



# THE NORTHERN REFLECTION

FALL 2022



*By Luke Mellors - President*

## President's Message Fall 2022

I would like to start by congratulating the newly

elected council: Mayor Michael Fuerth, Deputy Mayor Paul Ordanis, and Councillors Sheila Currie, JD Fentie and Wendy Mortimer. The needs of our township and community are significant and the new Council will be tested. However, I believe the will of people has been heard, and what our township is looking for and what it needs will be served by our new council.

Community is something that we have been advocating for as an association and we have demonstrated huge amounts of community leadership this past summer. Firstly, our BBQ and the silent auction raised over \$2000 for local families facing hardship following the May 21st derecho. Half of the funds were donated to the local food bank and the other half was donated directly to four local families in need who were impacted by the derecho. We were able to identify these families with the help of community leaders. On receiving the donation, one parent said: "You are going to make me cry, you have no idea how much this means to our family". It makes me emotional when I read what our support means to people within our







community. So many people rose to the challenge through donating items, bidding on items, volunteering and organizing the event – a true reflection of what a community united can achieve together.

Our association is also viewed as provincial leader by FOCA and other cottage associations for our Milfoil Action Committee activities. In July 2022 we became the first lake in Ontario cottage country to deploy mechanical harvesting of milfoil. We did this in a broad swath across a bed that was affecting boat traffic from the big island to Ridge road past Bear Ridge. This was an operation that required approvals from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, a harvesting expert, and the cooperation of a local farmer who received the harvested milfoil as a fertilizer. It also required a sizable financial cost, and we thank all who have provided support to Lake Health

and Invasive Species management including our advertising partners, Red Eagle and our municipal government who made a donation in 2021. However, the biggest thanks goes to you – our membership – who continue to fund on behalf of everyone all the activities that make our lake a wonderful place to be for all. Our membership is the single biggest contributor and the primary consistent contributor to managing invasive species and keeping our lake safe and healthy. Without your membership and support we would not be able to do the things we do.

I would like to highlight that the things we do for a lake our size, or any size, are unique and noteworthy. There is no lake other than the great lakes in Ontario that has received permission to harvest milfoil like we did in 2022 as far as we know, and our activities have put us on the radar of the cottage

community as a leader in managing invasive species programs. This is due to our fantastic Milfoil Action Committee led by Joanne Pozniak who has for two years been planning how we continue to combat threats to our lake. In addition we have a special resource in Fred McConnell whose selfless dedication to his Lake Steward responsibilities and continued education into lake health benefit us all.

This past summer we got to connect through events and just in general which was refreshing. It was great to be able to meet many of you for the first time and others again. Putting on events is no easy task and I want to thank all who devoted time and attention to making our events a success this year. I especially want to give a shout out to Doug Rudder, Angela Baltkois and Mary Byrne for making our BBQ and AGM so successful.

We continue to have an ambitious agenda for 2023 including benthic mat installation for milfoil among our other activities. Please contact the MAC at [wlhca.news@gmail.com](mailto:wlhca.news@gmail.com) if you are interested in installing mats around your dock next summer. Permits are assessed based on having a plan for the whole lake, so we'll need to work together on this.

2022 was a great year and with your support the WLHCA can look forward to planning 2023 events and activities on the lake, in the lake, and around the lake.





By Fred McConnell - Lake Steward

## Lake Steward's Report

Fall 2022

**W**ollaston State of the Lake Report: Next Steps Wollaston Lake, like other lakes in the region, is

in the process of transition based on the effects of a number of stressors such as climate change, invasive species, shoreline and adjacent development, increased short term rentals, increased angling pressure, and increased pleasure craft traffic to name a few.

The first draft of the Wollaston State of the Lake Report trend analysis was presented at the WLHCA 2022 AGM in August. (See the WLHCA Facebook group for the presentation). The report provides a summary of the most current and relevant environmental information on Wollaston Lake and its watershed, and is the first step towards preparing a Lake Stewardship Plan, which is an action-oriented document to guide stewardship activities and land use policy for the long-term protection, maintenance, and restoration of the Wollaston Lake environment.

The next and possibly most valuable step of the process is public consultation with all stakeholders regarding the state of the lake data analysis, supported by our key partners. It is anticipated that this process will consist of at least two public meetings (including Zoom access for those not able to



attend in person) commencing in the late spring of 2023 as seasonal residents are returning to the area. The consultation process will be an opportunity for all stakeholders to review the peer reviewed data, express their thoughts and concerns for the state of Wollaston Lake and to ask questions of the cross section of partners.

