

French River Provincial Park
Joint Management Advisory Committee Meeting

October 22, 2008, 12:00pm – 4:00 pm
Lunch Provided
French River Provincial Park Visitor Centre

Committee Members: Art Tworo, Mike Palmer, Dave Minden, Art Parke
(Alternate for Rob Hepburn), Mary Lemieux

Also Present: Ed Chevrette, Chuck Miller

Regrets: Leonard Dokis, Leslie Joynt,
Paul Bewick (Ontario Parks), Bart Brown (MNR Parry
Sound), Randy Morrison (MNR North Bay), Ted Shannon
(MNR Fire), Karen Mikoliew (MNR Sudbury)

The site meeting occurred at the FRVC Meeting Room. Meeting began with lunch.

ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

1. French River Park Tabloid:

RECOMMEDATION: Proceed with the tabloid for 2008-9.

ACTION TAKEN: English Tabloid complete

2) Visitor Centre:

RECOMMENDATIONS:

***Established upgraded donation box for Friends of French River Heritage Park
Develop disability parking spaces.***

***ACTION: Donation Box established and two disability parking spaces created at visitor
centre***

3) Update Mooring Permits

***RECOMMENDATION: Implementing mooring fees should be a priority. Boaters are
using local emergency services, landfill sites etc but not making any contributions to
the local communities they attend. It is also not fair to canoeists and kayakers who are
paying fees.***

ACTION: Very early discussions with Georgian Bay boaters .

4) New Map

RECOMMENDATION/ ADVICE: Provide free maps to Emergency Service providers, EMS (ambulance), air ambulance, police (OPP Noelville, Still River, West Nipissing, Dokis, Henvey Inlet, Coast Guard (in Britt) and MNR Fire Control on an annual basis each spring to replace any that may have gone missing over the winter.

ACTION: Maps provided

5) Update Landfill / Garbage Trailers

RECOMMENDATION/ ADVICE: If someone is to accept recycled material – also consider extending service to other locations such as Hartley Bay.

ACTION: 10 recycling bear proof recycling bins purchased and are at Killarney – still need to find a company to accept recycled materials

6) OLL Project Inventory and Pit Toilet Installation

RECOMMENDATION: Install toilets.

ACTION: Installed about 40 toilets – about 20 replacements and 20 new locations including Upper French River area.

7) Glass Bottle Ban :

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Implement a glass bottle ban on the land area of the park. Cans are acceptable. Plastic bottles are acceptable.

ACTION: No regulation changes submitted to date

8) Fire Danger Signs

ACTION: Fire Danger Sign at Riverview taken to Hartley Bay and installed

9) Halton Recycling

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Insure the French River (Mashkinonje / West Sandy Island) Provincial Park(s) water quality, air quality, and marketing as an eco-tourism destination are protected.

Halton Recycling proposal withdrawn by company

10) Delegation for Brazil

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Let us know if we can be of assistance in assist in facilitating the visit.

Trip did not occur as planned – delayed and went to Algonquin in winter

NEW BUSINESS

11) Mooring Permits – still need to establish mooring permits- this has been ongoing for several years need a firm date for resolution. Ed Chevrette came across a moored boat this year making overnight use of a campsite – advised they required a campsite permit to occupy a campsite over night. There should have designated mooring bays to avoid conflicts with campers and cottagers.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Establish mooring fees by no later than October 2010.

12) Park Operations – Chevrette – Operations much the same as previous yaer – 3 staff, operated May 1 to Oct 31- a wet early start to the summer – wether improved in late July, august and September. Few problems this summer, campsites were cleaner than previous years. Delta association clean up another very successful effort – haul out larger materials that litter pick up crews can't get – old refrigerators, bed springs etc. many donated trailers, trucks and a barge to do the work. A successful annual event – Thank You to those involved.

A train derailment this summer near Hwy 607 – diesel fuel into a creek that flows into the River. Quick action by emergency staff – pollution control booms in place – no contaminants in the River. Ed Chevrette involved in investigation of incident.

A sewage tanker truck also rolled over near a bridge at Dokis. There was lots of media coverage but spill much smaller than reported. Down stream residents were warned about drinking the water by emergency service personnel. The sewage was quickly diluted by the volume of water flow and was not a downstream health risk. Ed Chevrette involved in investigation of incident.

Two people drown and one suicide in the park. One drowning in August at the Dalles Rapid – high water flow related. One drowning at Gibraltar Pass – when a snowmobile went through the ice. One suicide at Recollet Falls.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: drowning at Dalles Rapids was high water related – person fished the same area for many years but was not aware of significance of high water levels. Need better communication by Public Works Government Services Canada and Ontario Parks. Perhaps warnings of high water like forest fire danger signs.

13) Visitor Centre Operations – Lemieux / Miller - Assistant park superintendent, Leslie Joynt currently on an acting assignment with MNR Parry sound District. Alison Lake (Algonquin / Bon Echo Prov Pks) filled in for end of summer and fall. Visitation slightly less than 55,000 of previous years – but no accurate count kept. Royal Ontario Museum artifacts have arrived for new display next season. More bears in the parking lot area this summer – no problems. Handicapped parking spaces created this summer. People visiting the centre still 100% favourable comments. Store sales significantly increased. Open May long weekend to Thanksgiving Sunday - very busy on Thanksgiving day but closed. Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership and Ministry of Northern development and Mines hosted tourism writers and professionals at the Visitor Centre from Germany, Japan , United Kingdom, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and PEI .

14) Water Quality Stewardship Council – Palmer – had a student hired to take water samples and samples of flora and fauna – analysis not yet done. Some blue-green algae at dry Pine and Harley bay but very limited – high water levels may have a flushing action.

