



N e w s l e t t e r



The GLCA is a volunteer organization committed to representing the interests of the residents of Gull Lake.

President's Message:

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As I sit on the deck at the cottage, wrapped in a blanket and stare out over the water, I watch the sun set and relax as the scene unfolds. Hard to believe that it is almost Christmas, our cottages are "winterized" and we are starting to enjoy the colder seasons at the cottage!

It's been an amazing year full of challenges, fundraising, meeting and creating new friends, rejuvenating some "old" ones and enjoying the relaxing lap of the water at the edge of the land, sun beaming down and watching the children swim and play; as always Gull lake is my favourite place to be.

Water levels went from high to flooding, back to normal and now up to high again. In this newsletter, we have some information from our MP Barry Devolin's office. Hopefully the government will learn from their mistakes and the reviews that have taken place will provide some guidance and support for the future.

We have a budding River Association in the works; Gull River Rate-Payers Association has started meeting regularly and are actively working towards positive changes on the river. I went to a meeting in September and the GLCA will provide support to their association as they request it. I firmly believe that working together can only make our whole community a better place to be!

Initiatives within the GLCA....

- A new and improved website in the works....launch date....Spring 2014!
- The Lake Plan will be ready for membership review at the 2014 Annual General Meeting
- We are looking to have teen get-togethers, but need your help. Please contact the GLCA special events director, Carolyn Treadgold with your suggestions and ideas.
- The 2013 Regatta was a great success with improvements to the food booth, the addition of a boat licencing booth and a silent auction- where all proceeds went towards the flood relief fund. Results from the Regatta survey provided some excellent feedback to make it even better. Thank you to those who participated. Please send any further suggestions to Keith Kennedy, our Regatta Commodore.
- Updating the GLCA Bylaws which had been delayed while the new Ontario "Not for Profit Corporation Act" was released.

As always, we strive to improve our communication amongst our members. We hope that the new website, spring 2014, will provide a wider variety of information, including member pictures and links to resources and partners of the GLCA, that should serve members in a more effective manner. I would like to thank Connor Nijse for creating and maintaining our previous website. Please navigate the improved website to gain contact information relating to comments or concerns..

Furthermore, in order to keep our membership viable and strong, membership fees need to be received. Please bear in mind that membership renewals commence February 2014.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank our entire team for their efforts and dedication throughout this past year. Our success is directly reflected in our actions.

Kim Sharpe
President

Hello fellow Gull Lakers,

I hope you all had a safe and enjoyable summer.

So much has happened this year! On April 19th, the Gull River flooded its banks in Minden and stayed that way for almost a month. The water level came within a foot of the underside of the bridge in town which gives you some idea as to how much water we were dealing with. There was extensive property damage to homes and businesses but fortunately many were covered by insurance companies. Those who were not covered by insurance had access to the Ontario Disaster Relief Fund which pays for up to 90% of eligible claims. The size of the Disaster Relief Fund depends on how much the community raises and then the Province (which includes a Federal contribution) contributes up to \$2.00 for every \$1.00 raised by the community. With a private property damage estimate of \$1.8 million, we needed to raise at least \$600,000 in order to leverage another \$1.2 million from the Province. Our community really came together and donations came from individuals, lake associations, service clubs, businesses, and from many fundraising events for a grand total of just over \$700,000. Because the community raised so much money, eligible claimants received the full 90% of their claim from the Disaster Relief Fund. What an amazing achievement and thank you for your support. Regrettably, there were some people not covered by insurance or the Ontario Disaster Relief Fund because the damage was for a secondary home (cottage) and only primary homes are eligible. We hope these households managed to find a way to recover from the damage.

In August, Council passed a new noise by-law. The old by-law prohibited unnecessary noise from 11 pm through early morning. The new by-law prohibits unnecessary noise 24/7. It also prohibits the use of residential fireworks except for Victoria Day weekend, Canada Day, Labour Day weekend and New Year's Eve. Members of Council have been fielding complaints about fireworks for years now; they disturb the peace and tranquility which is so highly valued and they are environmentally destructive.

If you are experiencing chronic unnecessary noise or want to report the use of fireworks outside of allowable times, please contact our by-law officer, Paula Stamp, during business hours (705 286 1260, ext. 211). Paula will provide you with a noise by-law complaint form where you will be asked to provide a description of the noise and the location. As the complainant, your name will be kept confidential, however, you will be required to agree to appear in Court if necessary. Please note that staff are not able to make site visits for noise complaints so detailed observations are required (day, time, nature of complaint, duration, etc.). Serious noise complaints in the evening should be reported to the OPP (911).

Safety reminder....For those of you on private roads, please note that emergency responders will come to your aid if your road is passable (adequately maintained, ploughed, no low-hanging branches).

I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and see you next Spring at the AGM.

*Barb Reid,
Reeve - Township of Minden Hills & Gull Lake Cottager*

MH council receives petition on cell towers,

Article by [Chad Ingram](#), Minden Times, September 5, 2013

Minden Hills residents presented council with a petition on cell towers during an Aug. 29 meeting.

The petition, presented to councillors by residents Dave Bonham and Corina Sallaberger, is two-pronged, calling for both the removal and reconstruction of a tower installed near Gull Lake last year, as well as the creation of a township policy dealing with communication towers. The pair had 173 names on paper.

A 120-metre tower constructed by Bell went up near Gull Lake in June of 2012, and, according to Bonham, was lit up for the first time in October of last year.

It's caused anger among some residents of the area. "They'd be happy to see you driven out of town and Bell driven into bankruptcy," Bonham said. The petitioners are asking the tower be taken down and replaced with something smaller.

Bell fulfilled its requirements under the current process, governed by Industry Canada. It ran an ad calling for public input in the newspaper in April of 2012.

Bonham called the ad "sneaky," noting it had been smaller than the large, colourful ads the company uses when selling its products and said the requirements meant that not many area residents were informed in writing of the proposed tower.

"Towers are nocturnal," he told councillors. "They stand there sort of benign during the day. They come out at night."

Sallaberger proposed that a township policy require that towers be under 30 metres in height and have the "monopine" design – disguised as large pine trees – or that the company provide proof why this is not a possibility. She said a policy should also include requirements for the advertising of public meetings, as well as a summary of their results.

"These things are already happening in other townships," she said.

While Industry Canada is the ultimate power in dealing with cell towers, its process requires input from the local land use authority

Minden Hills was the land use authority in the case of the Gull Lake tower and while the township signed off on the tower, Reeve Barb Reid said it was a consultant from the township's planning consulting company who had signed off and that the tower had not been approved by council.

"Council is still unaware as to how a member of our planning consulting firm felt they had the power to approve this, using our letterhead," Reid said. "We can only apologize for the situation we got ourselves into."

The reeve said towers were an issue that needed to be taken more seriously and that staff will be developing a procedure.

Reid said MP Barry Devolin has been looking into trying to find alternative lighting solutions for the tower and said correspondence had been sent from the township to Bell.

"So far, that has not produced any results," the reeve said. "They have a letter of approval to back up their position."

In April of this year, council voted against the creation of cell policy by the township, choosing at that time to stick with the default process from Industry Canada.

Algonquin Highlands adopted a cell tower policy in May, becoming the first township in the county to do so.

Treasurer's Report

by Nick Evans

As I reported at the AGM in June, the association has a healthy financial foundation. The costs to run our programs are slightly less than the revenue we are collecting each year and we have a modest reserve of over \$20,000 to cover off any unforeseen expenses related to any particular event. From a financial standpoint both of our two big events, the AGM and the Regatta, came under budget this year. The key financial investment in 2013 has been the Lake Plan, including \$2,500 worth of research on the health of the lake being done this fall. The team was very creative in managing their costs by building a team of volunteers and a university graduate student, instead of paid consultants as other associations have done. Thank you to all the members who donated their time. As a result the Board has decided that only primary memberships will have the additional \$10 Lake Plan fee next year and we will be able to eliminate it for associate members. In 2014 the key financial focus is going to be to invest in a new website which will facilitate membership renewal, communication and participation in the activities on the lake. A complete financial analysis for 2013 year end will be included in the Spring newsletter and highlighted at the AGM.

Membership Report

by Nick Evans, Acting Membership Director

In 2014 we are going to be making several changes to make it easier to join, participate, and see the benefits of being a member. To make it easier to join, we will be rebuilding the website and making it simple to renew your membership. To make it easier to participate in activities like the Regatta, you will not have to first sign waivers forms to participate, just come and enjoy the day. Similarly, once the new website is built you will not need a password. We want to encourage people to use it. Over time, it will also be easier to see the benefits of being a member as projects like the Lake Plan are being completed and will help us all understand how we can best preserve Gull Lake for the future. The belief is if it is easy to join, easy to participate, and easy to see the benefits, cottagers will make the effort to join each year.

We want to kick-start an initiative to reach out to cottagers who have not joined in the last few years or have historically not been members. We can be an even stronger association if we have a higher rate of involvement. I did a small pilot program this summer and tried to contact 10 cottagers in these two categories. Of the five cottagers that I managed to connect with, four ended up renewing and one became a member for the first time. The typical responses were "sorry I have had a lot on the go and I have just not got around it" and "oh, I thought we had renewed this year". In 2011, when we started a similar initiative, membership jumped up to over 300 members. We are looking for 3-4 people who are willing to be part of a committee to design a fun and creative approach to reach out to these groups. If you are willing to be involved, even in a small way, please contact me directly at nickevans@rogers.com.

As 2013 comes to a close we will end up at around 270 members, which is relatively stable compared to the last few years. However the mix has changed as the number of primary members has shown a slight decline but the number of associate members has increased considerably. In 2014, the goal is to have 20 more cottages on the lake be members. I would like to thank Jane Robinson for all her work behind the scenes to maintain the membership database. Also, I would like to thank Marlene Robinson for her time and effort as she held both the Treasurer and Membership roles for many years and has now stepped down from the board.

Foiling Fouling Geese

Author Terry Moore is Research Director for the C.H.A. and a Lake Steward on Halls/Hawk Lakes



Geese over-concentrations are a common problem on Haliburton shorelines these days. This article, provided by the CHA, is about foiling these potential foulers! For a variety of reasons, Canada Geese love lawns or areas where the vegetation is cut low on shorelines. They are a tundra species that feels at home in open areas with unobstructed sight lines for safety reasons. They like to take their young up onto lawn-like open areas to forage where it is easier to see any approaching predators such as foxes or coyotes. They also love to eat the high carbohydrate shorter grasses offered up by lawns or lawn-like environments created by humans bringing suburbia to cottage country. This food then turns into up to pound of feces a day fouling properties and adding E-Coli to the lake. The key to discouraging Canada Geese from congregating on shoreline open spaces is to make sure that they see a wall of plant material 24" high when they look at a shoreline from the water and not large expanses of inviting manicured lawns,

Leora Berman, from "The Land Between" organization, has just completed a shoreline Canada Geese control project at Head Lake Park in the Town of Haliburton. Large numbers of geese had caused the public beach area to be closed due to E-Coli contamination for many years. Berman studied how the geese were using the area surrounding the park for two years before designing her control strategy. The geese used one area for nesting in the early spring, a second for feeding the young before they learn to fly and a third, the main park area, for foraging during the lead up to the annual southern migration.

Lines of "flashing tape" were used to discourage Geese from using the nesting area while rows of vegetation, planted perpendicular to the shoreline every 20 meters, were employed to giving adult geese a sight line camouflaging the lawn-like fledgling feeding zone. The result has been a ninety percent drop in the geese population in Head Lake Park, dramatically reduced fouling of park open spaces, and a beach that's once again open for swimming.

Canada Geese are an iconic national symbol for most Canadians. Unwittingly, humans have created open spaces that extend a virtual invitation to these majestic birds to congregate in non-traditional areas creating all sorts of conflicts in the process. Many now consider the geese as pests but the problem has been caused by us, not them. Having created the problem it is now up to us to understand the impact of what we have done and to find ways to eliminate or minimize the root causes of problem geese populations.

So help your lake and yourself by planting native plants that grow to 24" or higher on your shoreline and Foil Those Fouling Geese.

91st GLCA Regatta

by Keith Kennedy

"Back in the day" we were fortunate enough to grow up on Gull Lake, as kids we spent the summers in our tin boats meeting and playing with other kids on the lake. Racing our "tinnies" to each other's cottage was exciting and fun. Our summer days were spent swimming and canoeing and evenings were always about a great game of cards at the Harvest table. Gull Lake has a special meaning to each and every family on the lake, regardless of the time you have been with us.

The relationships built over the summer and particularly at the Regatta have a long lasting impact on us and we can all remember a special time at this event. Although the Regatta has changed over time, as many of us have, the fundamentals remain the same. The board goal is to have an event that brings together all people from the lake to enjoy a day of fun and safe activity that can help us bond as a membership and more importantly lifetime friends.

On behalf of the Board and Regatta volunteers, we thank the association members that filled out the questionnaire this year. This valuable information will enable us to modify and improve the day to the best of our ability. Records of each year along with critical contacts and purchasing information are being kept so that future generations can continue this tradition with ease. On a personal note, I would like to thank the volunteers that work so hard in the organization and planning of the Regatta and their donations to make it a success.

In response to the questionnaire for the GLCA Regatta, we will continue to offer the challenge for the coveted ribbons and trophies that are eagerly sought after by the kids and young adults. As well, continue with more information or "opportunity" booths. The Board will be modifying the Registration process to be inclusive of friends and non-members for a small fee, however there is still a need to track attendance. The registration is important for us to monitor the numbers and ages attending from year to year.

Although in the early days there wasn't a need for insurance it is necessary to have now, particularly since we are using the University's property. In our modern times insurance is always a concern and it is the Boards responsibility to show that we have it. Nick Evans has spent a great deal of time with the insurance company and lawyers to be clear on requirements and in 2014 we will post the waiver at the Regatta and do away with the need to sign it.

Kim Sharpe, President, writes....

The weather held out for a wonderful day of Gull Lake Regatta fun, socializing and some friendly competition. This year the Regatta was organized by the Lett, Hawkin, William and Kennedy families and you could tell they had everything planned and prepared. They also spiced up the day with additions to the BBQ menu including pulled pork sandwiches, peameal bacon on a bun and freezies for the kids!

We had 318 attendees this year representing 88 families, we definitely have a young group coming up the ranks as our kids games were packed with budding cottagers! Our raffle this year had record sales of \$630 and the silent auction was a great success with over \$700 going towards the Minden Flood relief and the Minden Hospital. Members of the GLCA created some of the items in the silent auction – we have an amazing amount of talent on the lake!

Thank you to everyone who participated in donating and purchasing the amazing array of items.



Regatta Awards: August 3, 2013

Bedlington Cup - 1st: J. Scott
2nd: L. Evans
3rd: L. St. John

Chisholm Cup - L. Evans & N. Evans

Christie Cup - Mixed War Canoe
A. Davis, Luke, Maddie & Mike St. John

Crerar Family Paddles - J. Scott, L. St. John

Earl Family Paddles - S. Brzozowicz, L. Evans

Sharpe Family Paddles - T. Beamish, M. Forrest

Minto Cup - 1st: W. Rae
2nd: R. Allison
3rd: L. Ardron

Mixed Terrain Race - S. Leask, R. Allison, J. Allison

Parr Memorial Trophy - M. Parr & D. Parr

Stinson Plaque - J. Larsen and D. Larsen

Treadgold Trophy - 1st: T. Beamish
2nd: J. Forrest
3rd: M. Forrest, R. Scott

Sailing Race Awards: July 20, 2013

Duncan Trophy - 1st: P. Allison, V. D'Allesio
2nd: M. Walter, E. Walter, J. Burton

Vice-President Report

by Richard Newman

Summer is always the best promise of what might be. The summer of 2013 will be known as one that went quickly with little time to relax. Before we knew it, the boat needed to be put away and the swim raft brought in from the lake. Always a poignant moment for me, making me wonder where the time went. Precious moments this summer where all the environmental criteria were met, (No rain, warm and sunny, reasonable water levels, families and friends at close hand) this year were fleeting. 2013 proved to be challenging as this "Criteria" were often not aligned – derailed by events beyond our control such as flooding and rain clouds.

The high-point for me this summer was the Kinmount flood benefit concert – a beautiful evening with outstanding music – a community pulling together; we all felt connected, stronger for being together. A priceless moment.

The year has been busy for the GLCA– many, many people continue to volunteer and work on your behalf to make our community the special place that it is. The GLCA is making positive changes for 2014 to make events more inclusive and fun. I am sure that you will read more about this change in this publication. The goal for the GLCA in 2014 is to create more and longer lasting special moments while continuing to build on a sense of community and cooperation. So stay tuned !! We cannot always control all the environmental criteria but we will do our best. We will be doing a push for new members early in 2014 and we will need your support to recruit your neighbors.

Rock Bass Tournament

The Premier Rock Bass tournament proved to be a great hit with the kids – and something that we will do again in 2014. Larry Murphy has committed to run it again in 2014 so contact him if you can support his efforts. If you want to volunteer let me know, he is my neighbor.



Why have a Rock Bass Tournament? Rock bass both eat the food and fry of more desirable fish such as lake trout and both large and small mouth bass. Rock bass are an invasive species and should be treated as such. **How do you identify a Rock Bass?** Rock Bass resemble both the large and small mouth varieties with a major exception being that Rock Bass have red eyes. Call it genetic profiling – but if you catch a Rock Bass with red eyes please do not practice catch and release. Feed a seagull or feed the geraniums. Your choice.

The Gull Lake Plan

The Gull Lake Lake Plan Steering Committee Plan – following both FOCA (Federation of Cottagers Association) directions and stealing great ideas from other existing lake plans, the Gull Lake Plan Steering Committee continues to develop the Gull Lake Lake Plan that should be completed in 2014. The Lake Plan Steering committee is now in the process of compiling information gleaned over the last three years from volunteers and creating the Lake Plan for discussion and proposal at the AGM in 2014. The Gull Lake Plan represents that largest and most important project undertaken by the GLCA.

I get asked this question a number of times throughout the year: "What will the Lake Plan do for me?" Answering this question reflects the reasons why the Gull Lake Plan document is important and why we need your support. Here is a short list of responses and reasons.

Water Quality: "Is water quality important to you?"

Measuring water quality is something that if we do not take ownership of, no one else will. That is the awful truth. Relying upon the government to address our lake water quality concerns will be a challenge. The Gull Lake Plan will propose rigorous water testing & evaluation. By determining detailed water quality measurements (Benchmarks) and comparing these levels to upstream Haliburton lakes, we will identify concerns and potential corrective changes.

With an anemic industrial base and a revenue tax stream heavily dependent upon cottagers and a transitory summer tourist population, our concerns regarding water quality have also become the concerns of local municipal governments. Municipalities understand that only by maintaining the pristine water quality and healthy lakes in the Haliburton area will they be able to guarantee that the much needed revenue tax streams will continue. Without pristine lakes and quality water, cottage property values would drop and tourists would find other destinations.

The municipality is in the process of creating laws that will protect the environment and the quality of lake water. Mandatory septic tank inspections, more stringent noise bylaws (fireworks), and restricting/limiting the cutting of trees along the water front. These proposed laws both focus both on improved water quality while creating a more harmonious community.

The Minden Hills municipality government will incorporate the completed Gull Lake Plan into the Official Plan. The completed Gull Lake Plan will have a long-term impact in our community from a planning and development perspective.

Water Levels: "Does excessively high or low water levels adversely affect the enjoyment of your property/Gull Lake?"

The Gull Lake Lake Plan will look at the effect of changing water levels on a variety of concerns ranging from the effect on loon populations, fish stocks, and water access by cottagers. By measuring and recording the effects of fluctuating water levels we can actively participate in positive change.

Development: "Are you concerned with over-development on Gull Lake?"

Many people wrongly perceive that the Gull Lake Plan is anti-development. This is not the case. Not at all. Every environment has a maximum threshold – or tipping point. The tipping point on Gull Lake can be defined as the maximum number of people and buildings/septic systems that can exist on the lake without negatively impacting both the water quality and bio-diversity of the lake. If this threshold is exceeded and the tipping point breached – potentially the lake could fail and die. A poisonous, toxic environment is difficult to recover. The threshold of Gull Lake has not been defined. The lake plan will identify concerns in the lake

(Example: Measuring dissolve oxygen levels at different depths, determine size/diversity of fish stocks, measure changing water temperatures, ecoli levels, measure and compare Gull Lake to that of other lakes in the region). Simply put, not enough is known to make rash assumptions regarding dramatic capacity and development changes. This would be foolish and criminal. We must first determine the overall health of the lake before development plans are made that jeopardize the quality of the lake itself.

Bio-Diversity: "Are you interested in having a healthy lake that supports a healthy thriving bio-diversity?"

- There has been very little study on Gull Lake regarding the bio-diversity of the lake. Lake trout populations are largely unknown along with specific fish breeding areas.
- The current lake draw-down beginning in the first week of August has an impact on fish breeding. Fish breeding locations and how these locations are affected by fluctuating water levels (Fall draw-down) need to be studied in greater depth (Pardon the pun).
- The effect of ice fishing on trout populations is largely unknown.
- Loon and nesting locations are very sensitive to fluctuating water levels – locating nesting sites and determining preferential water levels is critical for healthy loon populations.

The initial version of the Gull Lake Plan does not address all these above issues but what it does is create the process to create further levels of understanding.

Please support the Gull Lake Plan. Additional information can be found at www.gulllakeplan.com

We wish to thank fellow cottagers and merchants for their 2013 donations to the GLCA,

Paul & Rose Allison
Bob & Marilyn Beamish
Glen & Mickey Bonham
Carol Brewer & Ian MacDonell
Cresswell Family
Rosemary Hendra
Ted & Marie Kennedy
Ross & Helene Pinnock

Douglas & Yvonne Short
Charles & Evelyn Simon
Adam & Audrey Telfer
David & Tammy Wellstood
James Wilson

Miners Bay Lodge
Shepherd Septic



November 4, 2013

"DEVOLIN ACCEPTS AECOM'S 2013 GULL RIVER FLOODING REPORT"

MINDEN: Local MP Barry Devolin is announcing the release of a third-party review of Parks Canada's actions during the 2013 Gull River Flooding.

The review was commissioned to help identify the impacts of decisions made before, during, and after the spring flooding of the Gull River sub-watershed. The fact-based look at the flooding between April 18th and May 15th was also intended to support effective communications and decision-making between emergency authorities and other partners in the region.

"Among other things, the report states that on April 17, 2013, conditions were relatively normal along the system with a lighter than usual snowpack," said Devolin. "However, on April 18th and 19th, the single largest 48 hour rain event in more than 50 years occurred with little to no warning."

"The report states that the combination of rain and melting snowpack added 84 to 115 mm of water equivalent to the April rainfalls, doubling the water input to the reservoir lakes," said Devolin. "That combination created the worst possible conditions at the worst possible time. It would be like a 100 vehicle crash on the Don Valley Expressway at the height of rush hour."

"It is interesting to note that the dams at both Gull Lake and Moore Lake were wide open prior to the rain event," said Devolin. "That annual draw down was already occurring as part of the Trent Severn Waterway's schedule of operations."

"Further, the review states that "communication channels between dam owners/operators and levels of government are not clearly defined by law", said Devolin. "I plan on working with my counterparts at the provincial and municipal levels to improve coordination and communications during cases of future incidents that put public safety at risk."

Parks Canada manages water reserves for the Trent-Severn Waterway on a system-wide basis to meet a broad range of stakeholder needs, including municipal water supplies, flood mitigation, commercial activity, fisheries, hydro generation, and recreation. While the Trent-Severn Waterway is open for navigation from May to October, monitoring and managing its watershed is a year-round responsibility.

AECOM's 2013 Gull River Flooding Review can be found here: <ftp://ftp.pcan2.ca/2013%20Gull%20River%20Flood%20Review%20Final%20Report.pdf>

For more information, please contact:
Barry Devolin, MP
(705) 324-2400 or (866) 688-9881

Annual Christmas Bird Count

Copied from the Minden Times, article by Dennis Barry

Every year brings new surprises on the annual Christmas Bird Count. We look forward to this year's count, Saturday, Dec. 14, to see what excitement awaits.

Last year's new birds were merlin, red-bellied woodpecker and hermit thrush, bringing the count total over the 46 years since 1967 to 102 species. Of course many of those birds, such as ruddy duck, Barrow's goldeneye and boreal owl have been found on only one count. A handful of species, including black-capped chickadees and blue jays, are recorded every year, although numbers vary depending on available wild food supplies.

Numbers of species reported on any one year are usually in the low to mid-50s. There are several factors that determine what birds are here in Haliburton County in mid-December. Perhaps most important is available wild food.

Species often referred to as "winter finches" will travel to whatever parts of North America have the best supply of tree seeds. Red and white-winged crossbills even have specialized beaks designed to pry open cones on evergreens to extract the seeds hidden inside. Redpolls, goldfinches, purple finches and pine siskins feed on birch seeds as well as those from larches, spruce, balsam fir, cedar and hemlock.

But a bumper crop of seeds on trees in Haliburton County doesn't guarantee a banner year for winter finches here. Only when the crop in this part of Ontario is the best on the continent will these winter wanderers arrive in huge numbers. We think of spring as the season for birds to sing, build nests, lay eggs and raise families. But crossbills and pine siskins time their nesting whenever and wherever tree seeds are available to feed voracious nestlings.

The bubbly song of white-winged crossbills singing at sunrise along the Opeongo Road in Algonquin Park is beautiful to hear. But to experience this on New Year's Day when the temperature is minus 35 F is certainly a pleasant surprise.

This year, the wild food crop in Haliburton is fairly good. But most of the boreal forest to the north and west has as good or better crop. So the numbers of winter finches arriving here will likely be limited. Most affected will be species that travel farthest such as redpolls. Bumper crops of native mountain ash berries in the northern boreal forest mean that pine grosbeaks don't have to come south for food. Ash trees have huge crops of seeds this year as well, so evening grosbeak numbers will be down from last year.

American goldfinches breed here and will stay around in numbers, so expect them at feeders with niger or black sunflower seed. Some purple finches will have stayed north, and a very few stray pine siskins may show up. A good crop of acorns and white pine seeds has kept many blue jays around. Very few migrated out of the province this autumn. Dark-eyed junco numbers are up as well. Many will remain as long as snow depths under evergreens are limited. Most red-breasted nuthatches and black-capped chickadees stayed north too, but unlike blue jays, numbers at feeders may not reflect this.

The designated period for conducting Christmas bird counts used to vary, but was standardized a few years ago to begin on Dec. 14 and end on Jan. 5. We try to hold the count here as early as possible to include the variety of waterfowl species concentrated here as lakes and rivers to the north freeze over. Next year the count will take place on Sunday, Dec. 14.

To check results from past counts, go to the National Audubon

website. This count is named "Minden" after the largest town in the count circle and the code is ONMN.

The circle extends from Kinmount in the south to Mountain Lake in the north and east to Irondale, Gelert, Lochlin and Ingoldsby. It was selected to include the most open water in the Gull River and Burnt River systems. So far, small lakes, and bays on larger lakes have frozen, but rivers and the main parts of large lakes are still open, and snow cover is still limited. So hope for calm weather that's not too cold on Dec. 14.

Stock your feeders with sunflower seed and niger, scatter some millet or cracked corn on the ground for the juncos and mourning doves, and hang up some suet for the gray jays and nuthatches. Call to join us on Dec. 14, but, most importantly, let us know what birds are at your feeders and around your neighbourhood so they're included in this year's totals.

Contact Ed, Thom or Dennis as soon as possible to join a group on December 14.

To report birds at your feeder, phone 705-286-1189 between 5 and 7 p.m. on Dec. 14, or phone Ed or Thom on Dec. 15. Or you can e-mail your results to Dennis or mail them to Dennis Barry, 338 Crystal Beach Blvd. Whitby, ON L1N 9Z7. Species not seen by anyone on Dec. 14, but found on Dec. 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 or 17 will be recorded as Count Week birds. Numbers of individuals are not recorded for birds seen on any day except Dec. 14. We just want to know, for example, that, while no one saw a golden eagle anywhere in the count circle on Dec. 14, one was spotted circling over Gelert on Dec. 16.

Thom Lambert 457-9110 singing.dog@sympatico.ca

Ed Poropat 457-3018 ed.barb@sympatico.ca

Dennis Barry 905-725-2116 dbarry@interlinks.net



Gull Lake Water Quality Report

by Lake Steward, Don Drouillard

Mike Thorne and I once again jointly performed the annual sampling of the Gull Lake on August 5th. The day started out perfectly sunny and calm but windy conditions took over in the mid afternoon.

This year, we tried to collect some dissolved oxygen (DO) and temperature data on the deepest areas of the Lake however we developed problems with the oxygen sensor early in the process and had to abort that mission. We will continue next summer on DO collection.

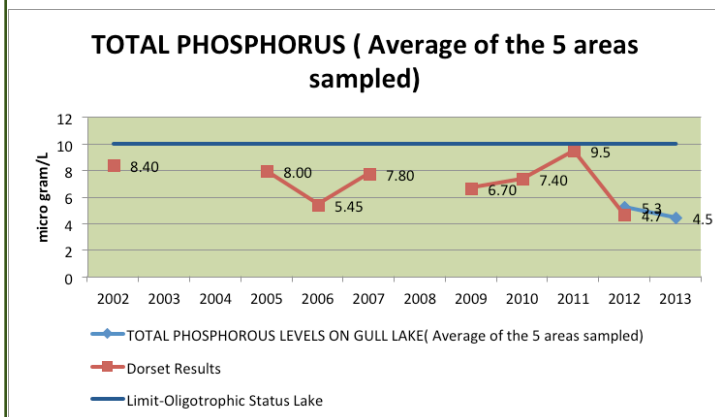
We collected the routine samples in the usual places and also collected the Lake Partners Plan (LPP) water sample mid Lake off Rackety Creek. (the Lake Partner Results are not yet available however I will report them separately once available.).

We have eliminated turbidity and colour from our analysis this year as it was not found to be particularly useful and therefore we have decided to use the secchi disc data alone as our indicator of turbidity.

Also, as discussed in last year's report, we have discontinued use of Central Ontario Analytical Lab (COAL) for Total Phosphorus results and now utilize Trent University Lab in Dorset. (they use the same method as LPP in Dorset). We have also included conductivity in the analysis as it can be a useful tool to alert us of any chemical imbalances in the Lake. (further in depth studies are being done on the entire lake, streams and source waters.- analysis and conclusions are being done and will be included in the Lake Plan document). Detailed information about each area over the years is retained and if you are interested in more detail you may contact me by e-mail (don.drouillard@sympatico.ca).

Key Indicators

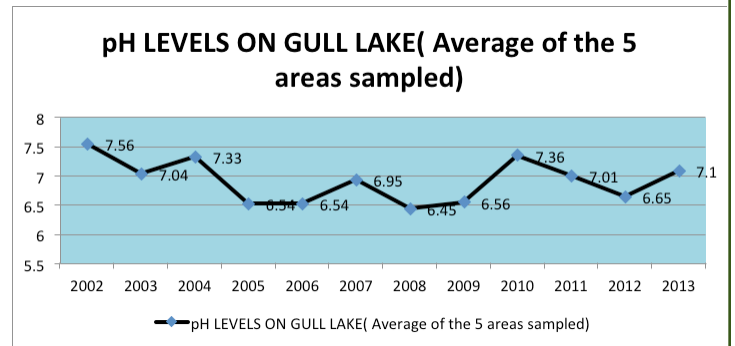
TOTAL PHOSPHORUS



This has until now been our key indicator of the health of the Lake . Results were very similar on all areas of the Lake. Generally this indicator suggests that we are an Oligotrophic Lake . (< 10 micrograms/L, pristine, cold, stratified in summer, unproductive , clear water , no algal blooms , shield lakes, lake trout lakes). We are now finding that there are other important considerations in assessing our Lake. Phosphorus alone does not tell the whole story. Sampling the surface waters may also not tell the whole picture as phosphorus is also locked into the mud and silt on the bottom. For this reason we will also do benthic studies (bug life in the mud and silt). The diversity of this bug life provides another opinion of the health of the lake. This sampling has already been done but we are awaiting analysis. (it will be available in the Lake Plan document in 2014).

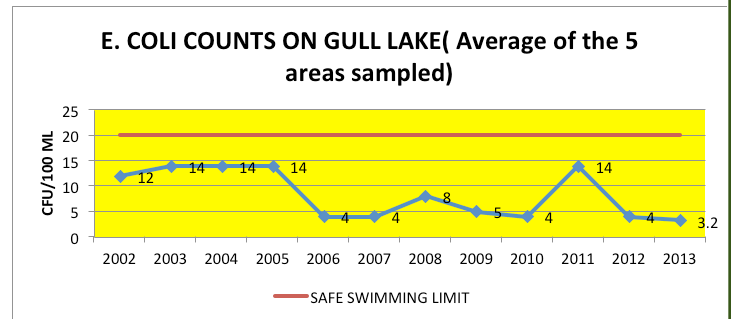
pH

Results on pH were very consistent on all areas of the Lake. pH is variable from year to year however it does not appear to be a concern. It is normal to see these fluctuations due to the amount of rain and the fact that we are a flow through Lake for the TWS. Our pH does not suggest that we are impacted by acid rain.



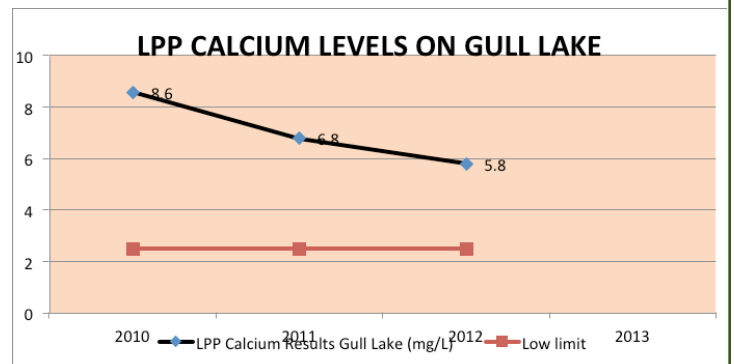
E Coli

Results were very low at this particular time. (Keep in mind that these levels can change rapidly especially following a significant rainfall due to surface runoff). It is never safe to consume the Lake water without proper treatment.



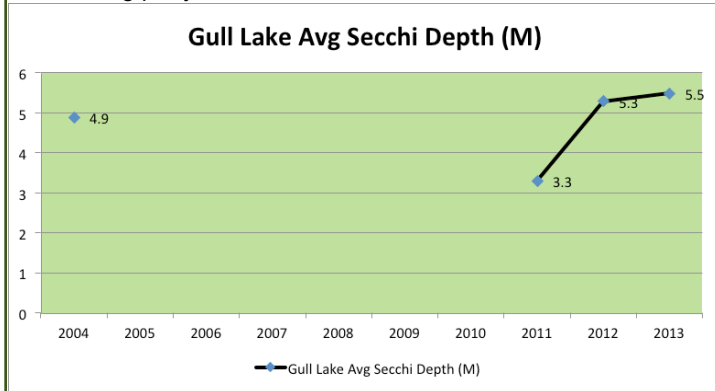
Calcium Levels

Calcium is important to the growth of daphnia and crustaceans. (a very important part of the food chain for fish). There is a general reduction in calcium levels in shield lakes. We are currently not in the danger zone for lower limit. The trend line is premature but disturbing. More information will follow in the Lake Plan. (keep in mind that it is important to have more than 3 results to make any assumptions about trend)



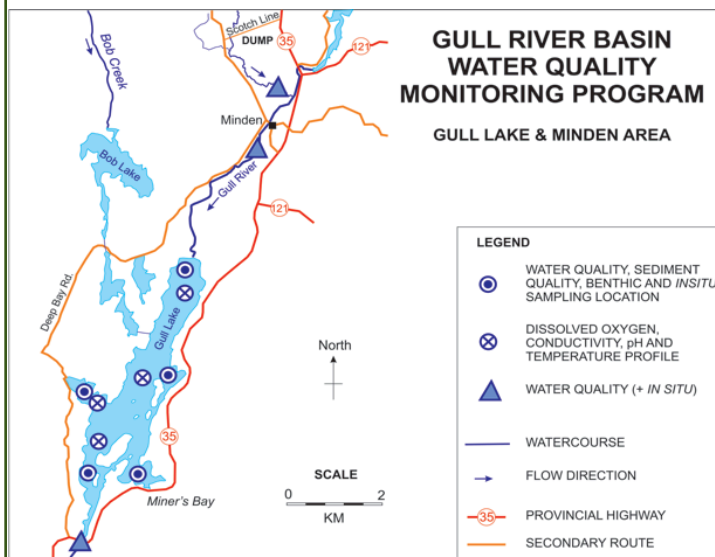
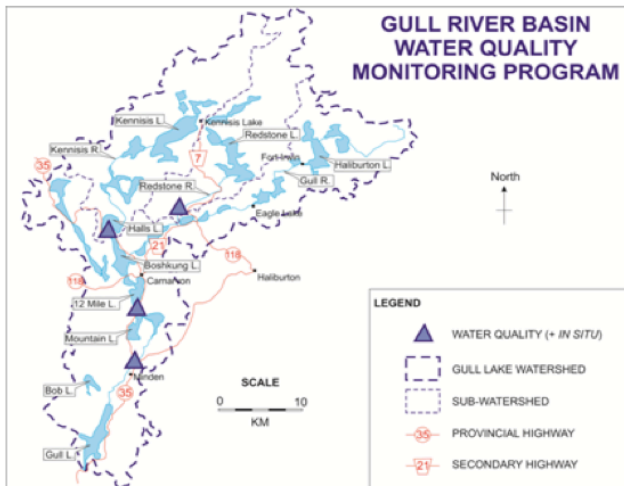
Secchi Dish (clarity)

The secchi disc is a black and white disc that is lowered into the water with a weight and the depth at which it is no longer visible is recorded. The method is subject to surface conditions, light intensity and user experience. We clearly need to obtain more than one reading per year.



A 3 day in depth Chemical and Benthic Study of Lake and Source waters on Oct 4,5,6 2013.

- Quantitative benthic invertebrate sampling with detailed taxonomy performed
- Water quality sampling
- Sediment quality sampling



Objectives

- To determine the overall health of the lake
- This will be done through biological (fish and benthic invertebrate data), as well as chemical data interpretation (water/sediment quality)
- To identify any upstream issues that should be monitored
- To provide a solid baseline for future comparisons (i.e. every 5 years)
- To contribute to the Lake Stewardship program

Shore Line Restoration

The shoreline is the kidney of the lake. In order to maintain the quality of the lake water 75 % of the shoreline should be natural. The following article written by Paul MacInnis of the CHA is worth reading and explains, in detail, why we should refrain from cultured lawns near water front.

What's Wrong with Grass?

We all love grass. It looks nice, is great under foot, super to play on and most of us have fond memories of doing some of our favourite things on grass.

So why do the lake health experts tell us not to use it around lakes in the Highlands. Are they just spoil sports or do they have valid reasons for their concerns with grass in lake country? Here's the scoop....

Commonly used grass varieties are not native in lake country.

Non Native plants:

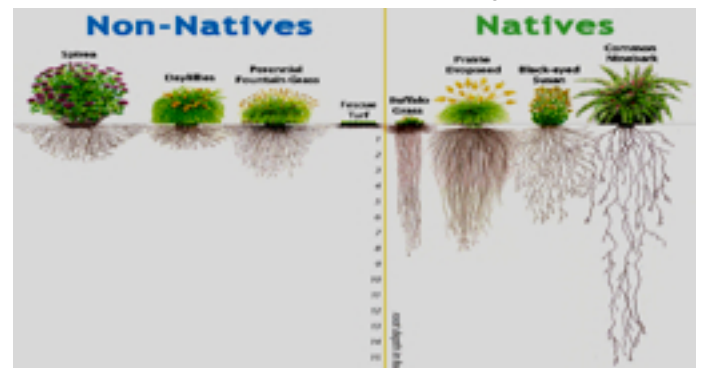
- Are not well suited to life in the Highlands and therefore need more inputs than native plants
- Water – something the experts say we may soon be short of
- Fertilizer- polluting our water- and costing us money
- Cutting and trimming – adding to Global warming

These extra inputs add nutrients to our lakes increasing algae and weed growth thereby decreasing the oxygen that fish need. We are told that no point in the Highlands is more than 500 metres from water..... how far from the lake is your septic system?

- Do not provide any habitat for the species that we all love such as frogs, toads, butterflies, humming birds etc.

Perhaps the biggest downside with grass is that grass does not contribute to and in fact harms the health of our precious lakes. Why is that – well there are all those reasons above but the biggest one is that grass does not do a good job of intercepting and absorbing nutrients before they get to our lakes. Nutrients such as Phosphorus come from:

- Our bodies, through our septic systems, where they leach into the soil and head down to water – our aquifers, streams, rivers and lakes
- Our Pets, Fertilizer use, Wildlife such as geese, birds etc.



While grass roots extend **mere inches** into the soil, the roots of native species extend **many feet** into the soil, searching for and absorbing nutrients such as phosphorous before they can damage our lakes. These long roots also do a better job of preventing erosion.

So why not take an area of your grass and plant it with native plants to help protect our lakes! You can start with a small area and then add more area over the years. Every little bit will help your lake where you, your kids and grandchildren can make new memories!

Author Paul MacInnes is Chair of the C.H.A. and a Member of the Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council. See Page 11 for Simple Septic Tips

We wish to thank the following folks for their 2013 donations to the GLCA.

Paul & Rose Allison
Bob & Marilyn Beamish
Glen & Mickey Bonham
Carol Brewer & Ian MacDonell
Cresswell Family
Rosemary Hendra
Ted & Marie Kennedy
Ross & Helene Pinnock

Douglas & Yvonne Short
Charles & Evelyn Simon
Adam & Audrey Telfer
David & Tammy Wellstood
James Wilson

Miners Bay Lodge
Shepherd Septic

Pictures from the Regatta...

Just keeping an eye out!



A very proud moment!



Let's just see if we can break this balloon....





Keep our lakes clean with these simple SEPTIC TIPS

FACT: The more efficiently your Septic System operates, the less pollution goes into the environment.

The 2 secrets to septic health and minimizing lake pollution are: **Time and Bacteria**

Bacteria –Never let anything go down the drain that kills the bacteria in your system, like:

- a. Bleach - non-chlorine bleach is ok
- b. Anti-Bacterial Products – ban them from your house and cottage!
- c. Dishwasher Detergent containing bleach (most brands do!)
 - i. Only ONE load of dishes using a regular detergent can kill ALL the good bacteria in your system for up to 70 hours – Use Septic Friendly Products, available at The Organic Times in Minden & other local retailers (look for a statement on the front of the package stating **no bleach & no phosphates**)
- d. Dishwasher Rinse Aids – use lemon juice instead
- e. Cream Cleansers – most have bleach (see a.)
- f. Drain Cleaners – use **Eco Ethic Septic Treatment** instead (*more detail on reverse side*)
- g. Automatic Toilet Bowl Cleaners – blue is not green
- If soap, toilet paper or grease (bacon & eggs anyone?) get down your drain – use **Eco Ethic Septic Treatment** once a month to provide your system with the correct bacteria and enzymes to digest these items
- If your system is sometimes not used for months at a time –when you arrive back the 1st thing you should do is flush 2 cups of **Eco Ethic Septic Treatment** down your drain to kick start your system
- Never use a garburator

Time - Your system needs as much time as you can give it to digest the waste you put in before the next load of water arrives. Remember – **one drop in = one drop out** of your system

Give your system time by Minimizing Water Use and Spreading It Out Over Time

- a. Try not to do any more than 1 load of laundry per day
- b. Keep showers short and use a low flow shower head
- c. Use every opportunity to use less water when doing regular activities
- d. Get a licensed septic pumpster to pump out both sides of your tank every 3-5 years.

For great entertainment and more info watch the "Poop Talk" **Lake Protectors** Video at

<http://www.cohpoa.org> Click on the Documents/Videos Tab

Keep our lakes clean with these simple SEPTIC TIPS

Who we are: - The C.H.A. - is a Haliburton based non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to protecting and enhancing the lakes in Haliburton County.

Did you know? - Septic Systems Are The Single Largest Polluter Of Our Lakes. All systems pollute, but those not working well pollute much more. Use **Eco Ethic Septic Treatment & The Septic Tips** on the reverse side to keep your system performing well and protect your lake!

Q. – Is it true our Septics don't need added bacteria - our guts give them what they need?

A. - As long as you only put human waste - no soap, grease or toilet paper- down your toilet and drains that is correct. But - if like most of us, you do dishes having *any* grease on them, use soap & toilet paper- your system and your lake will benefit from monthly use of **Eco Ethic Septic Treatment**

Regular use of **Eco Ethic Septic Treatment** will help keep your septic system performing well

Price - \$5 a month (\$60 plus HST for a year's supply) to protect your lake and one of your largest investments - your septic system and tile bed.

Available at **Organic Times**, 134 Bobcaygeon Rd., Minden and **Northern Expressions**, 13588 Hwy #118, Haliburton

Benefit-These retailers are CHA **Lake Protectors** Partners. Our **Lake Protectors** Partners contribute 100% of the net proceeds of this product's sales to environmental projects to protect our lakes in Haliburton County

Certification - this product is certified by Environment Canada's Eco Logo Program



More info or to **Contact the CHA** visit www.cohpoa.org Click contact link - bottom of the home page

The Details - A septic system functions on the principal of digestion of organic materials by bacteria. In the septic tank enzymes break the bonds of compounds, resulting in a simple food that bacteria then metabolize, converting waste into mostly water, carbon dioxide, mineral ash and more bacteria. Clean, clear effluent then flows out of the tank and into the tile bed (leaching field) where the effluent percolates into the soil. The more efficient the system operates the less pollution goes into the environment. The more bacteriological activity in the septic tank the better the effluent.



2014 GLCA Membership Renewal Form

Members Information
Cottage address:

Please Print

Primary Member Name: _____
 Spouse's Name: _____
 Cottage Phone: _____
 Cell Phone: _____
 Email address: _____

Home Address: _____
 Postal Code: _____
 Home Phone: _____

Associate Member Name: _____
 Spouse's Name: _____
 Cottage Phone: _____
 Cell Phone: _____
 Email Address: _____

Home Address: _____
 Postal Code: _____
 Home Phone: _____

Please check:

Primary Members:

Associate Members:

_____ \$50 dues	_____ \$10 dues
_____ \$10 hard copy of newsletter	_____ \$10 hard copy of newsletter
_____ donation	_____ donation

The Lake Plan Steering Committee has requested a list of GLCA member email addresses to communicate information directly. To decline (opt out) of the GLCA providing your email address check here: _____

If paying by cheque please include this form along with your cheque to:
 GLCA Treasurer ,145 Fairlawn Ave, Toronto, ON M5M 1S9

Those members opting to renew online by PayPal, through our website, this form is not required.

Membership Class:

Primary Membership:

Primary Membership holder is able to exercise a voting right on all motions to members, and attending all functions year round. Primary Membership includes spouse and all minor children

Associate Membership:

Associates Membership holders enjoy all the benefits of primary members, but are unable to cast a vote on motions put forward. Associate Membership includes spouse and all minor children.

2014 Membership Dues:

Primary: \$50

Associate: \$10

Additional \$10 for hard copies of Newsletter mailed to you.

All 2013/2014 primary membership dues include the \$10 lake plan assessment (2012 AGM)

Donations greatly appreciated!

PayPal service fee of \$1.75 added for online renewals.

WWW.GULLLAKECOTTAGERS.COM