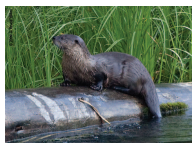


Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA) Inc.



Otterlake News



Website:
Email:

www.otterlake.org
postmaster@otterlake.org

June 2015

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

My name is Randy Hodgins and the Board of Directors has elected me to the position of President (the former President, Phil Mayhew, has resigned as he sold his home on Otter Lake). I have been on the lake for 14 years and live here full time. I have been a Director with OLLA for three years. It is my intention to carry on the good work of my predecessors and serve the members in the best way possible.

The Sustainable Lake Plan Committee, with Laurence Beaulieu as Chair, has spent hundreds of hours over the winter and we now have a draft of the Sustainable

Lake Plan. It was submitted to the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) for comment and will be presented at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) this July. I want to thank Laurence and all the committee members – Marcia, June, Judy, Karl and Shelley – for their tireless effort. This wouldn't have happened without them! An idea was conceived at one of their meetings to have a picnic on June 7th to initially present the Lake Plan and garner feedback. There is a separate article in this newsletter on the picnic.

Starting in June 2015, Watersheds Canada will be conducting a shoreline assessment of all properties on our lake. Please read the separate article in this newsletter for more information. The OLLA AGM will take place on July 25 at the South Elmsley Hall. Along with presenting and voting on the Lake Plan, we will have an election of Board members as there are a few openings and several positions are up for renewal. As a reminder, your annual membership must be up-to-date in order to vote or stand for election. If you would like to join the Board of Directors, or just want further information, please contact me or any Director at the email address above or come prepared to submit your name at the AGM.

Just a quick word about water levels. As you have likely noticed, the water is lower than usual for this time of year. The RVCA had an article in the Ottawa Citizen recently stating that our area may be looking at drought conditions this summer due to lack of snow, dry snow and that much of the snow evaporated rather than melting and filling creeks, streams, etc. Also, as of the end of May, we had received significantly less rainfall than normal.

I encourage everyone to attend the AGM and I look forward to meeting you.

Stay safe this summer!

Randy Hodgins

613-283-7134 or randyhodginskal@hotmail.com ☺

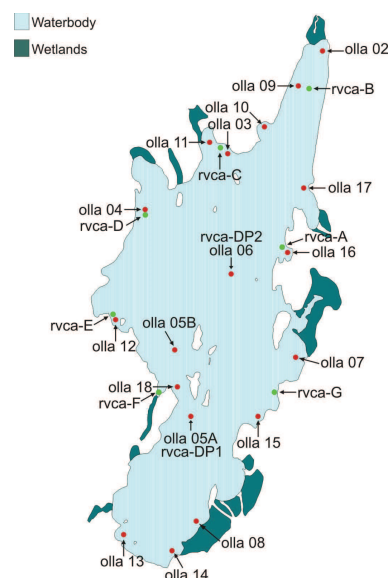
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LAKE STEWARD'S REPORT - 2015

Water quality testing is an important diagnostic tool to help residents of Otter Lake determine the health of the lake. We need early warnings to predict important changes in the lake's ecological process. By systematic testing and monitoring over time, it is possible to evaluate if water quality is improving or declining. By selective testing at strategic sites, water quality indicators can help determine the source or cause of contamination. The ecological and trophic status of a lake is generally determined by the levels of nutrients it contains.

As in previous years, OLLA is fortunate to have the assistance of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) in testing the water quality of Otter Lake. Thanks are due to Sarah MacLeod, and her qualified team of technologists for allowing us to include their data. Both RVCA and OLLA test at least 3 to 4 times per year at different sites. The map on the right shows the location of all our test sites.



The table below shows the results of the water quality testing performed in 2014 by OLLA and RVCA. *E. coli* levels were low or undetectable at all sites except at OLLA 07 in May. Site OLLA 07 is close to Barker's Creek, the major inflow into the lake and high *E. coli* levels at this site are not uncommon since Barker's Creek drains an extensive wetland and farming area west of Highway 15. *E. coli* was not detectable when site OLLA 07 was retested in June, 2014. Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen levels were generally in the acceptable range of between 200 - 500 µg/L at all sites tested. Phosphorous levels were all between 5 µg/L and 15 µg/L except for a very high reading at site OLLA 04 in May, which was probably an analysis error.

