

## Shoreline Management Position by SMLCC/P

Shoreline Management Plan - Press Release/ Statement from President, Ron Willard II  
August 8, 2003

*A majority of our membership is not in favor of the Shoreline Management Plan as written. After an extensive survey conducted with our membership, it has been determined that our members feel we need more time for public comment. In addition, the membership feels the community must be accurately informed of the impact fees associated with the Plan. With the busy season that we are in right now, many members feel that they have not had adequate time to read and interpret the Plan.*

*Our position from the Chamber is not to endorse the Plan as written. We are requesting that AEP extend the deadline for public comment and develop a way to educate the lake community on the true impacts of the Shoreline Management Plan. It would be an injustice to deliver such an important document without allowing adequate time for the steering committee to review the recent public comments.*

*Many questions have surfaced over the last few weeks that need answers. The Shoreline Management Plan states “striving for a balance that supports local economic interest yet protects environmental and recreational resources and that allows the public to enjoy these interests and resources.”*

*As representatives of our membership, we believe an economic impact study should be conducted to fairly assess the implications of the plan to our local economy. We need to make sure that we are not negatively impacting our workforce and economic stability.*

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### **Additional Press Release information**

SMLCC/P has been proactive in their approach to the Shoreline Management Plan (SMP). Each step outlined below was planned well in advance to inform chamber members and gain their feedback to determine the Chamber's position on Shoreline Management.

- President, Ron Willard II serves on the steering committee. He has kept the SMLCC/P Board and membership informed on each step of the project.
- Newsletter articles on front cover to inform the membership
- E-mail communications on meetings
- **Communications:** Members were informed on stages of the SMP action. A full front page article on the June 03 cover of *CONNECTIONS* (SMLCC/P newsletter) informed members on the plan along with a schedule that included committee meetings; public meetings, public comment; final draft, filing date.
  - Included in the article was the following statement, *It is crucial you forward your comments to me at RWillardII@smithmtnlake.com , or you*

*can obtain a list of steering committee members at the Shoreline Management Plan web site: [www.smithmtn.com](http://www.smithmtn.com).*

- The following newsletter, mailed in July after the draft plan became available featured a cover story/letter from the SMLCC/P president encouraging members to share their comments and concerns.
- To provide a fair representation of the SMLCC/P membership, the newsletter also included a 10 question survey. Members were asked to fill out the survey and return to the Chamber office by Aug. 8<sup>th</sup>.
- 450 members

#### Other insight

- In fairness to AEP, residents of SML and the membership businesses represented by SMLCC/P the Board waited until the final draft became available before surveying its membership. Surveys were sent in July.
  - Prior to the public meetings held on July 23 & 24<sup>th</sup>, SMLCC/P members were sent an e-mail informing them of the time/location and encouraging them to attend.
  - Ron Willard II, Board President, Vicki Gardner, Executive Director and a number of other Board members attended the public meeting at Resurrection Catholic Church on July 24<sup>th</sup>.
  - All members of SMLCCP were mailed a 10 question survey in a follow-up newsletter along with a cover story on Shoreline Management, dates and deadlines to submit their completed survey.
  - On August 4<sup>th</sup> members were sent an e-mail, reminding them to send in their survey.
  - Although the response to the print survey was ample and provided valuable information, SMLCC/P had not heard from a number of its members. It was determined that a phone survey campaign would provide a more comprehensive view of how our members feel about the Shoreline Management Plan. This effort proved to be accurate. See responses below.

#### 10 Question Survey Results:

- The survey to our membership revealed the following:
  1. Q- Do you believe the Shoreline Management Plan will be good for Smith Mountain Lake? Response: 56% No; 41% Yes; 3% N/A
  2. Do you think the SMP will help protect property values at SML? Response: No 59% Yes 41%
  3. Does this draft plan provide the resources (docks and other structures) necessary to conduct your business? Response: No 53%; Yes 41%; N/A 6%
  4. Do you feel AEP has made a reasonable effort to inform Lake residents of the SMP? Response: No 56%; Yes 44%
  5. Do you feel you have enough time to effectively review the document and submit any questions you have? Response: No 56%; Yes 41%; N/A 3%

6. Do you feel the SMP is an effective way to preserve the quality of life at SML? Response: No 56%; Yes 41%; N/A 3%
  7. Do you agree with the shoreline classification of your property? Response: Yes 63%; No 28%; N/A 9%
  8. Do you agree with the proposed vegetative cover regulations contained in the draft plan? Response: No 60%; Yes 31%; N/A 9%
  9. Do you agree with the grandfathering of existing structures on the lake? Response: Yes 88%; No 9%; N/A 3%
  10. Do you agree with the proposed size regulations for low-density classification? Response: No 53%; Yes 34%; N/A 13%
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The phone survey conducted over a two day period with the assistance of seven people including Chamber staff and volunteers.

Phone Survey Questions and results:

1. Do you feel that you have had adequate time and information on the Shoreline Management Plan to make a firm decision at this time? Response: No 75%; Yes 25%
2. Have all of your questions regarding the issues, personnel, enforcement, and a business plan explaining how AEP will fund the plan been answered? Response: No 81%; Yes 10%; N/A 9%
3. Would you like to see the deadline for public comment extended? Response: Yes 71%; No 26%; N/A 3%

Note: The revised plan was made available on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, AEP Public meetings were July 23 & 24<sup>th</sup> and the final day of public comment is Aug. 15<sup>th</sup>.

4. Are you in favor of the Shoreline Management Plan as it has been proposed at this time? Response: No 62%; Yes 12%; N/A 26% - Note that the N/A response stemmed almost entirely from members stating that they would like to be better informed before they make this decision.

Response overview:

- A review of the findings revealed that a majority of SMLCC/P members:
  1. Are not in favor of the Shoreline Management Plan as they understand it at this time – many commenting that they have not had enough time to consider all of the elements.
  2. Have not been disclosed details on how the SMP will be implemented and paid for.
  3. Overwhelming agree that the deadline for public comment needs to be extended.