



Council News Release regarding Public Boat Launch

Eagle Lake Estates Park

40 Angus Point Rd, Eagle Lake

This upgrade has been in discussion since Fall 2015 and budgeted for in 2016. The Township received significant public comment starting in the Summer of 2016, as well as suggestions for alternate locations through the Winter of 2016. The Boat Launch proposal requires a work permit under the Public Lands Act and is subject to the Class Environmental Assessment for MNR Resource Stewardship and Facility Development Projects (Class EA). The Township through its consultant applied for a work permit. The work permit has been under review since the Summer of 2016, and recently completed this Spring.

As a result of the Class EA screening, the project was recommended as a Category A project (a project with potential for low negative environmental effects and/or public agency concern). MNRF is aware of previous public concerns with the proposal. MNRF believe that public concerns have been addressed to the extent possible. MNRF committed to contacting the representative of the landowners opposed to the project once the Class EA screening was complete to provide them an opportunity to ask questions and view the Class EA documentation, if they wish. We would like to thank MNRF for their thorough review and consideration of information from all parties. The process has been long and extensive.

MNRF's office wanted to specifically address the 2 following items:

1) Boat Traffic on Eagle Lake. There were concerns raised that boat traffic would increase on Eagle Lake. It is unknown to what extent boat traffic may increase as a result of this project. The location already provides public access to Eagle Lake, but the infrastructure will improve accessibility. MNRF manages Crown lands and waters for the benefit of the people of Ontario and have no grounds for limiting public access to Eagle Lake. There are existing laws to regulate boat speeds and ensure boat safety. Unsafe boating practices should be reported to the Ontario Provincial Police. 2) Spread of Invasive Phragmites. There were concerns raised that invasive phragmites are present at the proposed boat launch area, and an increase in boat traffic would accelerate the spread of this species around the lake. MNRF considered the plants that are present at the boat launch location and believe they are the native phragmites species. Additionally, the presence of invasive species would not result in work permit denial, since the spread of species can be mitigated through best management practices.

The suggestion of Invasive Species came forward to the Township in correspondence from the Eagle Lake Conservation Association dated Aug 9, 2016. The Township replied on Sep 15, 2016 requesting the Association provide the confirming data so we could review. At a meeting with the President of the ELCA in Jan 2017, the Township queried and was able to confirm the ELCA had no data to support the species as Invasive Phragmites. We are apprised at this time through 3rd parties that the ELCA recently performed sampling and testing of these reeds around several points along the shore of Eagle Lake, including this site at the Boat Launch. We've had no official notification of this from the ELCA, however as explained, the presence of Invasive Phragmites does not warrant work permit denial. If Invasive Species are identified, MNRF recommends that control and management activities are undertaken in a manner to prevent the further spread of the species, by following the Best Management Practices.

Council previously issued a Statement regarding the Public Boat Launch as well as Responses 1 and 2 to the Spokesperson/Group opposing. Council further issued an update regarding the Public Boat Launch. All of these documents have been, and continue to be prominently displayed on our website. This News Release will serve as the 2nd update. Council continue to believe the Eagle Lake Estates Park location is the best option. The property is known as Eagle Lake Estates Park and is owned by the Township. The Plan of Subdivision provided Block A to the Township as Access to Eagle Lake. The proposed work is on shore lands fronting municipally owned land. The Township will be doing some brushing and signage at the Eagle Lake Estates Park scheduled for this Spring. Further details on the Boat Launch upgrade will follow when additional information becomes available. We thank you for your continued patience.