



1. THE 2ND AMALGAMATION OF SASK COTTAGE COMMUNITIES

Almost a decade since the first amalgamation of cottage communities in our province¹, the **Resort Village of South Lake** and the **RM of Marquis** have quietly and efficiently made it happen with a new set of partners.

Interest in the initiative began in 2012 and was initially spearheaded by the Board of the **Organized Hamlet of Sand Point Beach**, requesting a friendly annexation by their neighbours in the nearby resort village.

Right from the start the initiative was supported by the RM of Marquis. RM administrator Ron Gaspar admitted that the RM was giving up the 35% of the OH tax revenue that the Organized Hamlet contributed to the RM revenue, but the RM was also giving up the many administrative and operative demands of having an urban lakeshore community. Gaspar spoke strongly about the common sense involved in having rural communities look after their own issues, that **commonality of interest** is needed for effectively functioning of municipal bodies, citing that farmers sitting around the RM table had little interest in the building bylaw applications from the lakeshore communities, just as OH Boards of cottage owners had little interest in the maintenance of grid roads in the RM.

The newly expanded Resort Village of South Lake came into being on January 1, 2015. The governance structure of the new resort village has changed to a **ward system for three councillors** (two elected from the original South Lake area, and 1 elected from the former Sand Point area), **plus a mayor elected at large**. For the upcoming interim period (the year until the province-wide elections in the summer of 2016), the current mayor has stepped down (replaced by a current councillor, elected for the year by acclamation). There will be a by-election this summer for one of the councillor positions for the one-year term.

Unlike the original Katepwa model, the new larger Resort Village of South Lake will be **encompassed within a continuous border**. Within that border will be the cottages of South Lake, the cottages of Sand Point Beach and more cottages in a new subdivision adjacent to Sand Point Beach (a new development with a significant number of lots that have been surveyed and are ready for sale).

¹ In 2006, the Resort Village of Katepwa Beach, the Resort Village of Katepwa South and the former Organized Hamlet of Sandy Beach became the **Resort Village of the District of Katepwa**. The parts of this resort village do not share a coterminous boundary. They are however, one legally self-governing resort village.

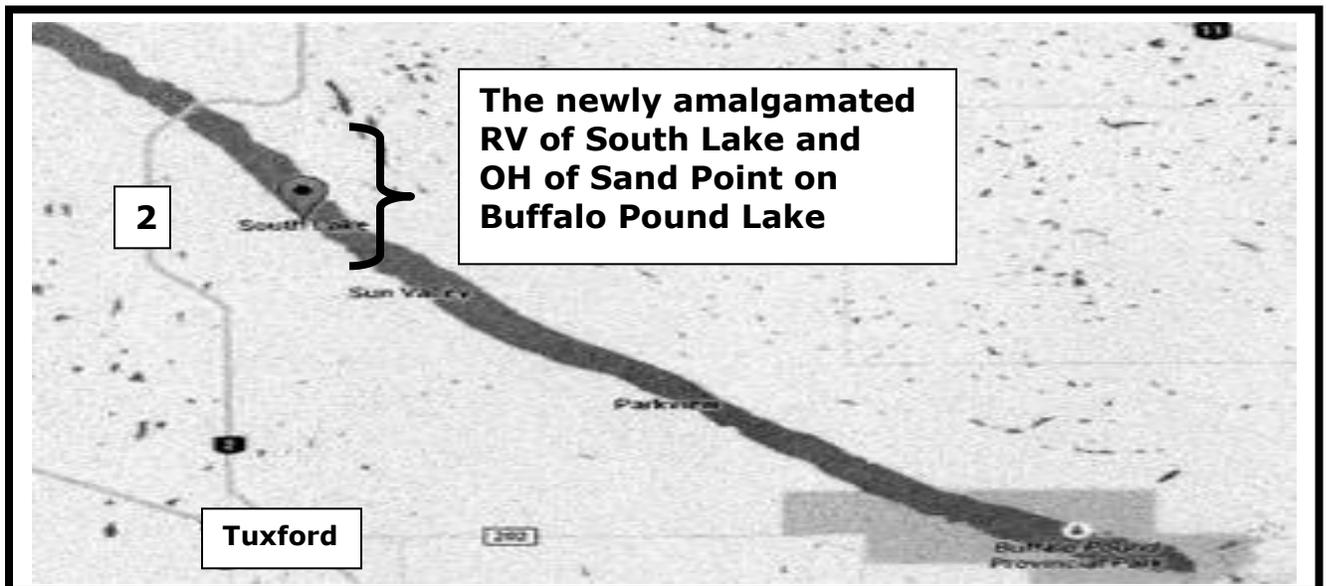
Between these cottage communities are a number of quarters of agricultural land adjacent to the lake and now part of the new resort village. The deal struck by the RM on behalf regarding these farmland parcels was that the mill rate for these quarters would remain the same as the RM mill rate for a set time period.

