



Otter Lake News



Website:
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Summer 2017

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

As I write this article at the start of June, I should be listening to the waves lapping the shoreline. Instead, I can hear the furnace running once again. The only comforting thing is that we did not suffer the flooding that other residents in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick suffered through.

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We held our 3rd Annual Family Day Picnic at Camp Otterdale on June 04. Although it was not sunny, the rain mostly kept away and it was warm enough. About 50 people listened to speakers cover various topics such as shoreline surveys results, septic systems, invasive species and demonstrations of building fish bundles and bird boxes. Everyone enjoyed the free lunch and comradery.

Through the raffle, we raised \$160 for the Send-A-Kid-To-Camp project. We also received \$70 in donations to be put toward OLLA projects. I would like to thank all of our sponsors and volunteers that helped put this project together.

Lastly, I would like to remind everyone that our next Annual General Meeting will be held on July 29 at the Township offices next to the O.P.P. station on Hwy. #15. There will be two openings for election of Directors and a call for volunteers. There are more details in this newsletter and on our web site.

As the water slowly lowers and the heat slowly rises, I wish you a safe and happy summer. ☺

Randy Hodgins
OLLA President
randyhodginskal@hotmail.com

Shoreline Naturalization

After the 'Love Your Lake' program issued the individual Otter Lake property owners confidential shoreline assessment reports, OLLA received a report containing lake wide data for Otter Lake. The lake report contained a summary of the features observed on the lake as well as a number of voluntary recommended actions that could be taken to protect or restore the shoreline around the lake.

Many of the recommendations identified the benefits of planting native vegetation along shorelines. As an example, *“One important way to improve water quality in lakes and rivers is to ensure that there is a natural buffer of vegetation along the shoreline. It is recommended for the health of a lake that 75% of the shoreline of each property remains natural, leaving 25% for shoreline development opportunity. Working towards keeping 75% of the shoreline of each property in a natural state will greatly benefit the health of the lake.”*

To assist with this Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) offers a Shoreline Naturalization Program that includes:

- Subsidized prices for native shoreline plants
- Complimentary on-site visits with qualified staff that provide simple, cost-effective advice on “how to” protect your shoreline
- Project planning and support including:
 - development of shoreline planting plans and species lists
 - ordering, shipping and handling of plants and tending materials
 - planting advice and/or assistance-- full project management from start to finish
- Shoreline naturalization workshops, talks and project assistance for community or lake groups



For more information regarding this program can be found at:
http://www.rvca.ca/programs/shoreline_naturalization_program/

We encourage you to use your individual property owner report as a resource to learn more about how to best protect your shoreline properties. By maintaining the natural shoreline, and with a few changes, residents of Otter Lake can enjoy the benefits of the lake for years, and generations, to come.

Otter Lake Fish Enhancement Project – Next Step

Since our last newsletter article, RVCA applied for and received our permit from MNRF (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) to install the brush bundles in Otter Lake.

We have also worked with RVCA and Camp Otterdale to schedule the brush bundle building and placement in the lake work session at Camp Otterdale on Friday, September 8, 2017.

We need volunteers!!

Mark your calendars! It is a Friday. I need to know as soon as possible who can help us build and place brush bundles around Otter Lake starting from Camp Otterdale on Sept 8th.

Call, text or email me. June Finless at 613-797-4096 or jfinless@gmail.com



Example of a Submerged Brush Bundle Installation

Nesting Boxes Project

Why Nesting Boxes?

Species of waterfowl and birds that nest in cavities are some of the most threatened birds in North America. Although natural cavities in trees that are created through natural decay, fire or woodpecker excavation are still the best nesting environments for waterfowl and birds, in locations where the availability of naturally occurring cavities have been reduced, nesting boxes are an easy and inexpensive way to provide additional nesting sites for these species. It is also a wonderful way to observe and learn about wildlife.

What is the plan?

Our goal is to install nesting boxes for cavity nesting waterfowl such as the wood duck, cavity-nesting tree swallows as well as bat boxes around the lake. We have started with building tree swallow nesting boxes. We have 20 boxes built so far thanks to the volunteers who built kits and/or assembled them. These nesting boxes are available to Otter Lake landowners who are interested in installing, maintaining and monitoring them for nesting activity over the next few years.



Occupied nesting box – Maple Glen, Otty Lake

What is involved?

You will be responsible for the installation of the boxes on your property, cleaning the nesting boxes annually and reporting any nesting activity to the OLLA project lead each year.

If you are interested in being part of this Nesting Boxes Project, we will provide you with:

- Nesting box(es)
- Instructions for installation, maintenance, monitoring and activity reporting

Are you interested in installing and monitoring nesting boxes and/or bat boxes on your property?

Contact June Finless at jfinless@gmail.com or 613-797-4096 for more information and to sign for this project.



MEMBERSHIP

OLLA is looking forward to the continued support of everyone having a cottage or home on Otter Lake. In past years we have had membership from as many as 45% of landowners.

Your membership has allowed us to continue with the monitoring of water quality, which has confirmed that Otter Lake has some of the best water results in the area. The ongoing water quality testing, as undertaken by our Lake Steward has ensured we have early knowledge of any problem areas but more significantly the testing continues to show that Otter Lake is very healthy. More recently, your membership has facilitated the creation and adoption of the Lake Plan for Otter Lake. This Lake Plan, which was approved by OLLA members, is providing guidance and priorities to OLLA executive decision-making.

Some of OLLA's more recent initiatives have been: the addition of a notice board at the boat launch, the initiation of the annual family picnic, the building and placement of loon nests, the building of bird houses. Yet to come this year will be the installation of brush bundles in areas of the lake recommended by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. These brush bundles are a means of encouraging fish habitats by providing shelter for the existing fish in the lake.

