

BLPOA MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

From: Your Lake Executive (blpoal@gmail.com)
Dated: Friday, April 26, 2024
Time: 9:16 a.m.

Here we go to try to brief you on all that is going on about the Wedgewood boat ramp that's supposed to close to the public as of June 1st, 2024.

We've had three coordination meetings with the Twelve Mile Little Boshkung Lakes Association (TMLBA). We have called real estate people, RPM, Wedgewood, Minden Hills permit and planning people and many others to find out what's going on with the ramp. All we know right now is that it's been sold to someone who won't operate it as a marina and that's why the gas pump and boat ramp have to come out.

Tom Steele (President of BLPOA) and Stu Smith (President of TMLBA) met April 19th with our Algonquin Highlands (AH) Mayor and County Warden, Liz Danielsen. Also at the meeting was Chris Card who manages all AH boat ramps.

First, we discussed the future for the Hwy 118 ramp. It was NOT very hopeful in the short-term. Yes, they could dredge it if they got approvals from MNR, MTO and Fisheries and Oceans. But Chris Card said it would fill in quickly and become almost an annual event to dredge it and the cost of doing so is not in their budget for this year. But, we received a different opinion from a local marina owner and are pursuing that with AH right now. Also, the parking and approach to that ramp is a challenge, as we all know. So, the bottom line is that the Hwy 118 boat ramp is not a feasible long-term solution for AH.

Second, according to Chris Card any planning for ramp improvements, rebuilds, dredging, etc. must be started 2 years in advance, because AH needs to retain consultants, obtain the required approvals and issue the required contracts, all of which take time and money. As a result, they said work at the Hwy 118 ramp could possibly happen in the fall of 2025. Or alternatively, find and build a new boat ramp at a better, more suitable location in a similar time frame.

Third, Mayor Danielsen made the comment that there is a lot of mystery about who bought the Wedgewood property and why the tank removal (which needs government/ MOE approval) and the ramp removal (which needs MNR approval) before the transaction is completed are so secret.

She'll try to contact RPM to ask if it can be arranged to leave it in place, at least until the fall of 2024. If it is an extra insurance cost, which was alluded to, then maybe between the two Townships, it could be added to the Townships' insurance policies. We even suggested that the lake associations may be able to contribute something to the cost of the extra insurance, provided it is reasonable in the circumstances and allocated fairly between all parties affected.

Fourth, it is clear that the boat ramp at Hwy 118 will not work for the future requirements of our three lakes, especially for larger boats (such as, ski and wake boats & large pontoon boats). A new location for a new ramp will need to be found and developed.

One possible location is the Twin Lakes Resort area where the barge was launched that worked on the recent dam upgrade. As we understand it, that property is owned by the Township of Minden Hills as a municipal shoreline road allowance. The water is deep enough and it is off a busy highway with a parking

area. Of course, this means the two Townships and the County of Haliburton will have to work together to accomplish this from both a financial, contract and development perspective. That'll be a challenge!

Fifth, the Mayor requested we send a written request to the Councils to both Minden Hills and Algonquin Highlands to get on their respective Councils' Agenda for their next scheduled meetings - i.e. make it official. That has now been done, so hopefully it'll be on the next Council meetings and we're trying to arrange for someone from BLPOA or TMLBA or both to attend to speak to it. Please see our website, www.blpoa.ca, for a copy of that letter, as well as current and future updates.

Sixth, if you are a current customer of Wedgewood Marina or just use the boat ramp at Hwy 118 and you haven't done so already, you're encouraged to find a new marina service provider quickly and ask about boat removal from Boshkung Lake, especially in the fall. We know the local marinas are filling fast and that Northland, JC Powersports and others will likely use low profile trailers at the Hwy 118 ramp and at other difficult to access boat ramps in the area. Please remember that each customer will need to make their arrangements well in advance for this service to happen.

While it would also be up to each customer to make their own arrangements, one possible idea for boat removal this Fall is using a crane service. It was suggested that there could be "boat haul-out" day(s) and everyone gets a time slot to be there and the boat is raised out of the water and placed on the customer's supplied trailer. While it appears that it's possible to do this (it's been done on other lakes) and the cost could be about \$75 - \$100 per boat at the rate of 3 - 4 boats per hour, those arrangements will have to be made with the crane company or with a marina directly.

For those that may be interested in considering this option, please contact us for more information. The problem will be to find a location where this could happen and it should be noted that this is an option of last resort. Like with the other boat haul-out services available, it would be up to each customer to make their own arrangements with the crane company involved.

Lastly, we have prepared a sample letter that you may want to use as the basis for your own letter to send to the Mayors and Councils of Algonquin Highlands and/or Minden Hills requesting action on this important issue. Please feel free to add or delete anything you'd like, since it's just intended to help you prepare your own letter to raise and voice your concerns about the issue.

But, we're holding off sending the sample letter until our group from BLPOA and TMLB meets with Mayor Bob Carter of Minden Hills on Monday, April 29th. We believe it is going to take a lot of pushing to get a new functional boat ramp for all three lakes to use.

Any questions, suggestions or concerns, please let us know at blpoa1@gmail.com.

Your Executive Team
Boshkung Lake Property Owners' Association (BLPOA)