



WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

9 Christie Street,
R.R. #1 Nobel, Ontario, P0G 1G0
Since 1921

Incorporated 1992

Georgian Bay Shoreline Concerns

SPRING 2009 NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Bruce Davidson

It seems that every day now, the media reminds us just how dire our financial situation has become, or gives us yet another dollop of grim economic news. Nothing travels faster than bad news. Ah, the power of the press. I, for one, am a little tired of it. So the last thing I really want to do is to talk about the financial crisis in a letter concerning our beloved Georgian Bay. Unfortunately, there are implications for our waterfront community arising from recent events that cannot be ignored.

Unquestioningly, there will be some changes in our neighborhood this summer as a result of the new economic order. The difference in this instance, refreshingly, is that many changes will be for the better.

For starters, less discretionary income means almost certainly less pollution for our waters from motorized craft, whether they be million dollar cruisers, noisy 'cigarette' boats, personal watercraft or even every day runabouts. For this, the fish and waterfowl will be grateful. Noise complaints should also be fewer and picnic spots more readily available.

An equally profound change will be a short term easing of pressure on both commercial and residential developments along our shoreline. I expect that many projects on the drawing boards will be postponed or scaled down owing to a lack of financing and/or a lack of buyers. Of course, some projects will be sold to those with deeper pockets, but the majority are likely to be put on hold. For example, there will be no incentive to spend serious money on feasibility and environmental impact studies for residential units without buyers. Who is going to pay for an OMB hearing when the banks are unwilling to lend on completion anyway? And who is going to build monster cottages when the kids college funding is in jeopardy?

Admittedly, dramatically lower energy costs could attract more day trippers to cottage country, but on balance, restraint is probably going to be the new order of the day. Camping may become increasingly popular, with kayaks and sailing also gaining respect as greener alternatives. Recycling should become more prevalent in tougher economic times. Wasteful conspicuous consumption is not going to sit well with the masses. In a tougher world, preservation of the natural environment just might become the holy grail of the next decade. Sometimes change can be for the better.

Now I realize that there are quite a few contractors, outfitters and equipment suppliers in our area who will be annoyed that I apparently take solace from a more relaxed development pace. However, as a lifelong seasonal resident and friend to

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some, let me assure them that I am indeed sympathetic to their plight. Hopefully many contractors have work backlogs that can see them through this summer, tradesmen may find work in other geographical areas, new business opportunities will surely arise and governments at all levels are focusing on retraining programs. In any case, the downturn may not extend beyond the current year.

The important thing to take away from this pause in the furious construction pace of recent years is that we have just bought ourselves maybe a year or two in which to rethink our priorities, to redraft our development guidelines without an angry backlash from vested interests and to promote the ethic that small is beautiful. Let's not lose this God sent opportunity to better protect the Bay. Now is the time to put in place policies that will serve future generations well, before it is too late.

Those of you who have taken the time to search the West Carling Association under "members" at the GBA website will discover that we refer to Franklin Island as the "crown jewel" of our domain. And well it should be. After all, as far back as 1922

Franklin was designated as a Provincial Park, although the legislation was never officially adopted. At the time, the Department of Lands and Forests practically fell over themselves in praise of the unspoiled wilderness. So it seemed a natural a few years ago that the WCA should take a lead role in developing a stewardship program to protect the 2000 odd acres of pristine rocks, trees and water. A partnership was duly formed among several prominent stakeholders with the objective of promoting good camping practices, discouraging or reporting instances of abuse, installing outhouses at heavily used camping sites and cleaning up where our message has fallen on deaf ears.

Those familiar with the work have derived some well deserved satisfaction from the formalization of an action plan. Carling Township itself has signed on to the program and has been instrumental in providing administrative and financial support. This summer the Franklin Island program continues to forge ahead and is widely regarded as an environmental success. Congratulations and thank you to all involved.

What we did not foresee when we initiated the program was that, by undertaking an effort to protect a property that was not technically in our jurisdiction or mandate, we would be breaking new ground. It's rather like cutting the grass and removing the weeds from a nearby park because it's the right thing to do and nobody else has the will or resources to do it. But it has been noticed. This summer we expect a high level delegation from Provincial environmental agencies to take a tour of many sites which we have 'adopted' to ascertain whether what we have started could serve as a model for protection of other environmentally-stressed publicly owned land in Ontario. Your Directors are pleased to have received this attention and will be assisting with the logistics in every way possible.



