



THE NORTHERN REFLECTION

FALL 2026

President's Message by Fred McConnell

I am amazed that another beautiful summer on Wollaston Lake has concluded. It seems like just yesterday that the ice was going out from the lake and there were small amounts of snow lingering in the forest. Now, as I write this message, the leaves are at their colour peak, and crickets can be heard continuously.

In reflecting on the past summer's many events, and anticipating the start of planning for the 2027 season ahead, I am impressed by how strong and committed our volunteers are and the success of our community and lake health events. We continue to punch above our weight as a small group and are often contacted by other lake associations to understand how we do so much. We welcome and encourage people within the community to get involved and volunteer to help with our 2027 events and/or our slate of officers.



I was honoured to present the results of our Milfoil Action Committee benthic mat program managing Eurasian Milfoil at the request of the Invasive Species Centre at their online Forum. The recording of the event will be available on our website. A sincere thank you again to our volunteers and the Belleville Dive club who for the fourth year enthusiastically took part in the benthic mat installation.

This summer saw the WLHCA host the second annual community BBQ at the public beach. We had previously held this event at the legion. One hundred and fifty people enthusiastically enjoyed the live music, food and beautiful weather and Wollaston Lake scenery. Many thanks to all the volunteers and our partners, the North Hastings Community Fish Hatchery (NHC FH), the Coe Hill jam session musicians, and Robert Pye from Watersheds Canada. The event raised over \$300 which we split equally between the NHC FH and Coe Hill food bank.



A reminder that October 26, 2026, is the municipal election. From the MPAC assessment roll, Waterfront properties in Wollaston Township account for 59% of the total property value assessment of the township. Voting is via telephone and internet. This municipal election the voters list is managed by elections Ontario so be sure to check online to confirm you are registered on the voters list. We have posted a link to the recorded livestream (thank you to David Purdy, our Director of Membership for making this possible). We have also asked all candidates to respond to a question about their view of and support for lake and fish habitat initiatives and partnerships. We will also make the responses available on our web site.



Photos credit Stacey-Ann Sukharrie





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The following is a summary of the summer season of 2026 slate of events:

April to August

The Milfoil Action committee planned and executed on the Milfoil managements plans as approved by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). Thank you to all who confirmed mats for installation in front of their properties. A reminder to send us an email at wlhca.membership@gmail.com if you wish to have mat(s) installed in the summer of 2027. The committee also completed harvesting at the outlet of the second lake where water flow is being changed by milfoil growth. We were also able to complete added harvesting in the third lake. We are looking for a site in the second or third lake to offload the harvested materials to make the process more efficient than bringing the harvester all the back to the boat launch for unloading. If you're willing to have the harvester offload onto the trailer at your waterfront please contact us at wlhca.membership@gmail.com.



July

- Annual community BBQ on July 11 at the Wollaston Lake public beach.

August

- The poker run was back by popular demand and huge success on August 2nd of the civic holiday weekend despite the unsettled weather.
- The Annual General Meeting (AGM) was the morning of August 9th at the Coe Hill Legion again. Anyone wishing to be considered for the slate of officers should send an email to wlhca.membership@gmail.com. Results of the 2026 Invasive Species Survey were presented. Please reference the Lake Steward report for a summary.
- WLHCA booth at the annual Coe Hill fair was Saturday August 29th.

September

- Spawning bed rehabilitation in partnership with Watersheds Canada under permit from the MNR took place the second week of September. This was the third year for this initiative and now completes this project. Brush bundles providing habitat for hatched fry are in place and the two major spawning beds used by Pickerel and Lake Trout have

been cleaned and eight tons of washed river rock added.

This year again, the WLHCA continues to support local charities such as the foodbank with a donation, and we encourage our members to make contributions to the foodbank as the services are more in demand than ever due to rising costs. Members also volunteer at and attend the twice monthly breakfasts supporting the Coe Hill Legion and we encourage all to support local community events such as this, the strawberry dinner, and the spaghetti dinner at the United Church and monthly soup lunches as they are held. We will provide details as they are made available.

Clearly our community and partnerships are strong, making a difference for Wollaston Lake and the surrounding area. I encourage all to regularly check out our Facebook and Instagram pages as well as our new website event calendar for notifications of upcoming Association and community events.

