



WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

9 Christie Street,
R.R. #1 Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0
Since 1921
Incorporated 1992
Georgian Bay Shoreline Concerns

SPRING 2008 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Bruce Davidson, President

Well, it won't be long now until hundreds of millions if not billions of people are glued to their television sets watching the summer Olympic Games in Beijing. Doubtlessly the camera crews will zoom in to reveal the everyday lives of people living in a city of 17 million in a country containing forty times the population of Canada. Imagine how Georgian Bay would be affected if Toronto's population were 17 million! Perhaps in the distant future it may be. We should think about that. In the meantime, we may well experience after the Olympics a sense of enduring relief that we live in such a sparsely populated country free of the teeming millions where the air and water are, for the most part, relatively pure.

Our job, quite simply, is to keep it that way. Not an easy proposition when one considers the forces pitted against us: the largest city in the country less than three hours away and getting closer with every highway improvement, an increasingly affluent society replete with all life's toys taking dead aim at the environment, a Provincial government downloading its environmental responsibilities to the local level, and well heeled developers fully prepared to do battle with Official Plans in any courtroom in the country.

The West Carling Association is the public face of our largely shoreline community. We are only as strong as our membership, our foresight and our dedication. So the acid test we must ask ourselves is: "How can we better equip ourselves to deal with the forces that would stain or destroy the incomparable legacy of Georgian Bay?"

Clearly the first imperative is to attract those among us with the ability and desire to achieve our environmental and communal objectives. In furtherance of this end, you may recall that we allowed an increase in the number of Directors at last year's AGM to twenty. With our previous core group of well qualified individuals augmented with several key new volunteers, I believe we now have the human resources equal to the challenge.

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Our second imperative is to operate in a fashion that keeps us both relevant and effective. In this regard, we have taken a more pro-active stance on environmental and development issues and have appointed individuals and sub-committees to monitor progress on increasingly varied issues. We are also opening up dialogue with our sister organizations in the Parry Sound region as well as participating in the wider initiatives sponsored by our parent the Georgian Bay Association.

Our final imperative is to communicate our activities to our membership in a clear and timely manner with a view to promoting discussion and consensus. We owe a considerable debt of gratitude to those Directors responsible for maintaining our membership database, recruiting new members, creating our newsletters, managing our finances and organizing community activities. As WCA cannot operate in a vacuum, we very much appreciate the attendance of our members at our Annual General Meeting and welcome comment from members at any time. Contact information for all our Directors can be found on pg. 2 of this newsletter. Please make us aware of issues that you feel may need addressing.

We hope you like our new approach to meeting the challenges that await us. With your continuing support, I am fully confident that the West Carling Association has both the ability and desire to truly *make a difference*.

Have a great summer!

	<p>CRAIG GROVES</p> <p>705 342-1228 705 746-3122 (cell) cegroves@vianet.on.ca</p>
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ADDRESS CHANGE

Canada Post has asked that we add a street address to our mailing address. As such the new address for the WCA should be:

WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION
R.R. #1
9 Christie Street
Nobel, Ontario
P0G 1G0

We are hoping to obtain a postal box in Nobel when one becomes available so stay tuned for another modification.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

As promised in the fall newsletter, you will find enclosed with this newsletter a copy of the West Carling Association Membership Directory. The last directory was published in 2001 in a booklet format. Our hope is that by adopting this simple 'print-out' format, we can issue an updated directory every spring for people who were members the previous year.

The directory is organized based on the Map Numbers from the West Carling Association map. If you do not have a copy of the West Carling Association map, please contact Doug Malvern and he can arrange to get you one. Our hope is that this listing will enable you to look up the number for a cottage on the map and then refer to the directory to quickly find the name and cottage phone number of the owners (if they are members of the WCA and have consented to have their personal information included).

As this is our first attempt in several years, please take a moment to look at your own information and ensure it is correct. Please contact Doug Malvern with any corrections/changes (contact details are on pg. 2 of this newsletter).

**RENEW YOUR
WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION
MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2008 NOW!**

**PLEASE FILL OUT AND RETURN THE
ENCLOSED MEMBERSHIP FORM TODAY**

SANDY ISLAND

By Michael Gordon

Over the winter you received a letter concerning the acquisition of Sandy Island by the Georgian Bay Land Trust and the Nature Conservancy of Canada and asking for your support. I'd like to thank everyone who gave generously to support the purchase of 450 acres of this fantastic island in our neighbourhood.

Unfortunately, as some of you may have heard, some legal issues arose with the current owners of the land and the closing of the deal was not completed as scheduled. The GBLT and NCC are working diligently to get the issues resolved so that the transaction can be completed and I look forward to reporting on that in the Summer issue so stay tuned.



