

Letter to the Director – Parks and Protected Spaces

Good Morning Rob:

Jan. 9, 2018

Regarding the clean-up of Derailed CN Rail cars at Nora Lake:

I'm writing in support of the email recently sent to you by Ron Smith of the WCA, to reinforce the urgency of your involvement in the clean-up of CN Rails' derailment between Nora Lake and Florence Lake. I understand from others in the area, that the first action taken in the "clean-up" by CN Rail, was to relocate those cars that were interfering with the sustained use of the track far enough away from it to resume use of their main line. Further that this involved pushing at least "one tanker into a marsh that drains into Nora Lake".

We understand that of the 23 rail cars involved in the derailment, some were tankers containing petrochemicals (other than crude oil) which remained intact, and no leakage occurred. In addition, approximately 3 were gondola cars carrying bagged **Nickel Sulphide**. Our concern is most acutely directed at the nickel sulphide which is a known carcinogen, highly allergenic, and can induce asthma if breathed in. At least as concerning is CN's having removed potentially damaged cars carrying this chemical from the railway track, and placing them into an aquatic environment (a marsh adjacent to Nora lake). The petrochemicals have not been identified, however, the Nickel Sulphide can only be described as:

(100%): Acute Hazard - Very toxic to aquatic life with long lasting effects
[Warning Hazardous to the aquatic environment, long-term hazard]

This approach to site remediation does not contain the contamination, but rather fosters its dispersion beyond what might otherwise occur. It increases the probable impact of what could be limited contamination distribution following a derailment and should not be condoned. I appreciate the railway's desire to sustain the operation of their main line, but it comes at a potentially, very high price for the neighbouring recreational area, exposing many cottagers to potentially horrendous impact.

Administration of the clean-up by a knowledgeable organization - other than the offending railway, should be mandatory. Further, a contractor having a full appreciation the chemistry of the materials at hand, and the implications of actions taken on the dispersion mechanisms in an aquatic environment, should be engaged, and held responsible for directing the clean-up actions taken. Given the incentive for the railway operator to put their track back into operation as quickly as possible, they cannot be

expected to fully anticipate the consequences of actions taken, nor respect the interests of those affected by it.

Once again, your leadership in protecting the best interests of both the park, and the cottagers that use it, is sorely needed.

Alan Roberts

Chair: Whiteshell Cottagers Environment Committee