



Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Management Advisory Board

E-Newsletter #1
June 2004

In this Issue...

- ❖ Board Activities
- ❖ New Parks Staff Hired
- ❖ Communications
- ❖ First Advisory Subcommittee Struck
- ❖ Overview of Current Site Status
- ❖ Summer Operations
- ❖ Contact Information

Greetings from the Management Advisory Board!

As summer season approaches, people are now actively enjoying the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site: cottagers, campers, canoeists, hikers and more. We felt it important to provide an update at the start of the season to let people know what has been happening since our last newsletter (January 2004) and what is planned for the Kawartha Highlands in the next few months. As this is our first attempt at an electronic newsletter, we would appreciate your assistance in distributing this letter to those you feel would be interested.

Board Activities

As a Board, we have been initially focussing on administrative items to establish the direction and operations of the Board. We know that there are many people interested in being kept

informed of what the Board is actually doing. The focus of our activity over the past 3 meetings has been to develop an active and effective communication plan that will meet the expectations of the public. We have had the ability to focus on this, as one of our major roles outlined in the Charter is to play a substantial role in the preparation of the Management Plan, which will not begin for several months.

The Board has been able to meet with the Minister of Natural Resources, David Ramsay, and he has confirmed his government's commitment to ensuring that the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park becomes an operating park. The Minister also supports both our general direction in planning the undertaking of our mandate and our Board structure which incorporates people of various backgrounds but who do not represent any particular interest group or organization.

New Parks Staff Hired

Ontario Parks has begun staffing for the Kawartha Highlands – showing a clear commitment to an “operating” park. The following permanent and short-term positions have been filled to help with the planning process and to manage the park both in the interim and when it becomes fully operational. Please feel free to contact staff regarding any of their areas of specialty.

Dave Coulas –

Park Superintendent

613-332-3940 x255

Dave will be focussing on all aspects of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site. Dave will oversee park staff to ensure delivery of goals and objectives. The full range of objectives will be attained by working closely with other branches, relevant agencies, surrounding communities, First Nations, park users, stakeholders and the Management Advisory Board. Initial period will be very much a transition phase to Ontario Parks, working closely with Nancy and district staff. Dave will be attending Board meetings as the appointed ex-officio member, also meeting with Cottage Associations, Municipalities, different interest groups, etc. Dave will be the main public face of the project. Dave's long term goal is to achieve a sustained semi-wilderness environment by planning, managing and operating Kawartha Highlands Signature Site consistent with the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Act and Charter as well as Ontario Parks philosophy, policy, standards and legislation.

Jennifer Fay –

Senior Operations Technician

613-332-3940 x261

Jennifer will take the lead on day-to-day operational issues within the Kawartha Highlands, including campsite and portage signage and maintenance, coordinating the work of ranger crews, health and safety issues, constructing kiosks, etc. Jennifer will also be working with the essential services subcommittee to address issues requiring immediate attention – e.g. parking, garbage, fire suppression, emergency response and enforcement.

Kim Harris –

GIS/Database Technician

613-332-3940 x262

Kim will create map products for use in planning documents and reports, signage, and public open houses. The use of GIS (Geographic Information Systems) to manage and analyse data collected in the field will be a significant part of Kim's job duties. As the lead for the trail data collection project, Kim will be actively participating in the collection of trail values, including documentation of significant features, cultural information and issue areas; acting as the key contact for concerned stakeholders seeking clarification regarding trails and legislation; and the compilation of trail values for use in management planning.

Pam Lawrence –

Senior Parks Clerk

613-332-3940 x216

Pam will provide an administrative/ office management role for the Park office as she has in the past 3 years. Pam also provides administrative support to the Board which includes: all meeting arrangements, preparation of background information, processing expense claims, and mailouts. Pam will continue to provide ongoing communication with key client groups, hiring of staff, budget control, purchasing, maintaining mailing list, monitoring the current Kawartha Highlands e-mail account and other duties as assigned.

Nancy Wilson –

**Special Projects Manager,
Bancroft District**

613-332-3940 x230

Nancy will be leading the management planning process for the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park for the next several years. Her primary undertaking at this point is the finalization of the regulation package for the park. Once completed, Nancy's full attention will be turned towards beginning the public process of developing the management plan. Nancy will also provide advice related to communications, planning, and ensure the link to the past public process for the Kawartha Highlands.

Graham Cameron –

Biologist Intern

613-332-3940 x240

Graham will be primarily responsible for monitoring the flora, fauna and abiotic components of the Kawartha Highlands ecosystems. This will be accomplished through extensive fieldwork, networking with local researchers, naturalists and resource managers, and through the creation of a long-term ecological monitoring and assessment program which will be anchored firmly in the management plan. Graham's role as communicator/educator will contribute to the public's understanding that the Kawartha Highlands is an integral component in the mosaic of resource protection in Southcentral Ontario.

