



## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Events Committee – Cheryl Bryant – CHAIR**

Another year has passed and the Whiteshell Cottagers Association (WCA) have been busy with various events making cottagers more aware of the WCA'S presence and increasing our membership. In March the WCA had a booth set up at the Cottage Country's Lake & Cabin Show where several members dropped by to say hi. We had a booth at the Falcon Fair and Volunteer Director's have been knocking on doors, letting cottagers know that through membership, we have a stronger voice when negotiating with the government. Enjoy your summer.

### **Environment Committee – Alan Roberts - CHAIR**

Trans-Canada Pipelines renewed their application to the NEB for approval of their Energy East Pipeline submission was renewed in early 2017. This pipeline conversion was to pass through the Whiteshell Provincial Park just north of Falcon Lake. This committee prepared a submission to the NEB requesting that TCP reduce the risk level for cottagers, by:

- Provide leak detection by using double walled pipe (with leak detection sensors between the pipe walls) on all diluted bitumen pipeline within the Park;
- Requiring annual static pressure tests to confirm the absence of leaks; and
- Providing 3<sup>rd</sup> party liability insurance coverage (in addition to their clean-up commitment) equal in value to the sum of all cottages and local area business on Falcon lake.

Trans-Canada Pipe withdrew their application for this project in late 2017.

A train derailment which occurred on the CN Rail line between Nora and Florence Lakes on January 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Approximately 23 cars were involved in the derailment and a number of them overturned in a swamp adjacent to the track – which drained into Nora Lake. Several of these cars contained unidentified petrochemicals, and several others contained bagged nickel sulphide – a known carcinogen that is highly toxic to aquatic environments. Sustainable Development was encouraged to take the lead role in the clean-up, however, they deferred to CN Rail who cleared the track first and cleaned up the mess later. We are advised that the site has been cleaned up - hopefully in the spring we'll be able to see whether any damage / contamination has occurred. Soils testing and remediation will be requested of CN Rail if there is visual evidence of contamination.

We continue to work with Recycle Manitoba in implementation of their recycle program in the Whiteshell.

### **Communications Committee**

#### ***Echo – Sharon Philip (Chair)***

The past year we published 5 regular issues of the Whiteshell Echo. We would like to thank our Editor, James Buchok, for all his hard work. In addition, we would like to thank all the dedicated individuals who have committed their time and effort to writing articles for the Echo. A special thank-you to those who have volunteered to proofread the paper. We are open to articles and pictures from Whiteshell members; if you have any news items, you can pass them on to your lake director or the Editor.

#### ***Website Committee Report - Angela Hogan (Chair)***

The Website Committee aims to keep members informed of news, events, issues and to share ideas affecting cottagers in the Whiteshell. Through the website at <https://whiteshellcottagers.com/> members have access to a wide variety of information including meeting minutes, electronic copies of the ECHO, Committee News, safety alerts, information about membership benefits, special events etc. The website activity continues to increase. We had a record of 10,484 unique visitors to the site over the past year. Our Facebook site at <https://www.facebook.com/WhiteshellCottagers/> is updated regularly with news, stories and ideas for cottagers. We have had over 1700 "likes" and over 1800 followers on Facebook.

We continue to make improvements to the online registration & renewal process which allowed more members to renew on a timely basis in January and February this year. The online payment option is secure and reduces the administration work associated paper applications and the need to follow up forgotten renewals.

If members have feedback, news or pictures to share, they should contact [webmaster@whiteshellcottagers.com](mailto:webmaster@whiteshellcottagers.com) or send a message through Facebook.

### **Membership Committee – Deborah Seguin – CHAIR**

At December 31, 2017, membership in your Whiteshell Cottagers Association hit an all time high of 2230, a more than 10% increase over the previous year. THANK YOU, MEMBERS, for your support and confidence. As of April 4, 2018, membership in the WCA has reached 1532. Hooray to all you early birds! If you are not one of the 1532, today is the time to join and enjoy the benefits. Go to [whiteshellcottagers.com](http://whiteshellcottagers.com) to join on line or print and mail in your membership form. There is also a membership form in the Echo that you can use. While you are at it, consider a multiple year membership saving you time AND money.

Our Marketing Committee is very busy this year bringing you fantastic savings from a number of great businesses:

**TOTAL LIGHTING** - Receive contractor pricing

**STAR BUILDING MATERIALS LTD.** - Receive contractor pricing. Discounts vary on lumber and hardware. <http://www.starbuilding.ca/winnipeg>

**ROBINSON BATH CENTRE** - Receive contractor pricing

**ABC FIRE & SAFETY** - Receive 20% Discount.

*Members are required to present their WCA membership card as proof of membership when shopping at the above merchants.*

**CABELAS** - \$20 off on a purchase of \$150 or more. Coupon will be mailed with your membership card.

**MARKS WORK WEARHOUSE** - Discount cards will be mailed with your membership card.

**COTTAGE LIFE MAGAZINE** - Receive a discount on your subscription at <https://secure.cottagelife.com/subscribe.php?key=W15ASWCA>

**PLEZIA INSURANCE BROKERS** - <http://pleziainsurance.ca/whiteshell-cottagers-association/>

**\*\* New! CDC Computers** - Receive V.I.P. Pricing up to 20% OFF with your WCA membership card

**BOATsmart** - Whiteshell Cottagers Association (WCA) is working with BOATsmart to arrive at a year round discount for boaters licenses for WCA members, but in the meantime BOATsmart has set up a link specifically for WCA for a special offer they currently have on ("gift card" at 50% off for Boater licenses)

WOW, that is quite a line up for cottagers! Check our website and Facebook for updates on this discount program. Take advantage of being a member and please help us reach this year's goal of 2650 members by encouraging all Whiteshell cottagers to join and be part of our united voice. Membership strengthens your WCA for what ever we may be pursuing on your behalf. HELP US HELP YOU.

