



# Otter Lake News



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Spring 2018

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## IN THIS ISSUE:

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK.....	1
EUROPEAN FROGBIT .....	1
UPDATE ON OTTER CREEK CULVERT INVESTIGATION ...	2
FINAL SEPTIC SURVEY REPORT AVAILABLE NOW .....	2
SOCIAL & RECREATIONAL EVENTS.....	3
OUR CORPORATE SPONSORS .....	4
2018 MEMBERSHIP FORM.....	5

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

*By Marcia Maxwell*

As I begin to prepare this message for our spring newsletter the winter season at Otter Lake is slowly coming to an end and with Easter arriving early in April this year; will that bring an early spring – time will tell. The lake froze over on December 27th one of the earliest dates in recent years typically it is into January before we get freeze up. Right now it is not showing any signs of breaking up, which is good as it is during the ice coverage period that the lake rejuvenates itself.

There will be a few changes in our activities this year; one is that we will not be hosting a Family Day Picnic in June at Camp Otterdale, as we have in the last few years. You may also notice a new look to our website as it is being updated and some of the pages are still under construction – so keep checking. We will be, as usual, holding our AGM at the end of July on the 28th and there will be more information about it in our next newsletter.

There are still concerns regarding the European Frogbit an invasive aquatic species that has been discovered in Otter Lake in the past couple of years. As highlighted in our fall newsletter Judy Hodgins reported on the efforts that are being taken to

prevent this spreading any further into the lake so please consider helping with this project this summer. Also, as June Finless reported in her article in our last newsletter; the brush bundles that were placed in the lake to enhance the fish habitat and what it was all about. Now, through the spring and summer we will be monitoring those locations to see how the bundles survived the winter and how the fish and loons are reacting to this new environment created for them. Then again, in the fall we will be placing a few more at specific locations around the lake.

Looking forward to a fantastic summer!

## European Frogbit

*Submitted by Judy Hodgins*

*Chair, Aquatic Plants Sub-Committee*



Our efforts to eradicate European Frogbit from Otter Lake will continue this summer. In partnership with the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, an application for funding to hire a summer student to provide a set number of hours to work with us on education, removal and research was

submitted to the Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters. The outcome of this application will not be known until May. With or without the assistance of a summer student, volunteers are needed to help remove this invasive aquatic plant from our lake. Please consider putting your name forward as a volunteer to help with this project by email to [FrogbitHelp@bell.net](mailto:FrogbitHelp@bell.net). Dates for harvesting the

Frogbit are selected based on weather so volunteers would be notified a few days prior and can at that time affirm or decline their availability to help on specific dates.

*Note: An article on European Frogbit appeared in the Fall 2017 OLLA Newsletter, which will be available on the OLLA website [www.otterlake.org](http://www.otterlake.org) once the website renovation is completed.*

## **Update on Otter Creek Culvert Investigation**

*Submitted by Shelley Dunlop  
OLLA Treasurer and Membership*

For those on the OLLA email list, there was an opportunity to complete a survey in November 2017 about your views on the possible replacement of the culvert where Otter Creek crosses underneath Otter Lake Road. The survey also asked for your views on beaver management in the upper reaches of the creek for the purpose of reducing spring flood risk. Although previous member surveys were made available, more detailed information was requested by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority which is the approving body. Details were summarized in an email report to the membership in December, then passed on to the Municipal Services Committee of the Township of Rideau Lakes and, to the RVCA, and to the 4 Councillors representing residents of the lake community.

After some dialogue over the winter, Council has given direction to undertake an engineering assessment on the effects of replacing the culvert with another culvert or bridge. The Township is selecting Coldwater Consulting of Ottawa for this work. Mike Dwyer, the CAO for the Township, reached out to OLLA to ask our opinion on this, and we offered no objections. There will be a Technical Advisory Committee struck to monitor the project and Lake Steward Doug Franks and Government Liaison Karl Fiander were offered to the Township as OLLA representatives.

Once the investigation moves forward there will be opportunities for community engagement which may include a separate website, surveys, and public meetings. As information is available, OLLA will

update members and non-members alike through periodic email blasts.

If you missed the summary report sent in December or you would like your email address added to the list please email Shelley Dunlop, OLLA Treasurer and Membership, at [esdunlop54@gmail.com](mailto:esdunlop54@gmail.com). The intent is to make an informed decision on any changes made at the culvert and the RVCA and Township will be asking for robust consultation with the lake community.

