



Safe Quiet Lakes

2016 Stakeholder Meeting Report

The Safe Quiet Lakes 2016 Stakeholder Meeting, themed “Getting the Word Out”, was held April 8 in Port Carling, and attracted over 65 participants who provided excellent discussion and feedback. Participants included the OPP, lake associations, municipalities, boating organizations and marinas.

The meeting included a summary of SQL’s very busy and productive 2015, plans for this year including a “Quiet Campaign” in co-operation with the OPP. Presentations from our speakers including MPP Norm Miller, OPP, Wakeboard Canada, BoaterSkills, Paddle Canada and the MLA gave us different perspectives on the issues and challenges we face.

Here is a link to the muskokaregion.com/Bracebridge Examiner story on the meeting.
<http://www.muskokaregion.com/news-story/6496460-safe-quiet-lakes-team-up-with-police-in-muskoka/>

2015 Review

Greg Wilkinson provided an overview of 2015 activities, building on the success of 2013 and 2014 campaigns. In the 2013 survey results, the most commonly cited problems are:

- Boats going too fast too close to shore
- Loud boat engines
- Large wakes
- Unsafe and inconsiderate boating

Since 2013 a total of 75 Boater’s Code signs have been posted at marinas (including: Pride, Port Sandfield, Muskoka Warf), public boat launches in Township of Muskoka Lakes and Seguin including the locks, local resorts and boating oriented businesses including Marriott and Deerhurst. Also, over 6100 Boater’s Code cards, 1700 Right of Way stickers, and 1200 Brochures have been distributed. Finally over 8000 page views were recorded on the website by 4800 users.



2016 activities

We will continue our Education and Communication programs this year with a new joint media campaign with the OPP starting on the Victoria Day weekend called the “Quiet Campaign”, re-launch of a new, improved website (safequiet.ca), and extended **Boaters Always Care** outreach to marinas, resorts, lake associations with our summer intern John Joseph Mitchell.

We are working on a new toolkit for lake associations, and continue with advocacy and engaging governments (municipal, provincial, federal), and cooperation with like-minded groups.

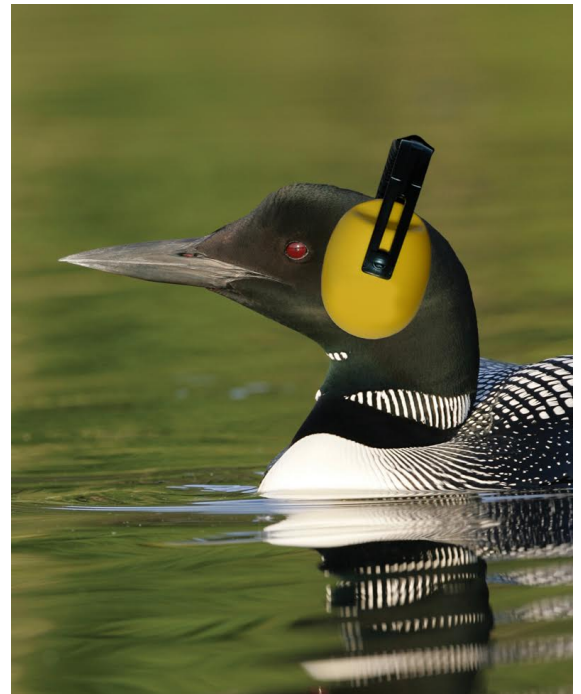
We were invited to the National Marine Manufacturing Association (NMMA) “Summit” on recreational boating in Ottawa in May and were given the opportunity to introduce SQL and discuss our model.

Quiet Campaign

We are undertaking an ambitious joint media campaign with the OPP on education/outreach to raise awareness of boating safety and excessive boat noise, and how owners can mitigate the noise. It will begin the Victoria Day weekend with a ride-along in an OPP cruiser as officers inspect boats at busy locations such as Port Carling or Port Sandfield.

The campaign aims to:

- educate boat operators about safe/respectful norms and culture,
- increase awareness of the noise issue and changes boaters can make today,
- encourage compliance with laws,
- advocate with governments to make current laws more enforceable,
- work with the boating industry to encourage adoption of standards that value quieter options.



The Quiet campaign involves media/public relations outreach, a celebrity endorser (former NHL star Paul Coffey) and will include traditional and social media.