In closing, I'm proud of the WLHCA accomplishments thus far in 2026 and look forward with optimism to the upcoming events in 2027.

Whether you contribute via membership fees or volunteer your time, every member makes a difference. These programs would not be possible without you.



FALL 2026

Lake Steward's Report by Fred McConnell

Recall, in the fall of 2025, the WLHCA initiated a survey of all Wollaston Township stakeholders to solicit input about the initiatives of the Milfoil Action Committee. The goals were to assess opinion of initiatives to date and gauge opinion regarding the Procellacor herbicide approved by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to combat the spread of milfoil.

This survey is a follow on to the 2021 survey, a component of the Watersheds Canada Love Your Lake waterfront property review. That program was communicated by Watersheds Canada to all Wollaston Lake Lake front property owners.

A subset of the original survey is also included later in this article to provide further context. The results were presented at the WLHCA annual general meeting in August 2026 and the recommendation voted on by the members in attendance. These results and recommendation are being made available to the Wollaston Township staff for inclusion in the October information to Council and are being posted on the WLHCA web site.

The response to the question of the potential use of the Procellacor herbicide was split with 49% being strongly and somewhat opposed

to herbicide use and 42% being strongly and somewhat in favour of Procellacor use. Based on that split and the concerns regarding the lack of detailed field research, the recommendation to not use herbicide at this time and monitor the research was adopted by a vote of the WLHCA members in attendance at the annual general meeting.

The motion adopted is as follows:

- Continue to monitor the status of Field Research pertaining to Procellacor and post on the WLHCA website
- * Limited field studies available – possible persistence of the chemical in sediment
- Monitor the activity of other Ontario Cottage Associations via FOCA
- Conduct a follow-up survey within 3 years