*Save the date!  
OLLA Annual General Meeting  
July 28, 2018*

## **Final Septic Survey Report Available Now**

*Submitted by Karl Fiander  
Lake Plan Committee*

The Otter Lake Sustainable Lake Plan outlined several action items to be completed over time including conducting a survey of existing on-site treatment systems servicing waterfront homes and cottages. While conducting the fieldwork, an information package was delivered to each resident. This package included 'SEPTIC SMART' brochures distributed by the RVCA Septic Office and outlines best practices for system maintenance and a description of advanced treatment units available for those considering improvements or new construction. To the extent possible, questions were asked directly of property owners about the age and system design. Communication was also completed by phone and email. During the field work, biophysical site scores for the surrounding area between the septic system and the waterfront were estimated using the method created by Michalski and Usher (1992) and still used by RVCA during development applications. This was done to evaluate any risk factors for septic system performance and also to compare the data from the Watersheds Canada Shoreline Assessment Summary Report produced in July 2016.

There were 266 residential units surveyed which represent the number of cottages and homes on all private roads servicing the lake. Residential system

units are regulated by the Ontario Ministry of Housing under part 8 of the Ontario Building Code and these systems are approved and inspected by the municipality. There are 5 commercial properties with approximately 229 trailers and cabins usually combined with at least one or more residences. These systems are governed by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment regulations for systems over 10,000 litres per day, and they are not included in this report.

Class 4 systems = septic tank + leaching bed	86%
Class 5 systems = holding tanks	8%
Class 4 systems + advanced treatment units (Waterloo etc)	5%
Outhouse or composting toilet only	1%

The Biophysical site scores indicated that approximately 56% of the land around the lake scores higher than 20 which indicates a higher risk for contamination of lake water. Risk factors include slope, thin soil, and poor soil texture but in 48% of cases, inadequate vegetative buffers were noted. Watersheds Canada reported that 52% of the shoreline was degraded or developed (they recommend no more than 25%) so this survey reinforces the data reported previously.

For the full report including recommendations, please visit the OLLA website at [www.otterlake.org](http://www.otterlake.org).

## Social & Recreational Events

*Submitted by Judy Hodgins*

*Chair, Social & Recreation Sub-Committee*

Who doesn't have items at the lake they no longer use or have a need for items to enhance life at the lake? As a community service, a "dock sale" is being organized from 9 am to 3 pm on Saturday, August 11, with a rain date of Sunday, August 12. A "dock sale" is a yard sale that is held on your dock. Notices will be posted on every private road around Otter Lake to advertise the event. Information will also be posted on the OLLA website and Facebook page. To participate all you need to do is fly a white flag at the end of your dock (any white piece of fabric will do) that will indicate you have stuff to sell. If any of your items are too large

to bring down to the dock, you may wish to have pictures available so that interested buyers could then come ashore or later drive over to view the item(s).



As mentioned in the President's Message, the OLLA Family Day Picnic at Camp Otterdale will not be held this year. To continue fostering a sense of community, we are looking into organizing alternate events on the lake next year: 1) "boatilla" – a parade of boats that could be decorated if desired, and 2) canoe and kayak races. As part of these events a fund raising aspect may be incorporated, possibly collecting donations for a local food bank. The events would be held on a Saturday (or Sunday due to inclement weather), likely on a weekend in August. To assist in planning, it would be very helpful if all residents of Otter Lake would send an email to [OtterLakeEvents@bell.net](mailto:OtterLakeEvents@bell.net) indicating if they would be interested in participating in either or both of these events. Your feedback and enthusiasm is appreciated!



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# Otter Lake Landowners' Association

## 2018 Membership Form

This is an invitation to all landowners on Otter Lake to become members, or to renew their YEARLY membership in the Association. Your membership is important and helps meet the cost of monitoring the water quality, associated laboratory fees, as well as other water quality-related concerns. Membership also provides access to all the resources of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA).

Our annual membership fee remains at \$30.

This is a New Membership..... or renewal.....(2018)

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

Mailing address:.....

.....

Road and Cottage/House number: .....

Telephone: Lake:..... Residence: .....

**E-mail address:**.....

Please send me the OLLA Newsletter by email: Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Please send me the FOCA Newsletter by email: Yes \_\_\_ No\_\_\_

Some members have requested to pay their dues for more than one year at a time:

Number of years:..... Amount enclosed @ \$30/year:.....

I would like to make an additional donation to OLLA! For 2018, donations we receive will go towards the Sustainable Lake Plan project to eradicate invasive aquatic plants, like Frog-bit.

Donation to Frog-bit & Invasive Species Eradication Project: \$.....

Please return to the address below or give directly to one of the OLLA executive:

**Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA)**

**#32 - O10, R.R. # 1, Lombardy, ON K0G 1L0**

Thank you for your support