15) Park Map – the map needs to be reprinted this winter – there are printing plates from previous reprint – changes on the Georgian Bay side – need to remove reference to Island of the Dead Picnic Site – exclude private land near Pig Island and Key Harbour - Lake Nipissing side of maps a couple of campsite closures.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Just make a new printing plate for Georgian Bay side of map – changes as noted plus blow up insert map at rapid. On Lake Nipissing side just post closed campsite signs on the campsites and correct map at a future date.

16) Landfill Sites and Garbage Hauling Trailers – Landfill sites in the Region – no new closures anticipated for 2009 season. Ten recycling bear proof garbage bins are now available for the Visitor Centre. Need to enter into a contract with a company to take recycling. If entering into a recycling contract should also include recycling materials from Hartley Bay Access Point.

Currently have park garbage pick up at River View (Dokis)- 1 garbage and 1 recycling trailer, Pine Cove lodge (Wosley Bay) 1 garbage trailer, French River Supply Post – Lower French river – share FR Municipal Bin, Hartley Bay - garbage and recycling trailer.

River View needs a third trailer, Hartley Bay trailer needs to be replaced – large hydraulic dump trailer. Request for new locations at Wosley Bay and at Cedar Village – discussed volume of permit sales does not require expansion of services.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Seek funding for replacement and new garbage trailers. Check Certificate of Approval coverage for “transfer stations”(Hartley Bay’s is covered by Municipality of Killarney).

17) Sewage Hauling – now have vault toilets at Otter Bay, Visitor Centre and Mashkinonje. All sewage hauling contracted to Noelville Sanitation – no issues.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Noelville municipal sewage lagoons emptied into Wosley River after treatment. Wosley River flows into French River – discuss with health unit if any notifications are required to French River water users.

18) Hydro Dam / Dam replacement Dokis – public works Government services Canada starting Environmental assessment process – gathering background information to replace Big Chaudiere Dam. Dokis First nation has asked for Ontario parks contacts to be identified to discuss potential hydro electric development outside the park. Chuck Miller, park superintendent and Ed Morris, Zone ecologist – identified as Ontario Parks contacts.

19) Fishing – Fishing Regulations – changes but the French River slot sizes stayed the same- fishing seems to be improving in lower French river – Lake Nipissing seemed slower than usual. Division 10 now west of Highway #69 and Division 11 east of Highway #69. Northern Pike open year round in Division 10 but not Division 11.

First Nations from the west are now travelling to Five Finger Rapids to gill net spring walleye in traditional use area. Lake Nipissing – Nipissing First Nation - successful at managing fishery on Lake Nipissing.

Walleye Ponds – Wosley Bay Pond – not stocking into French River based on advice from the Laurentain Freshwater Co-Op Unit – regarding genetic stocks. Dokis Ponds?

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: lobby to have a closed season for Northern Pike in Division 10 to reduce incidental catch March 31 to May 17.

20) Fire Pumps – Municipalities and others have fire pumps for personal property protection at Terry Plaskit's on Georgian Bay, Hartley Bay and at Riverview on Upper French. Several cottagers on the Upper French River have also former clusters with identified pump locations – list to be sent to park.

Ontario Parks has a volume supply water pump – no fire fighting pressure pump.

MNR Fire responsible – respond to forest fires.

21) EMS / Ambulance Services – the use of numbered campsites on the park map has been an excellent resource for EMS – almost all reports for assistance now come in “ I’m on campsite #XX” makes it much easier to locate injured parties. Four call outs by EMS for first response below the Dalles Rapids – no EMS boat below the rapids although EMS staff are certified to use boats (MED A3). Some discussions with Municipality of Killarney but supplying boat to Hartley Bay First Response seems doubtful. First Response and Paramedics fall under different rules regarding travelling in boats. At the French river Visitor Centre two EMS calls to recollect falls hiking trail – in all the above 6 responses private boats had to be arranged and used.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: If aware of any surplus and suitable boats consider posting a boat (perhaps donate to Municipality) below the Dalles Rapid (for Georgian Bay) and at French River Supply Post (for Recollect Falls Hiking Trail). Develop more detailed plans and equipment for response on the Recollect Falls Hiking Trail – some surplus stretchers available from Hartley Bay First Response – hold joint practice session annually

22) Snowmobile Bridges – clubs did inspections and adjustments this year – fairly expensive for the club – have placed a donation box at the bridge. No news small bridge near Otter Bay.

23) Poison Ivy – some poison ivy has started on Recollet Falls Trail.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Remove from trail or post to make people aware.

23) Tramways – Recollect Falls Tramway in poor condition and no longer used to pull over motor boats suggest removal with plan amendment at next plan review cycle. Rainbow Tramway needs some repairs – a price quote for lumber has been done – the Friends of the French River Heritage Park may fund in 2009- work could be done with MNR Fire crew or volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: agree Recollet Falls Tramway remove and Rainbow Tramway repair before condition becomes worse.

23) Badger Lake – Illegal Entry – to intentionally avoid park fees and marina fees cars have taken to parking and entering the park at Badger Lake. Ed Chevrette has caught some of these folks without permits at Hartley bay – but lake is outside park so have to wait until folks enter the park. On upper French river still some folks entering unaware of park and the need for camping permits.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Look at response to dealing with intentional illegal access – often these folks are also folks that are not respectful of park resources.

24) New Committee Members – any suggestions of people interested in entire river – non-political – not single issue?

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Suggested - Mike Monette – CAO Municipality of French River

25) Meetings – suggest reduce meetings from 2 per year to 1 per year – after Thanksgiving and special meetings if issues arise.

RECOMMENDATION / ADVICE: Agree

25) Next Meeting – October 21, 2009 at noon – 4 pm – French River Visitor Centre