

**OUR MISSION: Make the Muskoka lakes safer and quieter to ensure the sustainable enjoyment of a treasured shared resource**



## August 2017 - Newsletter

# Getting the Word Out

### Chair's Message

The 2017 "**Your Lakes, Your Views**" survey results have been released and an overview of the findings can be found in the story below. The full report and a summary are on our website for you to download.

We are thrilled with the response from all over Muskoka and beyond. A total of 3291 responses were received - an increase of 44% from our 2013 survey. This response rate indicates the Muskoka lakes community is deeply engaged with the joys and concerns covered in the survey and 72% of respondents support more education and communication.

Our activities are not possible without financial support from individuals, lake associations, municipalities and our sponsors Gordon Bay Marine and Sotheby's. A tremendous thank you to ERIN Research and to Ross Halloran of Sotheby's for help with the survey.

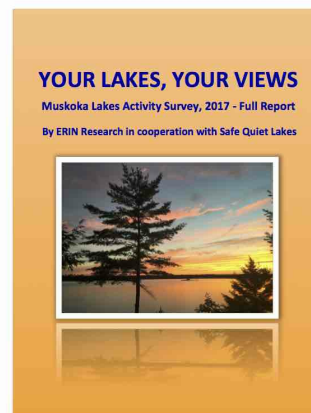
We have launched our Summer Fundraising Campaign. **Please support our efforts. For more information and to make your gift online please click [safequiet.ca/donate-now](http://safequiet.ca/donate-now).**

We have a great story to tell. Please be in touch if you would like to get involved in our work. I can be reached at [chair@safequiet.ca](mailto:chair@safequiet.ca).

**Frances Carmichael**  
*Chair, Safe Quiet Lakes*



*Chair Frances Carmichael, right with ERIN Research Principals, George Spears and Kasia Seydegart and Greg Wilkinson, chair of the Safe Quiet Lakes Research and Advocacy Committee.*



## Record Survey Participation And New Findings About Boaters

*Results show direct link between enjoyment of the lakes and*



View the **SUMMARY** and **DETAILED** reports on our website [HERE](#)

The report shows a direct correlation between enjoyment of cottage country and the perceptions of safety on the water and noise issues. The survey was conducted by ERIN Research during June and July 2017 and had more than three thousand respondents - a 44% increase over the original study that was conducted in 2013.

The survey found virtually all cottagers, residents and visitors love life on and near the water, including swimming and appreciating the sounds of nature. More than 93 per cent of respondents feel strongly that all Muskoka residents and visitors have a responsibility to protect the natural beauty of the region for future generations. Approximately, 98% of respondents own one or more boat. Canoes are still the most common type of boat but kayaks, paddleboards and powerboats of many kinds and sizes are rapidly gaining in popularity.

More than half of respondents feel that the Muskoka lakes and waterways are busier and noisier than four years ago and that excessive wakes have become more of an issue. The three most frequently mentioned problems in 2017 are all associated with unsafe and inconsiderate boating:

- Boat noise, especially from personal watercraft
- Boat wakes
- Boats operated at high speeds, especially when close to shore

Although respondents feel that boat traffic has increased, their overall perceptions of safety have remained steady since 2013.

Dr. George Spears, one of the principals of ERIN Research said "Respondents told us about their love for the lakes in no uncertain terms and they also told us there are things that they believe need to improve. Most prominently, since 2013 there has been a 10 per cent increase in support for education and communication about responsible boating."

**The survey found that there are widely varying levels of support for solutions that have been commonly proposed.**

- **72% support more education and communication**
- **71% support no wake zones to protect people and wildlife in sensitive areas**
- **67% support frequent and consistent enforcement of laws about illegal above water exhausts**
- **62% support stronger enforcement of boating while under the influence, and establishing decibel limits on noise made by boats**

"The survey allowed cottagers and residents to share their views," said Greg Wilkinson, chair of the Safe Quiet Lakes Research and Advocacy Committee. "Respondents wrote 274 pages of comments, describing their joys and passions for the lakes and also identifying areas where they feel change is warranted."

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**Some links  
to what  
people are  
saying  
about the  
results**

Here are links to some of the stories about the survey results

[CTV BARRIE](#)

[Bracebridge Examiner](#)

[MOOSE FM](#)

## Summer 2017 Video

Our second video was launched a few weeks ago and features interviews with Muskoka Lakes Township Mayor Don Furniss, Seguin Township Mayor Bruce Gibbon, OPP marine officers, and Gordon Bay Marine Marketing Manager Jeff Dixon.

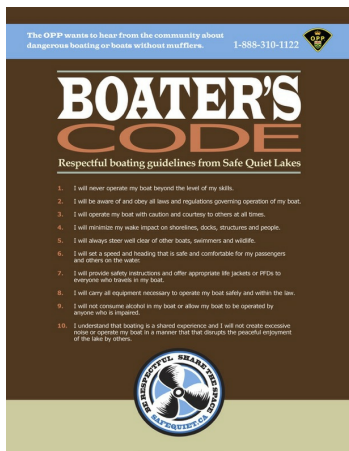
Please share it with your friends and neighbours.

Contact us at [outreach@safequiet.ca](mailto:outreach@safequiet.ca) if you would like a presentation at your upcoming AGM or event.



[Watch the Campaign Video](#)

## Want to report boating too close to shore, wakes, noise or other safety issues? Call 1-888-310-1122



Driving an unmuffled boat with pipes venting exhaust above the waterline directly from the engine with no muffler, or bypassing the muffler, is illegal on Muskoka area lakes.

Outboard and inboard/outboard engines comply with the law when they exhaust through the propeller hub under water. Loud isn't illegal, but muffler bypassing on our lakes is.

The OPP wants to hear from you. The more info you can provide, the better: photo, description, location, time, and registration number.

## [Add Your Support to our Fundraising Campaign](#)

Over the past six years Safe Quiet Lakes has been building our reach with support from organizations across our community and from individuals such as yourself.

Please help us with a gift of \$25 to \$500 online at [safequiet.ca/donate-now](https://safequiet.ca/donate-now) or by mailing a cheque with a completed [donation form](#) to: Safe Quiet Lakes, P.O. Box 358, Rosseau, ON, POC 1J0.

We are a not-for-profit community group that brings together stakeholders who care about the lakes to identify and implement solutions to improve safety and respect on the water. The funds that **Safe Quiet Lakes** receives are used for our outreach and education programs in Muskoka. Your financial support will also help us to ensure that all levels of government and

policy makers will hear the Survey findings.

As a thank you, we will send you one of our decals for your boat or personal watercraft to display your support for our shared goals. For a gift of \$100 or more, you will also be recognized as a [Supporter](#) on our website.

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## Join the Conversation

