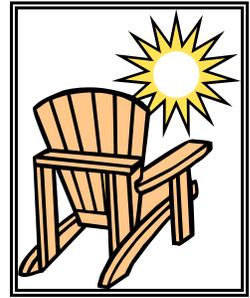


Otterlake News



Website: www.otterlake.cyberus.ca
Email: olla@otterlake.cyberus.ca

Summer Edition
July 2011

OTTER LAKE LANDOWNERS' ASSOCIATION

OLLA - AGM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday July 23, 2011

9:30 a.m.

South Elmsley Hall

(On Hwy 15 at OPP station)

REGISTRATION, COFFEE, TEA & REFRESHMENTS - 9:00 a.m.

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

FOCA REPORT

LAKE REPORT

CALL for DIRECTORS & VOLUNTEERS

PRESENTATION by RON HAHN

ALL OTTER LAKE RESIDENTS ARE WELCOME

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From the President's Desk

Water Water EverywhereAfter a few years of fairly consistent water levels that property owners seemed to be comfortable with, we are again experiencing extremely high levels this spring. As a result we have been receiving complaints ranging from flooded property including septic systems, flooded roads, shoreline erosion, damage to docks and in many cases where owners have not been able to put docks in because water levels are high.

Recently, going back to 2007/2008, RVCA agreed to take on the job of managing Otter Creek and things worked well until they informed us that they were not going to continue on a permanent basis, and would discontinue their program at the end of 2009. OLLA requested that they continue their monitoring until after the spring 2010 run off, and as a result their project ended in early spring 2010. During this period there were no complaints about water levels on Otter Lake for the first time in many years. However, last summer the beavers were again active and dams were in place when the fall rains started in September, causing flooding in some areas by late fall. This spring we received high rainfall accumulations, and the lake continued to rise.

As discussed at the AGM last summer Ron Hahn decided it was time to approach Rudy Dyck at RVCA to see what arrangements could be made to have RVCA continue monitoring the creek to avoid what could be very high levels this spring. Thus in December 2010 the Otter Creek Beaver Management Group was formed, and the Road O9 Association contributed \$1000.00 to a fund for RVCA so that they could continue what they have been doing in the creek for the past couple of years.

Fortunately, this group was formed and monitoring of the creek began in December. However, with snowfalls mixed with mild spells and rains throughout the winter, and a quick melt combined with record rainfalls in April, we are again faced with the current situation of very high water levels in the lake.

Ron will be a speaker at the upcoming AGM on July 25, 2011 to discuss this program further.

Looks like this will once again be a busy and exciting summer at Otter Lake!!!

Marcia Maxwell, President

Voice: 905-829-5645 E-mail: marcia@maxwellenterprises.ca



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Call for OLLA Directors

The OLLA Board of Directors consists of elected representatives with the objective of maintaining and enhancing the well being of our environment and the quality of life on Otter Lake.

At the annual General Meeting (AGM) held in July of each year, vacant Director's positions are filled by a process of nomination and then election by a simple majority of the voting members. Once elected, a Director can serve for up to a three year term before standing for reelection.

As of the writing of this newsletter the Board of Directors consists of:

- | | | |
|----|----------------|-------------------|
| 1. | Marcia Maxwell | President |
| 2. | Carol Schaefer | Secretary |
| 3. | Lisa Baker | Treasurer |
| 4. | Doug Franks | Lake Steward |
| 5. | Ed Wilton | Membership |
| 6. | Jim Nobel | Director at large |
| 7. | Phil Mayhew | Director at large |

At the time of the AGM there will be four (4) openings on the OLLA board and we urgently require assistance to deliver the programs and communication OLLA is committed to (including this newsletter). Please give serious consideration to standing for election at this year's AGM. You can contact any of the directors for further information in advance of the meeting.

Additionally, Phil Mayhew's three year term is ending this year and we are fortunate to have him stand for reelection.

