



## GREATER OTTER LAKE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

### SPRING 2021 UPDATE

<https://www.gora-argo.org>

Greetings from your GORA Board! We hope everyone has remained safe during these COVID times. We are pleased to provide you with an update on the Board's activities.

#### **Annual General Meeting 2021/Board Positions**

The Board is considering holding an AGM this summer. At this point, we cannot be sure that large indoor gatherings will be allowed in Quebec. However, a virtual AGM is a possibility. We will provide confirmation and more details in June. All ten Board positions are up for nomination in 2021.

#### **Membership Fees 2021**

Meanwhile, we would appreciate receiving your \$25 annual membership fee. Please note that you can make your payment via e-transfer to [gora.argo@gmail.com](mailto:gora.argo@gmail.com). Alternatively, you may send a cheque to GORA, P.O. Box 490, Otter Lake, QC J0X 2P0.

#### **New Mandatory Boat Washing By-law is in Effect**

Everyone received a pamphlet on boat-washing with the recent property tax bill. We would like to draw your attention to a few changes in process.

#### **New Boat Wash Station:**

Due to COVID, the timeline for delivery of some of the equipment for the boat wash station has been delayed. As a result, the payment kiosk and new power washer are not yet installed. Magnetic cards and boat stickers will not be available until the kiosk is up and running. The goal

is to have it set up at some point in May. Meanwhile, the existing power washer remains available for use at the Municipal Hall.

### **\*\*Important Changes\*\* to What Taxpayers Need to Do:**

- 1) To receive your free boat wash magnetic card, you must fill out and sign the Boat Wash Attestation Form which is being sent to you along with this newsletter. You can send it by mail to Municipality of Otter Lake, 15 Palmer Avenue, Otter Lake, QC J0X 2P0 OR complete, sign, scan and send it by e-mail to [otter-lake@mrcpontiac.qc.ca](mailto:otter-lake@mrcpontiac.qc.ca). Be sure to include your mailing address so that the Municipal Office can send you the magnetic card by mail.
- 2) If you are a taxpayer who leaves your motorized boat on the same lake for the entire season, you will also be issued a sticker to affix to the boat. If an inspection is performed, you may be asked to show your sticker. You will NOT be required to wash your boat if you are launching it into the same lake year after year.
- 3) If you move your boat from lake to lake during the season or if you are launching it this year after having been in a different body of water last year, you **MUST WASH IT BEFORE EACH LAUNCH**.
- 4) When you touch the magnetic card at the kiosk, the pressure washer will be activated. At the end of the wash cycle, the kiosk will issue a "wash certificate" and receipt that you should keep as proof that your boat has been washed.

### **Why do taxpayers need to sign an attestation form?**

By signing the attestation form, you attest to being aware of the Mandatory Boat Washing By-law 02-09-2020 and you understand that you must wash your boat before launching, i.e., if you take it out of one lake and plan to launch it into another. You also attest that your magnetic card is for your use **ONLY** and you will not share it with others.

You are also asked to indicate the type of boat(s) you use and whether they remain on the same lake (if so, give address of lake property) **OR** they are moved from lake to lake.

### **How will the by-law be enforced?**

Beginning this year, boat launch sites will be regularly monitored, particularly to ensure that visitors with boats are in compliance. Warnings and/or fines will be issued, as necessary. There is a \$300 fine for non-compliance. In addition, the boat wash station will be under 24-hour surveillance.

The by-law involves a culture shift and it will require the entire community to respect and implement. While communications material will be widespread, we encourage everyone to talk to their neighbours and help ensure that they are aware of the by-law and understand its significance. We trust that there will be an understanding of the importance of boat-washing and we can continue to protect our lakes for enjoyment for many years to come.

We encourage you to review the by-law which is posted on the GORA website as well as the Municipality's website at Local Government-Bylaws-Environment (<https://www.otterlakequebec.ca/by-laws>).

