



Wolfe Lakers are kindly invited to support the Protect Opinicon initiative

The Wolfe Lake Association Westport board continues to follow the developments of the Skycroft trailer campground on the shores of Opinicon Lake. Members of the nearby Chaffey's Area Lakes Association (CALA) have set up a non-profit corporation called Protect Opinicon.

Protect Opinicon now represents numerous community members and residents who share a love of Opinicon Lake and are committed to the conservation of its sensitive ecology and biodiversity.



CALA's members can be found on the shores of seven lakes within the Township of Rideau Lakes, stretching from Newboro Lake to Whitefish Lake in the vicinity of Chaffey's Lock. Their board contacted their membership once more, and CALA has asked us to spread the word as well. **It also**

means that Wolfe Lake members can also weigh in on the Skycroft trailer campground expansion by supporting the "Protect Opinicon" initiative.



As the holiday season approaches and everyone is thinking about giving, perhaps you will consider reaching into your wallets and donating to the 'Protect Opinicon', the nonprofit organization that is working to protect our water bodies from harmful agents such as invasive species, algal blooms or overdevelopment. Protect Opinicon needs financial aid as it is gradually nearing its target donations needed to pay for the costs of the Land Trust Tribunal hearing in January. The witness statements have been submitted and the hearing is scheduled between Jan 7 and Jan 28, 2025.

Four groups involved

There are four groups presenting at the hearing:

1. Protect Opinicon – (including three scientists specializing in fish, lakes, birds, snakes and turtles); **2.** Township of South Frontenac; **3.** Queens University and

4. Skycroft – the applicant – Proposed expansion – an increase in campground size from 83 campsites to 231 and thereby increasing seasonal residents by 600.

The arguments are but not limited to, endangered species, zoning, and lack of amenities. The project is looking for funding/donations to support the legal costs for representation to the Ontario Tribunal Board.

From the CALA Newsletter

Published December 6, 2024

Even though Skycroft already greatly exceeds the allowable density for waterfront campgrounds by more than 30 sites, in 2022 it sought to expand to nearly triple its current size, from 83 sites to 231 sites. Such an expansion would add upwards of 600 new seasonal residents to the lake and would bring irrevocable negative impacts to the character and environment of Opinicon Lake and the surrounding area...including reducing property values. That proposal met with strong opposition from the local community, some of whom formed Protect Opinicon to work toward a more sustainable future for Opinicon Lake.

In October 2023, the Township of South Frontenac's Municipal Council sided with local residents and the Queen's University Biological Station in voting unanimously (9-0) to reject that expansion request. Rather than respecting the Council's decision and the

overwhelming opposition of the community, however, Skycroft appealed that decision to the Ontario Land Tribunal. Under the pro-development mandate of the current provincial administration, the Tribunal has consistently shown a tendency to rule in favour of developers, meaning the Township's unanimous negative decision on Skycroft could be overturned. The Tribunal has scheduled a formal hearing for January 6-18, 2025.

In preparation Protect Opinicon has retained the services of Donnelly Law, a prominent environmental law firm based in Toronto, to put forward the strongest legal arguments we possibly can. Our community is now tasked with raising an additional \$100,000 to \$125,000 (CND) to see the case through to completion. While some members of our community have been willing to donate \$5,000 or more to help fund the necessary legal efforts, we need additional financial support if we are to see it through to the end. We hope that everyone who cares about the future of Lake Opinicon will consider donating to this essential cause. There are several different options for tax-deferred donations.

How to donate?

Find here the instructions on how you can donate to the Protect Opinicon Legal Fund, which was established to fund legal and consulting fees to stop the proposed expansion of Skycroft campground:

(1) Make a pledge for the total amount that you are willing to commit to help Protect Opinicon fund our opposition to Skycroft's appeal at the OLT hearing if it is needed. The total additional cost for our participation in the hearing is estimated to be about \$125,000.

(2) Either pay the entire amount of the donation upfront or pay some lesser portion (e.g., 25% of the donation) now and pay the remainder of your pledge when we contact you to notify you that some or all of the remainder of your pledge is needed. We will endeavor to reach out to donors equitably. For example, we will collect 75% of everyone's pledge rather than asking for 50% from some and 100% from others.

Also attached is the Payment Options document for Canadian and US Citizens. Both get tax receipts. Every dollar counts!

(End quote CALA News Letter)

WATCH THE VIDEO TO LEARN MORE

To understand more about the impact of the Skycroft expansion, we invite you to watch this short video, produced by Protect Opinicon.

<https://vimeo.com/998737180>



WOLFE LAKE ASSOCIATION'S REPORT 2023

In August of last year, the news came out that the owner of Skycroft Campground and Resort (on Lake Opinicon) submitted an application to South Frontenac Township to increase the number of campsites on the waterfront of Lake Opinicon from 50 to 231. We thought at that time it was important to inform our members, because such a development could potentially set a precedent, and might not be limited to Opinicon Lake, but could in the future of other Lakes in the Township of South Frontenac - including Wolfe Lake - have an impact on our treasured environment.

Since 2023 the board of the Wolfe Lake Association Westport is following recent developments. And now we felt we wanted to inform you about the new Protect Opinicon, the appeal from Skycroft Skycroft to the Ontario Land Tribunal, the subsequent hearing in January of 2025, and, how you can help the Protect Opinicon initiative.

(For easy reference we have attached our August 2023 News Flash on this topic, in case you would like to read it again.)

If you no longer wish to receive the News Flashes of the Wolfe Lake Association Westport (WLAW), please let us know at: com-wolfelake@outlook.com, and we will unsubscribe you.