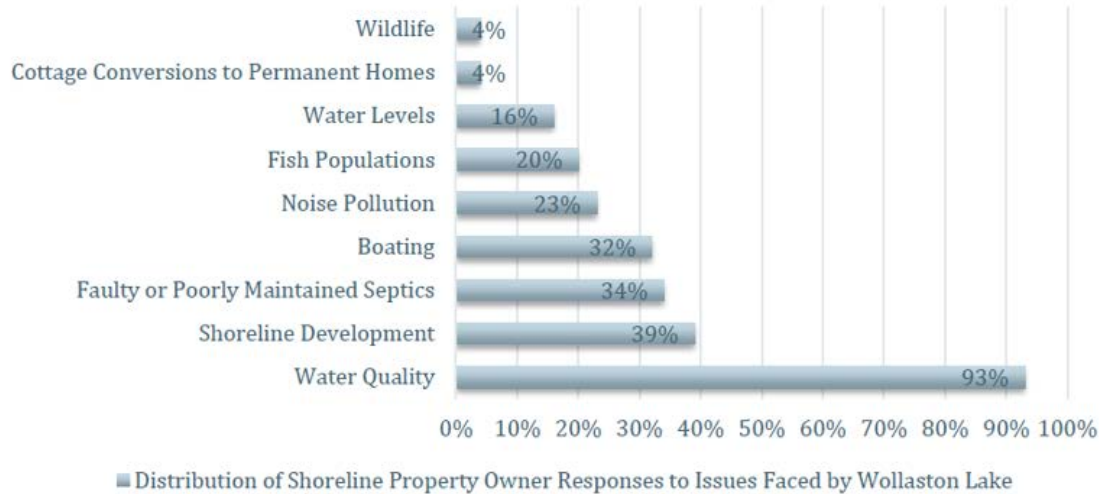
Photo above credit Lisa Sibbald



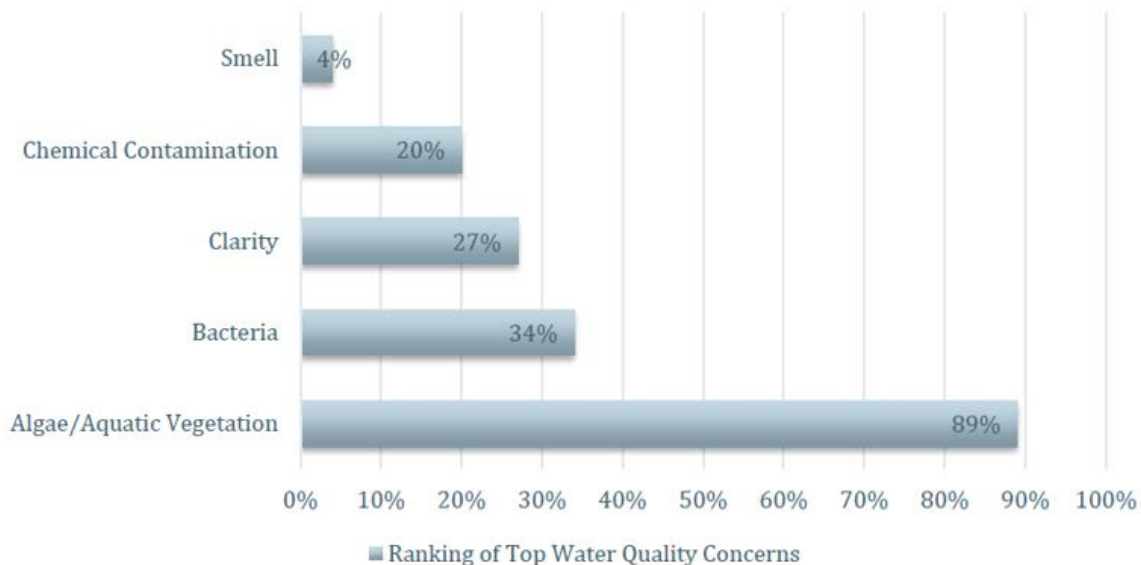
FALL 2026

Snapshot of Survey Results

Distribution of Shoreline Property Owner Responses to Issues Faced by Wollaston Lake

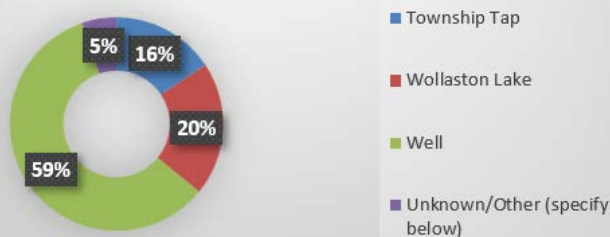


Ranking of Top Water Quality Concerns



FALL 2026

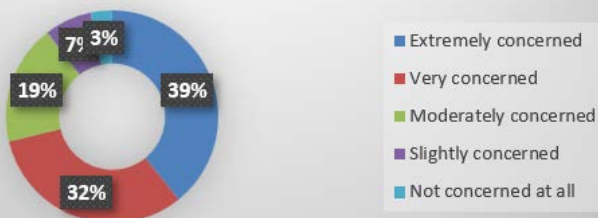
While in Wollaston Township, what is your primary source of potable water?



How familiar are you with Eurasian Water Milfoil? For example, can you identify it, do you understand its impact on the ecosystem, etc?



How concerned are you with invasive or unwanted aquatic plants/weeds in our lake?



Have you noticed the yellow buoys in the lake and understand their purpose?



Are you aware of the measures we have taken so far to control the spread of EWM?

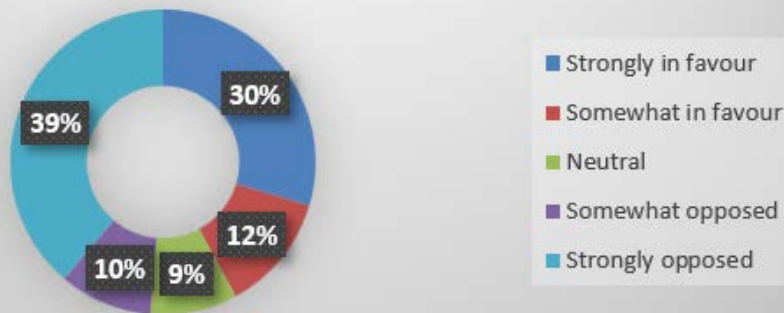


Are you aware that regulators have approved the use of certain aquatic herbicides to treat EWM?



