

August 11, 2023

Dear Becky:

Please accept my written comments in response to the public discussion before the Select Board held on July 31, 2023 regarding the future of the South China Town Landing Road.

While I had the opportunity to express my opinions through the zoom connection that evening, I feel more comfortable sending a written communication in the event that I did not articulate all of my points at that time.

I would ask that you share this with the Select Board along with the short video I took after a vehicle went into the ditch trying to navigate this narrow roadway and had to be towed out in late July.

My interest in the Town Landing Road has been heightened as a year-round resident of South China who has cleaned this road for over 20 years on my daily walks and with the help of my husband.

I have tried to educate myself about the history of the lake and the human impacts. There are many factors that contribute to the lake health and water quality, and we know phosphorous is a significant problem that is the result of storm water runoff.

As we consider how best to maintain the road, which we all agree is necessary to reduce this run-off into China Lake, I am in favor of upgrading the road as outlined in the recommendations by A. E. Hodsdon Consulting Engineers.

This narrow and secluded entry point to the lake, in my opinion, would best be served by carry-in boats along with recreation such as swimming and fishing. The impact of large boats and vehicles to this sensitive area is evident. With limited width, no parking, and a turn around made available through a private land owner's deed, which was intended for fire department use, we run the risk of continued wear and tear to the road, its culverts and ditches, leading to increased environmental impacts to the lake from runoff and NPS pollution.

Paving this road would likely lead to more run off, greater traffic, larger boats and vehicles, and the need for boat inspections, which is not currently being addressed with potentially inherent dangers.

We heard from folks who do not want to restrict access to motor boats. Are motor boat owners a representative sample of the population in South China? I understand this is a genuine concern for those who do own motor boats, but isn't the health of the lake more important than the minor inconvenience of traveling to one of two well maintained and visible boat launches? We have the potential to create a more welcoming, environmentally friendly access for a different recreational focus if we repair and manage the road, its culverts, ditches, and buffers, while potentially enhancing our residents' experience.

Plowing in the winter is also something that needs to be considered as a lot of debris gets pushed down this road and into the surrounding wetlands.

The volunteer fire department certainly needs access to water from China Lake. Some alternatives were discussed, and maybe there is a more convenient location for the fire truck to draw from?

China Lake is our most treasured resource and careful stewardship will allow for a sustainable future for generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Katy McCormac
South China Resident