



Newsletter Spring 2010

President's Message

(Bill Goderre)

Bill's Blog

Welcome back after another Great Canadian Winter! Although it was a mild one, it's nice to feel the warmth of the sun again. I am a real fan of the Olympics and watched our Canadian team's performance with great enthusiasm. I would like to congratulate the participants on their achievements.

In my apprenticeship as RLPOA president, I attended several meetings along with Wendy Engel and Don Pouliot over the fall and winter. One was an update on **KHR's waste management long-term planning**. As the Round Lake site may be included in the plan, **I would encourage everyone to get involved by attending future public meetings** and voicing your opinions. Public meetings will be posted on the RLPOA and KHR websites.

I also met with the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) in Pembroke, regarding **fish stocking of Round Lake**. I must say they are willing and helpful. Our discussions touched on many points about the nature of the lake, the variety of species in it, and the lack of others.

Round Lake is not a Pickerel/Walleye lake. It lacks in structure, and the water is too clear. Now, I know many of you are thinking I am nuts because you used to catch all kinds of these fish. So did I when I first came to Round Lake in the 80's. But every one of the Walleye we caught was put there. The lake was regularly stocked throughout the years since the 30's. The records, which are public knowledge, indicate stocking of Lake Trout, Speckle Trout, Kamloops Trout, Grey Trout, Small Mouth Bass, and Walleye. Many of you will remember that the area was a hot spot for anglers from all over the Province and the USA. Unfortunately those days are over, as the last stocking of the lake was July 1986 when 1,200 Walleye were put in. **I have yet to determine why the program was stopped**, whether budgets, politics or lack of interest, **but my goals are to find out and to bring some of it back**.

Round Lake has been designated as a **Lake Trout** lake. I am told the trout are unique to the lake and therefore will be protected as one of a kind in Ontario. Because of this, **MNR will not permit other trout to be overstocked**. This raises one question that has not been answered to my satisfaction: If the lake was stocked for 51 years with lake trout that would have bred with other lake trout, did the stocking not create the species? (By the way, during that period over 237,000 trout were put in the lake.) So in order to stock lake trout, **we would have to catch and milk them, and then raise the fry** until

they can be put back into the lake. This is a ten year process, so what can we do in the meantime?

As I mentioned, MNR was very helpful. Our discussions also centered on other species such as **Small Mouth Bass**. The lake already has a good bass fishery. This can be improved by creating additional habitat, for example underwater structures where the bass can hide. I have applied for a grant through MNR for funds to assist us in this effort. Now all I need is the know-how. This is where you can help. If you have any experience in this regard, please contact me at info.rlpoa.info, or use the mail-in sheet. I have heard from a member of the Petawawa Bass Masters organization, and will meet with them to discuss any assistance they can offer.

I know you are waiting to hear something more about **Pickerel/Walleye**. We can apply for a permit and stock the lake with "picks" again. I have talked with two organizations that can help—the Eastern Ontario Walleye Association and a Pembroke group that has a fish farming facility. If there is a cost involved, it would be up to us to raise the funds.

In conclusion, I said I was interested in restocking Round Lake, and as you can see, I am. I will need your help and expertise. When it comes time, we will require a committee to operate the program. I will be glad to be part of it, but I will not be able to run it entirely, as I have many other duties and a business to run. **So let's talk and come up with a plan, and let's get fishing!!!**

Please Support Your RLPOA

Your membership fees, donations, participation in fundraising, and volunteerism support the many RLPOA programs important to the lake and its property owners: Stewardship (water quality monitoring and education); Safety (boating hazard markers and Cottage Watch); Issues and Negotiations (water levels, park planning, waste management planning); Communications (newsletters and website); Community Involvement; support for umbrella associations such as the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association and Waterfront Ratepayers After Fair Taxation); administration.

Many thanks to those of you who have responded this year. **We ask those who have yet to do so to please use the mail-in sheet**. Don't forget that we need your updated contact info, including your email address so we can send you any short-notice messages (blind copied, of course.) We do not share your information with outside organizations, and only use it within our own on a strict need-to-know basis.

July 24 Annual General Meeting ◆Board Positions Open◆

Please mark your calendars: The RLPOA AGM 2010 will be held July 24, Saint Casimir's Church Hall, Round Lake Centre, registration 9:00 a.m., meeting to start at 9:30 a.m.

