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April 27, 2022

Township of Muskoka Lakes
1 Bailey Street
P.O. Box 129
Port Carling, ON P0B 1J0

Dear Mayor Harding and Councillors,

Re: Hardy Lake Provincial Park

The Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) is writing in connection with the following resolution passed by Council on February 16th, 2022 in connection with Hardy Lake Provincial Park:

Resolution Number C-29-16/02/22

Councillor Zavitz - Councillor Mazan: Be it resolved that Staff be directed to advise the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) that as the Ministry refuses to cover any of the operating and capital expenses of the Hardy Lake Provincial Park, the Township will be terminating its services for the maintenance and operation of the Park, effective April 30, 2022.

AND THAT any remaining 2022 operating and capital funds for the operation and maintenance of Hardy Lake Provincial Park be redirected to the operation and maintenance of Township Parks and Trails.

The MLA acknowledges that hiking trails in the Muskoka region are one of the most popular attractions drawing people to the area year after year and providing recreation for local residents. This past number of years, it was common to see more than 50 cars lined up outside Hardy Lake Provincial Park where people came to enjoy a safe and healthy outdoor activity. Recently, there has been some concern that the trails at Hardy Lake Provincial Park will not be maintained in the summer of 2022, which could lead to closing the park for the season.

We understand that, while Hardy Lake Provincial Park is owned by the Province, the Township together with some volunteers has been responsible for maintenance in the past and that arrangement may be changing. We are interested in learning more about the current situation and the changes that may be coming in the hopes that we can somehow assist in preserving this valuable natural and tourism asset.

On behalf of our members and others who hike the trails, we hope that the Township will continue to work cooperatively with the Province and local volunteers so that the trails can be maintained in a state

of good repair and safety. We understand that the funds required to maintain all trails in the Township for the season have been allocated in the 2022 budget. We also understand that volunteers have traditionally helped with Hardy Lake Provincial Park's maintenance.

The MLA encourages the Township to consider options for maintaining Hardy Lake Provincial Park, including by involving interested groups, in the hope that this valuable natural and tourism asset is preserved.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Eplett', with a stylized, cursive script.

Susan Eplett
Chair, Government and Land Use Committee

cc: Ken Becking, Director of Public Works