Water Quality Test Results - 2014 (OLLA + RVCA)																
RVCA ID	OLLA ID	E. Coli (cfu/100 ml)			Total Kjeldahl nitrogen (µg/l)				Total Phosphorous (µg/l)				Secchi Disk (meters)			
		Jun	Jul	Aug	May	Jul	Aug	Oct	May	Jul	Aug	Oct	May	Jul	Aug	Oct
	OLLA 02															
RVL-26C	OLLA 03		2	2		470	500			14	6					
RVL-26D	OLLA 04	0			290	470			39	11						
RVL-26DP1	OLLA 05A				620		480	400	8		5	10	6.25	4.25	4.75	5.50
	OLLA 05B															
RVL-26DP3	OLLA 06				430	430	470		10	22	6		7.45		5.50	5.25
	OLLA 07	50	0		480	480			13	12						
	OLLA 08															
RVL-26B	OLLA 09		2	2	510	470	460			13	5					
	OLLA10				550				18							
	OLLA 11															
RVL-26E	OLLA 12				340	490			11	10						
	OLLA 13					420				9						
	OLLA 14															
	OLLA 15															
RVL-26A	OLLA 16															
	OLLA 17					560				12						
RVL-26F	OLLA 18		2	2		440	480			13	6					
Average		1.50			476.96				10.11				5.56			
Std. Error		0.35			31.06				0.77				0.39			

A reading of 22 µg/L was obtained by RVCA at site OLLA 06 in July, but this was a deep water sample and may have contained bottom sediment which would be rich in phosphorous. Secchi depth readings were generally between 4 and 7 metres indicating that the lake remains very clear. Increased water clarity means that sunlight can penetrate more deeply; this often results

in algae blooms over the summer months, however there were no really significant algae blooms last summer. Therefore, with an average phosphorous level of 10 µg/L and an average Secchi depth of 5.5 metres, the lake remains on the borderline between oligotrophic and mesotrophic. The low *E. coli* values at virtually all sites tested indicate that the overall health of the lake is excellent. Only one round of sampling has been done so far in 2015, so it is too early to make any predictions for this year, however the results obtained appear to be similar to last year.

Water levels might become a concern in 2015. The "ice off" for Otter Lake this year occurred on April 21. While we had a significant amount of snow on the ground in March, which melted quite slowly (unlike last year), the snow was very dry with little water content. There was very little rain in April and May so that our Spring "high" water level was modest, more than a foot lower than last year. In fact, RVCA issued the following drought condition warning in April:

"To the end of April, the three month precipitation totals recorded at climate monitoring stations in and around the Rideau River watershed were in the order of 65% of normal. Rainfall in July and August, 2014, were above normal. However, monthly precipitation totals started to decline in September with drought conditions (80% of normal precipitation) beginning in mid-November and persisting to the present."

This June RVCA stated that drought conditions still persisted throughout the Rideau Valley watershed. Thus, if we have another hot dry summer, Otter Lake could see some very low water levels by September. The current water level is what we would expect to see in late July or early August.

LOON UPDATE

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 on which they depend. Loons breed on lakes throughout most of Canada, and 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 to cottage associations, schools, and the general public. Local volunteer "Loon Ambassadors" help spread the message of loon-friendly lakes.

Otter Lake is "home" to between 3 and 5 loon pairs during the summer months. In 2011 and 2012 our loons did not fair well in successfully producing chicks. In 2011 only 2 loon pairs were successful in producing chicks even though they nested in late May. In 2012 none of our loon pairs was successful in producing chicks even though all of the loon pairs appeared to nest. It may be the result of our fluctuating water levels, since if a loon's nest becomes flooded after they have laid their eggs, the eggs will be lost. (Loons only nest once a year.) By contrast, if water levels drop after loons have nested, they will often abandon the nest because it becomes too difficult for the loons to reach it. Therefore, in 2012 OLLA installed 2 loon nest platforms in locations where we know the loons usually nest. While there was no clear evidence that the loons used these platforms, in 2013 and 2014 our loons were much more successful in producing chicks than they were previously. In 2014, 2 of our loon pairs hatched

2 chicks in early July and a third pair hatched 1 chick. A fourth pair who nested on one of our many islands had a nest with 2 eggs, but the nest was raided by a raccoon!