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EASTERN GEORGIAN BAY WETLANDS EVALUATION & SPECIES-AT-RISK PROJECT

By Michael Gordon

I am delighted to announce that this coming summer West Carling will be the focus of an exciting ecological science project. The purpose of the project is to complete wetland evaluations and related species-at-risk inventories for priority areas along the eastern Georgian Bay coast (with Carling being the priority). Although the idea for the project initiated with the West Carling Association, the effort will be led by three primary partners: the Georgian Bay Land Trust, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and the Ministry of Natural Resources – Parry Sound District.

As some of you may be aware, in 2001 and 2002 these three partners (GBLT, NCC, MNR) conducted an incredible project covering the eastern Georgian Bay coast from the Key River to the Severn River. The project, known as the “Ecological Survey of the Eastern Georgian Bay Coast” was a natural-heritage inventory to collect natural-resource information and biodiversity data on this biologically rich part of the Great Lakes coast. That project looked in detail at the new conservation reserves proposed in July 1999 as part of the Ontario Living Legacy Land Use Strategy (including the Franklin Island and the Shawanaga-Shebeshekong Conservation Reserve) and looked briefly at the area of mainland coast in Carling from Franklin Island to Killbear Park. The results were published in 2005 and are well worth a read. Through that work and further NCC/GBLT efforts to develop a Natural Area Conservation Plan for the Eastern Georgian Bay Coast, the need to conduct a more detailed examination of the wetlands and species-at-risk habitats along the coast became apparent.

The wetlands and adjacent uplands of Eastern Georgian Bay provide habitat for twelve provincial Species-at-risk, including several species of global conservation concern (e.g. spotted turtle). This community-based project will focus on mapping and evaluating wetlands associated Species-at-risk, and

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WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting
Sunday July 27th, 2008
10:30 a.m.
Carling Recreation Hall

Come early at 10:00 am for coffee and chat with your neighbours

Wetlands/Species at Risk - cont'd from page 6

sharing this information with local residents and municipal planners. Results of the project will be greater awareness of species-at-risk and better protection of their habitat.

The project in Carling this summer is intended to serve as a pilot project with the potential for expansion in 2009 to extend the program to other communities and achieve further wetland evaluations and species-at-risk inventories along the eastern Georgian Bay Coast. We are very fortunate to be the first area of focus – a direct result of our early involvement and commitment to the project.

Funding for this project is coming from several sources. The Nature Conservancy of Canada has made an application for Species-at-risk funding in the amount of \$12,000, the MNR-Parry Sound District may contribute as much as \$50,000 in cash and in-kind, and we as a local community have contributed nearly \$11,000 so far with \$5,000 coming from Carling Township Council and the balance from individuals in West Carling. More donations would enable the project to do an even better job so please contact me if you would like more information or are able to make a donation to support this important project.

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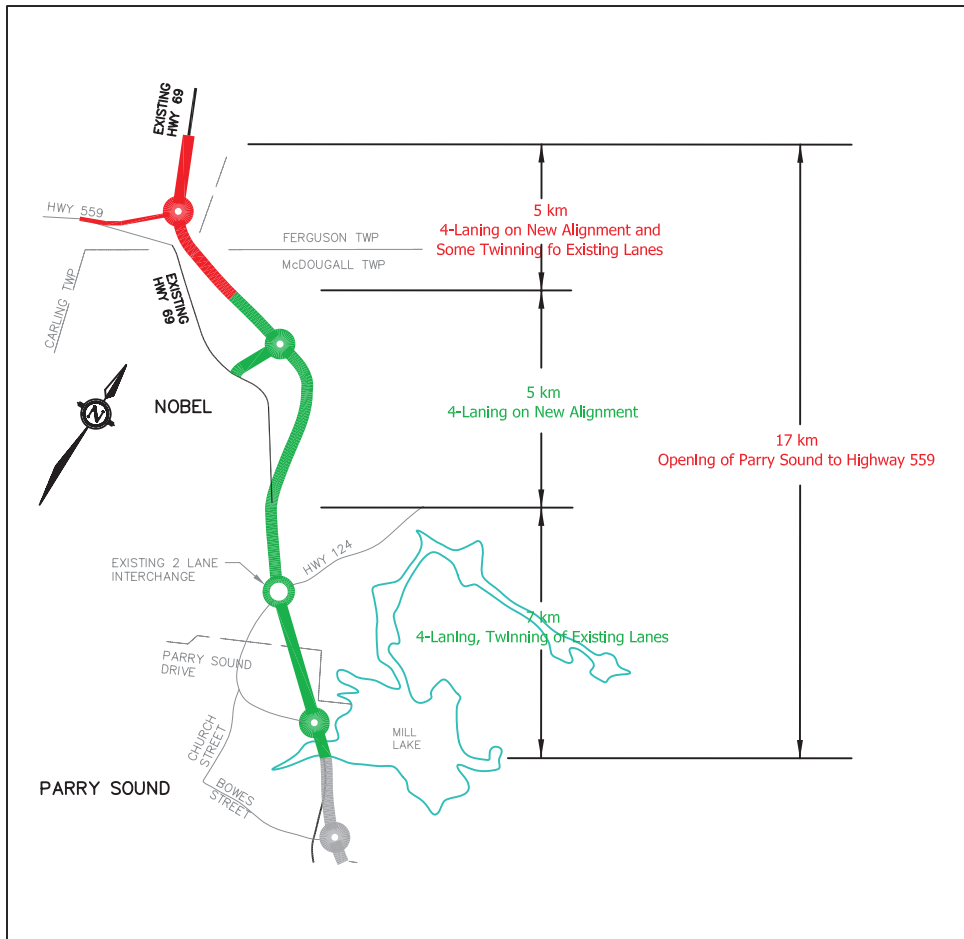
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HIGHWAY 69 EXPANSION

