



The Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association Bulletin Issue No. 25 – June 2016

In This Issue...

The Province Replies: In mid-April, we received a reply from Minister Stephanie Vallée regarding our request for provincial leadership and support. We provide a link to that letter and a summary and link to our reply.

A Concerned Cottager: A long time cottager asks the municipality and the province to do more to protect our lake.

Blue Sea Lake's Spring Runoff: Find out what you should do as a result of this year's record runoff.

Eurasian Milfoil Jute Tarp Project: Learn the latest on the plan to lay jute tarp over two beds of Eurasian milfoil.

2015 RSVL Results: The results of last summer's water sampling and transparency checks are now available as is news about this year's program

Blue Sea Creek Revitalization: Preliminary planning is underway to help revitalize the Blue Sea Creek. This is not the first time such an initiative has been undertaken. Learn more.

Spring and Summer Tips: It's time to hone up on our seasonal suggestions on how to be an environmentally responsible resident/cottager.

Fireworks: Just a reminder not to use fireworks in cottage country.

Update on Outreach to Provincial and Federal Governments

As noted in the last edition of En Onde/Shorelines, several months ago the Association sent letters to our local MNA, Justice Minister Stéphanie Vallée and to the Québec Minister of the Environment, David Heurtel, asking the provincial government to do more to help save our waterways. We have since received a response from Minister Vallée in which she confirms the government's commitment to helping protect our lakes and rivers, and details various measures the government has taken/will take to do so. Our Association was very pleased to receive Ms. Vallée's letter and to learn about the government's efforts. We noted, however, that her response did not address a number of the issues we had raised. Accordingly, we have sent another letter to Minister Vallée, with an info copy to Minister Heurtel, asking the government to:



1. provide funding to municipalities for enhanced septic system inspections;
2. expand the septic system replacement component of the Rénovert program to include those at cottages;
3. publicize the importance of the shoreline protection policy and strongly encourage all

- municipalities to rigorously enforce it; and
4. develop and implement a province-wide policy to combat the spread of boat-borne aquatic invasive species.

You will find on our website [Minister Vallée's response](#)¹ to our initial letter and [our reply](#)² to her letter.



During the past month, we also extended our pursuit of watershed-related municipal funding to the federal level by co-signing a letter to the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Communities asking the federal government to include watershed protection projects in its infrastructure program. That letter was also signed by the mayors of Blue Sea and Messines and the president of the Association for the Protection of Cedar Lakes. To view it, please [click here](#)³.

A Cottager's Concerns

In the March edition of En Onde/Shorelines, we asked members to voice their concerns regarding the health of our lakes by sending a short note to municipal and/or provincial officials. One long-time Blue Sea cottager - Mr. Doug Cameron - answered this call and wrote a very thoughtful and heartfelt letter to Mayor Fortin. To read Doug's letter, please [click here](#)⁴.



After the Flood

As most of you are aware, Blue Sea Lake's water level rose well above normal this spring, resulting in flooding in low-lying areas. Municipal officials responded very quickly to the situation, calling in



provincial experts and - under their direction - shoring up the dam on Blue Sea Creek and reducing pressure on that dam by installing sand bags at the mouth of the creek. Their tireless efforts no doubt prevented a bad situation from getting worse.

In addition to flooding in low-lying areas, the high-water level has caused extensive damage to boat houses and docks. It has also resulted in a great deal of debris (logs, dead heads, etc.) floating in the lake. This debris constitutes a real hazard to boat traffic.

Due to these conditions, we strongly recommend that:

- anyone with a domicile in an area that has been flooded should contact municipal officials to determine whether and how their septic system should be inspected;
- any cottager or resident whose dock or boat house has been damaged must get a work permit before proceeding with any repairs. Those who have a boat house or dock along the bike path and do not own the property on which their structures are built must contact the MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau for a work permit. Failure to do so in either instance could result in stop work orders, significant fines, etc.

- all boaters should exercise due caution when on the lake and - if safe to do so - help remove debris from the lake.

