

PSLL NEWS

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Water Study Finds Lakes on the borderline

A scientific water study has found clear evidence our lakes in the Perkins Sur Le Lac domain are slowly loading up with nutrients. The same problem is common to all populated and developed lakes in Canada.

Unless all cottage owners pull together and address some of the sources, the kind of algae blooms that prompted so much discussion at the Annual General Meeting last summer will only become more common.

With a concerted effort by all residents, and with the assistance and support of local government and other associations, we have the opportunity to slow the lake ageing process. Natural lake aging goes faster when humans pollute by allowing too many nutrient chemicals, such as soaps, as well as seepage from old septic fields, into the water.

At last year's general meeting, members overwhelmingly passed a motion to hire a consultant to survey the water quality of Lac Bataille, Lac Rhéaume, and Lac Barnes and advise us on water quality issues. **Dany Boudrias** of Eco-Guide Environnement, Brownsburg, Que., was hired to undertake this study.

The total cost for taking samples, laboratory work and a thorough report was \$4140.90, including federal and provincial goods and service taxes. Mr. Boudrias gathered the samples in August, 2002, and April, 2003, after fall and winter cooling had mixed the lake waters at all levels.

A summary of the study's findings is included as an insert with this newsletter.



President's Message

From Gail Bradshaw

Our quality of life at the lake... Working to maintain it for you!

On behalf of the Executive Committee of Association Perkins-sur-le-lac (PSLL), I would like to pay tribute to our neighbour, friend and colleague, **Simon Veilleux**, who passed away on June 29, 2003. Simon was a dedicated member of the Executive Committee for many years, representing Lac Rhéaume with devotion and good humour. He will be greatly missed. I also wish to thank all PSLL members and members of the executive for their hard work and dedication, especially **David Kerluke**, who devoted so much time and energy to organizing the water study. The Executive Committee commissioned the study by Eco-Guide of Lac Rhéaume, Lac Bataille and Lac Barnes and also participated in the Association of Lake Associations of Val-des-Monts, which successfully lobbied the Municipality to provide resources for septic tank inspections and a public awareness campaign. Please see inside for more details.

This year's Annual General Meeting will be held 9:45 a.m. on July 20 at Lac Bataille Beach. Free BBQ [Rain date, July 27].

Executive Members Quit

Three members of the executive resigned over the decision to award the water-quality study to Eco-Guide.

Gil Boyce of Lac Rhéaume, **Jane Askin** of Lac Chevreuil and **Irma Bigras** of Lac Bataille supported a proposal to award the study to the Centre for Sustainable Watersheds (CSW), based in Portland, Ont., and objected to an executive vote not to recognize an earlier email vote from **Jim Dale** of Lac Rhéaume, who also supported the CSW bid. **David Kerluke** recommended Eco-Guide because of its experience and location in Quebec.

The remaining members of the executive made a ruling to fill Irma's Lac Bataille position with **San Fong**, a runner up in the 2002 elections for the post.

The executive also made a decision that the association constitution prevented **Serge Tremblay** from taking a position on the executive after he and **Irma Bigras** were elected in 2002. He is not the registered owner of his family's lake property. **Hélène Lemieux**, who had placed first after Tremblay, assumed Serge's Lac Bataille position on the executive.

ELECTIONS

Executive Posts to be filled by election or re-election at the July 20 Annual General Meeting:

President, Secretary, Treasurer, Lake Representatives: Lac Bataille, one position; Lac Rhéaume, four positions; Lac Chevreuil, one position; Lac Barnes, one position.

Lac Louise, Lac Corrigan and Lac Maskinongé are also vacant.

What YOU can do to improve our water quality

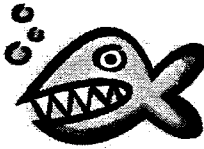
- PLANT as many shrubs and trees as possible in the space between your septic bed and the lake.
- If you have a LAWN down to the lake, add several feet of trees or shrubs at the shoreline. Better yet, let it return to a natural state.
- DO NOT REMOVE any live trees or shrubs from the first 50 feet of lakefront.
- Ensure that EVERY DROP of grey water (i.e. soapy water from drains) goes to your septic system or holding tank. NEVER run these drains into pits or onto the ground.
- NEVER use bagged commercial fertilizer on lawns or gardens anywhere on your property. (Low-grade composts, bone meal, etc. are OK away from the lake).