GROWING OUR MEMBERSHIP

By Michael Gordon

After a number of busy years focused on issues such as the Official Plan, windfarm development proposals, crown land stewardship and wetland evaluations, the focus of the WCA Directors for 2009 is on growing our membership.

Growing our membership is important for many reasons. In our interactions with Carling Township Council on issues such as the Official Plan, the size of our membership provides a stronger voice. As the 5th largest local cottage association under the Georgian Bay Association umbrella (after Pointe au Baril, Sans Souci & Copperhead, Cognashene and Honey Harbour) the \$40 of our memberships fees that flows to the GBA provides them with critical resources to work on the macro issues facing eastern Georgian Bay. Having more members provides more funds and support for our WCA efforts to protect and preserve our natural environment.

This effort to grow our membership involves several initiatives:

New Brochure - we have produced a brochure outlining clearly what the West Carling Association is all about. You will find two of these brochures enclosed with this newsletter. One is for you, one is for you to share with a neighbour or friend who is not a West Carling Association member but might join if they knew more about our work.

Mailing to non-members - later this spring we will be mailing a letter (and a brochure copy) to all property owners in the WCA territory who are not members inviting them to join.

Director outreach - we have divided the WCA territory into smaller sections and assigned a Director to each one to personally contact property owners who are not members and invite them to join.

Social BBQ - we are planning to enhance our annual meeting on late July with the addition of a social BBQ lunch.

We would appreciate any assistance or ideas that you have about how we can reach out to the property owners in our area who are not members of the West Carling Association and invite them to join. You can reach me by email at mgordon003@sympatico.ca *Continued on Page 5*

CARLING MARKET 2009
Opening day Saturday June 27th

**RENEW YOUR
WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP
FOR 2009 NOW!**

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

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

As promised in the fall newsletter, you will find enclosed with this newsletter a copy of the West Carling Association Membership Directory. Our plan is to 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).

Please take a moment to look at your own information and ensure it is correct and contact Doug Malvern with any corrections/changes (contact details are on pg. 2 of this newsletter).



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GBLT 2008 UPDATE

By Wendy Cooper, Executive Director of the GBLT

In 2008, GBLT completed two of its largest properties - approximately 425 acres on Sandy Island and just under 100 acres of coastal wetland in Port Severn. They also worked with 19 landowners to complete 10 new properties, including one purchase, one conservation easement, and 8 donations of land. The properties include the GBLT's most southern and most northern properties to date, and GBLT's first property in the North Channel. Over 205 acres of coastal wetland, interior wetland, forest and rock barren habitats will be protected, supporting regionally, provincially and globally rare flora and fauna such as Eastern Foxsnake, Eastern Massasauga, and Stiff Yellow Flax, among many others.

Although completion of the transfers is a great accomplishment, the real work now begins as the GBLT works with existing and new volunteers to develop Steward teams for each of these properties. Stewardship activities include the completion of management plans for each property, regular monitoring visits by Stewards and summer students and other management activities as required.

KAYAK EXCURSION TO SANDY ISLAND

Saturday July 11th 2009

**The Georgian Bay Land Trust is planning an
afternoon Kayak excursion to Sandy Island. For
more information, contact info@gblt.org or call
Amanda at 416 440-1519 x3**



WEST CARLING ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting
Sunday July 26th, 2009
10:30 a.m.
Carling Recreation Hall

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

WETLAND EVALUATION RESULTS

Good News! Following the wetland evaluation work completed last summer the Shebeshekong (West Bay) and Rennie Bay wetlands have been designated as provincially significant. This gives these wetlands protection status through provincial and local planning policy. The evaluations of Hailstone Lake and Deep Bay wetlands are still in process, more news to come.

