



MASTERS SWIMMING ONTARIO

National Capital Commission Consultations on Meech Lake & OWS

October 7, 2020

To: MSO clubs in the Ottawa area

Masters Swimming Ontario (MSO) has a mandate to promote and foster life-long adult fitness through the sport of swimming, both in the pool and open water. MSO has an interest in maintaining access to safe, clean open water venues for all swimmers, including our membership. It is for this reason that MSO is working with the National Capital Open Water Swimmers Alliance (NCOWSA).

The NCOWSA was formed in response to restrictions that were imposed on open water swimming in Meech Lake by the National Capital Commission during the summer. This move was a response to complaints by residents in the area. The NCC has committed to holding a public consultation process over the next several months to find a solution to these issues before the start of the next open water swimming season in 2021. The goal of the NCOWSA is to liaise with the NCC regarding open water swimming and to prepare written and oral presentations for the upcoming consultations.

The NCOWSA committee will represent swimmers and other interested parties to help inform and shape the NCC's adoption of open water swimming guidelines and best practices. We will be advocating a balanced framework that serves all parties interested in the protection and use of Gatineau Park's public lakes.

At this time, NCOWSA is contacting swim clubs and organizations who may benefit from the committee's work. A Facebook group, website, and email address have been created to help reach out to interested parties. If you would like to support NCOWSA and its goal of protecting access to lakes controlled by the National Capital Commission for open water swimming, please join the Facebook group to stay up to date on the issues. When NCOWSA participates in the consultations, it will be important to demonstrate significant and widespread support among the swimming and triathlon communities. The support of coaches and swimmers is important to this initiative.

If NCOWSA is unsuccessful, this may be the thin edge of the wedge that could see swimming in Meech Lake banned for all users other than residents. Please consider supporting the NCOWSA efforts and feel free to distribute this message throughout your own networks.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact NCOWSA via email or on Facebook.

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1021485418297680>

Web: <https://ncowsa.wixsite.com/mysite>

Email - ncowsa@gmail.com

This letter is also posted on the MSO website at <https://www.mastersswimmingontario.ca/>

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BZirger', written in a cursive style.

Brigitte Zirger
President, Masters Swimming Ontario