



August 26, 2015

### **Whitewater Ontario Board Votes on Orillia Power Proposal**

Whitewater Ontario's Board of Directors have voted 'Yes' to granting access to Orillia Power for the building requirements of the proposed power generating project should their proposal be approved. This allows OP to proceed with their project application on September 1st, 2015. **WO has not agreed to any other aspects of the project or building requirements other than to enter into discussions with OP on the project details and to determine if a satisfactory agreement around these other aspects can be reached which include but are not limited to location, construction and impact of the build, flow operations, maintenance or improvement of paddling opportunities, and financial compensation.** If OP is not willing to include these conditions in this initial agreement, it will not be signed. If a subsequent agreement cannot be reached that maintains or improves river access, this initial access agreement will be null and void. Similarly, if the township of Minden does not grant OP access to the shoreline allowance abutting their property and WO's property, this access agreement will be null and void.

The WO Board did not come to this decision easily nor was it unanimous. It is fully aware of the varying perspectives of the issue not only among the Board but within Whitewater Ontario itself and the paddling community. The Board has made it clear to Orillia Power that while willing to sign an agreement to grant them access to WO property, we are a long way from agreeing to the proposal and have concerns about the lack of information and high levels of uncertainty about the project. This is not a vote in favour of the project but rather of continuing the conversation and being included in discussions as they move forward. WO will remove itself from the agreement if our concerns are not addressed. It is also important that the members of the paddling community who believed WO should not sign this agreement still have their voices heard, concerns addressed, and ideas considered.

The Board will also be requesting resources to assist WO in consultation activities around agreement negotiations to a) ensure a thorough, complete and timely consultation process, b) engage with other river user groups and stakeholders, c) avoid added burden to an already stretched volunteer base, and d) not detract from the organization's other activities and responsibilities.

As we move forward, Whitewater Ontario's priorities are to 1) protect river access, and 2) ensure that paddling opportunities are maintained or increased. We will continue to assess the implications of the project as more information becomes available and communicate and consult with the paddling community.

Thank you for your input and thoughtful reflections about the Gull River and this project. No matter what one's perspective is on the issue, there are clearly a large number of people who care deeply about the Gull. Questions, comments, and concerns can be sent to [info@whitewaterontario.ca](mailto:info@whitewaterontario.ca). Further details will be forwarded once available.

Jim Tayler  
President