

Brian Croft

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Sent: Tuesday, January 30, 2007 10:02 AM
Subject: PUBLIC MEETING - TUESDAY FEBRUARY 13TH - 7 P.M.

Dear Friends and Neighbours: The attached memo from Area A Quality Water Association President, Joe Harrison, outlines progress on the various water related issues discussed at the AAQWA Annual General Meeting in August 2006. This document updates you with specifics and outlines AAQWA's continuing concerns with the conclusions reached by the Hotel Lake Reports that will form part of the discussion at the above meeting. Please log onto our website at www.aaqwa.org to review the original documents and plan to attend the scheduled Public Meeting. If, as a part time resident, this proves impossible you can make your views known to the Sunshine Coast Regional District by telephone or e-mail - Your demonstrated continued involvement is critical.

Barbara Kappeli (Secretary, AAQWA) - For Joe Harrison, President



**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO AAQWA
MEMBERS – JANUARY 2007**

SCRD PUBLIC WATER MEETING

Tuesday, February 13th – 7:00 p.m. at Madeira Park Legion Hall

Please read the Scientific Reports relating to the following issues online at www.aaqwa.org

Issues to be discussed:-

- ***Application for Water Licence on Sakinaw Lake***
The impact on Lake level equivalent to less than one heavy dew per month
- ***Setting maximum Summer drawdown on Hotel Lake***
– ***Proposed a half a foot below last summer's record low (0.6m)***

AAQWA records show the five year average low is 0.31 m.
Doubling the low water level **on a permanent basis** will affect water quality and recreational activities. **The five-year average is a better idea**

- ***Damming Hotel Creek during February and March to store summer water***
Will your property be affected by raising levels 8 inches?

- ***Abandoning two water licences on Hotel Lake***
An excellent idea. Let the water run down to Sakinaw Lake where it can be pumped with almost no impact.

Good News

1. The Sunshine Coast Regional District has provided us with a draft Master Water Plan for Area A that is a comprehensive blueprint for the future. AAQWA first proposed this plan in August 2003. Congratulations and thanks to Director Rees and staff and members of the Planning Committee for what appears to be an excellent plan for the most part.
2. Pipes connecting Irvines Landing and Garden Bay Lake are now in place and awaiting engineering approval.
3. Plans for UV treatment of Garden Bay Lake water are proceeding.
4. Daniel Point will be connected to Sakinaw Lake when the Sakinaw Ridge Development is finished. Thanks again to John Rees for vetoing arsenic well water!
5. North Pender residents will soon have emergency access to three different sources providing options in the case of fire or contamination.
6. We look forward to the day that North and South Pender are joined together at Narrows Road and Oyster Bay to form one system for the benefit of everyone in Pender Harbour.

Areas of Concern in the Master Water Plan

In 2004 when the Environmental Appeal Board ordered a Master Plan for Area A they also demanded comprehensive error free biology and hydrology studies of Hotel Lake. Page 22 of the report authored by Kerr, Wood, Leidel, Consultants recommends a maximum drawdown of **0.6 metres below the overflow level at Acadian Road (0.8 metres below high water level)**. According to AAQWA documents the five year average drawdown on Hotel Lake is **0.31 metres below overflow**.

**Table 1 – Hotel Lake Levels 2002 – 2006
(from AAQWA records)**

| Year | Low Water Date | Level | Refill Date | Refill Period | Refill Rate per day |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 2002 | Oct. 17/02 | -0.35 m | Jan. 3/03 | 78 days | 4.4 mm |
| 2003 | Sept. 15/03 | -0.30 m | Nov. 15/03 | 61 days | 4.9 mm |
| 2004 | Aug. 14/04 | -0.18 m | Nov. 10/04 | 88 days | 2.0 mm |
| 2005 | Est. Sept. 15/05 | Est -0.30 m | Nov. 10/05 | 57 days | 5.3 mm |
| 2006 | Oct. 22/06 | -0.45 m | Dec. 3/06 | 42 days | 10.7mm |
| 5-Year Average | Sept. 23 | -0.31 m | Dec. 1 | 65 days | 5.4 mm |

Why Should YOU Be Concerned?