Many comments expressed concerns with the limited field research and potential long-term impact to the ecosystem.

What is your overall opinion regarding the use of approved aquatic herbicides in Wollaston Lake to control the spread of EWM?



Water Quality Initiative Pertaining to the Burned Cottage on The Ridge Road

Following the fire over the Easter long weekend, the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) was contacted by the WLHCA to understand its review of the potential impact from the fire and subsequent runoff as it relates to the health of Wollaston Lake. The response at the time was that the MECP had visited the site, remained confident in the measures that the Wollaston Fire department undertook at the time of the fire and was actively pursuing site clean up with

the owners of the property.

The MECP had not undertaken, nor required water testing, but when requested, made a recommendation for testing that could be completed. The WLHCA (although not directly responsible), proactively completed the recommended testing through Caduceon Labs in Ottawa (funded wholly by membership dues) and provided the results to the MECP for review. The technical services team in Kingston reviewed those results and provided their assessment and recommendations. Those were shared with the Township staff and communicated to the property owners

by the MECP inspector. At time of writing, I am happy to report that site remediation is underway. Pictures of the site have been provided to the MECP inspector to ensure proper containment measures are in place. The MECP has also recommended testing of the lake bottom sediment adjacent to the property and are working with the property owners, accordingly.

Fish Habitat Rehabilitation

As identified through the Love Your Lake survey, fishing is one of the most popular recreational activities on Wollaston Lake. Elevated nutrient and silt levels threaten the viability of the spawning beds utilized by Lake Trout and Pickerel/Walleye to reproduce. Through our partnership with Watersheds Canada, cleaning/augmentation of the materials making up the spawning beds took place in September 2025 on one of the primary spawning beds on the west shore of the big island. In September 2026, the second largest spawning bed on the north shore of the island in the middle of the main lake was completed.

Thank you to all the volunteers who provided boats and shovelled the three yards of washed river rock into buckets to spread it on the spawning bed. All activity was completed under permit from the MNR for work in the water and habitat restoration. Over the two years, Watersheds Canada

funded all work relating to spawning bed improvement and restoration. The project to restore the major spawning bed and place brush bundles for fry habitat is complete. We will utilize the underwater drone funded by a number of area cottage associations (including WLHCA) and the NHCFFH to monitor their status of the spawning beds and activity during the spawning seasons of Lake Trout and Walleye/Pickereel.

Milfoil Action Committee (MAC) Update

You will recall that our primary strategies for European Water Milfoil (EWM) remediation were application of biodegradable lakebed mats to suppress EWM and harvesting of milfoil where beds are particularly dense or in high traffic areas.

So, how did it go with the mats?

The Belleville Dive Club once again volunteered to do the in-water work. Great people! They spent a half day with us hitting as many sites as possible. Due to a weather delay, the work took place on August 22nd and went very smoothly. Volunteers in boats and a McGyvered barge ferried out mats and stone (to anchor the mats) to the divers.

Five sites were treated with a total of 10 mats:

- Ridge Road/Chescher Lane near Bear Ridge
- The Bay by Lawrence Lane

- Northside of the big island
- Anson Bay
- Second Lake past the narrows

In all, some 12,000 square feet of EWM beds were treated this year, which represents our best effort yet. While this is significant, more could be done with increased funding. Our work this year was funded by Invasive Species Canada, monies raised from WLHCA events such as the Poker Run, and donations from property owners. All of this was supplemented by the volunteer divers, boat drivers, and folks who ran the lunch BBQ (those chilly divers needed the calories).

Interesting.

What about the harvesting?

August 14th saw us return to a harvesting strategy with a new contractor – Clean Lakes, and a harvester that we hoped could access Third Lake which has some large EWM beds.

The harvester was supported by volunteers in 3 boats that skimmed the work area for floating milfoil fragments. The harvester takes the cut milfoil on board. Once full, it makes its way to a shore access point where the milfoil is cleanly transferred into a waiting trailer that hauls it away to be used as compost on a local organic farm.

