

PARCS UPDATE #1 – JUNE 2009



1. PARCS HIGHLIGHTS

BACKGROUND - The *Provincial Association of Resort Communities of Saskatchewan* held their inaugural conference in 1987. Since that date, the major concerns that PARCS has worked to remedy have included:

- **The burden of the education part of the property tax.**

THE ROLE OF PARCS - PARCS was instrumental in the formation, in 2005, of the Coalition that came together to lobby against the over-reliance on property taxes to education. Coalition members (SARM, SUMA, PARCS, the Sask School Boards, the Association of Sask Realtors, and the Sask Chamber of Commerce) called for the provincial government to assume a greater share of the funding of K-12 education.

"PARCS Directors and their members should be proud of the leadership that they have shown by forming the Coalition that took this issue to the steps of the Legislature and to every political party." Larry Schneider

THE RESULT – On March 17, 2009, the Provincial government increased the provincial share for education funding from \$103 million in 2008 (51% of education costs) to \$ 241 million in 2009 (63-66% of education costs). Mill rates for education were capped.

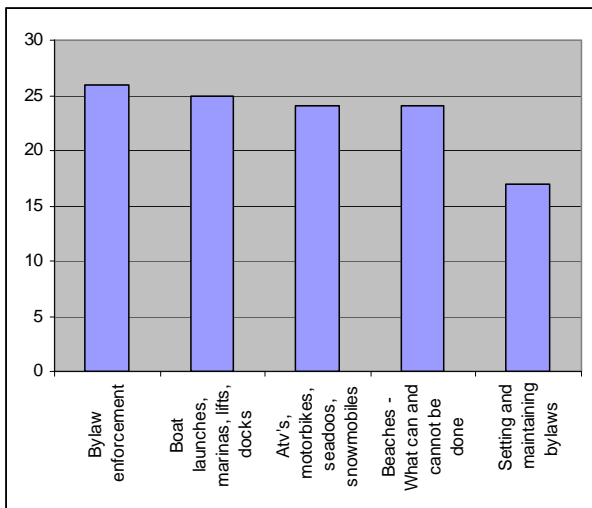
- **The failure of the provincial grant system to treat resort communities fairly.**

THE ISSUE – Both the Municipal Operating Grant and the Municipal Economic Enhancement Program are grants that are calculated on the basis of the census, in other words, full time residents. Whereas the government argues along the lines "of one taxpayer one grant", PARCS points out that most cottage owners are "one taxpayer paying double taxation".

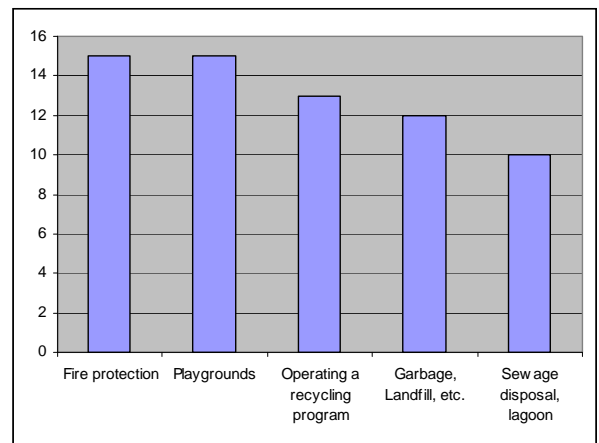
YOUR INVOLVEMENT in PARCS will assist us as we continue to lobby for equity in the provincial grant system for resort communities.

TODAY – Your current PARCS Board is looking to broaden their role by offering information and support to Resort Communities on a variety of common interests. This spring a survey was sent out to 64 resort communities or RMs, asking them to identify their main areas of concern. Shown below are the top 10 concerns as identified by the 34 communities who responded. **The agenda for the fall convention will address many of the topics identified through the survey.**

Top 5 areas of interest: **LIVING TOGETHER**



Follow-up 5 areas of interest: **SERVICES**



PARCS' Mission Statement

PARCS is organized to promote the interests of resort communities in Saskatchewan.

2. FACTS ABOUT RESORT COMMUNITIES IN SASKATCHEWAN

Did you know that there more than 200 resort communities in Saskatchewan?

There are 24 rural municipalities that administer resort communities, including:

- The **64 ORGANIZED HAMLETS** that are resort communities.
- More than **60 HAMLETS**, some of which are small beach communities of just a few cottages and others that are larger communities.

Some resort communities are independent municipalities, including:

- The **40 RESORT VILLAGES** that elect their own Councils, set their own mill rates and are self-governing urban municipalities.
- Some of the regular Saskatchewan towns and villages (such as the Town of Regina Beach or the Village of Elbow) that have large summer populations of cottage owners. Also, many of the villages in Northern Saskatchewan have summer cottage owners.

Resort communities in parks typically have Cottage Owners Associations.

- Saskatchewan has 101 regional parks. There are **24 COTTAGE COMMUNITIES IN REGIONAL PARKS**.
- Saskatchewan has 30 Provincial Parks with **9 COTTAGE COMMUNITIES IN PROVINCIAL PARKS** plus Wascesiu in Prince Albert National Park.

3. WATER QUALITY IN SASKATCHEWAN

Because cottage owners typically live beside water, most cottage owners care deeply about the quality of the water in their lake, in their river, in the smaller rivers and smaller lakes in their drainage area, and in their groundwater. Cottage owners who wish to protect their water sources may wish to learn more about the **watershed stewards group for their region**. Not to be confused with the Sask Watershed Authority which is a government agency, these groups are independent, non profit, publically funded organizations whose mission is to build awareness of and promote environmentally sustainable practices. Check out the web site for the watershed area for your resort community. Most offer excellent information and on-staff expertise:

- Lower Souris Watershed (lowersouriswatershed.com)
- Swift Current Creek Watershed Stewards (sccws.com)
- Moose Jaw River Watershed Stewards Inc (mjrriver.ca)
- Assiniboine Watershed Stewardship Association (assiniboinewatershed.com)
- North Saskatchewan River Basin Council (nsrbc.ca)
- Wood River Riparian Authority (woodriverriparian.ca)
- South Saskatchewan River Watershed Stewards Inc (southsaskriverstewards.ca)
- Last Mountain Lake Stewardship Group (lmlsg.ca)

Mark your calendars:
PARCS CONVENTION - SASKATOON INN
 Thursday, Oct. 15 - 3:00 p.m. Opening Plenary
 Friday, Oct. 16 - Workshop sessions
 Saturday, Oct. 17 - 1:00 adjournment

4. THE URBANIZATION OF SOME RURAL MUNICIPALITIES

Our July Issue of PARCS UPDATE will feature an article about the challenges and rewards being faced by those rural municipalities where resort developments are springing up around our lakes.

**Watch for our second
 PARCS Update in July.**

5. HOW TO CONTACT US

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