

A new cable ferry for the Ottawa to Quyon Ottawa River crossing

By **TERRY BOLAND**
Review Associate Editor

The environmental assessment process is underway for the proposal to construct a new cable ferry between Ferry Road in West Carleton and Quyon, Quebec.

Ferry operator Don McColgan, and the consulting firm CIMA, presented their current findings and the proposal on Thursday, July 19 to residents of West Carleton at the Fitzroy Harbour Community Centre.

The meeting attracted over 120 people hoping to get details on how the new ferry will operate and to address concerns about the cable operation and navigation.

The much larger ferry, which will run along a four ton cable between Quyon and Ferry Road will replace two aging propeller-driven ferries.

The need for an upgraded ferry has grown with both truck traffic forced to use bridges and the preliminary decision by the federal government not to support a \$200 million bridge in the far west end of Ottawa.

The new ferry operation will require some dredging on the Quyon side in front of the dock but no dredging will be required on the Ontario side.

The cable will relax behind the ferry as it crosses but the forward cable will rise to a depth of nine feet under the water surface.

The cable has raised concerns from residents about navigation but McColgan assured residents such ferries operate in other jurisdictions with little inconvenience to others using the waterway.

At present the environmental assessment has determined the planned dredging will be sufficient to ensure the ferry doesn't bottom out in front of the Quyon dock in low water conditions.

The water levels are determined, in large part, by the amount of water allowed through the Chats Falls dam.

Biologists are examining the impact of the new operation on local wildlife, including the Northern Water Snake, Milk Snakes, Spiny Softshell, Native Cisco, American Eel, Yellow Budhead, Lake Sturgeon, Channel Darter and



Photo supplied

Above is a picture of the William Pitt Ferry, which is presently operating in New Brunswick and is similar to the ferry being proposed by Don McColgan for the Ottawa to Quyon crossing.

River Redhorse fish.

Most of the members of the audience were very supportive of the decision to upgrade the ferry to a more environmentally responsible operation and would welcome the return of heavy transportation on the ferry.

Farmers, like Pinto Valley's Ernie Smith, rose to support the new ferry and the return to cross-river business opportunities in the livestock and other agricultural commodities.

The ferry was forced to stop carrying livestock trucks destined for the Galetta Stockyards after complaints were launched about the safety of carrying the large trucks without proper gating.

"As you know the large trucks we used to cross with, with the gates open, we weren't supposed to and we did, we can no longer carry," said McColgan. "Transport Canada has enforced those regulations and 27 feet across and 12 feet high, eight feet after dark, is not very high, has eliminated a lot of our truck traffic.

"It has eliminated about 90 per cent of our truck traffic and almost 90 per cent of our trailers were have to unhook. It is time consuming and cumbersome so a lot of the people just drive around."

The new ferry, three times the size of the current ferry, will be able to

direct dock and will carry three times the number of vehicles (21 cars) that the current operation can handle.

While many supported the concept there were concerns about the impact on the Mohr's Landing/Quyon Port Authority which has agreed to help in funding the significant adjustments to the docks on both sides of the Ottawa River.

The port authority, privately run, is required to meet Transport Canada regulations.

The port authority took over the docks in the late 1990s with just under a half million dollars in financing from Transport Canada for maintenance and repairs.

While the meeting was about the environmental impact of the new ferry, many concerns were for the ability to raise the millions of dollar necessary for the ferry and dock reconstruction.

The estimated cost of the new ferry is \$2.3 million and a price tag on the docks is yet to be determined.

Groundwater study in Fitzroy Harbour in 2007

By **TERRY BOLAND**
Review Associate Editor

The city of Ottawa will be undertaking a groundwater characterization study for Fitzroy Harbour this year.

The study will review existing conditions of groundwater, which includes water quality and quality characteristics, in addition to recommending appropriate measures for the sustainability of new development on private water and wastewater services.

The city has retained Trow Associates Inc. to undertake the studies, which also include the villages of Ashton and

Sarsfield.

In order to assess the existing conditions of groundwater aquifers, representatives of the company will be contacting residents directly in the upcoming weeks to participate in the well water sampling program. All samples collected will be sent to a credited laboratory and results will be provided to anyone who chooses to participate in the program.

If you have any specific questions regarding the sampling program, you can call Dan McNicoll from Trow at 613-225-9823, extension 268 or by e-mail at dan.mcnicoll@trow.ca

Contact the Review at 613-623-6571

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