

Project to Establish a Technical Landfill Site at Danford Lake in the Municipality of Alleyn-et-Caywood

Brief by Michael Power, Land Owner in the Municipality of Kazabazua

I own a recreational property on Lac Shea in the Municipality of Kazabazua, which is about 10 km from the proposed landfill site. My interest in this project is about the environmental impact on my recreational property.

I first learned about the Danford Lake landfill initiative when I read, buried in the minutes of Council meeting in 2005, that the Municipality passed a motion to proceed with building an engineered landfill site. It appeared to be an effort to replace the existing trench landfill with a better one so this news didn't catch much attention. Soon after, people were saying by word-of-mouth that this landfill would actually be a megadump for the Outaouais. I talked to residents and cottage owners in my area and no one knew about this initiative. I thought that this was odd.

I did some research and found out that the promoters of this landfill had made a similar but failed attempt at pushing for a landfill site in North Onslow near Quyon. In a statement by Mr. Rouleau in December 2003 to The Equity, he stated "that if public opinion was solidly against the project, he would not pursue it — he would not get a certificate in the face of public opposition." There were lessons to be learned from this attempt insofar as dealing with public opposition. Between this time and the municipal elections of 2005, there was a quiet period as the next candidate was sought and groomed and this occurred with the Municipality of Alleyn-et-Cawood. But this time, he had a newly elected council well-prepared to support his plan. Tucked up and away in the far corner of the RCM of Pontiac, perhaps this time the initiative could proceed to a significant stage largely unnoticed by the public in the Outaouais.

By early 2006, the resident and cottage-owners in Municipality of Kazabazua were well aware of the megadump plans and they set forward to do something about it but they were faced with a lack of information and a lack of public consultation process to which they had always believed existed in today's democracies. The Council of Alleyn-et-Cawood was not cooperative.

Lac Shea is part of a cluster of over 20 pristine lakes in the Danford Lake area and most of these lakes happen to lie on the Kazabazua side of the municipal boundary. These lakes represent a valuable environmental and recreational resource in the Outaouais. My environmental issues are as follows:

- Any effluent that leaves the south side of the dump site by ground or surface water will end up in the Kazabazua River and this river occasionally backs up into Lac Shea when water levels rise, meaning that effluent will end up in this lake.
- Highway 301 passes the north side of Lac Shea. Truck traffic echoes across the lake. When trucks speed up and slow down to make their way through the highway that winds around a number of lakes, they create additional engine noise.

The megadump will increase this truck traffic by 75% and that will significantly disturb the quiet nature that people seek in our lake.

- The proximity of the lake to the dump site will bring nuisance sea gulls, which now occur very rarely, and likely increase the number of crows.
- The lake is downwind from the dump site and will bring odours to the clean and fresh air that we now enjoy.
- Our property values will drop as they already have as no one wants to buy a cottage near a megadump. Even the perception will drive people away.

Since Lac Shea, as with most of the lakes in the area, is on the wrong side of the municipal boundary, we were excluded in the consultation process undertaken by the Municipality of Alleyn-et-Cawood and then by RCM Pontiac regarding the megadump issue.

The BAPE hearings have given me faith that truth, openness and fairness will always prevail. The proceedings of the “questions” phase of the BAPE have brought forward a vast amount of useful information. The conclusions that I can draw from these proceedings are as follows:

1. That the public consultation process prior to the BAPE hearings was tightly controlled and artificial.
2. That the annual incentives offered to the Municipality of Alleyn-et-Cawood by the proponent are huge, equalling their entire annual budget.
3. That the majority of tax payers in the Municipality of Alleyn-et-Cawood are against the megadump project and do not see themselves benefiting significantly from these incentives.
4. That through a process of elimination, the prospective benefactors of these incentives can be narrowed down to a small number of people within the municipality.
5. That there are numerous worst case environmental scenarios that produce highly unacceptable outcomes. Consequently, when you tally up all the individual risks, there is a high combined risk of environmental failure of the landfill.
6. That the proponents are surprised by the resolve of the people for their opinions to be heard. As indicated in Clause 1175 of the BAPE proceedings, the proponent now concedes that a strong percentage of ratepayers are opposed to the project.
7. That the adjacent Municipality of Kazabazua will be subjected to the greatest impact by the megadump yet it was not provided with any means to consult with the proponent according to Clause 1340.
8. That the waste management problem is Outaouais-wide and, therefore, all municipalites must be part of the consultation and decision making process. Since this process has been restricted to RCM Pontiac, the public consultation process must be deemed to be invalid by BAPE.