By Michael Gordon

Our drives to Carling Township from the south will get better this summer with the planned completion of the 5km section of highway 69/400 between the Musquatch River and Moon River. That will complete the 4-laning all the way to Bowes Road in Parry Sound. The next section, 17km from Parry Sound to Hwy 559 consists of 3 sections as shown in the map below. The first 7km from Parry Sound to Nobel is under construction and consists of a twinning of the existing lanes. The next 5km of the Nobel bypass is also under construction on a new alignment (behind Tim Hortons). Both of these sections are planned to be completed in 2010. The final 5km to the new (further north) interchange with hwy 559 are in the “engineering and property acquisition” phase that proceeds construction so it will still be a few years until we’re exiting onto hwy 559 at a new interchange but great progress is being made.



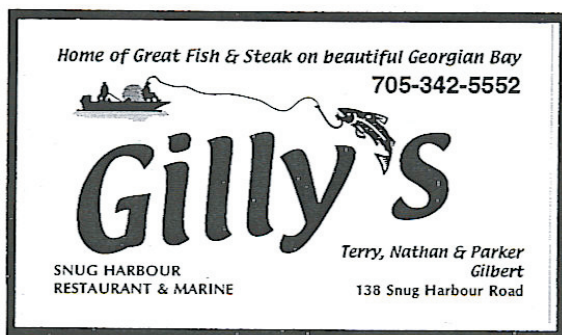
WPSGN WEST PARRY SOUND GEOGRAPHY NETWORK

By Michael Gordon

As some of you may have seen in an email from Susan Murphy at the Carling Township Office, Carling Township is a member of the West Parry Sound Geography Network. The West Parry Sound Geography Network (WPSGN) is a recently formed committee comprised of Municipal and Planning Board representatives from the west side of the Parry Sound District. The founding members include the Town of Parry Sound, the Townships of Carling, McKellar, Seguin and The Archipelago, the municipalities of McDougall and Whitestone together with the Parry Sound Area Planning Board and The Archipelago Area Planning Board. The WPSGN's raison d'être materialized from a collective desire to improve access to geographical information pertaining to the West Parry Sound Region which encompasses the area between 12 Mile Bay and the French River. They operate a area-wide Geographic Information System (GIS) that is open to the public.

You can access the home page of the WPSGN at [to find an amazing interactive mapping tool](#) that will give you a bird's eye view of the various municipalities and let you zoom in on any area to see natural and other features such as streams, wetlands, roads, utility lines, etc. It will also enable you to see the property lines for any property in the area to see the size and shape of the lot. In addition, it has amazing satellite photos that show areas of forest cover, areas of bare rock and even buildings. I've printed out copies of these aerial photos to use walking through the bush to be able to follow the paths of open rock instead of bashing through the trees.

I encourage you to take a look sometime and zoom in on your own cottage and special area of Georgian Bay.



FISHERIES REPORT

By Bill Davis

Cormorants

Last year I concentrated my report on cormorants writing a 10 or 11 page report, (depending on format). About the first third of the report was included in a WCA newsletter. I focused on cormorants because, as my son, Chris, also a fishery biologist, says, "If you have a cormorant problem, and do nothing about it, nothing else that you do matters." That includes reductions in creel limits, stocking, enforcement, reduced seasons, etc. The only possible exceptions would be in areas close enough to human activities that cormorants are not able to hunt effectively.

MNR Wildlife Section, - (because cormorants are their responsibility) decided in 2006 to terminate the 5 year (2001 - 05) cormorant control project, in favour of more research. This was despite the fact that the control appeared to be having beneficial effects. I checked recently, and there are still no plans to resume the control.