1. **Water Quality** – In 1992 Westland Resources first documented water quality problems in Hotel Lake. Beginning in 1993 the SCR D monitored nutrient levels. The Jacques Whitford study ignores both this data and Public Health Records.

Hotel Lake is shallow with extensive mud bottom at the north end. Water temperatures rise above 20° in late April or early May resulting in algae and plankton blooms if nitrate and phosphate levels are not kept in check by micro-organisms, insects and fish in the shallow areas. AAQWA recorded fish kills in 2004 – the cause undetermined.

Most of this nutrient control happens in the first couple of feet of water according to experts who testified at the Environmental Appeal Board Hearing. One scientist called the shallows the “lungs of the lake”.

Public Health Officers have been warning for years that Hotel Lake is vulnerable to contamination from development, roads, recreational use and inflow from septic tanks. In spite of improved filtering Irvines Landing residents are still complaining of a fishy smell in their water in late summer.

Doubling the drawdown means that the plants that support all the bacteria, insect life and small fish like stickleback, chub and trout that keep the nutrients under control will be reduced.

1. Allowing the SCRD to pump Hotel Lake down to a half foot below last summer's record level on a permanent basis has serious consequences
2. The lake will take 111 days to refill at the five year rate [$0.6 \text{ m} \div 0.0054 \text{ m per day}$]
3. If low water occurs on the average date (September 23rd) the lake will not fill to overflow until January 12th and not to full capacity until February 18th (this will not happen at all during a dry winter)
4. Flows in Hotel Creek will be too late for downslope coho and trout spawning in Mixal Creek.
5. The lake may possibly have already receded below the outlet level in early May preventing peamouth chub from spawning in Hotel Creek. The peamouth are food for trout in the lake.
6. Spawning areas, at 0.3 metres depth, for a genetically unique race of stickleback may be destroyed.

Water quality and recreational use may be affected by lower water levels because the lake may have a green scum as nutrients increase and micro-organisms decrease.

And it's all so unnecessary

If the SCRD were to adopt the more reasonable maximum drawdown of about 0.3 metres (1 foot) close to the five-year average, and switch over to Garden Bay Lake in summer it would allow enough time for the lake to refill at the historical rate of 5.4 mm (0.0054 m) per day.

This is especially true since the Environmental Appeal Board mandated studies relating water quality and biology have not been done.

The overflow in Hotel Creek on average begins December 1st and runs for 200 days at a fraction of the rate Kerr Wood Leidel mentioned in Table 12 of their report (see our website at www.aaqwa.org). This water is important for spawning fish both within Hotel Lake and downslope.

These report oversights need to be corrected.

The Jacques Whitford report also recommends the use of stop logs on Hotel Creek which will raise the lake level starting in February. A previous report suggested 20 cm (8 inches).

Residents with drainage problems should attend the meeting if they think they will be affected.

It's All Up to You

It's very important that you make your views known. A drawdown of over a half foot more than last summer's record low, on a permanent basis, is both unnecessary and unacceptable.

Switching over to pumping from Garden Bay Lake in early summer would ensure that Hotel Lake is not degraded

Garden Bay Lake contains 6.5 times as much water as Hotel Lake (11 million cubic metres versus 1.7 million) and does not have high levels of nitrates and phosphates that cause the slimy plankton blooms which destroy a lake. Sakinaw Lake is 25 times as large as Hotel Lake. Eventually, as development continues, both Garden Bay Lake and Mixal Lake will need maximum drawdown levels that protect these lovely jewels from overexploitation.

Your involvement is essential to protect our quality of life
By attending the public meeting/ phoning (604) 885-2261 or e-mail to steve.lee@scrd.bc.ca

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