Overall, Otter Lake loons seem to be doing much better. This year we again have 4 or 5 loon pairs on the lake and all of them appear to have nested. So when you are out on the lake in early July keep a look out for loon pairs with fluffy little chicks following behind or being transported on their parent's back. Please report any sightings to OLLA at: (postmaster@otterlake.org).

Doug Franks
Lake Steward

OTTER LAKE SUSTAINABLE LAKE PLAN UPDATE

The **Sustainable Lake Plan** Committee has been extremely busy the past three months and has successfully prepared a final draft of the Sustainable Lake Plan document for presentation at the OLLA AGM on July 25th, for approval.

The draft **Sustainable Lake Plan** received unanimous endorsement from 100 people from the community who attended the June 7, 2015 presentation at the OLLA family picnic at Camp Otterdale.

During the development of the **Lake Plan**, the Committee issued a community survey to obtain input on community values and gathered feedback from the OLLA Board of Directors and six representatives of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA). In addition to detailed feedback from RVCA, they made the following statement of support:

"Overall, staff felt this is a very well-developed lake plan - excellent work! A lot of time, effort and thought has clearly gone into pulling this plan together - congratulations to the Lake Planning Committee for the work completed to date!"

Prior to the OLLA AGM, there are plans to socialize the **Sustainable Lake Plan** with Township planners and councillors.

The committee held the kick-off meeting on March 1, 2015, and since then have spent hundreds of hours preparing materials, exchanging email, and working and reviewing meetings. In addition to the work on the **Sustainable Lake Plan**, considerable progress has also been made on enhancing a key reference document, the **State of the Lake Report**, which contains historical and factual data gathered from government agencies, commercial operators and residents.

Thank you to all the individuals who have indicated interest in volunteering to help with the **Sustainable Lake Plan**! This is the community support needed for a successful **Sustainable Lake Plan**. We will contact you once the **Lake Plan** has been approved by OLLA (at the July 25th AGM) and work begins on the 19 objectives and 79 action items.

Thank you to Shelley Dunlop, Karl Fiander, June Finless, Judy Hodgins, and Marcia Maxwell for their hard work and excellent progress on the **Sustainable Lake Plan**, **State of the Lake Report** and the **Action Plan Status Summary**.

Laurence Beaulieu
Chair of the **Sustainable Lake Plan** Committee

OTTER LAKE - SUSTAINABLE LAKE PLAN QUESTIONNAIRE

Prior to the creation of the **Sustainable Lake Plan**, a questionnaire was mailed to all known addresses of property owners on the lake. Returned responses influenced the direction of the Lake Plan Committee.

Of the 295 surveys mailed out, 107 responses were received, representing a response level of over 36%. Of the 107 replies, 37 were primary residents, 68 seasonal residents and 2 business owners.

The top 3 responses for each question.

1. Please rate how the following characteristics add to your personal enjoyment of the lake?

Very Important!

Water Quality: 94.39%

Swimming: 70.09%

Peace & Quiet: 60.75%

2. During the past 5 years how much negative impact have the following issues and concerns had on the enjoyment of your property?

Significant Impact!

Algae & Aquatic Plants: 31.78%

Power Boat Traffic: 16.82%

Excessive Lights & Towers: 4.67%

3. Please identify the top 3 actions you believe should be taken to preserve and enhance our lake for future generations?

Rated First!

Nutrient Runoff Control: 42.99%

Shoreline Preservation: 26.17%

Development Control: 25.23%

4. To improve or preserve water quality I would support the following activities:

Water testing: 94.39%

Limit fertilizer use in the Watershed: 83.18%

Mandatory septic inspection: 72.90%

OLLA FAMILY PICNIC – JUNE 7, 2015

An idea born from a meeting of the **Sustainable Lake Plan** Committee resulted in the first OLLA Family Picnic, held on Sunday, June 7th at Camp Otterdale. The weather was perfect for a picnic and approximately 100 people attended.

