

June 2014



URLA Newsletter

Upper Rideau Lake Association
Box 67, Westport, Ontario, K0G1X0

Special Interest Articles:

- Ontario Trillium Foundation supports local research into algae and aquatic plant growth
- Love Your Lake Program
- Westport Snowfluent System Fails.

President's Message by-Jayne MacDonald

In my first greeting as President of URLA in November I was optimistic that we were heading in the right direction and the lake was healthier. After a long, hard winter many of us were anticipating the spring thaw and URLA was gearing up to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

And then the bubble burst.

The Westport Lagoon was in trouble again. In mid-April the situation worsened and an emergency discharge of effluent into the lake was required. Residents around the lake felt we were returning to those days about 25 years ago when the lake was severely threatened and we didn't have strong enough words to express our disappointment and, in some cases anger.

Simply no one saw this coming!

We had expected to continue to work for a healthy lake environment in our 25th year of existence. We would continue to communicate with members, promote good shoreline and septic system practices, we would continue to monitor the nutrient level of the lake, and establish relationships and cooperatives with other organizations. What we didn't expect to be doing was the same thing we were doing in the first year of operations: fighting for zero discharge of effluent from the Westport Sewage Lagoon into the lake.

The sewage lagoon has not operated as designed for a number of years and Tony Coccimiglio the Ottawa man who was operating it has been fired. He has subsequently been found guilty on 13 environmental charges related to his management of the sewage and water systems in the village of Westport and fined \$35,000.

At the time of writing the village is working on a plan of action to restore the sewage system to prevent discharges in the future.

We will continue to be vigilant on your behalf as all parties look for a solution.

Please join us July 12 at our AGM. Jim Mahoney from the Ministry of the Environment has agreed to speak about the Westport Snowfluent System.

URLA Annual General Meeting 2014

Will be held on Saturday, July 12 @ 1000
at the
North Crosby Community Center, Westport,
875 Concession Rd 8

Please join us for coffee @0930; a complimentary BBQ will follow the meeting.

ALGAE GROWTH in the Upper Rideau

Algae growth is increasing throughout the area and the Upper Rideau Lake is at risk, more now than ever. In our past newsletters we have tried to share ways in which we can all work together to reduce risks and keep our lake healthy.

This year through our spring shrub program, in partnership with the RVCA, we distributed 690 trees and shrubs to lake owners promoting shoreline restoration around our lake. These plants will help to stabilize shorelines and help filter “run off”.

We all would like a better understanding of the causes of these green algae blooms and how going forward we can protect our lakes and rivers. Thanks to funding support from the Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation we are pleased to share with you the following press release of a program which we support and we hope will provide some answers.



Ontario Trillium Foundation Supports Local Research into Algae and Aquatic Plant Growth

Mississippi and Rideau Valley Watersheds, Friday, May 30, 2014 — Thanks to a generous grant of \$149,500 from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), community groups, scientists and watershed agencies are teaming up to learn about what is impacting the health of lakes in Eastern Ontario and to look for new ways to make changes in order to protect our lakes and rivers.

Carleton University, Friends of the Tay Watershed, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority and Rideau Valley Conservation Authority want to better understand what is causing green algae blooms and profuse aquatic plant growth in local lakes and rivers. OTF funding is making this special project possible.

Over the next two years, the partners will conduct research and offer community outreach tools including workshops, fact sheets and best management practice guidance for waterfront stewards and property owners to better understand the ecological changes that are occurring in Eastern Ontario lakes.

The common perception throughout the Mississippi and Rideau watersheds is that aquatic algae growth is increasing. Algae blooms are becoming bigger — despite little observed change in nutrient concentrations in the lakes. Working with partners, the collaborative will examine why this is happening, and together we can move towards solutions.

“We want to understand the historic and current health of our Eastern Ontario lakes and rivers,” says Mike Yee, RVCA Biology and Water Quality Manager. “If there’s a unique cause of excessive algae and plant growth, we want to know what it is. From there, we want to educate watershed residents and provide best management practices on how we can work together to reduce the problem.”

Yee acknowledges that aquatic algae and plants are part of the natural ecosystem. They are the first vital links in a natural food chain that all other water creatures rely on including insects, frogs, minnows and small fish right up to top predators like bass, muskie and lake trout.

“Abundant growth occurs when things are out of balance and we start to see cause for concern,” says Yee. “When we have too many plants and algae decomposing in our water, it uses up too much oxygen and degrades the aquatic ecosystems. Reduced oxygen can cause fish kills and excessive blooms that are unappealing to water users. The good news is there are things we can all do to help maintain the balance and keep our lakes and rivers healthy and thriving natural environments.”

“Our local watersheds are well known for their lakes and river systems,” says Yee. “Our continued enjoyment of these features depends on our careful stewardship.”

“If there’s a unique cause of excessive algae and plant growth, we want to know what it is.”

Ontario
Trillium Foundation



Fondation Trillium
de l'Ontario

For more information about this project,

Feel free to contact-

Kaitlin Brady, RVCA Junior Resource Technician at 613-692-3571 ext. 1154, or kaitlin.brady@rvca.ca

Or

Mike Yee, RVCA Biology and Water Quality Manager at 613-692-3571 ext. 1176 or michael.yee@rvca.ca

Westport Snowfluent System FAILS!!!!

In 1996 in order to solve their sewage problems Westport installed a Snowfluent system. In winter, at certain temperatures they would blow liquid sewage through nozzles, breaking down the bacteria and making snow. This snow would collect on designated fields and then melt come spring.