Three-year terms scheduled for the following positions are concluding and therefore open to election: president; vice president; past president; treasurer; stewardship chair; water levels chair; shoreline directors for areas A, D and N (Reserve Creek to Jack's Creek, Pine Point to Bonnechere River, and Dombroskie's Point to Reserve Creek). Nominations must be received by July 5. Please contact any Board member or reach us by email: info.rlpoa.info. Remember that a shoreline director must own property within the area he or she represents, and that a property owner's designate (see definition on mail-in sheet) can hold a board position. **Other positions that are presently vacant** and can therefore be filled at any time during their current terms are listed on the volunteer side of the mail-in sheet. (Thank you to **Linda Dombroskie** who has responded to the need for a shoreline director for Sunrise Road to the Sherwood River.)

Please consider helping. The board is a friendly group, the subjects and issues discussed are interesting, and you will be participating in the betterment of the lake.

Issues & Negotiations Water Levels

(Don Pouliot, RLPOA Water Levels Chairman)

Freshet

As of the April 15th submission of this article - so far, so good! A very benign freshet, due to the early, warm and dry spring we are experiencing, is a very welcome respite from the last several years. Water levels in both Golden and Round Lakes were lowered to the maximum allowed within the Water Management Plan (WMP) by Renfrew Power Generation (RPG) in mid March. As a result, both lakes were as prepared as possible under the current WMP for the annual spring floods. Given that there is little or no snow remaining in Algonquin Park and minimal precipitation forecasted for over the next couple of weeks, spring water levels should not be as high as in previous years. The following link is the weekly water level chart produced by RPG:

<http://www.renfrewpg.ca/waterlevels/RoundLakeLevels.pdf>

Thermal Ice Push

During the first or second week in January, a most interesting phenomenon occurred: An ice ridge approximately 3 feet high, exploded with a loud "boom" in a line across the middle of the lake from Dombroskie's point over to the islands. A possible explanation for the formation of the ridge is that the ice

expanded, as typical during a thermal ice push event, however it appears that the shoreline ice was well anchored and the expansion could only be vented by upwelling and splitting of the ice cap out in the lake.

According to hearsay evidence from long-term residents, these ice ridges used to be a common event in the 1940's/50's and only very occasionally from the 1960's to the present. The latter seems to coincide with the initiation of the higher water level regimes in the late 50's, whereas prior to that time, levels were held static with minimal drawdown in the fall and winter. Possibly shoreline ice anchors better if not subjected to water level drawdown during freeze-up.



Another interesting observation was that this January's ridges generally formed along the deep-water drop-off. (Such formations also apparently used to be a common occurrence on Golden Lake, similarly along the drop-offs.) RPG made special efforts to take photos and measurements of the ridge as well as ice bores along the shorelines. This data will be reviewed and analyzed at a meeting scheduled in May.

Later in January, a thermal ice push took place at the shoreline, narrowly missing some structures and also causing some property damage, although minimal in comparison to previous years. It was mostly evident in Saint Patrick's Bay, but smaller pushes occurred in Eno and Sand Bays. The RLPOA maintains that the best prevention of shoreline damage is to lower fall levels sufficiently to create a 20-30 ft buffer zone around the perimeter of the lake, which would serve to contain all but the very worst thermal ice push events. RPG has the ability to do this within the current WMP, but chose to lower this year's fall levels by only four to five inches in order to observe effects downstream. All being well, we encourage them to increase this drawdown next fall.

Bonnechere System High Water Emergency Communications Meetings

Over the winter, the Golden Lake Property Owners Association (GLPOA) organized an excellent initiative to establish a communication process in the event of future flood conditions as experienced in 2005 and 2008 on both Golden and Round Lakes. A major problem in those years related to the lack of communication between all affected and involved groups. For example, there was no clear method as to when and how to identify and initiate emergency flood control actions by RPG and the other dam operators, and the municipalities along the Bonnechere system. There needed to be better coordination in requesting emergency services from provincial resources, when and how to best dissipate high flood waters, provision of protective sandbags by the various municipalities, identifying and sending evacuation notices to affected property owners, etc.