The primary purpose of this event was to present a draft of the newly-developed **Sustainable Lake Plan** and to garner feedback. Information was also presented on the 2015 **Shoreline Assessment Program—LOVE YOUR LAKE**. As a result of the survey mailed to all landowners, information was collected on what issues mattered most and we now have 29 people who have volunteered to help with the **Lake Plan**.

Other reasons for the OLLA Family Picnic were to create a sense of community and provide an opportunity to meet and talk to fellow residents. Camp Otterdale offered its facility as a venue, provided activities for the kids, and conducted tours of Camp Otterdale. Rideau Lumber/Home Hardware sponsored the hot dogs and donated prizes for the raffle; Rideau Heartland Realty provided drinks and chips as well as donated prizes of four 18-hole golf passes for the Perth Golf & Country Club; and Eastern Ontario Dock & Marine also donated prizes. Raffle tickets were sold for the prizes with the \$182.00 that was raised being donated to the “Send a Kid to Camp” fund.

Evaluation forms were distributed at the end of the picnic. The consensus was that the picnic was worthwhile and they would like to attend again next year. A summary of the comments from the evaluation forms will be posted on the OLLA website (www.otterlake.org).

Thanks to all who attended and the volunteers and sponsors who made it happen.

What a great day it was!



WATERSHED SHORELINE ASSESSMENT

Watersheds Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Federation have developed a joint shoreline assessment program, *Love Your Lake*, and we have been invited to take part. This program receives support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Rogers Foundation and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. To date, over 9,500 properties have been surveyed. Typically, 17 lakes in 5 different regions in Ontario are surveyed each year. In the last two years some of the lakes assessed were Otty Lake, Farren Lake, Upper Rideau and Sharbot Lake. Otter Lake will be surveyed this summer.

The *Love Your Lake* program provides a packaged shoreline assessment and educational stewardship program. Its sole purpose is to provide accurate and current state-of-the-lake data. It includes recommendations to individual landowners on how to improve shorelines and lake health.

There are four things to remember about this program:

1. **It is free.** The landowner does not have to spend any money. OLLA will make a nominal donation on your behalf. The Directors will also supply the boats for the survey team.
2. **There is no obligation.** This assessment is advisory only. It may recommend various voluntary actions but they are NOT mandatory or enforced. For example, if you have problems with erosion, they may suggest several ways of stopping or slowing the erosion.
3. **It is confidential.** You will receive a special code to access your personal report online. You cannot see your neighbours' reports and they cannot see yours. All survey staff sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement. They are NOT looking for permit infractions. The goal is strictly educational and non-regulatory.
4. **Privacy.** The survey team will NOT set foot on your property. They may come within a few meters of the shore, but will NOT get out of the boat. They will take a picture to be included with your report. The pictures respect your privacy and will not have any identifiable information such as location, address or people included.

For more information, please visit www.loveyourlake.ca.

BOATING TIPS AND REFERENCES

A copy of the complete “**Safe Boating Guide**” is available on the Transport Canada website (link below) or in various recreational and boating stores.

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety/debs-obs-menu-1362.htm>

The Guide is nearly 80 pages in length, which means many of us may not have taken the time to read through it. The OLLA Board of Directors felt all Otter Lake boaters could benefit from a few of its highlights. If you agree, we will continue to include similar tips and recommendations in future issues. Please provide your feedback, as well as topics you would like to see covered.

Pleasure Craft Operator Card

Everyone who operates a power-driven boat in Canada needs proof of competency that shows you understand the rules of the water and how to safely operate a boat. This proof of competency is your Pleasure Craft Operator Card.

Remember it is not sufficient to just carry your Operator Card. When heading out in your motorized boat make sure to bring on board:

- Pleasure Craft Operator Card
- Personal identification
- Pleasure craft licence (for 10hp or more)

Know Your Water

Everyone knows that when traveling on waters that are marked for navigation it is beneficial to own the appropriate Navigation charts. However, charts are not available for Otter Lake. The best map of Otter Lake we have found is available for Adventure Maps, P.O. Box 255, Bridgenorth Ontario, L0L 1H0 (705-292-6175) for \$9.95. Adventure Maps (link below) are fishing maps and are not intended for navigation. That said, it shows **most** but not all of the rocks and shoals, which can certainly improve your boating experience on Otter Lake.