The Importance of Water

We all probably take water pretty much for granted. We just turn on the tap and expect it to be there. We also assume what comes out of that tap is of the highest quality and is suitable for all our needs. However, all that changed following the Walkerton incident in May 2000 when many residents of the small town of about 5,000 began to simultaneously experience bloody diarrhea, gastrointestinal infections and other symptoms of E. coli infection. The water supply for the town became contaminated with the highly dangerous O157:H7 strain of E. coli bacteria, from farm runoff into an adjacent well that was known for years to be vulnerable to contamination. At least seven people died directly from drinking the E. coli contaminated water.

RVCA published a series of short articles on the sources, use and protection of our local water supply leading up to World Water Day on March 22, 2011.

Where does our water come from?

Water appears in many forms in our lives...lakes, rivers, wetlands, groundwater and drinking water among others. Each is important to humans and to many other forms of life which depend on it, and each form of water is linked to all other forms.

Wetlands

Wetlands cover about 15% of our area providing huge benefits in terms of flood reduction, recharge of the underground water for wells, habitat for plants and animals, waste treatment and nutrient recycling. A recent Ontario study calculated that wetlands provide an estimated value of \$247 per person per year in these so-called ecological goods and services. In other words, Mother Nature through wetlands does for free what we would otherwise have to pay millions of dollars to do through technology and infrastructure. When we remove the wetlands, we lose the services.

Lakes

The beautiful Rideau Lakes and many others of Eastern Ontario add huge value and interest to the lives of residents and visitors alike. All of the recreational pursuits suitable to lakes (fishing, boating, birding, swimming) are healthy antidotes to the high stress of our urban lives. The tourism value of the lakes creates millions of dollars in revenue for the municipalities and the businesses in the area. Lakes occupy less than 5% of the local landscape but remain as one of the most memorable and sought-after places for vacations and, increasingly, retirement living.

Rivers/streams

The rivers, streams and creeks that make up the drainage pattern of the area is under stress. People tend to clear cut or harden the banks of small local streams under the mistaken impression that these watercourses are of little value. In fact, the tissue of small tributary feeder streams to the Mississippi, Rideau or Ottawa Rivers can easily be 30 times longer than the main rivers themselves! And research shows us that these tributaries are often in poorer environmental health. Taking care of the “tribs” is often the first course of action in taking care of the big rivers.

Groundwater

Studies show that about 17% of the people in the Mississippi and Rideau watersheds (over 140,000 people) rely on groundwater and wells as their daily source of household water. Groundwater is vulnerable to whatever type of activity is happening on the ground surface above. It becomes important to know and protect the areas around the well head from storage, use and spills of hazardous materials. Groundwater also flows eventually into rivers and streams keeping up the supply of surface water even during surface droughts and extended hot weather.

Drinking water

This one's fairly obvious. Canadians use a whopping 300+ litres of freshwater each and every day for domestic purposes such as drinking, cooking, toilet flushing and washing. Drinking water is one of the smallest portions of our local water use (less than 1% of the available water in the valley) but is certainly the most important. Celebrating and protecting water for its essential value to our way of life is a little self-serving but it does get the job done. If we do it for ourselves and our families, our entire environmental, social and economic systems will benefit too.

How much water do we have?

Eastern Ontario is blessed with a sufficient quantity of good quality water to do most everything we want to do ... it is a liquid legacy that is the envy of the world. While we

sometimes experience local gaps in supply or quality at certain times of the year or as a result of particular man-made events, we generally have plenty of water for our needs. However, with our abundant water comes a responsibility not to waste it so we can ensure there is enough for fish, wildlife, instream needs and for future generations.

How much water we get and where it goes in the watershed is known as the water budget. In our area, we have traditionally received an average of 912 mm of water a year as rain and snow. An astonishing 547 mm of that (60%) is very quickly lost back to the atmosphere either through evaporation or humidity after being used by plants. That leaves 40% or about 365 mm to flow through the valley as lakes, streams and groundwater to be used by animals and people in various ways.

Wetlands: About 13% of the Rideau and Mississippi watersheds are covered by marshes, swamps, bogs and fens. These wetlands provide many valuable ecological services to the people of the valley such as flood reduction, wildlife habitat, erosion protection, water cleansing and groundwater recharge.

