



**UPDATE AS OF MAY 5, 2024**

**Re: Loss of the Boat Ramp Facilities at Wedgewood Marina and The Need for a Public Boat Ramp to Service 3 Lake Chain**

Hi folks,

What a busy few weeks we've had since we were notified of the sale and closure Wedgewood Marina by June 1st. Everyone wants to know how it will affect them. We have a great working committee of 11 people from our two lake associations who are all taking on some piece to try to solve our issue. Here's where we are and what we've done so far, with more work to do:

1. We've tried diligently to talk to the owner and to the manager of RPM (current owners of Wedgewood) to ask if the boat ramp could be available until the fall. We've had no reply. AH Mayor Liz Danielsen has also tried without success.
2. Stu Smith (President of TMLB) and Tom Steele (President of BLPOA) have met with Algonquin Highlands (AH) Mayor Liz Danielsen and Chris Card, Manager of Parks Recreation and Trails, to explain our 3 lakes situation. It was a productive meeting.
3. During those discussions, it was recognized that the ramp at Hwy 118 is rated in 'fair condition' and only 'may' be slated for upgrading after four other very poor boat ramps ahead of us, on other lakes. It is also clear that nothing will happen this year. The BIG issue for Hwy 118 is water depth later in the season. The question was raised about possibly dredging to provide the necessary depth for taking larger boats out in the fall. But, again, nothing is likely to happen this year.
4. Stu & Tom met with Minden Hills Mayor Bob Carter. Remember, this is two different Townships we are trying to work with. They have different priorities, already approved municipal budgets, and demands for funds available. The Hwy 118 boat ramp is in Algonquin Highlands. Bob was careful not to raise hopes. He is not going to commit to building a boat ramp, at least at this point.
5. Mayor Carter suggested that we talk to Twin Lakes Resort's new owners and gave us their contact information.
6. The Twin Lakes Resort area just north of the dam has enough water depth to accommodate all boats. It is right across from the current Wedgewood location. It is safer

because the entrance is off Taylor Road, rather than off a major highway. The land is Shoreline Allowance owned by Minden Hills and Mayor Bob suggested that a long-term access agreement could potentially be arranged.

7. Some of our group hopes to meet with the new Twin Lakes owners this week to explore this option.
8. We sent a letter to both MH & AH Councils to request that the boat launch issue be added to their next meeting agendas. We expressed our concerns and outlined the impact that the loss of this boat ramp will have on the 3-lake chain. It could have a negative affect on seasonal tourism, resident boating, and possibly property values. It could also affect access for OPP, MNR, Fire & others. Finally, it is expected to impact the resorts on the three lakes as customers may not be able to launch or take out their boats. Of course, that may have an impact on local employment at those resorts and elsewhere as a direct result.
9. AH Council added it to their meeting agenda on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The outcome was to hire a consultant to evaluate the Hwy 118 ramp, to see if dredging is viable, as well as recommend any other options. At least it is a step to see what potential Hwy 118 has for an improved public boat ramp.  
While everyone is encouraged to watch the recording of the meeting that's available on our website at [blpoa.ca](http://blpoa.ca), there was a very important acknowledgement by AH's Chris Card, who confirmed that the Hwy 118 ramp was only designed for small shallow-hull aluminum boats, and not the larger ski, pontoon, and V-hull boats that are predominant on our lakes now.
10. MH has not put it on the next meeting Agenda as Mayor Bob Carter would like to see if something can be worked out with the Twin Lakes Resort new owners. He says he is keeping the fellow Council members informed.

**We want to stress: if you have previously relied on Wedgewood's ramp to get your boat out in the fall, it's important that you make other arrangements as soon as possible to ensure you will be able to get your boat out at the end of the summer.**

We will be sending a questionnaire shortly to see how many cottagers use the Hwy 118 and/or Wedgewood ramps in the spring and fall, or at other times. (For example, some of us use the Hwy 118 ramp in the spring and Wedgewood's ramp in the fall.)

We'll also ask all of the three lakes' resorts to give us an estimate of their use. It will be very important going forward to have a clear indication of the number of users to add more information and support for a long-term solution to both Townships involved.

Lastly, we are preparing a base 'form' letter for you to consider sending to both AH & MH Councils so that your voices are heard.

We are working hard to find a solution and hope to see boats able to access all 3 lakes this summer and in future years.