The access point we used was the

public boat launch. This resulted in some lost time as the harvester returned to the launch to unload each time. Volunteers oversaw the loading and were prepared to rake up any cuttings that went astray. It was easy work as the transfer was fast and clean. We will look for a site where the pick-up and trailer can get to the waterfront closer to the work next season.

Thank you

Of course, our thanks for all of you who volunteered and those who sit on the Milfoil Action Committee. We are especially grateful to the Belleville Dive Club for the support and assistance and to the project funders – without you, this would not be possible.

Special thanks to all of you who completed our questionnaire on the EWM remediation work. It is important that the people doing the work hear the different perspectives. Please continue sharing your thoughts and opinions with us.

There is room on the Milfoil Action Committee for additional members, and we always need some volunteer help during the in-water remediation work each summer. Check out the Get Involved link on our website Home Page to learn more. Together, we can continue to make a difference for the health of Wollaston Lake.

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The Magic of Wollaston Lake

Wollaston Lake has stirred the hearts of all who know its shores, awakening memories, wonder, and a profound sense of belonging. Regardless of the length of time one has been affiliated with Wollaston Lake, there's an inevitable love that blooms. Six members of our Executive Committee have shared why our lake plays such an integral part of their lives, focusing on the following points:

1. Length of affiliation with Wollaston Lake
2. Importance of Wollaston Lake
3. Special memory or favorite activity
4. Meaningful photo

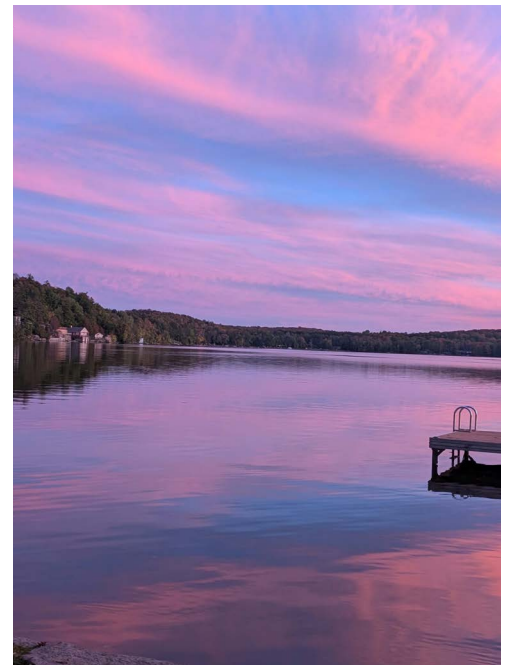
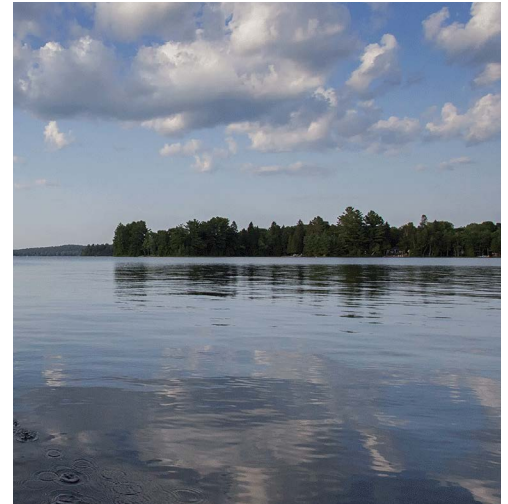
Fred McConnell, President and Lake Steward:

The Currie family cottage was built in 1954 (prior to Beach Lane being built and hydro lines installed) by floating the materials down the lake from what is now the boat launch using hand tools. My wife Sheila has been on Wollaston Lake every year (except 1) since her birth.

We bought the family cottage in 2009 and moved to Wollaston Lake full time in 2020 because it has always been the central hub of our family. We and our children feel the cottage is our home over and above every other place we have lived.

Outdoor sports have always been a cornerstone of our family. Our

children caught their first fish here, learned to swim and developed a love of nature and the outdoors on Wollaston lake. Wollaston lake is the place they bring friends and connect as often as possible with their cousins.





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Pete Lennox, Vice President & Secretary

I'm a child of the 50s, and when I was a kid, my mom's best friend owned a cottage on the north shore of mighty Wollaston Lake, down near the public beach. I have memories of standing on a sandy beach (before the dam went in) when I was a kid. It's the only place in the world that has been part of my life for almost seven decades.