### **How will it work for non-taxpayers or visitors with boats?**

- 1) Non-taxpayers will need to pay \$10 per motorized boat (non-motorized boats are free);
- 2) Payment is accepted at the payment kiosk at the wash station;
- 3) Once the boat is washed, the kiosk will issue a "wash certificate" and transaction receipt;
- 4) The boat user must keep the "wash certificate" to show as proof;
- 5) The boat user must place their transaction receipt on the dash of their vehicle so that it is visible;
- 6) The wash certificate for non-taxpayers will be valid for the day that it is issued.

### **Farm Lake Water Level Measurement Project**

As of April 2020, GORA began recording the water level of Farm Lake to ensure that water is flowing out of the lake unimpeded through the creek and culvert.

We now have one year's worth of measurements to act as our first baseline to compare the level of Farm Lake between years. Water levels so far this spring are significantly lower than last year. This year's peak was 10" above Summer Low at March 31, compared to the peak of +17.5" in April last year. Summer Low is defined as the lowest level seen on Farm Lake over the last half-decade, as agreed by owners of two of the low-lying properties.

The most recent measurement is 6.75" above Summer Low. The complete set of daily measurements is updated frequently (<https://www.gora-argo.org/farm-lake-water-level>).

We check the culvert regularly to ensure that the water is flowing freely and we thank the Municipality and the Provincial Ministry of Transport for responding quickly when blockages need to be cleared.

### **Results from 2020 Lake Water Testing**

Results from the testing done in 2020 are now available at the following website:

<https://www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/eau/rsvl/relais/index.asp>

For ease of reference, we have updated our chart of results (see below). You will see that all four of the lakes scored very well. The province recommends that the lakes "be protected" to preserve this status, and for us, this reinforces the importance of boat washing and taking care of our lakes.

Results include those done for measuring water clarity (using the Secchi disk) and the separate sampling done for the second consecutive year to determine the levels of phosphorus, chlorophyll, and dissolved organic carbon. As you may recall, these tests are done typically over a 2-3 year period in order to get a representative sample.

We are grateful to the Municipal Council for their 50% contribution towards the cost of these special 2020 tests. We are also pleased to announce that the MNA for Pontiac, André Fortin, has recently provided \$1000.00 to GORA which covers the remaining 50%. We are very appreciative of his support for our efforts to protect our lakes.

The Ministry of Environment is recommending that we continue to take samples for phosphorus, etc. in 2021 and perhaps a couple more years or until they can make adjustments to data from samples taken in previous years. This is due to a new method of analysis that they are using. The good news is that the province will cover 75 percent of the costs, so, the cost for GORA would be reduced to \$125 per lake per year.

A big thank you goes out to the "testing team": Valerie Buchanan (Little Hughes), Nick Cushman (Hughes), John and Maggie Madden (McCuaig), and Stewart Wilson (Farm) for volunteering to collect the samples.

### **Seven Classifications of Trophic Level of Lakes:**

- 1 = Ultra-oligotrophic (exceptionally good state)
- 2 = Oligotrophic
- 3 = Oligo-mesotrophic
- 4 = Mesotrophic
- 5 = Meso-eutrophic
- 6 = Eutrophic
- 7 = Hypereutrophic (extremely poor state)

## FARM LAKE

	Transparency (metres)	Phosphorus (micrograms/litre)	Chlorophyll (micrograms/litre)	Dissolved Organic Carbon (milligrams/litre)
2010	6.1	4.1	1.9	2.7
2011	5.3	5.3	2.5	3.0
2012	5.8	2.2	1.7	3.6
2013	5.6			
2014	5.3			
2015	5.8			
2016	5.2			
2017	4.8			
2018	5.3			
2019	5.3	3.8	1.3	4.3
2020	5.9	3.3	1.5	4.4

### Brief Summary of 2020 Results

- Transparency of 5.9 metres characterizes clear water and indicates an oligo-mesotrophic state;
- Phosphorus level indicates that the lake is only slightly enriched by phosphorus (ultra-oligotrophic);
- Chlorophyll level shows a low biomass of microscopic algae in suspension (oligotrophic);
- Dissolved organic carbon level indicates that the water is coloured (from organic deposits) and this colour would affect the transparency of the water;
- Overall, Farm Lake is considered to be in an **oligotrophic** state with little or no signs of eutrophication. This is the second best out of the seven classifications of trophic levels.