- Use PHOSPHATE FREE detergents and soaps exclusively.
- NEVER use soap of any kind in the lake, whether for bathing, or washing hair, boats or dogs.
- PICK UP your pet's droppings and dispose in your toilet.
- MINIMIZE the amount of water you use. Either install a low water volume toilet, or flush only when necessary. ("If it's yellow, let it mellow; if it's brown, flush it down.")
- DON'T USE automotive washer fluid or antifreeze in your water system for winterizing. Instead, use anti-freeze specifically made for plumbing systems.
- MINIMIZE the amount of Javex-type, or chlorine-containing cleansers that you use.
- If your SEPTIC bed is very close to the lake (e.g. less than 25 ft.), or if you suspect that it is not functioning properly, consider replacing it with a conforming system.
- ENSURE your boat bilge is empty, and the boat is clean of all weed fragments, after using it in another lake or river.
- NEVER introduce baitfish or water from other lakes.
- DISCUSS all of these recommendations with your neighbours.

BOAT LAUNCH PHONE NUMBERS:

Jacques	671-4302
Paul	671-4090
Hugnette	671-4843
Odette	671-3419
David	671-0249



FISH STOCKING TO RESUME?

Some property owners put in their own stock after association decision last year

Debate to take place again

Following the association's decision at the 2002 annual meeting not to stock Lac Bataille and Lac Rhéaume with rainbow trout for one year at least, some property owners chipped in to stock a small amount of rainbow in Lac Bataille. The executive consulted several essays on fish stocking on the Ontario government web site. The government recommends ecological studies prior to stocking and the selection of fish species, if possible, that were natural to the lake originally. In the case of PSLL, that would not be rainbow trout, which cannot reproduce in the lakes here.

As this year's general meeting approached, secretary Tim Naumetz volunteered to obtain more information from environmental experts.

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE THERE'S A FIRE

Once again last summer, careless supervision of a campfire nearly ended in disaster. Someone left a small fire unattended on the shore of Lac Rhéaume and it spread on and in the ground. Several nearby property owners saved the day damage by dousing the flames that had burned underbrush and bark. Remember, municipal bylaws do not allow open fires without a permit. **Imagine the PSLL domain without a forest!**

WATER STUDY REPORT FOR MEMBERS Get it at the meeting

Treasurer David Hodgkin, a computer whiz, has produced CD-R copies of the full Eco-Guide report to hand out to paid-up PSLL members at the annual general meeting. The report, to this date, is in the French language only, but the executive was hoping to have a translation ready.

IT'S NOT THE ICE STORM, BUT A HYDRO QUEBEC POWER OUTAGE CAN SPOIL THE BUTTER

Lac Barnes executive member Paul Strigner reported loss of groceries and spoiled food due to a power outage in his neighbourhood. At a later

executive meeting, Lac Rhéaume executive member Jim Dale reported that Hydro Québec quickly compensated him a small sum after some of his groceries were left inedible because of an outage. It never hurts to try, should it happen to you. But remember, if you are leaving the cottage for several days or longer, you should always empty out the fridge and make sure the garbage has been taken out.

New boating regulations in force

You don't have to pull the plug on your favourite lake sport But it helps to know the rules

Boaters on our lakes are well known for their good manners and the care they show for other boaters and swimmers. But there are important points the Canadian Coast Guard makes on its web site (ccg-gcc.gc.ca) about how to follow the new boating laws. Some of the main things to remember are:

- All boat operators born after April 1, 1983, must now have a proof of competency card, issued by the Coast Guard, in order to operate any craft fitted with a motor and used for recreation..
- All operators of boats and personal water craft under four metres in length (under 13 feet), including personal watercraft, must have a proof of competency card.
- All boat operators must have a proof of competency card by September 15, 2009.
- Anyone under the age of 12 who is not directly supervised by someone 16 or over cannot operate a boat with more than a 10-hp engine.
- Anyone between 12 and 16 who is not directly supervised cannot operate a boat with an engine more powerful than 40 hp.
- Anyone under the age of 16 is not allowed to operate a personal watercraft.
- There are no motor power restrictions for anyone over the age of 16.
- Always boat safely, watching for others and wearing your life jackets.



Current Executive Members

President: Gail Bradshaw
 Treasurer: David Hodgkin
 Secretary: Tim Naumetz
 Lac Rhéaume Lake Rep: Ron Malis
 Lac Rhéaume Lake Rep: Jim Dale
 Lac Bataille Lake Rep: Héléne Lemieux
 Lac Bataille Lake Rep: David Keriuke
 Lac Barnes Lake Rep: Paul Strigner

SUMMARY of the study of Lac Bataille, Rhéaume and Barnes Summer 2002 / Winter 2003

**Study made by Éco-Guide Environnement
Dany Boudrias, aquatic ecologist**

Following a violent storm on June 11th 2002, the water quality of Lakes Bataille, Rhéaume, and on a lesser degree of Lake Barnes changed dramatically. Especially on Lake Bataille, filamentous algae started to grow and attach on substrate and aquatic plants. This was particularly worrying for the lakeshore residents since these lakes always seemed to have maintained a good water quality before this event. To better understand why algae blooms did occur, Eco-Guide Environment was asked to do a follow-up on the actual status of these three lakes.

