

The Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association Bulletin
Issue No. 48 – June 2021

Phase 2 of the Jute Tarp Project: Removal of Bags

Context

Last year the Blue Sea Lake Watershed Association carried out the installation of 15,930 m² of biodegradable jute tarp, using 4100 black, polythene bags of cleaned, crushed gravel, over high concentrations of Eurasian Milfoil in an experiment aimed at controlling the spread of this troublesome invasive species, which has infested large parts of Blue Sea Lake. The purpose of the bags was to weigh down the jute tarp until it soaked and settled over the milfoil on the lake bottom.



Objective

This year, our task is to safely remove those 4100 bags. They have done their work and their removal is an important condition of Quebec government approval of this project. Removal of the bags is our responsibility and will involve the use of divers, of barges and other watercraft and volunteers. We will be calling on the support of the municipalities and local businesses to assist us in this endeavour.

Action Plan

Here's the plan. We intend to outfit a barge with a crane, winch and pulley system that will lower a large net or basket over the tarps and the bags, while divers gather the bags at the bottom and place them in the basket. The basket is then raised to the surface where volunteers transfer the bags on other watercraft to bring them ashore. For safety purposes the areas where this operation will take place will need to be secured from other boating activity. Assessments still need to be made on how and where to dispose of, or possible reuse the bags and the gravel.

The Association has created a team to plan out and prepare for the removal of the bags. We have tentatively reserved the period from **June 19th to July 5th** for this activity to take place.

How you can help

- Qualified divers, qualified, with proper training and certification and able to devote time in early July to help move the bags on the lake bottom;
- Volunteers, in good physical condition and comfortable working on the water, to lift the bags out of the basket and moving them onto a watercraft;
- Watercrafts that can carry bags that have been in the water or for other needs;.
- Accommodations to make available to divers or other participants on the project from outside the region;

- Construction or engineering experience that might apply to a project like this.

Finally, there will be costs involved. So, the Association will be grateful for any contribution to support this project. Please note that Association's registration fees and donations are subject to a tax credit; go to the "[REGISTRATION](#)" page of our website to contribute..

Anyone who would like to contribute their time or skills to this project should contact a member of our Bag removal team:

- Doug Burnside: doug@dolyn.com
- Bob Butler: kbutler@bell.net
- Guy Gauvreau: guygauvreau55@icloud.com
- Dave MacLaren: jdavidmaclaren@gmail.com
- Gab McConnery: gaby.mcconnery@videotron.ca
- Nick McConnery: nick.mcconnery@videotron.ca

Lakeside Fireworks – Chapter 4



A portion of charred cardboard, plastic, and chemical residue collected from a cottage fireworks display. Fireworks debris typically sink to the bottom. In this case the lake was frozen and the debris were swept up from the ice surface.

The regulation of lakeside fireworks was discussed at the most recent tripartite meeting of the Association and the Municipalities of Blue Sea and Messines on February 26th, 2021. Armed with survey results of our members showing overwhelming disapproval of lakeside fireworks usage, we once again requested that our Municipalities consider regulating this activity by restricting it to a limited number of holidays or weekends. Once again, the Municipalities indicated to us that they are sympathetic to our concerns but are not prepared to regulate, pointing to the difficulties with enforcement. They encouraged us to concentrate our efforts in promoting safe practices and in educating our members and the general public as to the potential environmental ill effects and the safety and social nuisance issues that fireworks pose.

We agree with the Municipalities that it is important to educate. We will continue to do so. We understand enforcing limits of the use of lakeside fireworks would present

challenges. But we also feel that at some point education and regulation have to go hand in hand, especially, as we think we have demonstrated, many people are strongly opposed to this practice.

We have always appreciated the willingness of Blue Sea and Messines to discuss frankly and constructively our issues of mutual concern. We will continue to discuss with them the issue of lakeside fireworks.

Meanwhile, the Association maintains and promotes its policy by urging our members and the general public to choose methods other than using fireworks for carrying out lakeside celebrations.

For background on this issue and more information, the following articles already published in our newsletter can be viewed via the "[SHORELINE](#)" page of our website:

- [No 20, April 2015](#): " Do Fireworks Harm Our Lakes? "
- [No 23, December 2015](#): "The Potential Impact of Fireworks Displays on Our Lakes ";
- [No 25, June 2016](#): "Fireworks - Please Don't Use Them";
- [No 37, May 2017](#): tripartite meeting where the Association expresses its concerns to municipalities regarding fireworks in the vicinity and on lakes and rivers;
- [No 42, May 2020](#): " Lakeside Fireworks and the protection of our Watershed ";
- [No 46, December 2020](#), page 3 (PDF file): " The Association Surveys its Members on Lakeside Fireworks"

Water Quality Monitoring Program 2021: Volunteers are Welcome

From the beginning of June to Thanksgiving weekend, the Association will be active collecting water samples and carrying out water transparency measurements following the Quebec Ministry of Environment's VLMP, (Volunteer Lake-Monitoring Program).