In addition to the items listed above, your ongoing support allows us to work with the Township of Rideau Lakes to ensure awareness and sensitivity of Otter Lake issues. Your membership has also ensured our active participation in Love your Lake, Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association (FOCA), and the national Loon Survey.

If you have not already renewed your membership for this year please complete the included form to renew your membership for 2017. At the request of our members, we have modified the form to include the ability for an individual to pay their membership for several years. We have also included an option on the form to make a donation to OLLA in addition to your membership. For 2017, any donations we receive will go towards increasing the number of brush bundles we install in the fall of 2017.

Please speak to your neighbours about the benefits of OLLA and encourage them to join.

Broad representation from property owners increases our voice when lobbying government agencies such as the Township of Rideau Lakes. Several councillors have stated they are impressed when we say we have nearly 50% representation of Otter Lake landowners.

If you have any questions on membership please reach me at the OLLA email account (otterlakeassociation@gmail.com) or telephone me directly.

Ed Wilton
613-284-1899

Otter Lake Culvert Review by Township of Rideau Lakes

The adequacy of the culvert under Otter Lake Rd has been debated for some time. The existing culvert is about 60 years old and replaced a bridge that spanned the creek previously. As our Lake Steward Doug Franks has pointed out from his many years of water level records, the culvert is almost full during the spring freshet however it wasn't known if there was any appreciable 'damming' of water when spring levels are at their maximum.

The subject was on the agenda at the May Municipal Services Committee after receiving extensive correspondence from Ms. Paula Banks in which she extensively referenced OLLA. As Ms. Banks, is not an OLLA member President Randy Hodgins and 3 directors attended the meeting. Karl Fiander made a presentation reinforcing the aspirations of the Sustainable Lake Plan in the event that some action was being considered. In the absence of any clear facts OLLA recommended that the technical resources of RVCA be engaged to render an opinion and a fact-based decision made.

On Monday June 12th, RVCA General Manager Sommer Casgrain-Robertson presented to the MSC and you can access her presentation here:

<http://www.twprideaulakes.on.ca/2017%20Agendas/RVCA%20-%20Otter%20Lake%20MSC%20PW%20June%2012.pdf>

Sommer concludes that the culvert is performing to expected standards and details the expected "head loss" (upstream water level is higher than downstream) as water levels increase. During a 1 in 10 year flood, the head loss across the culvert is 11 cm (4.3 inches) and during a 1 in 100 year flood it is 24 cm (9.5 inches). OLLA water level records indicate that lake levels have approached the 1:100 year level since 2003 but not exceeded them.

The Township is not able to proceed without permits from the RVCA and the MNRF. At the conclusion of the June 12th MSC meeting Mayor Ron Holman moved that a working group be created to study the matter further. OLLA will be following closely and report to the members as information becomes available.



OPTING-OUT OF OLLA NEWSLETTER

If you no longer wish to receive the OLLA Newsletter, please send a request to: postmaster@otterlake.org

Lake Steward's Report - 2016

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 was 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, Kaitlin Brady and their qualified team of technologists for allowing us to include their data in this report. Both RVCA and OLLA test at least 3 times per year but at different sites.

The map on the right indicates the location of all the current OLLA and RVCA test sites. These sites have been chosen to be representative of the whole lake. Sites 05A, 05B and 06 represent the 3 deepest water sites (more than 90ft). Sites 04, 07, 08, 11 and 18 are in areas where there are known inflows from streams and wetlands into the lake. Other sites are in shallow bays where there is an increased tendency for weed and algae growth.

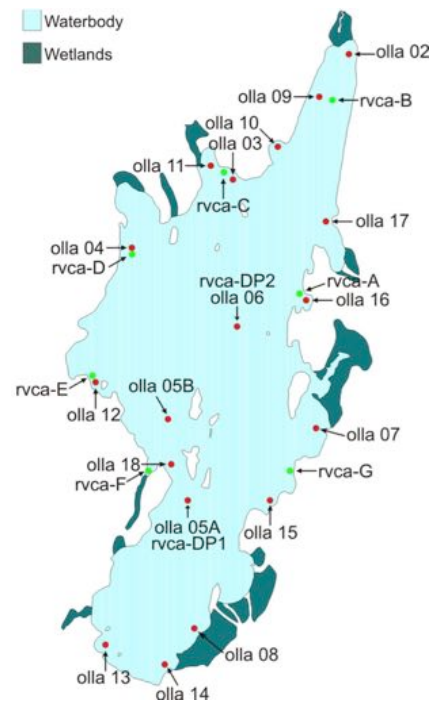
NUTRIENTS & BACTERIA

Recreational water quality can often be expressed in terms of how clear the water appears. Water clarity is influenced by the amount of soil sediment and phytoplankton, or microscopic algae, present in the water. Clarity is measured by a simple visual test using a Secchi Disk, a 20 centimeter black and white disk attached to a measured line. The disk is then lowered into the lake until it is no longer visible and the depth recorded.

Additional information on water quality is gained through analysis of samples for nutrients, specifically phosphorus and nitrogen, which gives an indication of how much nutrient and energy is available for the growth of algae and aquatic plants.

A full report of the Lake Steward's Report will be available at the AGM or here:

http://www.otterlake.org/water_qual.html



Otter Lake Landowners' Association

2017 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.....(2017)

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 2017, donations we receive will go towards the lake plan fish habitat project.

Donation to fish habitat 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

Otter Lake Landowners' Association
Annual General Meeting: Saturday July 29, 2017

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

- Business Highlights over the last year
- Sustainable Lake Plan Update
- Election of Directors (currently 2 openings)

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 29, 2017.

Signature _____

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