A final note: If you are a permanent resident whose principal domicile is on the shores of Blue Sea Lake and has been damaged by the flood, you may be eligible for financial assistance from the Ministry of Public Safety. If you meet these criteria, please contact your town manager (i.e.: Jim Smith in Messines or Christian Michel in Blue Sea) for more information.

Update on Eurasian Milfoil Jute Tarp Project

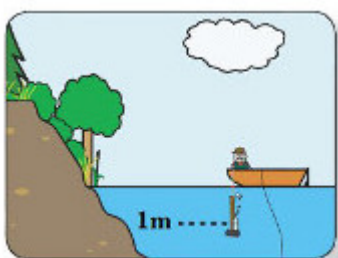
As noted in the March 2016 edition of En Onde/Shorelines, the municipality of Blue Sea has approved an expenditure of \$8,000 for the mechanical installation of jute tarps in two areas adjacent to the village shoreline. For an update on this project together with information regarding the purchase of jute tarp “cottage kits” and a mechanical option for residents interested in having jute tarps installed mechanically over large milfoil beds near their shoreline, please [click here](#)⁵.

For more information about the use of jute tarps to control Eurasian milfoil and the BLOCK-AID mechanical installation system, please [click here](#)⁶.



RSVL Results for 2015 Now Available

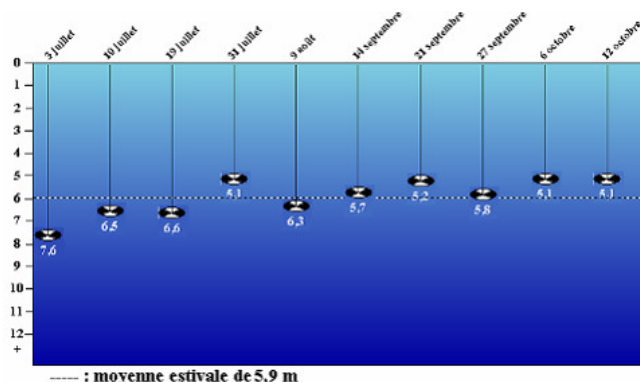
Two of the most important activities of the Association are the annual measurement of water transparency at and the collection of water samples from various lakes within both the Blue Sea Lake and Blue Sea Creek watersheds. The taking of these measurements and the collection of the samples



are done by volunteers in accordance with the scientific protocols established by the “Réseau de surveillance volontaire des lacs” (RSVL). RSVL is a provincial agency that helps lake and watershed associations throughout Québec monitor and document the health of their waterways. Under this partnership, association volunteers effect the measurements and collect the samples while the RSVL team analyzes, interprets, and publishes the results. RSVL also provides valuable support in many other related areas. Please note that our participation in the RSVL program is jointly funded by the municipalities of Blue Sea and Messines.

The province-wide results of the 2015 RSVL water quality monitoring program are now posted on the RSVL website ([click here](#)⁷). In 2015, our Association monitored the water quality of the following lakes: Blue Sea, Roberge, Grant, Laverdure, Beaudry, Grenon, and Profond.

In interpreting this data, two points must be borne in mind. First, taking transparency measurements/water samples is a long-term effort; the results will vary from year to year and are only meaningful over an extended period of time. Second, and more importantly, these data only tell part of the story: assessing the environmental health of



a lake is a very complicated endeavour that involves the consideration of a multitude of other phenomena including aquatic plant and periphyton growth, the appearance of blue-green algae blooms, etc. To get an idea of what's involved, please read "[Assessing the Health of a Lake](#)"⁸ on our website.

The Association will begin its 2016 RSVL monitoring program soon. We are very happy to announce that, in addition to the seven lakes noted above, we will also be monitoring the water quality of Lacs Clément and Castor. We are able to conduct such a comprehensive, watershed-wide program only through the dedicated efforts of our team of volunteers. This team includes: Paul and Pierrette Dénommé, Robert Duval, Carl Novak, Dave Maclaren, Marie Anne Poulin, Gilles Galipeau, Michael Donovan, André and Andrée Dompierre, Richard Latour, Charles Singh and Malcolm Hamilton. Many thanks to them and to Don Karn, our RSVL coordinator.

If you would like to know more about this program, please contact us at info@associationblueseas.org.

Blue Sea Creek Revitalization

The Municipality of Blue Sea's socio-economic development committee recently committed to a project for the revitalization and development of Blue Sea Creek. A sub-committee has been formed to pilot the project and our Association has been invited to participate in its planning and execution.



This is not the first project dedicated to the rehabilitation of the creek. In the 1990s a dedicated group of citizens, working in conjunction with the Blue Sea municipal council, the municipality's recreation council, and creek-side property owners undertook a similar initiative. Under this project, several truckloads of garbage that had accumulated over the decades were hauled off to the municipal dump; electric fencing was installed to keep livestock out of the stream; reforestation efforts were undertaken and several hundred trees were planted on creek-side properties; and navigation aids for canoers and kayakers were produced which included maps and signage for route planning and portage identification.

The volunteer group responsible for the project, Les Amis du Ruisseau, was still active in 1998 when the appearance of a blue green algae bloom on Blue Sea Lake triggered the formation of the Inter-municipal Committee for the Preservation and Improvement of the Water Quality of Blue Sea Lake (*Comité conjoint sur la*

préservation et l'amélioration de la qualité de l'eau du lac Blue Sea). One of the first decisions of the committee was to contract the University of Québec at Montréal (UQAM) to conduct a study and produce a report characterizing Blue Sea Lake. This report, known as the Geiger Report, was first delivered in 2000 and subsequently revised in 2010.

At the time of the first UQAM study, Les Amis du Ruisseau persuaded the inter-municipal committee to include the Blue Sea Creek in the study's terms of reference. This in turn gave rise to the inclusion the Blue Sea Creek watershed in our Association's mandate. Accordingly the Association's watershed became defined as the land mass drained by the headwaters of Blue Sea Lake and Blue Sea Creek to the point where the creek flows into Lac Perrault.

The objective of the current revitalization project is to protect the creek's natural environment and to make the waterway and wetlands accessible to canoe and kayak navigation. Anyone for brook trout?



Stayed tuned to Shorelines for more information regarding the development and progress of this exciting project.

Springtime and Summertime Tips – a Reminder



With the arrival of spring flowers and warmer temperatures, many of us start to prepare our cottages and residences for summertime activities. As we perform this annual ritual, let's remember that spring cleaning in the country brings with it extra environmental challenges and concerns as well as opportunities to become more responsible stewards of our environment. You will find on our website some "green" [springtime](#)⁹ and [summertime](#)¹⁰ tips.

Fireworks - Please Don't Use Them

As explained in the [December 2015](#) edition of En Onde/ Shorelines, due to the fragile state of our waterways, our Association does not support the use of fireworks and therefore asks all shoreline residents to refrain from using them.



AGM: Mark Your Calendars



This year, our 8th Annual General Meeting will take place at the Municipal Hall in Messines, the morning of Saturday, July 23rd. Details will follow. For now, please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

1. www.associationblueseas.org/images/documents/CORR_2016_04_04_Stephanie_Vallee_a_Dick_Ryan_en.pdf
2. www.associationblueseas.org/images/documents/CORR_2016_05_16_Association_a_la_deputee_en.pdf
3. www.associationblueseas.org/images/documents/CORR_2016_05_11_Maires_et_associations_a_ministre_Amarjeet_Sohi_en.pdf
4. www.associationblueseas.org/images/documents/CORR_2016_04_20_Villegiateur_au_maire_de_Blue_Sea_en.pdf
5. www.associationblueseas.org/index.php/en/home#tj
6. www.associationblueseas.org/images/documents/Depliant_Block_Aid_controle_myriophylle_en.pdf
7. www.mddelcc.gouv.qc.ca/eau/rsvl/index.asp
8. www.associationblueseas.org/index.php/en/watershed/assessing-the-health-of-a-lake
9. www.associationblueseas.org/index.php/en/environment/best-practices/seasonal-tips/spring
10. www.associationblueseas.org/index.php/en/environment/best-practices/seasonal-tips/summer
11. www.associationblueseas.org/index.php/en/newsletter-23-december-2015#fa

Shorelines is a production of the Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association.

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