Access Road on the West Side of the KHSS Park

Beaver Lake Road access issues to consider and why this access point should be reconsidered.

Sissy Tanner (LSC) at public meetings stated no cottage roads would be considered, and that MNR would have their own access roads. There would be no conflict between property owners and park visitors. This was stressed through all the public meetings and confirmed by MNR staff at many public meetings.

During Chris Hodgson’s negotiations on the Charter with the 4 signatories, it was again reiterated and agreed, that a new road on the west side of the Park, north of Catchacoma lake would be built and funds set aside for this purpose.

During the selling of the Charter to the entire SGKH members meeting, MNR staff reiterated that the access road on the west road would be built north of Catchacoma.

After all parties approved the Charter document and after signing it became apparent that the word “may” was inserted into this part of the Charter. If known at the AGM meeting, the Charter would not have been approved by many of its members.

The Beaver Lake Road is used by approximately 500 property owners to access their property. This includes the Beaver Lake Road and all off shoot roads to cottages on Gold Lake, Anstruther Lake (north side), Ratty’s River, Catchacoma Lake, Mississauga Lake, Cavendish Lake and McGinnis Lake.

The one lane bridge, commonly known as the second bridge, was funded by the province (1983-4), but the road in many parts, particularly subsequent to the second bridge, was built and paid for by property owners, and over the years brought up to MTO standards – at which time the Township assumed control. Parts of the Beaver Lake Road along the boundary of the park on the north side of Beaver lake/ McGinnis is still unassumed road, paid and maintained by property owners. It is not up to MTO standards so all costs in maintaining and repairing this part of the Beaver Lake Road are paid for by property owners. All off shoot roads from the Beaver Lake Road are maintained and paid for by property owners.

Unlike the roads on the east side of the KHSS, there is no commercial establishment on the Beaver Lake Road to control, register, provide facilities such as outhouses, garbage disposal, monitor parking or maintenance of such facilities. (On the east side both access roads have a lodge or marina AND public land at both locations to maintain some form of control of visitors).

There have already been problems with parking on the side of the Beaver Lake Road and it is expected this will only get worse and generate more conflict. This was supposed to be a “not in your face” park.
Previous studies for MNR in the 60’s (Spooner report) indicate that the Bottle and Sucker Lake area (also known as the KHPP) campsites could be increased by 10 fold from the present number. (Studies on soil depth). Political pressure in the near future will demand more campsites (KHPP) in this area. This area of the park is at (over) maximum usage now (based on the number of campsites at this time). The parking, garbage and general misuse of the KHPP is at a crisis point with the current numbers overloading the present campsites. This has an adverse effect on the property owners in the area with little support from MNR, the Township or the OPP, especially on weekends when this is most critical.

The Bancroft Minden Forestry company is logging north of Catchacoma Lake and will be building logging roads to the boundary of the park to do selective logging in the next one to two years (2008 -9). This entails bridges over creeks, following a previous logging route to extract timber and provide a solid road for logging trucks. It also entails extraction of fill from various points along the route (category 14 gravel pits) required for logging roads. Forestry companies do not have to abide by the same considerations of environmental issues when building logging roads. This was obviously known by Chris Hodgson and MNR staff during the negotiations on the Charter document.

The choice of access road on the west side is the choice of doing it right the first time as promised throughout this process, or doing it again, properly, later if the wrong decision is made now using the Beaver Lake Road as its access route.