The Wollaston Lake Home and Cottage Association (WLHCA) will be partnering with a number of environmental expert organizations for the consultations process such as the Trent Aquatic Research Program (TARP), Watersheds Canada, Ontario Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP), and Crowe Valley Conservation Authority with the majority having already committed to participating in our process. It is our hope that many residents across the entire community will take the opportunity to participate in the consultation process so the

state of the lake review represents all views.

Additional Community Outreach As communicated in the spring 2022 newsletter, this year's water quality testing season added more sampling locations of the Wollaston Lake watershed as well as adjacent lakes within Wollaston Township. With our assistance Urbach, Finnigan, Ragged and Casteroil Lakes, and the Deer River headwaters were enrolled in the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) Lake Partner Program. At least one sample from most lakes was completed and will be used to inform water quality testing planning for the 2023 season. We have received a request to add Peter Lake for 2023 and welcome other suggestions within Wollaston Township. To be added to the Program, the water body needs to nominate a volunteer to be a prime contact to be trained to conduct the collection of water samples.





## Milfoil Action Committee Update

This season was particularly a busy and exciting one for MAC, as we were successful in completing TWO very big projects! The first was the mechanical harvesting project that was started in March 2021, and the second was the “education blitz” which showcased the new Ontario watercraft operator regulations. Awareness and education are key to ensuring everyone understands what they can do to support lake health and be informed about Eurasian milfoil and the devastating impact it is having on Wollaston Lake and Deer River, along with the other aquatic invasive species. We have a collective responsibility to not only “clean and drain” our watercrafts but more importantly to learn how to minimize our impact on the sensitive and irreplaceable watersheds and natural land around us.

### MAC 2022 Season ACTION ITEMS: COMPLETED

- Mechanical harvesting in high traffic boat area between the Big Island and Bear Ridge Campground on July 26&27
- Submitted a permit to MNR and DFO for mechanical harvesting for summer 2023
- We were awarded \$1000 microgrant for Ontario with the Invasive Species Centre



- Community Youth Contest “Help Keep Wollaston Lake and Deer River Healthy and Clean”
- Education blitz “NEW WATERCRAFT REGULATIONS” handout: available at community retailers, township buildings and website
- Community education sessions with ISampleON at Township boat launch and WLHCA BBQ
- Purchased and installed 10 new yellow buoy milfoil bed markers this season (60 markers in total)
- Drone imaging of major milfoil beds as required by permit applications, and to assess year over year growth rate





#### IN PROGRESS/ NEXT SEASON:

- Seeking volunteer divers for benthic mat installation:
  - Bay at end of Lawrence Lane, Second Lake and Mud Bay (2021 permit)
- Deer River outlet (2022 permit)
- Scheduled delegation to the Township of Wollaston Council (December 2022) to present a summary of this season's action items and request for continued necessary funding for lake health initiatives:
- Continue discussion regarding the installation of an information box and collection bin for plant debris as watercraft users **MUST CLEAN** all watercraft items **BEFORE** leaving the waterbody

- Addition of lake health information to the Wollaston Township website
- Continue fundraising efforts for lake health initiatives
- On the lake signage for watercraft operators and at the public boat launch

With the continuous threat of aquatic invasive species, there will always be a need for community groups such as this one to continue the important work of education, collaboration and of course most of all ACTION! THANK YOU Terry and Wendy Thomas, Tracy McNaught, Fred McConnell, Adam Low, and George Berry - the committed members of the Milfoil Action Committee - for your time and efforts put forth for this very important community initiative.