Using the standard parameters for determining the Carlson Trophic Status Index of these lakes, we found that Lake Bataille was an oligotrophic lake and that Lakes Rheaume and Barnes were qualified as being mesotrophic. Instead of using the average of results to report a lake status, some specialists use the highest results found as being the actual status of a lake. We prefer using this as an indicator of a lake status in the near future. By doing so, we can observe that phosphorus concentrations were the highest results obtained and could show lesser conditions at all three lakes. Thus, Lake Rhéaume had phosphorus concentrations of a eutrophic lake, Bataille of a mesotrophic lake and Barnes of a highly mesotrophic lake. Because of the sudden change in water quality, particularly for Lake Bataille, we must consider the algae blooms as being a result of a lesser water quality than what is presented when using the Carlson Trophic Status Index. It is not clear if the algae blooms were only the result of the usage of accumulated bottom nutrients from mixing created by the violent storm or from usage of nutrients from storm water (erosion and saturation of septic beds which could leach nutrients to the lake). It is probably the result of both phenomena. [Note: Oligotrophic = low nutrient levels and high oxygen levels; Mesotrophic = transition phase to Eutrophic; Eutrophic = high nutrient levels and lower oxygen levels.]

Although it is still not clear if faulty septic installations could be a major reason for the algae blooms, we must consider this as being a high probability. A study made in 2001 by Eco-Guide Environment on a lake that suddenly changed in water quality, showed that 25% of septic installations on that particular lake were defective. This was a lake that was fully checked by the ministry of environment in the late 80's and where all installations that could have been a problem were changed. This is why we recommend in our report that all septic installations be fully verified by specialists as soon as possible.

Multiple recommendations were presented in the final report. The recommendations touch subjects of interest such as shoreline protection and restoration; better septic installation management including using less water and having stricter rules for septic installations using peat moss as a means for filtration; better water quality sampling procedures; reducing fertilizer use; better beaver dam management; bringing down accumulated phosphorus concentrations in soils by planting trees and bushes between the leaching bed of a septic installation and the shoreline of a lake; better management practices for limiting introduction of exotic and invasive species; and finally we recommend that a shoreline capacity study be made to better understand the differences between water quality changes originated by natural causes vs man induced pollution.



The Association of Lakes of Val-des-Monts

The *Association of Lakes of Val-des-Monts* was formed at the initial Water Quality Day held on July 27th, 2003 at l'Hôtel-sur-le-lac in Saint Pierre. It brings together fourteen (14) lake associations and the *Municipality of Val-des-Monts* as well as our partnership with *La Société de la faune et des parcs du Québec*. Our overarching goal is to develop and implement an action plan and associated strategies for improving the water quality of our lakes. The Lake Associations are as follows:

Bois Francs Lake Association; Brassard Lake Association; Clair Lake Association; Dam Lake Association; Grand Lake Association; McArthur Lake Association; McFee Lake Association; McGlasham and Girard Lake Association; McGregor Lake Association; Perkins-sur-le-lac Lake Association; St. Pierre Lake Association; Trois Lacs Lake Association; L'Association pour la Protection du Lac St. Germain; and le Domaine Saint Antoine.

There are three programs that the *Association of Lakes of Val-des-Monts* have focused upon for this year. Each Program has its specific objectives:

1. To assure the proper functioning of our septic systems and that grey waters are treated via our septic systems;
2. To make our population aware of the urgency to modify certain habits to protect our most important natural resource of this municipality: our water. In this regard, we have recommended a variety of complementary communication tools to instigate within our Val-des-Monts population a sense of pride and a collective will to act and be responsible to protect our environment, and more particularly concern for water quality and to conserve the natural habitat of our shoreline of our watershed; and
3. To oversee the quality of our lake water by measuring the level of phosphorous, the clarity of our water, the pH, calcium and fecal coliforms. In this regard, we have develop and approved a Water Quality Protocol and a corresponding number of tests that all Associations will perform during the Spring of 2003. The Municipality has agreed to communicate the test results to the public.

The Municipality of Val-des-Monts had approved a budget of \$ 80,000. for fiscal year 2003 to fund the Septic System Inspections and the Public Awareness Campaign and we are awaiting the approval of our action plan and specific expenditures for 2003.

I wish to thank everyone for their continued efforts and accomplishments in the last six months and wish to acknowledge the assistance and leadership displayed by our members and by our Mayor, Marc Carrière.

Bernard Lamontagne, President, Lake Associations of Val-des-Monts