<http://www.adventurefishingmaps.on.ca/otterlakefishingmap.htm>

Bass Season

By the time you receive this Newsletter bass season will be open (June 20th this year). There are numerous bass spawning beds around the lake and we thank everyone who has resisted the urge to fish these areas for the “easy catch”. Did you know that if you take the protector fish off the spawning bed, even for a few minutes (i.e. a catch-and-release technique), the predators will remove all spawn from the bed, resulting in reduced availability of bass in future years?

FEDERATION OF ONTARIO COTTAGE ASSOCIATIONS (FOCA)

As a member of OLLA you have access to all of the information published by the Federation of Ontario Cottage Associations (FOCA).

This section of our OLLA Newsletter is to highlight the extended benefits FOCA provides. In future Newsletters we will outline current topics FOCA is addressing. For more information on FOCA, access their website at: www.foca.on.ca

FOCA Mission:

To protect thriving and sustainable waterfronts across Ontario.

FOCA Vision:

FOCA will continue to be the pre-eminent Ontario-wide organization representing cottagers and permanent waterfront residents. FOCA will be responsible for promoting vibrant and sustainable waterfront communities through effective communication, education and advocacy. FOCA will:

- Encourage and empower positive **environmental stewardship** by providing information and tools
- Promote and provide leadership for sound **public policy** on key issues
- Align with other **key partners** that support like goals and objectives

Who Supports FOCA? Over 50,000 families in over 500 Cottage/Lake/Road Associations, plus individuals who:

- Care about clean and safe lakes and rivers,
- Are concerned about affordability,
- Treasure family time in cottage country

FOCA issues regular notices which are available to all. The May 2015 FOCA 'Elert' contains the following and is available at: www.foca.on.ca/foca-elert-may-2015 (Note: you may have to cut and past this link into your browser)

- Top 10 Cottage Safety Tips
- Electricity pricing update
- Lake Partner Program results release
- Radioactive Waste storage near the Great Lakes
- Invasive species monitoring tools
- and more...

Otter Lake Landowners' Association
Annual General Meeting: Saturday July 25, 2015

South Elmsley Hall
441 Highway 15 (Adjacent to the OPP station)

Registration, coffee, tea and timbits 9:00 a.m.
MEETING WILL COMMENCE AT 9:30

AGENDA HIGHLIGHTS

- Sustainable Lake Plan Update
- Lake Steward's Report
- Election of Directors

If you are unable to attend the AGM and would like someone to represent you, please complete the section below and provide it to your delegate. She/he must bring this form to the AGM in order to be recognized as your designate.

VOTING BY PROXY FORM

My First and Last Name: _____

Cottage Number and Road: _____

I designate: _____ to cast a vote
on my behalf at the OLLA AGM on July 25, 2015.

Signature_____

Otter Lake Landowners' Association.

Membership Form 2015

For Otter Lake property owners.

This is an invitation to all landowners on Otter Lake to become members, or to renew their membership your Association. Your membership is important and helps with the cost of monitoring the water quality and 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 Cottage Associations (FOCA), which represents cottagers' and landowners' interests at Queen's Park and in the scientific community.

The Otter Lake Landowners Association (OLLA) is an association of those whose property abuts Otter Lake. OLLA's objectives are simple and straightforward: to maintain the health of Otter Lake by working with local and regional governments, existing road associations, and individual landowners. To increase our effectiveness we need to increase our membership.

Please speak to your neighbours about the benefits of OLLA membership.

**Our annual membership has remained unchanged
and is still only \$30**

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

This is a New Membership or renewal (2015)

Name(s) of Owner(s):

Mailing address:

.....

Road and Cottage number

Telephone Numbers:

at Otter lake: Residence:

Your e-mail address:

Please send me the Newsletter by email: ____ Yes ____ No

Amount enclosed: \$ 30.00

Please return to:

Otter Lake Landowners' Association (OLLA)

#32 - O10, R.R. # 1, Lombardy, ON

K0G 1L0

Or in person at the OLLA AGM on July 25, 2015

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These commercial enterprises have supported the publication of our Newsletter.
Please be generous with your support of their establishments and services.



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