The Noonan/Desso family sold the place to Kathy and me in 2012, and we've enjoyed renovating it, cherishing it, and welcoming friends and family alike. It's our happy place. I've been coming to Wollaston Lake pretty well all my life, and have come to care about this lake and this

community very much. I don't live here full-time, but my heart belongs to Wollaston and its beautiful lake, whether I'm here or away.

The picture was taken from our dock on September 25, 2026, when the sun was setting in the west, past the public beach.

Mike Benson, Treasurer:

My family and I first visited Wollaston Lake in the summer of 2007. We purchased our place on Lawrence Lane in 2009 and have enjoyed 18 years of family gatherings and happy times on the lake. It is our 'cottage haven' where we come to relax, connect with family and friends and share memories.

A favourite pastime is enjoying the marvelous sunsets from our dock.

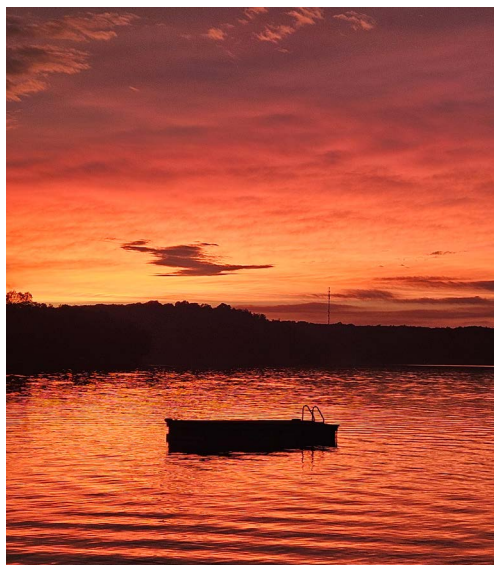
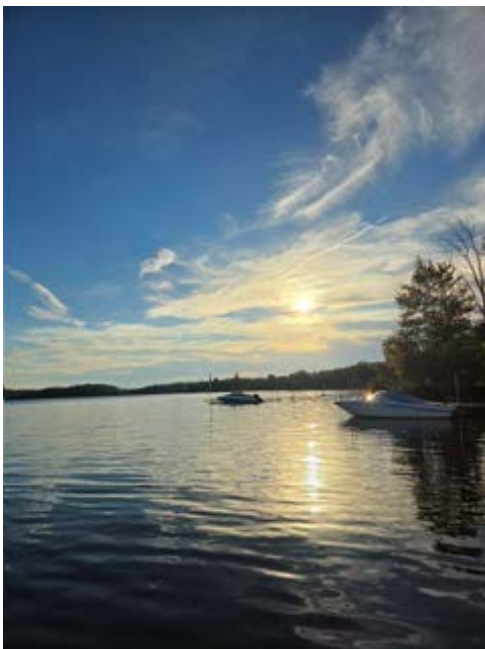
David Purdy, Director of Membership:

I have been on the lake for 40 years and took my first boat ride on Wollaston Lake in June of 1986, just two months after I was born.

The lake represents a lifetime of memories: spending time with family and lifelong friends around the lake.

Favourite memories include learning and teaching friends to waterski, working on projects, and of course, countless dinner parties with neighbours.

Photo of Purdy cottage summer 1962, East Corner of Anson Bay.



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Carol Dahlquist, Member at Large:

We bought our Beach Lane cottage in the fall of 1998. In 2015 we tore down the old cottage and built a log home and have been living here full time for the past 4 years. My husband has been coming to the lake for over 70 years. His parents built the family cottage, now owned by my brother and sister-in-law, next door to us in 1954.

The lake is meaningful to us because of the memories we have created. Having a place where our entire family can come together gives us the opportunity to create cherished, lifelong memories with our children and grandchildren, and our two

loveable labs, while also sharing this special place with my elderly mom, who lives with us. It is a place that brings generations together and gives us the gift of time, connection, and memories we will treasure for years to come.