Participants were polled on the various creative options. The loon pictured right was the overwhelming favourite.

Other speakers

Geordie Newlands (summerwatersports.com) from Wakeboard Canada, Craig Hamilton from Boaterskills (boaterskills.ca), John Bowlby representing the Muskoka Lakes Association's 9 km water radar pilot project, and Dawn Callan from Paddle Canada (paddlecanada.com) made short presentations on their respective programs that were well received and took questions. Dawn will be coming to the area to provide free paddlesmart training in early June (date to be determined). Those interested can contact her through the PaddleCanada website.

Breakout Sessions & Participant Feedback

We held group breakout sessions after the presentations to obtain feedback from attendees, and suggestions for moving forward. Here are some of the responses we got.

Issues that should be raised at the recreational boating summit in May in Ottawa:

- safety (education, pfd's, alcohol use, speed regulation),
- building and certifying boater capability,
- noise (education, enforcement, decibel limits, manufacturer cooperation, elimination of Captain's choice option),
- wakes (education, cooperation with towing sports community, research)
- research (usage, impacts of education, actions and interventions on behaviours)
- respect (education, support ongoing generational transfer of cultural norms).

How SQL can better "get the word out"

- lake association AGM's, newsletters, websites
- social media – recognizable hash tag
- include youth, new-to-boating people
- timing – summer meetings to expand the audience

A complete summary of the suggestions is included in Appendix A.



Participant Survey

We surveyed participants in the stakeholder meeting and their responses confirmed earlier data trends and some of our anecdotal experience. It was very encouraging to learn that almost three quarters of respondents agree that boating stakeholders are working together more in Muskoka and almost two thirds agree that boating safety is improving. There is clearly more work to be done however, because only half of the respondents feel that the level of responsible and respectful boating is improving and even fewer respondents feel that noise and wakes are improving in Muskoka.

We also collected feedback on the communication and education tools that are foundational to the work of Safe Quiet Lakes. Our Boaters' Code and Navigation sticker continue to receive very high marks from stakeholders, a view that is consistent with the extremely high demand for those tools. Our electronic tools, website and social media, are rated lower, although they are perceived to be improving by respondents, and both will be an area of focus for further improvement for Safe Quiet Lakes in 2016. Detailed results are included in Appendix B.

Our thanks to SQL's financial and in-kind donors. Without this support our activities would not be possible. For the complete list of donors please go to our website safequiet.ca.

Appendix A

Stakeholder Meeting - April 8, 2016 - Group Discussion Output Summary

Questions discussed by the groups:

1. What issues should be raised and what priorities should be focused on at the recreational boating summit?
 - a) Safety (education, pfd's, alcohol use, speed regulation)
 - b) Building and certifying boater capability (education, outreach, PCOC, reaching renters)
 - c) Noise (education, enforcement, decibel limits, manufacturer cooperation, elimination of Captain's choice option)
 - d) Wakes (education, cooperation with towing sports community, research)
 - e) Research (usage, impacts of education, actions and interventions on behaviours)
 - f) Respect (education, support ongoing generational transfer of cultural norms)

2. How can the Quiet Campaign be encouraged, promoted and improved? What can you or your organization do to help "get the word out"?
 - a. Lake association AGM's, newsletters, websites
 - b. Website links from townships, boating associations, marina/camp/resorts
 - c. Education
 - d. Social media – recognizable hash tag
 - e. Message coordination with different groups
 - f. Link to PCOC process
 - g. Sensitivity to cottager needs; awareness of cottagers as sources of noise issues
 - h. Include youth, new-to-boating people
 - i. Leverage 360 degree message, Bow Down etc.
 - j. Boater information package
 - k. Events including farmers markets

