

January 30, 2023

Transport Canada
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Ottawa, ON K1A 0N5

Email: MSSRegulations-ReglementsSSM@tc.gc.ca, honey.walsh@tc.gc.ca
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Attention: Honey Walsh, Manager-Office of Boating Safety and National CMAC Secretariat

**Re: Consultation on updating the Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations
(2021 submission) – Wake Surfing**

The Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) would like to provide our comments on Transport Canada's proposed changes to the Vessel Operation Restriction Regulations (VORR) regarding wake surfing.

The MLA represents over 11,500 people who are lakefront property owners and users in the District of Muskoka. Our mission is to promote the responsible use, enjoyment and conservation of the unique Muskoka environment. Our activities are extensive ranging from water quality testing to advocating for responsible government, fair taxation and responsible land use policies. The MLA is Canada's oldest lake association and has been active in the region since 1894.

In our membership survey conducted in May 2021, 62% of respondents identified an 'increase in boat wakes' as something they worry about for the future of Muskoka.

The MLA supports Transport Canada's proposed change to the VORR to provide that wake surfing will have separate rules from other towing sports as it has a different impact on safety and the environment.

A growing body of research on wake impacts is showing that wake surfing has a bigger impact on shoreline habitat than other boating activities. As a result, the MLA recommends that the

restrictions for wake surfing should also include minimum distance from shore and minimum water depth, which might mean some bodies of water are too narrow or too shallow to allow wake surfing at all. This change will allow local authorities to limit wake surfing to protect the shoreline, lake water quality and safety without limiting other towing sports.

We would like to thank Transport Canada for proposing these changes to the VORR and bringing this to the public consultation stage of regulatory change. We encourage you to move this relatively straightforward amendment through the process as quickly as possible to make our lakes safer and protect the shoreline and water quality for all.

Sincerely,

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

Susan Eplett
President
Muskoka Lakes Association