Three meetings were held November 19, 2009, January 7, 2010, and March 11, 2010 with excellent attendance and participation by the MNR, RPG, GLPOA, RLPOA and the local municipalities

in which the lakes are located. Agreements and process have been completed on several items, and further meetings are scheduled on an ongoing basis to complete the remaining issues. We hope ways and means of preventative actions to control flooding will also be explored. A full summary of all agreements and processes will be forthcoming in a future newsletter. The minutes of the Nov. and Jan. meetings can be accessed at: <http://www.goldenlake.infowater/communications.htm>
The March meeting minutes can be accessed on the RPG website at: <http://www.renfrewpg.ca>

Our thanks and appreciation to the GLPOA for initiating this series of communication protocol meetings and especially to Kevin O'Connor and John Gulland for their exceptional organizational efforts and hard work.

RPG Log Pull Records

Log pull records of the Tramore and Golden Lake dam operations have been obtained via the Freedom of Information Act from the MNR for the years 1995 to 2009 for Round Lake, and from 1993 to 2009 for Golden Lake. Missing for both lakes are the records for the years 1997 and 2002 as well as all years prior to the above dates. RPG have the full data records for all years, however as a private company they are not required to comply with the FOI Act and it is our understanding they are unwilling to release the information at this time. However, under section 4.2.4 of the WMP, RPG is required to "maintain and retain all level and flow information.... for future reference". Therefore, as log pulls are integral to water levels and flow volume, it is our opinion that this information should be freely available to the public. We are exploring other options for acquiring the omitted records under the FOI Act.

Our purpose for obtaining the log pull data is to allow analysis of exceptional water level and flow conditions that have been experienced over the past 65 years and to permit validation of what actions were conducted by the dam operators of the time that alleviated or exacerbated those conditions. Due to manpower and related cost restrictions RPG cannot perform this analysis in detail, but could be the beneficiary of any insights that may come to light as a result of the analysis. Hopefully RLPOA will have access to all of the log pull records in the near future.

Thanks to Ron Fabian, whose persistence and understanding of the FOI process has helped the RLPOA to successfully obtain the MNR records.

N.B. **Please report any shoreline property damage!**

It is important that we continue to be aware of and document damages to shoreline. This is the only way to build up the case for more aggressive action to resolve the continuing erosion of shoreline properties. To report problems and/or receive further information or explanations of water levels issues, please contact **Don Pouliot** (djfp@sympatico.ca 613-756-2631; 613-633-9035).

Boating Safety

Pleasure Craft Operator Card is now mandatory

All operators of motorized pleasure craft must have on board a PCOC. Those of us who have procrastinated may find ourselves in a lineup, so we advise that you attend to this ASAP. Transport Canada provides a list of accredited course providers at www.tc.gc.ca/eng/marinesafety If numbers warrant (and no doubt they will), Golden Lake POA intends to repeat its highly successful four-hour course (including the exam), on July 3, 8:00 a.m. at Killaloe Public School. \$30.00 per person. You are asked to pre-register by email (info@goldenlake.info) or by mail to GLPOA, PO Box 99, Golden Lake ON KOJ IXO.

FOCA Welcomes Individual Memberships

A modest portion of your RLPOA membership fee is designated to our association's membership in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations. Many of our past newsletters have described some of the work FOCA does on behalf of waterfront property owners, not only at the provincial level, but also by providing a wealth of resources to assist waterfront associations in their endeavours at their local levels. To gain a real appreciation of the great benefit FOCA affords all of us, take a trip through their website at <http://www.foca.on.ca>

Like any other association, membership revenue provides an important source of funding for FOCA. If you would like to also support them as an individual member, please see <http://www.foca.on.ca/join-foca> If you are not "online" but would like a form, contact the RLPOA at info.rlpoa.info



Stewardship Algae



The following material (to dotted line) has been extracted from FOCA's Docktalk Fact Sheet.

What are algae?

Algae are tiny organisms. Like plants, most algae use photosynthesis to make their own food, and are often green.

How do algae survive?

Algae make their food in the form of starches or oils by using the energy of sunlight and nutrients from the water. They grow in many forms. Some species are microscopic simple cells; others can grow as mass aggregates of cells or in strands. They can even resemble higher plants.

Are algae good for the lake?

Algae are critical to the life of our lakes. They are the base of the food chain, convert nutrients to organic matter, and oxygenate the water. Fish production in lakes varies directly with the amount of algae the lake produces. If there were no algae, there would be no fish. Virtually all aquatic animals are dependent (directly or indirectly) on algae.