The system has been failing/ not managed effectively over the past years. This spring, as a result of the high amounts of spring runoff and the failing system, the sewage lagoons were in danger of breaking. On April 12, as the Lagoon#2 was threatening to burst, about 12 million liters of untreated effluent was discharged into our lake. The Ministry of the Environment became involved and thousands of liters of sewage were trucked to Smiths Falls. In May, after meeting Ministry of Environment requirements another discharge of 12 million liters into our lake occurred.

We are working with officials to prevent this from ever happening again. Our lake was just recovering from past practices and we feel that discharging into our lake is **NOT** an acceptable practice.

<http://www.thewhig.com/2014/05/26/trial-begins-for-man-who-ran-westport-facility>

<http://www.thewhig.com/2014/05/27/man-who-oversaw-water-system-calls-charges-against-him-petty>

<http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/westport-sewage-discharges-enter-upper-rideau-lake>

Check us out on FACEBOOK for further information!!!

Upper Rideau Lake Association depends entirely on volunteers. We have volunteers to take water samples for the Lake Partner Program, helpers to install and remove the buoys and others who offer to paint signs or bake muffins for our AGM.

*As we head into our 25th year of operations we have successfully maintained an association that is working to keep a healthy and safe environment around the lake for the enjoyment of both the residents and our many visitors and tourists. **We can always use volunteers.***

If you have time to spare this summer we are in need of volunteer boaters.

Lake Use/Interest Survey

If you received your newsletter in hard copy, you will have found a Love Your Lake survey questionnaire and a return postage paid envelope. This questionnaire asks you to indicate how you use the lake and what elements are most important to you. Results of this survey will be used to help guide your URLA executive in undertaking activities that are directed towards the interests of Upper Rideau Lake property owners.

To participate in the survey you are not required to provide any personal information. Questionnaires are to be mailed to the Canadian Wildlife Federation who will do the analysis and provide an aggregated report to URLA. Your survey responses will be kept confidential.

If you received your newsletter by email, you may go to the <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LoveYourLake> and complete your survey there. Please remember to enter Upper Rideau Lake in the name of the lake box even if you do not enter any personal information.

Thanks for participating!



Your survey responses will be kept confidential.

URLA



Executive for 2013/14

President- Jayne MacDonald
613-549-0732

Vice Pres. – vacant

Past Pres. – Wendy Stewart

Treasurer – Murray Kane

Secretary – Jennifer Davis

Membership and Community

Affairs- Anne & Tom Carter

Lakeshore- Colleen Holmes

Water Quality- J. MacDonald

Newsletter- Carol Thomas

Members at Large -vacant

Web Master- Huw Davis

E-MAIL:

jmacdonald43@cogeco.ca

Mail: P.O. Box 67,
Westport, Ontario,
K0G 1X0

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.urla.ca

We're also on [Facebook!](#)

Friends of Foley Mountain –Fundraiser

On weekends this summer Friends of Foley Mountain will be selling raffle tickets near the Westport liquor store on a Swift fiberglass Kayak or canoe (your choice). The package worth over \$2,000 includes a paddle, life jacket, cart for maneuvering the kayak on land and a safety kit. The tickets are one for two dollars or three for five dollars.

Mary Bowbly invites you to pop by to meet them and to support their efforts to enhance educational experiences on Foley Mountain.

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

As part of the People, Aquatic Plants and Healthy Lakes: Finding Balance in Eastern Ontario's Lake Country Project, RVCA will be developing workshops. They are looking for feedback in order to develop workshops that will be of interest throughout our community.

Please take a moment to fill in the one page survey at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/workshoppicks>

Rideau Lakes Environmental Foundation

RLEF is a registered charity which funds activities for the environmental protection of Rideau Lake and its watersheds.

It has been devoted to such projects as water testing, bass tracking, loon and frog monitoring, and shoal markers. RLEF is helping to fund both the Algae Study and the Love Your Lake Project.

We encourage you to donate to this charity. Please be sure to dedicate your donation to Upper Rideau Lake, this will earmark funds directly for us. Tax receipts are issued.

Thank You to...

-**George Ingram, Don Rasmussen, Peter Newgard and Paul Byrne** for installing our navigation buoys over the long weekend, helping to keep us safe on the lake.

-**The Cove** for continuing to provide us a meeting place complete with hot coffee.

-**Cross Street and Co. Chartered Accountants** for preparing our financial statements

-**Internet Kingston-** for hosting our website.

-**Westport Village Rental-** for providing a place to storage for our files/archives.

About Our Organization...

URLA is a volunteer, not-for-profit organization comprised of community members surrounding the Upper Rideau Lake.

The Association surveys the lake for potential problems, monitors water quality, promotes shoreline maintenance and restoration and also gives a strong voice for its members to the regional bodies governing the lake.

Our membership year runs from July 1st to June 30th. Our membership fee is still \$30 per year.

Please take a moment to fill in and return your 2014/15 membership form.

We have open spaces on our Executive please contact us if you would like to volunteer your time.

We are also still in search of **Road Reps**,

If you live in any of the following communities and would like to volunteer, please contact Anne Carter at URLAmembership@gmail.com

Mulville Bay Lane off Hwy 42, Rideau Resort Rd, Maple Grove Lane, Rideau View Lane, Forrester's Landing Drive, Upper Rideau Dr. off Sunnyside Rd, Jannine Lane, Newport Lane (Newport Village), Adrain's Creek Lane, Sugarhouse Lane and 1206-8 Narrows Lock RD

Don't forget to attend the
AGM July 12
Jim Mahoney, Ministry of Environment,
will speak on the Westport Snowfluent System