Stay informed on all issues and breaking news by visiting the WCA website [whiteshellcottagers.com](http://whiteshellcottagers.com) and following us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/WhiteshellCottagers/](http://www.facebook.com/WhiteshellCottagers/).

### **Photo Contest Committee – Lorna Spencer – CHAIR**

The 2017 photo contest was a very successful initiative as many photos were submitted by members and friends of the WCA. Upcoming for 2018 will include a digital photo contest, in addition to the print contest. There will also be a monthly winner to be shown in each edition of the Echo.

### **Water Levels Committee – Alan Roberts - CHAIR**

The spring of 2017 brought a very average to slightly below normal runoff – enough to replenish lake levels, but little more. The summer brought below normal rainfall in April, May, June, and August with above normal rain in July and September. The low spring rainfall, left enough lake storage room to accept the July rains, and the high evaporation rate of July and August gave us the storage to handle the heavy September rains as well. Total precipitation was very normal, and the timing of it prevented an accumulation problem from developing. This made for a very “normal” year for the South Whiteshell (Falcon, West Hawk, Caddy, and Brereton), and very “dry” year for the Central Whiteshell lakes (Big Whiteshell, White, and Betula) that are dependent upon the Whiteshell River to maintain their lake level. Because of its dam, the water level on Jessica Lake did not suffer, even though precipitation levels were below normal. Water quality of the Central Whiteshell lakes always suffers in years of low to normal precipitation resulting in warmer water temperatures and algae blooms on the shallower lakes.

#### ***Falcon Lake:***

Because of its decrepit level control infrastructure, and poorly maintained boathouse access channels, much of our efforts were focused on upgrading of the infrastructure on Falcon Lake. We are pleased to report that we’ve been able to gain the support of both Sustainable Development (SD) and Manitoba Infrastructure (MI), and we are looking forward to a great deal of relief from uncontrolled water levels over the next couple of years. Sustainable Development (Parks) have agreed to dredge the boathouse access channels on Falcon – which will allow the lake to be operated at a lower level; and Manitoba Infrastructure have completed a Preliminary Design Study which will serve as a basis for design of a new level control facility to replace the existing gravity drain that was built in 1963. Though discussions are still at a rather preliminary stage, the WCA and SD are in general agreement on the objectives to be met by the dredging program. Their recognition of the integral nature of this work to controlling the water level, and their timely decision to undertake it, warrants kudos from all cottagers on the lake. We will continue to work with SD to represent the interests of the cottagers affected.

Discussions with MI regarding the new level control facility, however, have not proceeded as well thus far. The differences between us lie in our performance expectations, and the definition of “flood protection”. WCA’s objectives are: to prevent damage to shoreline infrastructure; and: to retain recreational access to it on a continuous basis between June and September. MI supports the study recommendation for a gravity drain – due largely to its lower cost, and to their desire to redefine “flooding” as being a life threatening situation rather than one which causes damage to shoreline infrastructure and prevents recreational use by cottagers. Their study demonstrates that a gravity drain cannot meet WCA’s objectives in any year where the rainfall is greater than “normal” – it **will not prevent flooding** in wet years. We need to convince them that the cost for the cottagers to repair the damages from flooding are greater than the difference in cost between the gravity drain they prefer, and the pumped discharge that WCA believes is better value. The upcoming **Open House** planned for this summer (no date yet), is your chance to express your opinion.

#### ***Caddy Lake:***

Inadequate river crossings by both CN and CP Rail have been confirmed as the cause of frequent flooding. Efforts made to open a dialogue with both railways to find a solution, have been unsuccessful. Manitoba Infrastructure (MI) have obtained enough tunnel design information to confirm the primary constraint is the CN Rail crossing, and they are in the process of finalizing their flow analysis model. This may be sufficient to serve as a basis for discussion with CN – a renewed effort will be made.

Reduction of the draw down rate at the low end of the Caddy Lake level range would involve modifying a remote weir at the discharge of North Cross lake. In order to be effective, such a modification would have to impose a flow restriction additional to the existing weir. Because it is so remote, access for adjustment would be very difficult, so the restriction would have to be permanent. Until the flood risk can be reduced, injecting an additional flow restriction into the drainage system would exacerbate the flood situation unacceptably. Consideration of low level flow reduction measures will therefore be postponed until the flood control issues have been resolved.

#### ***Betula Lake:***

Raising the water level of the lake by reducing the discharge flow rate at low water levels is a very similar problem to that at Caddy. The difference is that the weir controlling the level of Betula is readily accessible for adjustment when necessary, and flooding is not an uncontrollable issue. MI has been asked to redirect their efforts towards

review of the control measures needed to reduce the flow rate from Betula by adding control stop logs or a V-notch weir on top of the existing flat-topped weir to enhance the retention of water to a higher level. We will monitor MI's progress with interest.

**General:**

The level of communication and cooperation between the WCA and both SD and MI has improved dramatically over the last 2 years. We look forward to sustained improvement in the water level control facilities and management thereof.

More detail is available in the "Committee News" section of our website under the heading "Lake Levels". Visit: [www.whiteshellcottagers.ca](http://www.whiteshellcottagers.ca).