Communications

As a Board, we are committed to creating an atmosphere of openness and transparency in the work we undertake on your behalf. We have spent several meetings preparing a communication strategy that will support our goals. As Board meetings are only held every 1-2 months, it is important for us to focus this time together to plan our undertakings. Future recommendations to the Minister will be based on a thorough analysis of the information we receive from you, the general public and other stakeholders. This information will be assessed in light of the "purpose" section of the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Act, 2003 and the Charter. These documents, along with the Provincial Parks Act and associated policies, provide a framework for us to develop recommendations for the Minister.

While our present meetings are primarily closed, we intend, at future meetings, to receive delegations of interested stakeholders regarding management planning concerns. We will also hold open houses to provide information regarding our progress and to receive your input. In order to provide regular communications, we have chosen to use a variety of methods to provide you with as much relevant information as possible. Some of these include:

- ❖ **Board Website** – We are working on developing a website where we can post information in a timely fashion. Information that we hope to include on this site would be: Board member backgrounds, Terms of Reference, Board Mandate, Summaries of all of our working meetings, overview of the planning process identifying opportunities to become involved, and commonly asked questions and answers. If you have other ideas of what would be useful, please contact the park office. The MNR website will continue to post official documents related to this site and there will be links provided to connect these two sites.
- ❖ **Information Kiosks** – In an effort to educate current park users in respecting private property, backcountry camping etiquette, campsite locations, etc., this season you will see the establishment of information kiosks and other signs at several of the current access locations in the park area.
- ❖ **Board Newsletters** – As news warrants, the Board will take advantage of both electronic and regular mailouts.

First Advisory Subcommittee Struck

Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park will not become fully operational until after an approved Park Management Plan is in place. The site, however, continues to receive unregulated use causing conflicts between different user groups. Use of the site also threatens both the health and safety of persons and the environment. An interim **“Essential Services” Subcommittee** has been struck with the clear intent to address immediate operational issues of concern. It is the mandate of the Essential Services Subcommittee to develop short-term agreements to address specific issues relating to parking, garbage, fire suppression, emergency response and enforcement within the newly created park. It is the understanding of the subcommittee that these issues will be addressed in Park Management Planning where long term direction will be determined. This is a short-term (one year duration) working group with the purpose of making recommendations to the Management Advisory Board. Subcommittee members include representatives from both the Township of North Kawartha and the Township of Galway-Cavendish and Harvey. Other expertise will be called upon and utilized as needed.

Overview of Current Site Status

Site Regulation as a Provincial Park – Work is being finalized on the regulation package that is to be put forward for approval. Both public and aboriginal consultation has been completed and final maps will soon be available from the Ontario Surveyor General's office.

Due to a reduced meeting schedule for Cabinet Office during July and August, it is unlikely this site will be regulated before the fall. At the same time, the Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park Act will be proclaimed, and that is when all sections of this act will be in force.

Management Planning – Work on management planning will begin internally by MNR when the site has been moved forward for regulation. An outline of the planning process and opportunities for participation will be posted on our website when established. There will be several opportunities for input into the development of this plan and we encourage everyone to give us your input in this phase of the site development. This plan, when approved, will provide long term management direction for this site. It is very important that the views of aboriginal people, interested stakeholders and the public at large be known so that we have your information to consider when developing recommendations for the plan.

Summer Operations

- ❖ This summer you can expect to see a continuation of the canoe route and campsite maintenance activities. This will be completed, as in past years, by several junior and stewardship ranger crews.
- ❖ Information kiosks will be established at several of the current access point areas, and we will be hoping for the assistance and cooperation of the local cottagers associations.
- ❖ Work will be continuing on the road and trail mapping project. Trails will

be electronically located using satellite positioning systems. You can expect that some time in the future, the public will be asked to provide comments on the locations, current use and history of the trail system.

- ❖ A campsite inventory will be completed to assess condition of sites against provincial park standards.
- ❖ Site specific problems will be addressed where possible.
- ❖ Other inventory work will be undertaken to support the future management planning process.

Contact Information

As a Board, we can be reached through the Park Office at:

Kawartha Highlands Signature Site Park
Management Advisory Board
P.O. Box 500
106 Monck Street
Bancroft, ON K0L 1C0

e-mail:

kawartha.highlands@ontarioslivinglegacy.com

NOTE: If you would like to receive future mailings of electronic newsletters directly, please contact the Park Office to provide your e-mail address.