Lakes/Rivers/Streams: The beautiful surface waters of the Mississippi and Rideau valleys provide other valuable products and services for people. These include residential sites, recreation of many kinds, fish and wildlife and a lot of peace and quiet. Surface water made up of lakes, rivers and streams is estimated to cover about 7% of the local land mass. Combined with the estimated 13% covered by wetlands means about 20% of our region is water! This is much greater than most other areas of the world.

Groundwater: Only 10% of our rain and snow makes its way down through the soil to replenish our underground water sources (aquifers). In the Mississippi and Rideau watersheds, groundwater is critical to the nearly 140,000 people who rely entirely on wells for their daily potable water. Fortunately, scientists tell us that there is much more water underground than we see on the surface. While there seems to be plenty of local groundwater, we can experience periodic shortages due to seasonal or man-made fluctuations.

Drinking water: Drinking water use (both from municipal systems and private wells) accounts for less than 1% of the total amount of water available in our area. Agriculture and industry use even less than that.

In the end, our demand is fairly low in relation to the amount of water available in Eastern Ontario. Supply however can vary from day to day, month to month and year to year depending on weather, climate, land cover and human uses or abuses. Canadians are among the heaviest water users in the world with each of us using 300+ litres of water each day! Even in our region it is good practice to use water wisely so we can keep our supply and demand balanced for years to come. This balance is critical for the health and well-being of our watershed residents.



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Where are the Loons of Otter Lake

Introduction

Why are so many people captivated by the call of a loon? Perhaps it has a prehistoric ring. Loon ancestors arrived on this planet some 60 million years ago, and the loon we know today has existed for 10 million years! Their long heritage may be one reason why loons have mostly solid bones (birds generally have lighter, hollow bones). Solid bones allow loons to dive to great depths - up to 60 meters - with ease. With their place near the top of the food chain, loons are long-lived (up to 30 years) and don't produce many young, laying only 2-3 eggs per year. Loons are very clumsy on land because their feet are placed too far back on their body for balanced walking. But they love water and are graceful swimmers, perfectly designed to dive for their favourite food - small fish.

Five species of loon exist in the world today - Common Loon, Yellow-billed Loon, Red-throated Loon, Arctic Loon, and Pacific Loon. Most of us are familiar with the Common Loon, because it spends the summer on lakes across Canada. In fact, more than 80% of the world's Common Loons nest in Canada. The summer range of other loons occurs in British Columbia and further north, into the Arctic. Loons are migratory, and when winter approaches, they head for the coasts to open water. Loons can be found wintering along the coast of Maine through to the Gulf of Mexico, and from the Gulf of Alaska to Baja, California. They typically return to the same lake each year to breed. Anyone who has listened to their wild call echoing across a tranquil northern lake can appreciate how the Common Loon has become a much-loved wilderness symbol. The loon has a special place in the hearts of many lakeside residents and visitors, and is deeply missed in its absence.

Canadian Lakes Loon Survey

The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey (CLLS) was first initiated in Ontario in 1981 to assess the long-term health and productivity of Common Loons, and the lakes they depend on. Loons breed on lakes throughout most of Canada, and as top predators, their survival reflects broader lake health. Each year, hundreds of volunteer participants spend time observing loons on lakes where they breed in Canada: at least once in June (for loon pairs), once in July (for newly hatched chicks), and once in August (for young that survive to fledge). This information is used to monitor loon chick survival over time, and is an important indicator of loon and lake health. Educating lake users and residents is the most effective safeguard for loon populations in Canada. Educational materials about loons and loon-friendly activities are distributed through the CLLS to cottage associations, schools, and the general public. Talks are given to cottage associations and local, volunteer "Loon Ambassadors" help spread the message of loon-friendly lakes.

This year OLLA is participating in CLLS. It would appear that even though Otter Lake probably accommodates around 5 loon pairs, over the past few years our loons do not seem to be having much success in producing young. This may be the result of our fluctuating water levels in the spring, which is the time of year that loons begin nesting. If a loon's nest becomes flooded after they have laid their eggs, the eggs will be lost and loons usually only nest once a year. Also if water levels drop after loons have nested, they will often abandon the nest because it becomes too difficult for the loons to reach the nest. In an attempt to make life easier for our loons OLLA is planning to construct some loon nesting platforms. These platforms float and can therefore adjust to sudden water level changes and provide an

alternative nesting site where shoreline development or other factors displaces loons from traditional locations.

