

Christie Lake Association Inc.
P.O. Box 20058
Perth, Ontario
K7H 3M6



July 27, 2021

Scott Reid, M.P.
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Reid,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Christie Lake Association Inc.

As you know, the Tay River waterway, including Christie Lake, has experienced extreme changes in water levels in recent years, from unprecedented flooding to unusually low levels. Since early February, the level in Christie Lake has been close to, and at times even below, the historic minimum level. The Tay River down to Perth has also been experiencing historic low levels. The reason is a reduced snowpack last winter and limited rain through April and May.

For our lake, this has resulted in navigational challenges, and, generally for the Tay waterway, shoreline erosion, bird nesting issues and other environmental and infrastructure impacts. For Perth, low water levels above and below the Town can be problematic for both water supply and downstream discharge.

These ongoing challenges make it imperative that the community have access to the real-time flow data produced by Parks Canada at Bobs Lake Dam. However, Parks Canada has recently advised that the Department will no longer make this available to the public. The posting of real-time flow data, on which the community – municipalities, Conservation Authority, and community associations - has relied for many years, has been discontinued.

In the past, Parks Canada made flow information and water level data available to various Provincial agencies for a cost. The Department now is asking that the Provincial Agencies should be required to cover more of their "costs", which the Agencies are either unwilling or unable to do.

The Department justifies this in maintaining that these data are for their internal use, and that the data would not be properly interpreted by the public, as opposed to their departmental "experts". Not to put too fine a point on this, but the argument is, quite frankly, nonsense, given the experience that is available in a community that has lived in and observed the waterway for decades!

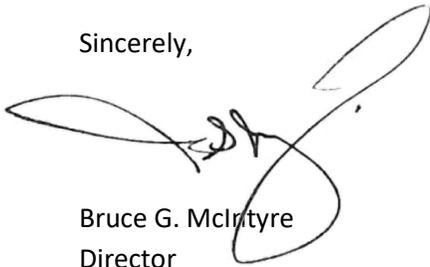
I understand that Parliament has adjourned for the summer and that an election in the late summer or early fall is likely, however, if you could have a means of presenting our case to the government, it would be greatly appreciated.

The Issues are too numerous to attempt to capture in a letter, but there are several points that are germane to the problem:

- The Water Survey of Canada (WSC) is the national authority responsible for the collection, interpretation and dissemination of standardized water resource data and information in Canada. In partnership with the provinces, territories and other agencies, WSC operates over 2800 active hydrometric gauges across the country. WSC is a division of Environment Canada and its mandate is to make these data public.
- Parks Canada operates a number of hydrometric gauges across Canada for which it charges access fees. An obvious question is 'Given that these are operated with public funds, why are the data not available to the Public'? A further question is 'Why are these gauges not the responsibility of the WSC whose mandate it is to gather the data'?
- There is only ONE taxpayer!

Scott, your assistance would be very much appreciated. Please advise if we can provide further information.

Sincerely,



Bruce G. McIntyre
Director
Christie Lake Association Inc.

Cc (via email)

John Fenik, Mayor, Town of Perth
Brian Campbell, Reeve, Tay Valley Township
Stephen Fournier, Reeve, Drummond North Elmsley Township
Glenn Tunnock, President, Friends of the Tay Watershed
Brian Stratton, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority