

Bob Lake Community Boat Launch – An Executive Summary

The Township of Minden Hills Council and staff are well acquainted with the Bob Lake boat launch issue and the efforts since 2017 of the Bob Lake Association (BLA) to resolve the situation (full history can be found at <https://boblakeassociation.ca/boat-launch>). By joint agreement the BLA and the Township funded a preliminary engineering design (completed by Tatham Engineering) and a legal assessment (completed by the Township's legal counsel). Despite the favourable engineering and legal advice indicating no legal impediments, the Minden Hills Council voted to not pursue a public boat launch on Claude Brown at its March 10, 2022 meeting. The deciding factors were cost and liability concerns.

To resolve this the BLA is proposing a “Bob Lake Community Boat Launch” solution based on the following key points:

- The Township enters into a lease agreement with BLA for a suitable section of the Claude Brown unopened road allowance utilized to accommodate a boat launch
- The BLA would be fully responsible for the construction and on-going maintenance of the boat launch – no costs to the Township
- The BLA would fully insure the operation of the boat launch – no Township liability
- Supported by reports from EcoVue, Tatham, and Boghosian + Allen LLP from a planning, engineering, and legal perspective with no red flags (all reports available upon request)
- The BLA will maintain the boat launch for the use of its members or approved organizations (e.g. MNRF, HHOA, OPP, etc.) – a “Community” rather than a “Public” solution

The proposal as described above provides the following benefits:

- Resolves the long-standing boat launch access issue on Bob Lake without added costs or liabilities to the Township.
- Reduces shoreline impacts by possibly reducing the number of existing private launches via re-naturalization efforts, and avoid future private boat launches.
- Leverages the planning, engineering and legal work that have concluded a boat launch on the Claude Brown Road allowance is viable.
- Addresses lake access issues for public services (e.g. fire/police), environmental organizations (e.g. HHOA/MNFR) and local businesses.

The BLA has completed an exhaustive analysis of Bob Lake for an alternative boat launch site, which has been shared with the Township. The unopened road allowance at Claude Brown is the only viable location due to its road access, land availability, and topography. This community boat launch proposal offers the Township and the BLA a solution without the cost and liability concerns previously raised.

Through the Bob Lake Community Boat Launch delegation, the BLA is hoping to secure an agreement in principle with Council on a path moving forward.