

Update from the Floating Homes Not Vessels Coalition, received by FOCA in late Feb.2024

The [Floating Homes Not Vessels Coalition](#) has the support of 20,000+ cottagers, 30+ cottage associations, 40+ Ontario municipalities along with eight federal Members of Parliament and Provincial MPPs. We continue to work with Transport Canada, Trent-Severn Waterway and municipal governments to advocate for change with respect to floating accommodations.

This is what has been accomplished just this past year!

- Over the summer and thanks to the dedication of volunteers, 2000+ petition signatures were gathered and the petitions collected have now been delivered to the House of Commons by MP Bardish Chagger. Based on Transport Canada's response, we now believe a viable working solution may be in sight. This solution comprises the three levels of government (federal, provincial and municipal) aligning to regulate floating accommodations. The Coalition plans to stay actively involved in this process.
- In July 2023, the Province of Ontario introduced and adopted an amendment to Ontario Regulation 161/17. The amendment stipulates that floating accommodations cannot be placed or used for outdoor accommodation or camping purposes on provincial public land covered by water. This amendment however excludes Federal waterways (such as the Historic Trent Severn Waterway).
- We received 720 pages of memos and email correspondence from our Freedom of Information request to Transport Canada on the topic of Floating Homes/Accommodations. After reviewing all of the correspondence, we have been given very clear insight into how Transport Canada thinks about the issue
 - i) Transport Canada views/defines Floating Homes as stationary/fixed to a mooring dock and connected to shore facilities to supply water, sewage and hydro and they are not classed as vessels
 - ii) Transport Canada views floating accommodations as vessels as long as they are not in a fixed mooring location like floating homes
 - iii) Transport Canada has referenced the July 2023 Ontario Regulations 161/17 as an appropriate mechanism to govern floating accommodations and encourages more regulation activity by federal, provincial, and municipal stakeholders in a manner consistent with the definitions spelled out in 161/17
- Separately but concurrently with the regulatory framework of 161/17, Parks Canada is moving in the same direction with their analogous regulatory framework expected to be published in the first half of 2024. Parks Canada will also begin to regulate floating accommodations on federal waterways in a manner similar to Ontario's 161/17
- Severn Township is in the process of drafting a regulatory framework to govern floating accommodations that intend to reside somewhere within the boundaries of Severn Township
- Various other local municipalities are drafting and/or amending regulations to govern floating accommodations. The GPCA President recently made a deputation to the Township of Severn's Planning and Development Committee with respect to a zoning by-law amendment they are considering with respect to this matter.
- Last fall, Transport Canada held public consultations through its Let's Talk Transportation website where many individuals submitted opinions on the issue. Conclusions from those consultations have not yet been publicly released.

- With all the above activities occurring currently, the Floating Accommodations not Vessels Coalition is working to bring together a tri-level government working group of **federal** (Parks Canada and Transport Canada), **provincial** (MNRF and Environment) and **municipal** (Townships of Georgian Bay and Severn) and members of the coalition.
- This working group will be charged with the responsibility to ensure all three levels of floating accommodation regulatory framework are homogeneous in their definition and do not create inadvertent gaps in this framework between federal waterways, provincial waterways and municipal shorelines

The Float Homes Not Vessels Coalition remains steadfast in their advocacy efforts, and we will keep you apprised of progress. We also wish to extend thanks to all our partners, residents and cottagers for their continued support and participation.

Your Floating Homes Not Vessels Coalition leadership believes we are now in the final stages of having all levels of government create the appropriate framework that are both effective to control floating accommodations and are consistent with Transport Canada's view of floating accommodations and vessels. While it has taken 3 years of hard work to get to this point, we believe that all our combined efforts are now paying off.