TAKE A SHOT ON THE ROCKS

The GBLT is holding a photo contest focused on the rocks of Georgian Bay. You can submit photos of the unique stripes, colours, bands, folds, and swirls that characterize the rocks of Georgian Bay. A panel of photographic and environmental experts will select the top 25 photos to be featured in a 2009 "Rocks of Georgian Bay" poster. Deadline for entries is Tuesday, September 15th, 2009. TO learn more about the competition visit www.gbtl.org/rocks.html , call 416 440-1519 x3 or email rocks@gbtl.org



Preserving unique properties along the eastern shore and North Channel. Join with us in protecting the natural beauty and character of Georgian Bay.

For more information visit, www.gbtl.org or call, 416-440-1519

UPDATE ON CARLING TOWNSHIP OFFICIAL PLAN

By Jeremy Gawen

Four associations; namely, West Carling, North Sound, Deep Bay and Smiths Bay, have all been working closely together on Carling's new Official Plan (OP) for nearly two years. The current status is that the OP Draft has been approved by Council and sent to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing together with several other Provincial agencies for their review and approval.

This has been a long and difficult process with the Association representatives spending many hours reviewing the material prepared by the Township's planner and attending many meetings of the Council during their deliberations. Our views as to what constitutes good planning and development intensity standards have not been universally accepted, and we have had to fight for every change requested. This plan will govern the development of Carling Township for the next generation, although it is subject to review after five years. Our constant aim has been to protect this beautiful and ecologically fragile place from the kind of inappropriate and/or intensive residential and commercial development that is occurring in the Muskokas and in the southern part of the Bay.



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We have had some successes and some failures. Successes include a ban on any new waterfront tourist resorts, a ban on expansion of tourist resorts on adjacent lands and a commitment to at least study the issue of providing enough dockage for the water access community. Clearly, our biggest failure was our inability to persuade Council to disallow the conversion of existing resorts (there are sixteen) to residential at anything close to the regulations for residential use. In particular, we were disappointed that the 100 meter minimum waterfront standard that existing residential owners must abide by, has not been imposed in the proposed standards for commercial conversions. In recognition of the long periods that these resorts have existed, their practical need to share certain facilities, and their declining commercial attractiveness, we accepted the premise that they ought to enjoy a somewhat greater redevelopment density together with slightly more relaxed setback requirements than would be the case for pure residential development. In our view, however, Council opted for development standards that were overly generous, to say the least.

Where do we go from here? As I mentioned earlier, Council has approved a draft plan which has been sent to the Ministry for review and approval. We have advised the Ministry of our concerns and three Associations have appealed some of the key provisions of the Plan to the Ontario Municipal Board. We will have to await the Ministry's response. If we are not satisfied, we still have the ability to take matters to the OMB for a final decision



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FISHERIES REPORT

By Bill Davis

I was about to commence writing my fishery report when it occurred to me that pretty much everything that I wanted to say was in a letter that I sent to David Reid our Lake Management Supervisor and his response to me. Here is the letter and (with his permission) the response.

Dear Dave,

These are my suggestions for belatedly trying to combat the invasion of Georgian Bay by Round Goby. The obvious approach is to increase the numbers of any native species that will eat, or compete with, goby.

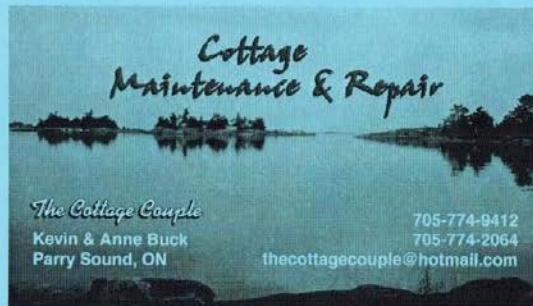
Maximum Size Limit for Smallmouth Bass – one species known to prey heavily on gobies is Smallmouth Bass. To maximize abundance of Smallmouth Bass, and their effectiveness as predators of gobies, I suggest a minimum size limit of about 14 inches as: 1) most Smallmouth Bass production comes from nests guarded by large males; 2) Smallmouth Bass are excellent predators of gobies and the larger the smallmouth bass, the larger the gobies they can consume; 3) Smallmouth Bass top the preferred prey list of cormorants. A maximum size limit would create a pool of bass that are too large for cormorants to eat, thus ensuring a supply of spawning size bass even through poor year classes.