I visited cormorant colonies west of us last summer. I found 7 colonies ranging in size from a couple of dozen nests to over 300, and totaling over 700 nests. The rule of thumb is that every 7 cormorant nests (parents + chicks) will use a ton of fish per season. So, the 700 nests that I found would use 100 **tons** of fish. This would not include fish consumed by juvenile cormorants and those migrating through. Although my visits to the colonies were spread over several weeks, I found both eggs and chicks, indicating that their nesting season is quite protracted. There are jurisdictions outside of ours (U.S. states and the prairie provinces) where cormorants are controlled. I am concerned that some of the methods, which include harassment, may displace cormorants that end up here.

I think that the best method of control for us is oiling the eggs. The oil suffocates the embryo and the parent birds, not realizing that their eggs are dead, continue to incubate them, wasting the summer. If the eggs are broken, the cormorants re-nest, joining an existing colony or forming a new one. My son, who is an area fishery manager in Alberta has also opted to add a cull of adult cormorants in order to speed up the population reduction process. (He also stocked millions of walleye fry and appears to be achieving spectacular results.)

Since I wrote the report last year, I learned that Dr. John Casselman, a now retired MNR fishery biologist, analyzed cormorant prey preference, screening out relative abundance of the available species. He listed the top five, in order of preference as 1) smallmouth bass, 2) rock bass, 3) sunfish, 4) perch, 5) alewife. Now, that tallies with what has happened to our ecosystem! It is probable that some species, such as pike and walleyes, were not listed because they are too scarce to be significant.

I went into considerable detail on cormorants, our ecosystem and the

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mistakes that I see MNR having made, as well as social and economic consequences in last year's report. I have it as a pdf file should anyone wish a copy.

Lake trout

I am discouraged by the fact that lake trout numbers out here continued to decline last year. I have long believed that we need a maximum size limit for lake trout, and there is still no sign of one.

MNR stocked lake trout in 2003, 04, 05. All of these trout were 17 months old when planted, so I think that some of these fish should have been large enough to catch by now. The numbers and fin clips are:

2003	319,541	clip Right Pectoral, some adipose. (pectoral =front)
2004	225,564	RPLP
2005	90,874	Left Ventral (ventral =rear side)

Lake trout spawn at age 7 and are then about 4 -5 lbs. I can usually catch lake trout as small as 3 lbs. or less. I have not been catching any of these recently stocked fish. They should definitely be showing up in the ice fishery. If anyone has been catching small lake trout with these recent clips, give me a call. (342 - 5412) I am concerned about a report from my brother that he saw cormorants descend on a stocking site as soon as the tug planting the little trout left.

Other Fish Species

Since the cormorant control period I have made personal observations and have heard reports indicating that there were beneficial effects. Things like smallish walleyes, pike, perch, rock bass, etc. Again, give me a call and give me any info. I can use this to lobby for a resumption of cormorant control. It is also encouragement for MNR fishery biologists to campaign on the inside of MNR's bureaucracy.

I was dismayed to see small smallmouth bass disappear in only a few weeks, in some areas near open water late last summer, when young cormorants began feeding.

A Small Correction

A WCA newsletter from last summer described a large smallmouth bass guarding a nest as a female, and a smaller visitor as a male. That is not ~~how it works~~



in the bass world. It is the male smallmouth bass that guards the nest. The bigger the bass the more attractive he is to the females. Several females may leave eggs in an especially attractive male's nest. There is a logical biological explanation for the arrangement. It takes a great deal of energy, in the form of fat or oil to make eggs. It also takes a great deal of energy to guard a nest and to stay on station through out the incubation period, and even after the eggs hatch to guard the small bass fry for a while. That is why this division of labour. The larger the male, the greater the chance is that he can stay there long enough. By far the greatest reproductive contribution is from the nests of large males. That is why, a couple of years ago, I suggested a voluntary maximum size limit of about 15 inches for bass.

Invasive Species

I am sure that you have all heard about invasive species. I had hoped that we could get our ecosystem back in decent shape before some of the new ones arrived here. Too late. My son reported substantial numbers of round goby along the west side of Franklin Is. last summer. Our ecosystem is naked to an invasive species like goby because cormorants have wiped out the native top and intermediate predators that could resist the invasion. Goby numbers could explode here, making the rehabilitation of our ecosystem much more difficult. Blame MNR Wildlife for the latest blunder.

2008 Regulations

The new angling regulations are finally available. Here are some changes I noted. There has been an attempt to simplify the regs. One result has been a reduction in the number of zones, changing our zone number from 16 to 14. There is now an aggregate limit for salmonids. Although each species has its own limit, the aggregate limit is 5. As I said earlier, I am very disappointed that there is not a maximum size limit for lake trout. I know that many local anglers hate maximum size limits for lake trout, but, they work, -- witness the success in the Big Sound.

The closed area for walleyes at the mouth of the Shebeshekong River has disappeared. I don't think that it was doing much good with low water levels, and especially considering the native harvest of spawning walleyes upstream.

I strongly recommend that you get your own copy of the new regs, as I may have missed important changes on my first read through.



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Georgian Bay.*

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