## HUGHES LAKE

	Transparency (metres)	Phosphorus (micrograms/litre)	Chlorophyll (micrograms/litre)	Dissolved Organic Carbon (milligrams/litre)
2010	5.0	3.5	1.9	2.9
2011	4.7	3.5	2.1	3.1
2012	5.2	2.2	1.4	3.2
2013	6.7			
2014	3.4			
2015	4.8			
2016	4.9			
2017	3.7			
2018	4.6			
2019	4.7	4.4	1.4	4.0
2020	4.9	4.4	1.3	2.7

### Brief Summary of 2020 Results:

- Transparency of 4.9 metres characterizes clear water (oligo-mesotrophic state);
- Phosphorus level indicates that the lake is only slightly enriched by phosphorus (oligotrophic);
- Chlorophyll level shows a low biomass of microscopic algae in suspension (oligotrophic);
- Dissolved organic carbon level indicates that the water is slightly coloured (from organic deposits) but this colour would likely have little effect on the transparency of the water;
- Overall, Hughes Lake is placed in the **oligotrophic** state with little or no signs of eutrophication. This is the second best out of the seven classifications of trophic levels.

## LITTLE HUGHES LAKE

	Transparency (metres)	Phosphorus (micrograms/litre)	Chlorophyll (micrograms/litre)	Dissolved Organic Carbon (milligrams/litre)
2010	6.4	5.6	1.3	3.0
2011	5.7	2.9	0.8	3.0
2012	6.8	2.2	1.1	2.4
2013	5.3			
2014	6.1			
2015	6.3			
2016	----			
2017	----			
2018	7.2*			
2019	6.1	3.4	0.9	2.2
2020	6.4	3.4	1.0	2.0

\*Only one Secchi disk measurement taken (September 2018).

### Brief Summary of 2020 Results:

- Transparency of 6.4 metres characterizes very clear water (oligotrophic state);
- Phosphorus level indicates that the lake has only very slight signs of enrichment by phosphorus (ultra-oligotrophic);
- Chlorophyll level shows a very low biomass of microscopic algae in suspension (oligotrophic);
- Dissolved organic carbon level indicates that the water is not very coloured (from organic deposits) and this colour would likely have a very small effect on the transparency of the water;
- Overall, Little Hughes is considered to be in an **oligotrophic** state with little or no signs of eutrophication. This is the second best out of the seven classifications of trophic levels.

## MCCUAIG LAKE

	Transparency (metres)	Phosphorus (micrograms/litre)	Chlorophyll (micrograms/litre)	Dissolved Organic Carbon (milligrams/litre)
2010	7.0	6.7	1.0	2.0
2011	6.2	2.7	0.9	1.8
2012	7.2	1.6	0.8	2.3
2013	6.4			
2014	6.3			
2015	6.9			
2016	----			
2017	----			
2018	7.5*			
2019	6.1	4.2	0.7	3.1
2020	6.9	3.9	0.8	1.9

\*Only one Secchi disk measurement taken (September 2018).

### Brief Summary of 2020 Results:

- Transparency of 6.9 metres characterizes very clear water (oligotrophic);
- Phosphorus level indicates that the lake has only very slight signs of enrichment by phosphorus (ultra-oligotrophic);
- Chlorophyll level shows a very low biomass of microscopic algae in suspension (ultra-oligotrophic);
- Dissolved organic carbon level indicates that the water is slightly coloured (from organic deposits) but this colour would likely have very little effect on the transparency of the water;
- Overall, McCuaig Lake is placed in the **ultra-oligotrophic** state with little or no signs of eutrophication. This is the very best out of the seven classifications of trophic levels.