minister of Environment & Climate Change, Steven Guilbeault
- Mayor Peter Koetsier Mayor TGB leading the charge politically
- Scheduling a face to face with Min of Transport Pablo Rodriguez

## Phase 3 – Social Media Pressure



- Active response strategy to Transport Canada's Let's Talk: Long Term Anchoring
- Social media strategy launched for Transport Canada's Let's Talk: Long Term Anchoring

# What Can You Do Today....

1. Engage the members of Safe Quiet Lakes, if they already are not connected to our Coalition, have them reach out to us.
2. Ensure your municipality is engaged and passed resolutions stating their concerns with Floating Homes not Vessels and communicate the same to Ottawa and Queen's Park.
3. Ensure your MP is aware and engaged on the Float Home not Vessels issue.
4. Send your voice to Transport Canada... Use their Let's Talk Consultation to provide your feedback.

<https://letstalktransportation.ca/long-term-anchoring>



Working together to prevent our worst fears...





# Float Homes not Vessels Coalition

<https://letstalktransportation.ca/long-term-anchoring>

**Deadline – December 11, 2023**

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