

Kayla Dunn

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October 30, 2025

Dear Mayor, Members of Council, and Kawartha highlands Provincial Park

Subject: Urgent Appeal Regarding Lake Access, Seasonal Water Drawdown, and Road Access Petition

I write on behalf of the group of owners of water-access cottages on Anstruther Lake, located within the Township of North Kawartha. We respectfully but urgently wish to raise grave concerns regarding an ongoing issue — namely the early and excessive drawdown of the lake's water levels via the dam at the lake's outlet. The consequence of this management is that many of us are now unable to access our properties by boat for a substantial portion of our cottage season, effectively shortening the time we can reasonably use our lands. Roughly 80% of the properties owned on this lake are water access only.

In past years, the drawdown schedule and volume permitted reasonable access through to a later date in the year. However, over the last few seasons, the drawdown has been more aggressive and earlier, resulting in a significant loss of access. As a consequence:

- Our ability to reach our properties by boat is compromised well before the season ends.
- We continue to pay full property taxes and other levies while being denied full enjoyment of our lands.
- We are disadvantaged relative to other property owners who have road access.
- The trust between cottage owners and the Municipality's stewardship of local resources is adversely affected.

While we fully acknowledge that water-level management is needed for infrastructure, environmental, and safety reasons, we believe a better balance can be struck. We respectfully request that the Township undertake the following actions:

1. Review and revise the drawdown schedule and magnitude, ensuring that water-access property owners retain reasonable access for as much of the season as possible.

2. Provide full transparency and consultation regarding the decision-making process for lake water-levels, including who authorizes drawdowns, when they occur, and with what justification.
3. Commit to exploring and advancing the petition for a permanent road access alternative, thereby providing year-round reliable access to properties currently accessible only by water. The recent access challenges underscore the urgency of this initiative.
4. Provide a written response within 30 days detailing the Township's plan to address these issues, including timelines, responsible staff, and metrics for success.

We trust that the Township of North Kawartha will approach this matter with the seriousness it merits. Good governance requires that property owners enjoy fair and equitable access and that changes to access conditions be communicated clearly and handled collaboratively.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Should you wish to meet with a representative group of cottage owners, we are available at your convenience. We look forward to your prompt reply and to working constructively with the Municipality to reach a fair and sustainable resolution.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayla Dunn

On behalf of the concerned cottage-owners of Anstruther Lake