Factors that affect algal growth

There are a number of environmental factors that influence algal growth. The major ones are: the amount of light that penetrates the water; the concentration of nutrients in the water; water temperature; the physical removal of algae through sinking or flushing through an outflow; grazing on the algae by microscopic animals and fish; parasitism by bacteria and fungi; competition from aquatic plants for nutrients; sunlight.

Algal blooms

Nutrient sources such as detergents, septic tank seepages, and fertilizer runoff from lawns and gardens feed the algae in the lake and can result in increased algal growth or a "bloom". Blooms of algae can affect the appearance of a lake, result in unpleasant tastes or odours, reduce clarity, and colour the lake a vivid green, brown or yellow.

Filamentous and colonial algae can mass together and form scums or mats on the lake's surface that can drift and clog water intakes, cause unsightly shorelines, foul beaches, ruin recreation, and provide habitat for bacteria. Peeling paint and staining on boats and docks are partially the result of algae growth. Some species actually produce acids that may chemically corrode submerged metal pipes and concrete. Death and sickness to animals have been attributed to certain "algae", mostly blue-green bloom-forming species.

Reduction in oxygen levels

Algae produce oxygen as a byproduct of photosynthesis, but also take in oxygen for respiration. A lake that has a large population of algae can experience a great fluctuation of dissolved oxygen concentration during a 24-hour period. Extreme oxygen fluctuations stress fish and other wildlife in the lake. When algae die, the decay consumes oxygen in the water. When dissolved oxygen reaches a critically low concentration, phosphorus is released from lake sediments and becomes available for algae growth—thus the cycle feeds itself and speeds up the degradation of the lake, or eutrophication.

Types of algae

Several thousand species of algae live in Ontario's waters. Algae are extremely diverse in form, colour, habit, and habitat. They can live on water or on land, and there are four general groups. The following descriptions relate to the algae found in fresh water in Ontario.

Green algae can be filamentous or free floating. Filamentous greens (or attached algae) range from several millimeters to a metre in length. In many cases they develop into larger colonies of floating or attached mats. They can cause odours in water or clog filters. Examples are Spirogyra, Mougeotia, and Cladophora.

Free-floating green algae are important in the food chain and help to maintain oxygen levels. Example of these are Chlorella, Pediastrum and the desmids.

Diatoms are food for many aquatic microscopic animals, and have silicon cell walls that do not decompose. This is the group of algae most likely to clog filters. Some diatoms produce tastes and odours in the water. Examples are Asterionella, Fragilaria and Cyclotella.

Flagellated algae possess one or more flagella, whip-like "tails" that act as propellers. These algae can sometimes produce strong tastes and odours in water supplies. For example, Synura can impart a cucumber odour to water even when present in low numbers. Examples are Dinobryon, Euglena and Synura.

Blue-green "algae" [actually cyanobacteria], commonly known as pond scum, range in colour from olive green to red. Some forms are gelatinous floating masses of various shapes. Sometimes, when a bloom of blue-green algae decomposes, pigments are released, giving the water a bluish or pinkish colour. They have a pleasant, grassy odour while healthy, but this may change to an unpleasant odour when they decompose.

How can we protect our lake?

Try to **maintain a natural shoreline** to increase nutrient uptake by plants and reduce erosion and nutrient leaching into the lake. **Use low-phosphorus [preferably phosphate-free!] detergents and soaps. Avoid fertilizers. Keep shampoos and soaps [including "biodegradable"] out of the lake.** Know how to **maintain your septic system** to keep it functioning properly, and have it inspected and/or pumped every 3-5 years by a licensed contractor. Be familiar with your lake's healthy conditions and be able to recognize troublesome symptoms.

Source: The foregoing information from FOCA was adapted from the "What are Algae?" fact sheet, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, 2002.

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More on Blue-green "Algae" or Cyanobacteria

What is commonly referred to as a blue-green "algae" bloom is actually a bloom of cyanobacteria. In contrast to algae, some cyanobacteria produce substances that are extremely toxic, and are capable of causing serious illness, or even death, if consumed.

One cannot tell simply by looking at a cyanobacterial bloom whether it is producing toxins. Instead, you should **presume toxins are present and don't swim in it.** A sample should be taken to a qualified lab for confirmation.