



Sylvan Lake Watershed Stewardship Society

P.O. Box 9012 Sylvan Lake
Alberta, T4S 1S6

May 7, 2007

Alberta Environment
Central Region - Red Deer
304, Provincial Building
4920 - 51 Street
Red Deer, AB
T4N 6K8

Attention: David Helmer
Regarding: File No: 00238800 - Castle Cove Companies

Dear Mr. Helmer,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Castle Cove Marina business proposal.

SLWSS is focused on proactive stewardship of the many values that Sylvan Lake and its watershed provide to a large community of users and the future generation of users. SLWSS membership is drawn from a broad spectrum of people including the local community and day lake users, all with interest in stewardship of this lake resource.

The Castle Cove Marina proposal is a business proposal to construct and operate a very large boat mooring facility within the waters of Sylvan Lake. This proposal is clearly a "water based" or "water-use" issue. The use of Sylvan Lake's water is paramount over any municipal land-use or access decision related to this project.

We would like to both discuss and understand the decision-making process as it relates to this or any other "water-use" choice with respect to the Sylvan Lake Watershed.

The decision to construct or expand marina infrastructure in Sylvan Lake's water is a very critical one. The potential for significant negative impacts arising from a seemingly minor municipally based land-use decision, which then by default becomes a major water-use decision, raises considerable governance, accountability and liability issues for the Government of Alberta.

Alberta's Water for Life Strategy mandates collective watershed based planning to protect aquatic ecosystems from risks that are created by such independent decision-making processes, yet the provincially recommended collective decision-making process is not being utilized for planning and development at Sylvan Lake. A collective planning and decision making process for the watershed and future lake water use is desperately needed prior to individual municipal land-use approvals that create risk to and impact upon the lake such as that being considered by Lacombe County and which underpins the current marina application. The solution to this and a host of future conflicts is a collective community and inter-governmental planning and decision-making process for the Sylvan Lake watershed.

SLWSS encourages the Government of Alberta to take a direct leadership role in implementation of the Water for Life Strategy in the Sylvan Lake watershed. We believe the matter of future marina development is just one of many issues that must be considered within the context of Alberta's Water for Life Strategy.

When deciding upon the current application, we provide a list of urgent questions that must be addressed prior to approval of further marina development on Sylvan Lake's waters:

- ✓ Is there a desire to maintain Sylvan Lake's current high quality meso-eutrophic aquatic condition?
- ✓ Is there a community-based "need" or "desire" for more over-water boat mooring?
- ✓ What is the impact to Sylvan Lake from pollution produced by existing boat mooring?
- ✓ What are the sources and types of pollution currently found at Sylvan Lake's existing boat mooring facilities?
- ✓ What are the experiences of other lake communities in respect to boat mooring, marinas and lake pollution?
- ✓ If a marina is deemed to be appropriate, where would the best boat mooring location be with the least negative impact?
- ✓ Is there a need for limits to the number of mooring sites?
- ✓ What is the capacity of the lake to absorb a further increase in boating activity?
- ✓ What are the specifications and acceptable standards? Will pump-out facilities be mandated for removal of boat sewage?
- ✓ What will be the process for future policy development and decision-making activities related to water-use proposals on Sylvan Lake?

Given the current quality and value that Sylvan Lake and its watershed provides to so many Albertans and Canadians, the potential for irreversible impact, and the lake's juxtaposition in Alberta's economic growth corridor, we believe that a collective, proactive and accountable process to manage the Sylvan Lake resource must become an immediately priority of the Government of Alberta.

On behalf of our full Board of Directors, we remain,

Respectfully yours,



Kent Williamson
President



Kim Schmitt
Vice President

SLWSS Board of Directors:

Lenore Berkeley
Wayne Carey
Steven Johnson
James MacSween
David Larsen
Bob Wilson
Barry Hillman
Kent Williamson
Kim Schmitt

cc: Hon. Ed Stelmach, Premier of Alberta
Hon. Rob Renner, Minister of Environment
Hon. Ted Morton, Minister of Sustainable Resource Development
Hon. Luke Ouellette, Minister of Infrastructure and Transportation
Ty Lund, MLA