



## Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association

P O Box 146 Cloyne Ontario K0H 1K0

Christine Reed  
CAO/Clerk-Treasurer  
Township of Addington Highlands  
72 Edward Street  
P.O. BOX 89  
Flinton, Ontario K0H 1P0

Dear Ms. Reed,

With the warming weather, the members of the Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association have begun to see a drastic increase in shoreline camping on Skootamatta Lake. Camping trailers and semi-permanent docks on shoreline road allowances, blocked boat launches, extensive littering, and dangerous bonfires are just a few of the issues that we have seen since the ice went out less than two months ago.

The SDRA worked with the Township and the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry to develop a by-law to address illegal camping activity on municipal shoreline road allowances and boat launches under a Land Use Permit. In 2021 this by-law was approved by Council. While the boat launches along Hughes Landing Rd may not be subject to the by-law, as they are Ministry-controlled, the road allowances leading to these boat launches do fall under the by-law. **How is the by-law being enforced, where the Township has clear jurisdiction?**

Even though provincial boat launches are not subject to the by-law, they are subject to the Public Lands Act. The Act is very clear that camping at boat launches is not permitted. To this, the Ministry has posted signs at the boat launches. These signs are routinely removed by illegal campers. The SDRA has been told to contact the Ministry TIPS phone line to report the camping activity, but by the time there is a response, the vast majority of campers have left and there is no follow-up with complainants. **Has the Township been in contact with the Ministry and/or the Ontario Provincial Police to devise a strategy for addressing this illegal activity?**

The SDRA does not object to minimal-impact camping activity, but what we have continued to experience is not only illegal, but dangerous. Just prior to the fire ban that was put in place on Monday June 5th, campers were reported to have a massive bonfire at the overcrowded boat launch. We continue to read about the wildfire just northeast near Centennial Lake and wonder if we'll be next. There needs to be more enforcement and clear jurisdiction on these matters. **The SDRA would recommend that the Township engage the appropriate Ministries of the provincial government to permit enforcement of municipal by-laws on crown land, where the by-law does not contradict the Public Lands Act.**

If this is not an option that the government would consider, then **the SDRA would request that the Township review options for Land Use Permits for Ministry-controlled boat launches where camping is a serious issue.**

The SDRA has submitted similar letters to the Member of Provincial Parliament, Ric Bresee, the Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs & Housing, and the Ontario Provincial Police as a means of underscoring the need for this issue to receive urgent attention for concrete action.

The SDRA remains open and willing to discuss these issues with all parties and work towards a satisfactory solution.

Kind Regards,

Joel Arthurs  
President  
Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association