

Owners of lakeside properties to meet

Gowan, Derwin. [Telegraph-Journal](#) [Saint John, N.B] 12 July 2012: C.6.

Landowners affecting the lake from which St. Andrews draws its municipal water will meet this weekend to organize a single voice.

The Chamcook Watershed Landowners Association will hold its charter meeting at the Bayside Community Hall at 2 p.m. Saturday, steering committee member Donne Smith confirmed Wednesday afternoon.

The move to form an association began after the provincial Health Department issued an advisory about blue-green algae in Chamcook Lake, the town of St. Andrews' drinking water supply, in September of 2010.

The algae abated when late-summer rain filled the lake. The Health Department lifted the advisory, but the town of St. Andrews, provincial government, Eastern Charlotte Waterways and others continued to work on the issue.

The town favours an association for landowners on the six lakes - Chamcook, Little Chamcook, Limeburners, Gibson, Snowshoe and Welch - in the Chamcook drainage.

"The town has been very supportive of the issue," Smith said. "The landowners themselves really had no unified voice."

Eastern Charlotte Waterways also helped form the Lake Utopia Preservation Association which will hold its annual meeting Saturday - at 1 p.m. in the Anglican Church hall in St. George.

"We are a watershed association and we have six lakes instead of one," Smith said. "Certainly the issues are similar."

"I live on Gibson," said Smith, a retired provincial civil servant. "It really doesn't have the algae bloom problem."

Gibson Lake property owners do have issues with beaver. In 2010, the provincial Transportation Department saved property damage by partially breaching a beaver dam about a week before the destructive floods in December, he said.

The beaver can affect property owners like Smith by building a dam above, lowering the lake below, or building below and flooding above, he said.

A beaver dam could temporarily lower water draining into Chamcook Lake, affecting the town's water, Smith said.

The town operates its own dam controlling Chamcook Lake. The town's plan to better manage its water supply affects lakeshore property owners, Smith said.

New regulations coming limiting the power of motor boats on Chamcook Lake will affect recreational users, he said.

"We're going to have to work our way through some of these issues," Smith said.

"There are landowners on the lakes who don't even touch on the lakes," he said. Some woodlot owners fall in this group. "It will be interesting to see how everything will work out ... there has been a lot of interest and a lot of good will."

The steering committee of eight or 10 members on which Smith serves came out of a forum the town of St. Andrews organized last fall, he said.

The steering committee proposes to open membership to anyone linked to a property identification number in the watershed area. This would include the town, which owns municipal water system, also the Atlantic Salmon Federation, as well as owners of cottages, homes, woodlots, businesses and other properties - one property number, one vote.

The steering committee sent brochures to 300 to 400 people, probably closer to 400, Smith said. The committee drafted proposed bylaws. The group hopes to come away from the Saturday meeting with a slate of directors, Smith said.

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