3. Which creative elements for the Quiet Campaign are most effective?
 - a) Loon
 - b) Little girl

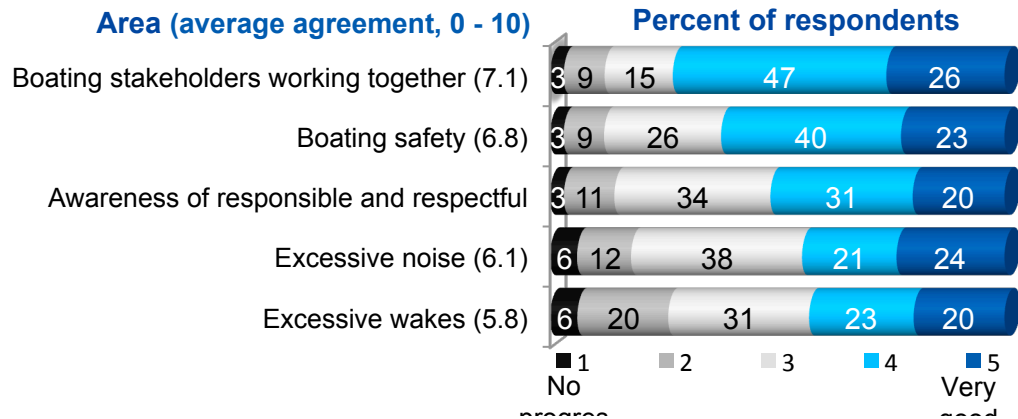
4. Who should we engage with who isn't here who can help us get the word out, organizations we should invite for next year (eg, resort owners)?
 - a) Camps
 - b) Transport Canada
 - c) Parks
 - d) Media - newspaper/radio/television
 - e) Power squadron, volunteers,
 - f) Marinas,
 - g) Local councillors,
 - h) High schools and colleges,
 - i) Trailer parks,
 - j) Resorts,
 - k) BIA/Chamber,
 - l) Municipality officials
 - m) Cottage rental agencies,
 - n) Timing – summer meetings to expand the audience

Appendix B

ERIN RESEARCH Analysis of Stakeholder meeting Participant Survey

1. PROGRESS

Figure 1. Have you seen progress in the Muskoka region in these areas over the past two years?



2. SQL COMMUNICATIONS

Figure 2. How effective do you find these SQL communications?

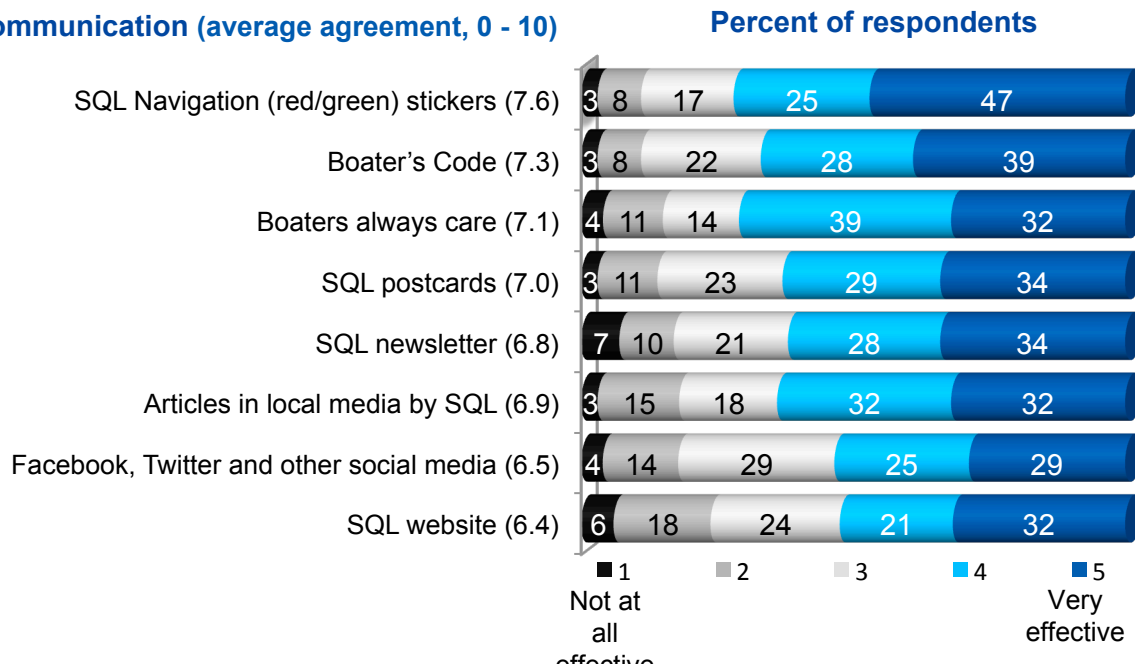


Figure 3. Effectiveness of SQL communications, 2015–2016

