

Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association

2023 Issues Report for the LTCA

1. FOCA has 525 member associations representing 50,000 families. A survey which resulted in 711 responses revealed the following:
 - a. 63% of cottages are winterized
 - b. 7 in 10 have 4 season road access, 10% water access
 - c. 1 in 3 have no digital access which limits use of their property
2. Before the province is a bill to make it mandatory that all persons age 12 and under must wear a life jacket while on board a watercraft. Likely to pass as this is the law in many other provinces.
3. Before the Feds is a bill recommending renewal of watercraft licenses every 5 years at a cost of \$20. Boats equipped with less than 10 HP will probably still be exempt from licensing.
4. There was a discussion on naturalizing shorelines using local native plants. Plants to avoid as they have a very invasive root system include Alders, Willows, Dogwoods.
5. A presentation on Fire proofing properties recommended:
 - a. Removing all trees and shrubs within 30 feet of the building (especially conifers)
 - b. From 30 to 60 feet remove tree branches that are within 6 feet of the ground
 - c. Remove all burnables from under cottages and from eavestroughs
 - d. keep grass from getting too long and dry
 - e. remove dead branches and dead trees and leaves from building proximity
 - f. encase your cottage in fireproof material – metal roof, steel, aluminum or cement board siding, aluminum fascia and soffits, enclose open space under cottage and additions with similar materials, remove unnecessary eavestroughs
 - g. purchase a fire pump, also attach impulse sprinklers to outbuilding roof (closer to forest)
 - h. stay off the lake if water bombers are active, Ontario has 9 but they do get relocated.
6. A discussion on climate change impacts revealed additional levels of drought, flooding, erosion silting and blue green algae. The latter mostly caused by farm runoff and illegal septics (both can be remedied). PFAS also known as forever chemicals entered Trout Lake years ago when the armed forces conducted firefighting exercises and the runoff entered Trout Lake. The current levels are measured at 58 ng/l. This year Health Canada dropped the threshold for safe drinking water to 30 ng/l (the US EPA dropped it to zero). What is the level in our Lake if any?
7. Internet on our lake:
 - a. Bell and Rogers have upgraded the local cell towers to 5G. Download speeds of 40 MB/sec. are attainable although local customers have reported numerous outages. 5G hardware, ie. Nighthawk M5 5G Mobile Hotspot and ZTE 5G Turbo Hub are available for purchase or sometimes free with a plan. Data plans are restricted to 50 GB per month at approximately \$150 per month. Streaming is not recommended.
 - b. Netspectrum 10 MB service is solid and highly recommended. East and North shore cottagers can see the tower on Shields Point Rd. data is unlimited at \$79.95 per month. Call for installation fee (water access surcharge). Cat 6 cable can run 330 feet from dish. \$10 per month for 6 months of non usage. Streaming is excellent.

- c. Starlink service is attainable if the test app shows you have sufficient overhead clearance (110 degrees). Two services offered, beware proprietary cables are only either 70 or 150 feet in length. Seasonal plan is \$170 per month. No charge off season. Super fast.
- 8. FOCA awarded a lake association that actively eradicated lead sinkers from local supply shops and anglers tackle boxes. Please don't use lead as it is deadly for all waterfowl.
- 9. Lake Talon and environs '2019 Lakeshore Capacity Assessment' (or why you can't sever your property – hint: we are one of a very few lake trout lakes left).
Google; 'Lakeshore Capacity Assessment: Trout Lake, Turtle Lake and Lake Talon' and then you can download the PDF. Also see Bonfield Official Plan, soon to be ratified.

Presentation by Canadian Environmental Law Association re Bill 23 More Houses Built Faster Act:

Amendments to the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System make it harder to designate a wetland as provincially significant, ie.

- a. No points allowed for the complexity of the wetland
- b. No points allowed for the reproductive habitat for endangered or threatened species
- c. No points allowed for migration, feeding or hibernation habitat for endangered or threatened species
- d. MNRF no longer providing oversight, municipalities can no longer determine a wetland to be locally significant.
- e. Development can occur with 30 metres of a wetland, down from 120 metres.

Amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act ie.

- f. Permits are not required if development is authorized under the Planning Act or has been issued by an MZO or CIHA (this has typically been a southern Ontario issue.)
- g. Conservation Authorities may no longer comment on the following Acts (aside from commenting on natural hazards):
 - Aggregate Resources Act
 - The Drainage Act
 - The Endangered Species Act
 - The Environmental Assessment Act
 - The Environmental protection Act
 - The Ontario Water Resources Act
 - The Planning Act (Official plan and Zoning now before Bonfield Council).

Re Green standards, Bill 23 will give municipalities the authority to apply green development standards through site plan control if they pass by-laws to this effect, by referencing opt-in Building Code standards that the government will soon be developing (as a modification of the 2025 National Building Code update).

Appeals to Minor Variances and Consents will only be allowed by representatives of public bodies involved in power generation, railway operations or telecommunications infrastructure and only if they presented at the initial hearing.

Objections to any of these amendments should be directed to your MPP, municipality, Conservation Authority, MNRF, FOCA and any other affected or influential body.