As an example, every year we measure water transparency at four sites on Blue Sea Lake as well as at one site each on 7 other watershed lakes: Beaudry, (aka Allard), Castor Blanc, Clement, Laverdure, Grant, Grenon and Profond. Our partner Association Edja, Caya and Roberge looks after these three lakes under its jurisdiction.

If you'd be interested in contributing a little time and energy to the success of the program, be sure to let us know. We'll train you, give you a quick lesson in the simple procedures and you'll be good to go; either to take over responsibility for a site or to be part of the backup team.

For more information on this topic, see the "[Water Quality](#)" page under the "WATERSHED" section of our website. It explains how water quality is monitored, results can be accessed, a general schedule of monitoring activities is presented and links to RSVL protocols are provided.

As always, we are grateful for the support of the Municipalities of Blue Sea and Messines, who cover all associated laboratory expenses.



A simple tool to measure water transparency...the Secchi disk



Enhancements to Mandatory Boat Washing Program by Blue Sea

Congratulations to the Mayor and Council members of Blue Sea. They have made significant investments to improve the operation of the existing station behind the Municipal Office and have approved an additional boat washing station to serve Long Lake. The new station will be located at the Municipal Recreational Centre at 396, chemin du Lac Long and will be installed by July 1st.

In addition, the mayor Laurent Fortin announced recently that surveillance cameras will be installed at the public wharf to monitor boats entering Blue Sea Lake and to ensure they are properly washed beforehand, according to the regulation in place.

We applaud these efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of this important measure to protect Blue Sea Lake from invasive species.

Lac Laverdure Loses a Friend: Remembering Gilles Galipeau (1946-2021)

Association founding member and long-time volunteer Gilles Galipeau passed away peacefully at his home in Messines Feb. 24th, 2021. Gilles was dedicated to the environmental health of our region, our rivers, lakes and especially his precious Lac Laverdure. He was a source of inspiration for his many friends and collaborators.

It was through his efforts that Lac Laverdure was examined as part of the 2010 GEIGER project which in turn led to our studying the environmental practices of the golf course; two key elements in establishing the Association



as a true watershed organization in fact as well as in name.

He was a creative problem solver with a subtle sense of humor. A story to illustrate: he used a breach in the dam next to his house to control the water level of Lac Laverdure. Unfortunately, he and the beavers didn't always agree on the optimal level. So he hired a life-size "Spiderman" to act as a scarecrow and against all odds it worked... at least for a week; failure! After that, Gilles kept "Spidy" at his post... to make his friends laugh; huge success!

We offer our sincere condolences to the Galipeau family. We will remember Gilles with great affection.



Heads up: Municipal Elections and Elections for Warden of MRC this Fall

Municipal elections will take place across Quebec on November 7th, 2021, including for the Municipal Councils of Blue Sea and Messines. In addition, the MRC de La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau will elect its Warden at the same time through universal suffrage.

If you are a non-permanent resident within the territory of the MRC or the municipality, and you are a cottage owner or owner of any other type of real estate, you must REQUEST your enrollment for the MRC's list, as for the local municipal list. But this must be done separately on the appropriate form (SMR 9.1 ou 9.2) if you wish to vote at the MRC or at the municipality.

Forms were sent out earlier this year but these forms can be obtained on the website of the MRC de La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau www.mrcvg.gc.ca in the "Documents" section or on the websites of the municipalities at www.blueseas.ca or www.messines.ca. The completed forms must be returned before September 1st, 2021 to:

elections@mrcvg.gc.ca OR info@blueseas.ca OU info@messines.ca
OR by mail at:

MRC de La Vallée-de-la-Gatineau
7, rue de la Polyvalente, C.P. 307
Gracefield QC J0X 1W0.

Call (819) 463-3241 ext 262 for more information.

Reminder: Time to Renew your Annual Association Membership

If you have not already done so, please renew your Membership for 2021. It costs a mere \$20 per person and is a vital support to the work of the Association. For that purpose, you can download a form from our website through the "[REGISTRATION](#)" page; instructions are there for completing your registration online or by mail.

If you wish, you can also include a donation to further support the work of the Association. Donations to the Association as well as registration fees are subject to a tax credit; a receipt is issued for any amount of \$ 20 or more.

Erratum

In the last issue of this bulletin, we said that André Beauchemin served **twelve** years as Director General at the MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau. In fact, he served **twenty-two** years. Our sincere apologies.