Lake Trout Management – another potential predator of Round Gobies could be Lake Trout. Sculpin are known to be important prey for lake trout. Round Goby are very similar to sculpin in appearance and behaviour. It is possible that during cold water months lake trout and goby habitat overlap, and thus lake trout could be important predators of goby at times of the year when smallmouth bass are less active.

I have been less than impressed with current MNR strategies for rehabilitation of lake trout in this part of Georgian Bay, outside of the Big Sound, so I will outline strategies that I would use and the rationale for them. Lake trout lay fewer eggs for their size than fish like walleye, white fish or pike, etc. These shallow water fish face much greater predation pressure and greater environmental pressures that vary year class strength than do lake trout, so these fish evolved reproductive strategies that make it possible for them to get the reproductive job done in a hurry. technology.

Lake trout, on the other hand, spawn under conditions that prevail most years so there is little variation in year class strength. In addition, lake trout spent their lives facing no predators, even humans, before the advent of modern technology. Because they could live long lives, and reach quite large sizes, they evolved a reproductive strategy that relied on large fish being able to spawn many times and eventually lay many eggs. Any successful fishery management strategy plays to a fish species strengths. For lake trout this means protection for large fish, with a maximum size limit, and low overall harvest. This is even more important for the rehabilitation of lake trout outside the Big Sound than it was inside, where this strategy has shown spectacular success.

This brings us to the next mistake being made in the rehabilitation effort. I think that Big Sound Lake Trout are not the correct variety for outside rehabilitation. Big Sound Lake Trout are a deep water variety. They have a long history of spawning at Davy Island, and even though they forage, and roam, widely outside of the Sound, there is no evidence, that I am aware of, of successful reproduction in outside waters. They always appear to "home" to Davy Island to spawn. The outside waters are, in lake trout terms, a shallow water habitat. My suggestion is to combine any Big Sound trout stocking with shallow water varieties from elsewhere, with shallow water Lake Superior stock being the logical choice. In evolutionary terms the separation of Lake Superior trout from Georgian Bay habitat has been brief. In any event the introduction of exotic species has rendered this habitat so different from its original form that the strategy I will recommend would be necessary, even if the original lake trout inhabitants of it were available. My strategy would be to stock several varieties of lake trout together, give them maximum protection, expect at least some successful natural reproduction from a large, varied gene pool of spawning adults, some of whom manage to get it right because there should be the right genes in there somewhere, and wait for natural selection to produce the lake trout appropriate for these waters.



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Dear Bill,

Thanks for your letter dated Dec. 22, 2008. Sorry I haven't responded before now but I have been out of the office much of the past month. You have made some very interesting and thought provoking suggestions in your letter. I have attached a copy of your letter for some of our staff to review and consider. Regarding the smallmouth bass size limit recommendation, as you know the Eastern Georgian Bay Stewardship Council is our first line of consultation regarding any potential changes to sportfishing regulations in this area of the lake. As the Stewardship Coordinator for this group I am requesting that Eric McIntyre bring your recommendation forward as a discussion topic at a future meeting of the Council. I too am concerned how the proliferation of gobies might harmfully impact the fisheries of Lake Huron including the potential for significant predation of lake trout eggs in the Parry Sound area. Given the recent invasion of gobies into the eastern Georgian Bay area any potential management tactics to reduce the harmful influence of this species need to be given serious consideration.

As far as lake trout are concerned we are currently reviewing our lake trout management strategies and will be revising our lake trout management plan. As you point out our success at rehabilitating the offshore areas near Parry Sound have been less than desired. By way of this note I am requesting that David Gonder and Adam Cottrill review your comments and recommendations and that we consider and discuss them internally as part of the update of the lake trout rehabilitation plan.

Again thanks for your input and I will keep you updated on our deliberations regarding your suggestions.

David M. Reid
Lake Management Supervisor
Upper Great Lakes Management Unit – Lake Huron
Ministry of Natural Resources

p.s. Lake trout will be planted again in the Limestone area starting this spring for the three year window. I believe John Brookham of our office has been talking to you about potential docking and route options for getting those fish out of the islands.



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