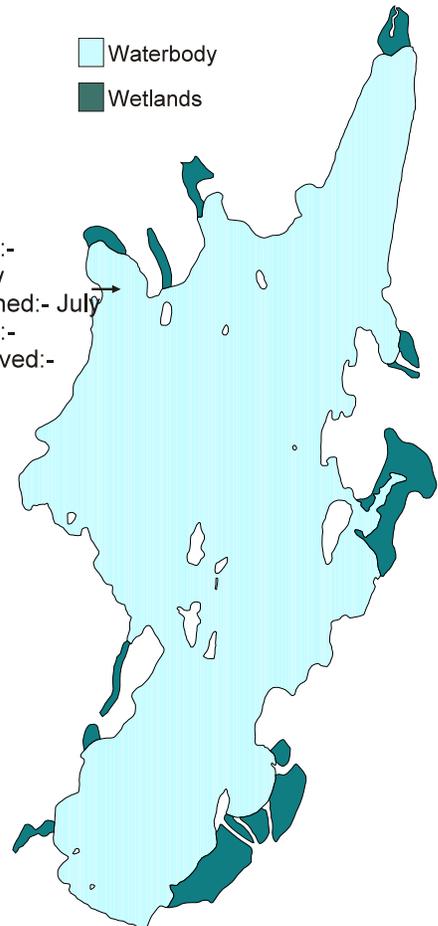
Building and placing nest platforms is labour-intensive so OLLA first needs to know where our loons are on the lake and how successful they are at producing young. If there is a loon pair living in your part of the lake please let OLLA know when you first saw them, where they are and when you think they may have nested. It is not necessary to know the nest location but if you have a good idea where it is, let us know that too. We also want to know if the loons are successful in producing chicks so let us know as soon as you see the adults with young. Loon chicks generally hatch around the end of June or early July and the newly hatched chicks are usually transported on the backs of the adults for a week or so before they begin swimming on their own. Young chicks cannot dive (they are too light) so their parents will do the diving and then feed the chicks their "catch". The kind of information we are looking for is shown on the Otter Lake map on the right.

Please forward the above and any other interesting loon related information you may have to:-

Doug Franks
 Lake Steward
 Otter Lake Landowners Association (OLLA)
 R.R. #1, Lombardy, ON
 K0G 1L0

email: djfranks@otterlake.cyberus.ca

1 Loon Pair
 First sighted:-
 Nested:-May
 Chicks hatched:- July
 No of chicks:-
 Chicks survived:-



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Announcing
The 2011 OLLA

20th Annual General Meeting
To be held on Saturday the 23rd of July 2011

09:30 a.m. sharp

at the old South Elmsley Town Hall
441 Highway 15, Smiths Falls.

Bring a neighbour

Proxy

Name _____

Of Civic # or address _____

Nominate: _____

To cast a vote on my behalf at the OLLA
AGM on the 23 July 2011

Signature _____

Otter Lake Landowners' Association

Membership Form 2011
For Otter Lake property owners.

This is an invitation to all landowners on Otter Lake to become members, or to renew their membership in the association. Your membership is important and helps to meet the cost of monitoring the water quality with the associated laboratory fees, as well as other quality – related lake issues. It also contributes to maintaining OLLA's membership in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) that looks after cottagers and landowner's interests at Queens Park and the scientific Community. In addition, University Studies in the US have shown that a strong Lake Association enhances and maintains property values.

Our annual membership has remained unchanged for several years, and still is only \$30.-

A small price to help keep Otter Lake a viable resource for generations to come.

This is a New Membership.....or Renewal (2011).....

Name(s) of Owner(s).....

Mailing
address:.....

Road and Cottage number, or civic number.....

Telephone Numbers:
at the lake:.....Residence.....

Your e-mail address:.....

Amount enclosed: \$ 30.00
Please return to:
Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA)
#30 - O10, R.R. # 1
Lombardy, ON
K0G 1L0

Or in person at the AGM on July 23, 2011

Thank you for your support