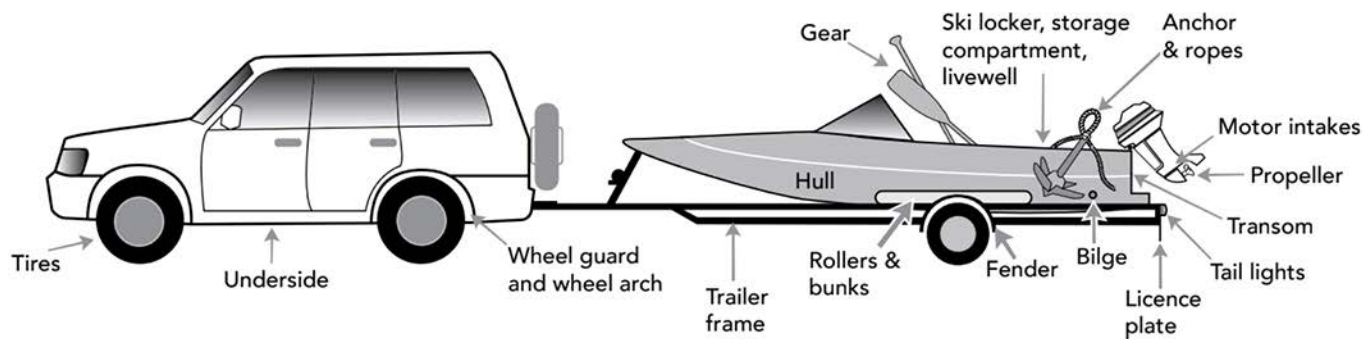
If you are interested in getting

involved with this committee or other related topics such as lake health, educational resources, community events and contests please visit the WLHCA website or Facebook page!

**Before launching,  
and before  
leaving...**

**CLEAN and  
DRAIN...IT IS NOW  
THE LAW!**

#### Where to look for Aquatic Invasive Species







By Mary Byrne - Director  
of Memberships

## Membership Matters

Whether your 'September' is disco style by Earth, Wind & Fire, or you prefer the crooner friendly 'September Song' of my personal favourite, Echo & the Bunnymen, or perhaps for the younger set, it is Green Day's 'Wake Me Up When September Ends', sadly, September does indeed always end.

What a memorable summer we had. Some good memories – social events were back! Some not so good memories – still cleaning up from Storm Victoria. At our place on Corral Post, we finally had stable electricity by July, which meant that with no running water and power for most of May & June, many projects have been put on hold until 2023. Parts to repair the boat were not available until August, which curtailed the usual tubing and wakeboard mayhem. And as parents, with our boys now young men, this was the summer of figuring out this new phase: one lived in Wollaston for the summer, working at a fantastic local business, with the other one too busy to head north much. Which brings me back to my September Song – with both off to university, leaving us old folks to pull out the boats and docks without the young muscle, as the days dwindle down to a precious few. These golden days.

## Membership

The membership for the Association has rebounded well from the



challenges of 2021. At the time of writing, we are at 54% of Wollaston Lake property owners (138) who have renewed their membership for 2022.

For those yet to pay, we welcome your support:  
Send an eTransfer for \$35 to:  
**wlhca.membership@gmail.com**  
Or  
Mail a Cheque for \$35 to:  
**WLHCA, PO Box 249, Coe Hill  
ON, K0L 1P0**

## Change of Ownership

12 properties have changed ownership in 2022.

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was held on the morning of Sunday August 7, at the Coe Hill Legion. We enjoyed a great breakfast, with 45 people attending in person, and several others who joined the meeting over the internet or by phone. It was fabulous to have a real meeting again! The agenda included reports from our executive, functions and

committees. The slate of officers for 2022-23 was affirmed as:

**President:** Luke Mellors

**Lake Steward:** Fred McConnell

**Vice President:** Mary Byrne

**Director of Membership:**

Vacant

**Treasurer:** Mike Benson

**Director of Communications:**

Vacant

**Secretary:** Casey Gallagher

**Milfoil Action Committee:**

Joanne Pozniak

**Members at Large:**

Angela Baltkois, Doug Rudder,

Kathy Corvers, Spencer Bush

We always have room for more, whether it be to fill a vacancy, or to run a social event. When you are ready, please get in touch.

Wishing everyone a happy Fall, and a joyous Christmas and New Year.



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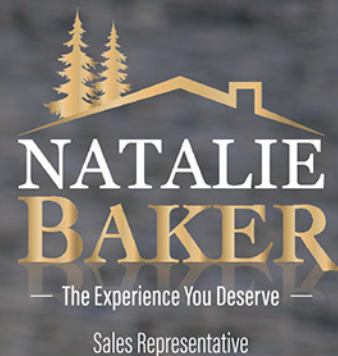


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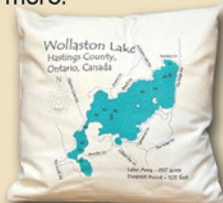
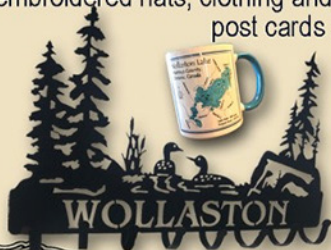
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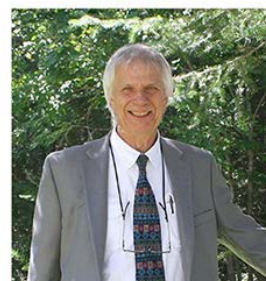
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