The access road from highway #2 into the Resort Village, originally the responsibility of the RM, is now the responsibility of the Resort Village.

The newly expanded Resort Village of South Lake is bordered by the Resort Village of Sun Valley, then the OH of Parkview (still part of the RM) and then the Provincial Park. When asked whether he thought that the new Resort Village might one day expand to include Sun Valley and Parkview, administrator Gaspar replied that **“a Resort Village of Buffalo Pound would make all kinds of sense, especially from the viewpoint of common interests and common zoning bylaws for protecting the lake”**, admitting, however, that it would be dependent of the visionary leadership of the day.

Gaspar was quick to credit much of the success of the amalgamation to the work done by the facilitator jointly hired by the two parties. A retired municipal administrator who Gaspar described as “the go-between guy” between the RM and the RV, the facilitator also worked hand-in-hand with Community Planning and the Advisory Services at the Ministry of Government Relations.

The retiring mayor of the former resort village, Terry Rollie, described the new community as “the joining of old friends and neighbours, a win-win situation”, also pointing out that the addition of the new subdivision adjacent to the former organized hamlet will provide an opportunity for future expansion of the new resort village, already doubled in number of cottages by this amalgamation.

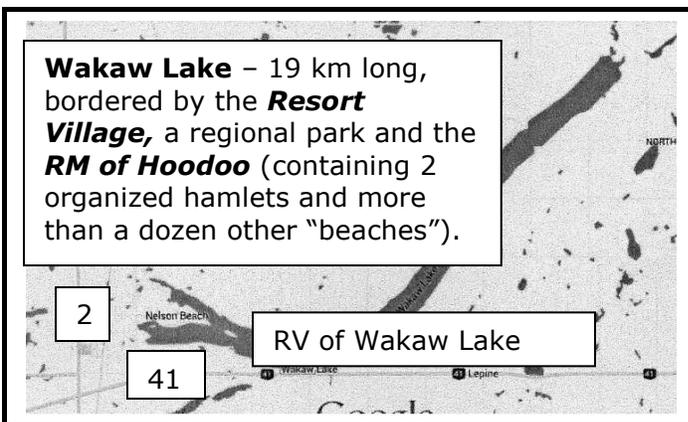


2. WORKING TOWARD A 3RD AMALGAMATION OF COTTAGE COMMUNITIES

The vision for the proposed amalgamation of all of the cottage communities around Wakaw Lake was initiated by the **Property Owners of Wakaw Lake (POWL)** with members from the almost 20 cottage communities around the lake.

In 2014, POWL officially requested that the Resort Village of Wakaw Lake begin the process leading to annexation of the neighbouring cottage communities.

The proposed amalgamation would include all of the property in the current Resort Village plus all of the RM lands abutting the lake. It would not include the Regional Park.



Helen Martinka, administrator of the Resort Village of Wakaw Lake, reports that the next step in the process will be the public meeting, stating that her office had sent out the notice to the newspaper and was about to mail out invitations to some 2,000 property owners.

As with South Lake, the Wakaw plans envision governance by the ward system, with wards set up with roughly equal number of properties (“rep by pop”).

Martinka cautioned, however, that there are still a number of issues to be resolved with this proposed amalgamation, and that more negotiations lie ahead. The one area of strong agreement comes from the cottage owner advocates who share their concern for the care of their lake, already overcrowded and facing numerous environmental challenges. Martinka states that the main incentive for amalgamation is that **“it’s all about stewardship of the lake.”**

3. SPEAKING ABOUT STEWARDSHIP . . .

One of our speakers at PARCS fall convention will be explaining about **Lake Capacity Studies** as a way for cottage communities to evaluate the ability of their lake to remain healthy and sustainable.

4. SPEAKING ABOUT AMALGAMATION . . .

Cottage communities that want to **“grow their community”** will be interested in the revised regulations for forming new Organized Hamlets and new Resort Villages, as presented at convention by speakers from the Ministry of Government Relations.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
PARCS 2015 CONVENTION
FRI. OCT. 16 & SAT. OCT 17
WILLOWS COUNTRY CLUB
SASKATOON
 Agenda and registration forms
 to follow soon!