



WHITE LAKE PRESERVATION PROJECT

WHITE LAKE PRESERVATION PROJECT (WLPP) 2018 WINTER NEWSLETTER

Having survived Christmas and New Year celebrations and our second DEEP-freeze, we can finally emerge to enjoy White Lake at its second most active season.

Favourable snow and ice conditions opened the season for ice fishing, snow shoeing, skiing, snowmobiling, skating and winter hiking. Winter allows us to explore areas that we cannot easily get to during other seasons.

Every year our neighbours on Wabalac Road make several large plowed and flooded ice rinks that we all enjoy, and for several years we hosted the “Wabalac Rd. Winter Olympics” comprising of team and individual skill sports such as winter golf, coffee-can curling, snowshoe relay races and exhibitions of winter skills of questionable merit, but all fun. We followed up with a potluck lunch, hot cider and glühwein (mulled wine). With another Olympic year coming up you may want to try this with your neighbours and discover that winter at the cottage can open up a whole vista of activities that gets you outdoors, and offer possibilities for social and physical activity. Bonus!! it makes the winter season pass quickly.

Conrad Gregoire and the Science Committee have received last summer’s water testing results and his report will be put up on our website in the coming weeks. The dramatic changes that we have seen over the last few years as the result of the zebra mussel propagation were significant enough for us to put a hold on publishing our State of the Lake Report. With this new information and the ongoing investigations that we are doing (using a grant that we have given to Carleton University), we feel that we are now in a

position to finish this report. We anticipate at least one other public meeting on the draft before the final document is presented.

The follow-up to the State of the Lake report is to develop a Lake Plan which is a guide to stewardship activities for long term protection of the lake environment. It sets out the future goals that property owners and visitors to the lake would like to see implemented. This fall, Doug Smith has been in discussions with the Planning Departments of Lanark County and Lanark Highlands to try and find out how local planning and environmental By-laws are applied, especially in concert with provincial directives in these areas. He has also consulted with the Health Department and monitored the positions of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) as to their role in protecting lakes. This will be the subject of a separate future newsletter.

David Overholt has taken a great interest in studying the progression of the highly invasive wetland “grass” called Phragmites. It forms dense clusters that force out native plant species and impedes the movement of animals through it. Phragmites consumes great quantities of water that can dry up and eliminate wetlands.

Dave and a small group of volunteers from the WLPOA removed two small patches on sites where this species was starting to establish itself near the lake and adjacent to township roads.

This fall, Dave also spoke to both Lanark County and Lanark Highlands Councils with suggestions as to how road maintenance crews could reduce the spread of invasive plant species through better brush clearing practices.

As most of you know, Claire Martel has taken on the presidency of the WPLOA. Claire and Janet Taylor met with the mayor of Lanark Highlands on January 4th to introduce themselves and discuss how the two associations would like to see an enhanced role in the operations of the Township on issues that involve White Lake. The response of the mayor and the staff to issues covered in these discussions will be the subject of another newsletter.
Suffice it to say that this is an election year and all of us should know

how our representatives view their responsibility to manage activity and development on the lake.

Finally, many of you are aware that there is an OMB hearing that is challenging Mississippi Mills to justify their decision to disregard many of their own By-laws when granting permission for a developer to expand his trailer park. This could be a precedent that other townships may default to when individuals apply for variances to current By-laws.

The existing By-laws on the books of all townships in eastern Ontario are designed to protect lakes and waterways. They are well researched and supported by good evidence... and work when applied.

The hearing will be at the Mississippi Mills offices starting Feb.12th. It is scheduled to last 10 days.

While the decisions made by the adjudicator will be made on the evidence and our ability to support our position, I think that the presence of lake enthusiasts who are interested in the outcome would be welcomed. You may find the discussion enlightening.

If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions please contact us via our anonymous 'suggestion box' located on the front page of our website at www.WLPP.ca or by email at WLPPmail@gmail.com.

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