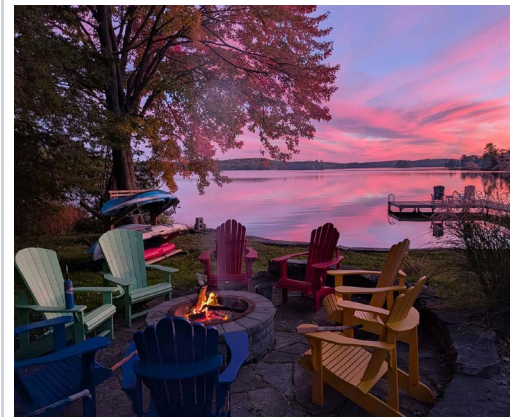
We love everything lake-related! From long, hot summer days spent swimming, kayaking and boating, to quiet mornings and evenings sitting on the dock, gazing out at the lake. Then come the gorgeous colours of fall, followed by the glorious, peaceful days of winter, when the snow settles softly all around us. Every season has its own magic, and we feel truly blessed to experience it all.

But if I had to pick one activity, it would be watching our Black Labrador Ruby jumping endlessly off the end of the dock!

Stacey-Ann Sukharrie, Director of Communications:

My husband and I first visited Wollaston Lake in the summer of 2006, renting a cottage on Kendon Lane. We fell in love with the lake, continued renting there for many years until we purchased our own cottage, also on Kendon Lane in 2021.

Wollaston Lake means the world to us. Here, our daughter - now 16 - caught her first fish, enjoyed her first s'more, learned to swim, tube, drive a boat, build a fire, and appreciate nature. Together with our two pups, we divide our time between Coe Hill and Markham. We love and embrace all seasons and enjoy the winter wonderland that provides opportunities for ice-fishing, skating and quiet reflection.





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Wollaston Lake continues to surprise us: from meaningful friendships with neighbours to waking up to deer at our doorstep to breathtaking cotton-candy sunsets, our lake continues to be magical. We feel fortunate to

Wollaston Public Library Update

Now that autumn is upon us, the Wollaston Public Library is busy preparing to deliver excellent service through the colder months.

Library staff and the Library Board are delighted that Wollaston Council approved funding for a pilot project to expand the Library's opening hours. We aim to make the Library as accessible as possible, ensuring the community can access library services later on a weekday and on weekends. Accordingly, the Library is now open on Wednesdays until 6:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 11:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. This pilot project will run until November 8, 2026, so please feel free to visit during these expanded hours. The Library Board will review usage statistics from the extended hours to inform our 2027 budgeting process.

If you have questions about the pilot project or wish to comment on the Library's hours, please call Kelly at the Library (613-337-5183) or email us at libraryboard@wollaston.ca.

have found this project a joy to be a part of, and the results will help inform the planning for our new building. The Board is now developing a fundraising strategy, and we look forward to partnering with community groups that might support us with fundraising events. Please reach out to Kelly or the Board if you are interested in hosting an event or have ideas about potential partners.

We are also excited about our improved website! Please take a moment to check it out at www.wollastonpubliclibrary.ca.

The website provides information such as our hours and Library programs, and also gives you access to our catalogue and the resources and services that are available through our dynamic facility and the excellent staff who serve the community in it. Also, remember to check us out on social media; we're on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WollastonPublicLibrary>.

We are most grateful to the community for our successful book sale on August 16. So many of you donated materials and participated in the sale that we raised over \$900 – a record amount – all of which will support Library operations. Thank you!

The Library Board is appointed by Wollaston Township Council, and library trustees serve a four-

year term, aligned with the term of Council. This is an election year, so following the vote on October 26, our municipal clerk will post a notice seeking library-board members. If you would like to volunteer to be part of the Library Board, please watch for the notice and reach out to the Clerk. Be a part of the Wollaston Public Library and its exciting future!

In the meantime, have a safe and wonderful winter.

Current Library Hours

- Monday and Saturday: Closed
- Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday: Noon to 4:00 p.m.
- Wednesday: Noon to 6:00 p.m. (3:00 p.m. after November 8)
- Sunday: 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Closed after November 8)



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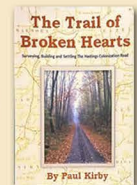
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