

WILLIAMS LAKE CONSERVATION COMPANY
A REGISTERED NON-PROFIT COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOUNDED 1968
www.williamslakecc.org

NEWSLETTER

MAY 2006

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 8, 2006 7:30 PM
CAPT. WILLIAM SPRY CENTRE

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

President Andrew Ross will report on the year's activities, we will elect the Board of Directors for 2006-2007, consider new business and discuss various concerns, particularly the dam, water license, and lake area development. The Board needs your input! Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend.

The Board also encourages you to make suggestions for the incoming Board of Directors. Is your area represented on the Board? Contact any member of the Board (see below) for further information or to put forward a name.

The WLCC welcomes new members, wherever they may live, who share our mandate to preserve the health of Williams Lake.

DAM UPDATE

Lake levels continue to be a concern. Last year was particularly acute with the lowest levels seen in a number of years. The issue is complex with a number of potentially confounding factors.

Thanks to many community volunteers and donors, the engineering assessment has been completed. It shows that the existing "dam" is in very poor shape. The dam offers little if any resistance to water flow. This is a result of years of pressure and the resultant washout of the smaller particles in the dam; the structure really has no solid core. The engineer made a number of recommendations, including replacing the structure with one significantly less porous in nature. Unfortunately this would be a very expensive project.

There is certainly significant community support to try and remediate the problem. Unfortunately, costs are a potential barrier. It was hoped that the City (which possesses land on the lake, is responsible for recreational activities for the greater population and collects significant taxes based upon land valuation on the lake) might assist. To date the response has not been positive or encouraging.

A significant factor in this issue is the Water License, which the Company holds. It expires at the end of this year. In order for it to be renewed, the NS Department of Environment and Labour is requiring that we make the dam safe and reliable. They also tell us that if the license is not renewed, we may be required to remove the dam altogether. This is clearly not a favourable option, a bit of a Catch-22. We continue to solicit ideas and potential funding for remediation of this problem but so far no real solution has been found.

WHAT IS THE WATER LICENSE?

The Water License authorizes the WLCC to "maintain the Williams Lake control dam and spillway and to store water in Williams Lake, primarily for recreational and aesthetic purposes". Then it describes the dam and imposes two conditions: 1) that the spillway elevation not be higher than 61.12 ft., and 2) that the WLCC inspect the dam regularly to ensure that the overflow channel to its west is not blocked by any man-made structure or debris. It does not require that a certain water level be maintained. The WLCC fulfills the two conditions.

The Water License has been an asset to the WLCC in various ways, such as when we have approached government authorities on behalf of Williams Lake or raised funds for dam repairs. Initially it was granted for periods of one or two years, but in 1986 the NS Department of the Environment granted it for a period of 20 years, until December 31st 2006.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Governor's Brook: It is almost a year since the WLCC dropped its legal appeals against Kimberley-Lloyd's plans to develop 156 acres of the land lying between the MacIntosh Run and Colpit Lake. Since then however we have met several times with representatives of Kimberley-Lloyd to negotiate changes to the development agreement which Chebucto Community Council (CCC) approved, despite our objections and those of many others.

We have focused on changes that would provide greater protection to both the MacIntosh Run and Colpit Lake/Williams Lake watersheds. We have discussed ways to minimize blasting, to reduce alterations in water flow and quality and how density within the site could be varied to provide better buffer zones for the

watersheds. Negotiations on future phases will be ongoing but we are pleased to report that Kimberly-Lloyd has agreed to the removal of a 48-unit apartment building that was to be built immediately above Colpit Lake on one of the highest points in the site. An amendment to the development agreement will soon be put before CCC to effect this change.

Another positive change is that the bridge connecting the new development to Drysdale Avenue will be built earlier than originally planned. Hopefully this will shorten the period during which construction traffic has to use the narrow residential streets near the Theakston Avenue end of the site. We hope to find agreement on additional improvements in our ongoing negotiations.

The WLCC has put much effort into this issue over the past few years, days in court, fund-raising, publicity, negotiations, and this tentative agreement is hopefully a victory for Williams Lake.

Ravenscraig: Work has recently begun on the Ravenscraig R1 single-family residential development that will extend from Joyce Avenue towards the Williams Lake Road. The plan includes a sports field on the flat portion of the old quarry site and trails connecting the active playing area to the rest of Fleming Park and adjacent neighbourhoods. Members of the WLCC have worked closely with both the developer and HRM to try to minimize negative impacts on the Whimsical Lake and Williams Lake watersheds. An engineered wetland is planned near the playing field to improve the run-off before it enters Williams Lake. For several months members of the WLCC have been visually monitoring the quality of the fill which is being brought in to grade the slope at the quarry face.

2005 ANNUAL CLEAN-UP AND YARD/PLANT SALE

Last September 24th, Whimsical Lake, Jollimore, and Williams Lake area residents pitched in to clean up approximately ¼ of the Williams Lake shoreline. Our 29 volunteers included 20 children, most of them students at John W MacLeod. Some participants focused on recovering ‘big ticket’ items such as rubber tires and construction debris from the lake and shoreline. Some very patient girls (wearing gloves!) systematically picked up about 7 lbs. of glass shards from the ‘Grandstand’ area off Wyndrock Drive. The most common trash items found were paper coffee cups, food wrappers and beverage bottles. In all, we collected 21 giant garbage bags of litter. Congratulations to the Redwood team who won top prize for the most collected.

The WLCC owes many, many thanks to the volunteers for their labour, to the anonymous donor of the prizes, to Clean Nova Scotia for donating the bags, to Cunard Jr. High for disposing of the rubbish, and to Martha Leary for organizing this successful event.

While the clean-up was going on behind Cunard JHS, out front we held a yard sale under the direction of Patty Cuttell and also a plant sale. Yard-sale connoisseurs browsed and bought and boasted of their finds, while knowledgeable gardeners found end-of-season bargains at the plant sale. Thanks to all who helped with these successful events.

THANKS: The cost of producing and distributing our newsletter to approximately 500 households is supported by a generous grant from the office of **Michele Raymond, MLA** for Halifax Atlantic.

MEMBERSHIP—PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP OR JOIN THE WLCC

WLCC membership remains \$20 per household. This is our only regular income. Memberships can be paid at the AGM or by returning the attached form. Heather Watts’ history of the Williams Lake area is available for \$5 when renewing or joining; additional copies are \$10 each. We recently even had a request for this history from a member of the Letson family living in Arizona who is researching family history in this area!

The mandate of the WLCC is to protect the health of Williams Lake, for the benefit of all. Everyone who shares this goal is welcome as a member.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2005-2006

Patricia Cuttell		Albion Road
Kathleen Hall	477-4159	Hall’s Road
Melanie Dobson	477-0668	Wyndrock Drive
Martha Leary	420-1520	Redwood Avenue
Andrew Ross	477-7906	Wyndrock Drive
Kay Singleton		Birchview Drive
Anne von Maltzahn	477-3353	Wenlock Grove
Lana Wood	422-3483	Spring Garden Road

MEMBERSHIP \$20.00 (\$80.00 for 4 years)

TO: WILLIAMS LAKE CONSERVATION COMPANY, c/o A. von Maltzahn
15 Wenlock Grove, Halifax, NS B3P 1P6

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ e-mail*: _____

*to be used for WLCC messages only, to save mailing costs

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