

SUBMISSION #12

- 12) Submitted by:** Shirley LaRoy
Date Submitted: February 8, 2018
Electoral District: Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes

Re: Proposed Electoral District Boundary Changes, Mt Lorne-Southern Lakes

Dear Commission Chair and Members,

I am against removing the rural community of Marsh Lake from its present electoral district.

The Interim Report has a heading on page 16 stating 3. "Increased "urbanization" of country-residential areas surrounding the city of Whitehorse".

I disagree most heartily with the Commission's use of the terms 'country residential' and 'urbanization' in referring to Marsh Lake. Reading the city of Whitehorse's Zoning Bylaw 2012-20 (Consolidated to Bylaw 2017-34), Country Residential (CR)-1 lots are a minimum of 1.0 hectares while CR-2 lots are a minimum of 0.5 hectares. Many lots in Marsh Lake are smaller than 0.5 hectares so cannot be considered country-residential by this description. Residents here pay taxes on rural properties. Marsh Lake is outside of Whitehorse boundaries and people here that I have spoken with want to keep it that way. Marsh Lake is rural.

Dictionaries refer to 'urbanization' as the process of a population shift from rural areas to urban areas and the act, or fact of taking on characteristics of a city. Marsh Lake has no characteristics of a city. In an urban area, one finds city services such as grocery stores, post offices, health centres, places of worship, local policing, gas stations, museums, municipal water and sewage etc. Marsh Lake has none of these. Carcross and Teslin have more signs of urbanization than Marsh Lake, yet the Commission refers to the proposed electoral district of Carcross-Tagish-Teslin as rural (p. 14 of interim report). This makes no sense. Indeed, people leave the lifestyle of Whitehorse to move to the rural area of Marsh Lake for its rural attributes and lifestyle.

The communities of Mt Lorne-Southern Lakes have common interests arising out of history and culture, both recent and historic. Our communities work well together on promoting common interests and concerns. Lobbying against Yukon Energy's proposal to enhance water storage in the Southern Lakes system and the shale gas exploration issue in our shared geographical area, and volunteerism to support the Southern Lakes Gran Fondo bicycle race and the Marsh Lake Loppet are but a few examples. Citizens of our communities attend meetings on such issues not only in their home community, but travel to other district communities to show cohesion and support.

The Interim Report states “the population in these country residential areas enjoy easy access to facilities and services within Whitehorse”(p16). Access from Marsh Lake can be anywhere from a 30 minute to 1 hour drive. That is not ‘easy’. There is no bus service. Driving is certainly not easy on a highway often described by 511Yukon.ca as snow covered, partially covered, black ice, poor visibility, blowing snow, travel advisory, and construction (delays expected).

I dispute that “the majority of the population...shares common interests more commonly aligned with Whitehorse residents than those in rural communities” (p.16). Marsh Lake is rural, we live here because it is rural, and we have rural interests. We travel to visit friends in the other communities of our present electoral district. Yes, some of us travel to Whitehorse to work, but we choose to live here because of Marsh Lake’s rural nature and activities and interests available to us because of the rural setting. Personally, my interests align more with other rural residents in the current district.

I have grave concerns and am totally against the Commission’s stated outcome of the change to our electoral boundary, that is “This change will establish the electoral district of Mount Lorne-Marsh Lake as a country-residential area with similar characteristics to urban electoral districts” (p23).

Marsh Lake is rural, not country-residential, nor urban. Marsh Lake does not have any characteristics similar to urban electoral districts such as Copper Ridge, Porter Creek nor Riverdale.

My concerns with the proposed change are these:

1. This change to create Mt Lorne – Marsh Lake is the only change that includes a description that I interpret as a change of zoning (rural to country-residential).
2. This change could be a prelude to the Yukon Government changing Marsh Lake to a country-residential designation/zoning thus affecting our property taxes and opening the door to more restrictions such as those regarding the keeping of livestock or kennels.
3. This change could be a prelude to the city of Whitehorse attempting to enlarge its boundaries to scoop up more properties and thus, taxes, with no increase in services. If this becomes reality, the City of Whitehorse could also impose its notion of urban life on the residents of Marsh Lake.
4. Losing the valuable electoral connection with the residents of Jake’s Corner, Tagish and Carcross.
5. Whereas other changes refer to population numbers or development, the proposed change to create Carcross – Tagish – Teslin refers to commonalities of First Nations (p19). It seems discriminatory.
6. The proposed electoral district of Carcross – Tagish – Teslin appears to be formed to carve First Nations out of an electoral district that I perceive to be inclusive all people, no matter their race or language. (I support the statements in the submitted

letter of Khà Shâde Héni Andy Carvill of Carcross Tagish First Nation who says his FN wishes to remain in Mt Lorne – Southern Lakes and extended welcome to Teslin to join us)1.

Sincerely,

Shirley LaRoy

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Marsh Lake, YT, Y0B 1Y2

Yukon Electoral District Boundaries Commission
PO Box 2703 (A-9)
Whitehorse, YT, Y1A 2C6

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1. <http://yukonboundaries.ca/docs/Submission%2010%20Andy%20Carvill,%20Carcross%20Tagish%20First%20Nation%20WEBSITE.pdf>