



Association des propriétaires du lac Gagnon

LE REMOUS OCTOBER 2019

Hello,

We hope you had a good holiday season and wish you a great year at the lake in 2020.

For this first Remous of the year, we would like to briefly review the events that marked 2019 at the lake and talk to you about our priorities for 2020.

2019: EXTREME WEATHER AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS

1) We experienced some weather extremes at the lake last year. A record-breaking flood in the spring caused a lot of damage and led the province to redefine the flood zone map. This was followed by a dry spell in July-August that resulted in the lowest lake level since we've been tracking these statistics. There was a difference of 216 cm or more than 7 feet between the high and low water levels. And then we had a harsh start to the winter on November 1st with no real let-up even if we did not have much snow.

2) The year 2019 was marked by several new developments that kept us very busy. Here is a brief list:

- a) A new president and two new Board members
- b) A sharp increase in membership (60 new members (22%)) for a total of 327. We also had a very high participation rate at the Annual Meeting. This is a great source of pride for us and gives us a lot of credibility when it comes to defending issues.
- c) A survey with a high participation rate that will serve as a road map for the years to come.
- d) Close collaboration with the municipality, which has become an important partner for our issues. Additionally, we were invited by the municipal council to present the results of the survey as well as our priorities at a plenary session in the fall.
- e) Founding of the *Regroupement de Protection des Lacs de la Petite-Nation* at the APLG's initiative to respond to the

important issue of potential graphite mines in the region. The Regroupement is very active and now has eight member associations: the Gagnon, Simon, Viceroy, Petit Preston, Iroquois, Lafontaine, Doré and Daoust lake associations. Here again, we are working closely with the municipality, which has six of those member associations within its territory.

f) Creation of two sub-committees: the Water Committee and the Fishing Committee. The Water Committee has responsibility for everything relating to water at Lac Gagnon while the Fishing Committee will be looking into all fish and fishing related matters.

2020: OUR PRIORITIES

Since its founding, the Association's mission has always been protecting the lake, the environment and its members' interests. Last year, two issues that can be considered very serious threats required significant involvement on our part— mining exploration and invasive plants. These are our two top priorities for 2020.

1) Mining development.

This issue was spearheaded by the APLG'S president and he devoted a lot of energy to it in 2019. As you no doubt know, we became involved after becoming aware of graphite exploration activities very close to Duhamel. We have learned that these claims extend from the halfway point of Lac Gagnon to the halfway point Lac Simon and pass close to Lac Doré and Lac Petit Preston.

We are not going to repeat everything here; you will find all the relevant information on our website. What is important at this time is that ours is not the only area that is affected. The entire Outaouais, Laurentians and Lanaudière regions are being targeted by companies looking for graphite. What is also important to know is that the Quebec government seems to be favourable to the idea of developing an electric vehicle battery industry based on so-called "critical and strategic" minerals, which include graphite. In fact, the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources is currently holding a "Reflection on Quebec's Place in the Development of Critical

and Strategic Minerals” ([click here to see the document](#) (French only)). If you feel we are unnecessarily concerned, look at the attached map, which identifies the main sites in the province for these minerals. You will see the graphite deposits in the letter B, that is all the claims along the lakes listed above.

The *Regroupement de Protection des Lacs de la Petite-Nation* is the contact point with the municipalities and the government to defend our interests in this matter. The interests of APLG members will be well defended since our president is the spokesperson and leader of the Regroupement. The Regroupement is seeking to have mining activities prohibited in the zones designated by the Papineau RCM as being reserved for vacationing, recreational tourism, ecotourism and forestry. To date, eight municipalities have adopted municipal council resolutions confirming their support for the Regroupement: Duhamel, Chénéville, Lac-Simon, Ripon, Montpellier, Notre-Dame de Bonsecours, St-André Avellin and Plaisance. We are expecting shows of support from two others in January. The whole region is mobilizing so that we can have a say in what happens. We have also made representations with the RCM, in Quebec City and Ottawa and are in contact with several groups in the Laurentians and Lanaudière that are beginning to take an interest in the situation.

We have come a long way in less than a year. A lot remains to be done, but we are confident about what we can achieve. We would like to acknowledge the invaluable collaboration of the Mayor of Duhamel, David Pharand. There is no doubt that you will be hearing about this issue in 2020.

For more information you can read these two articles (French only): [Mining boom threat](#) and [Mining exploration in the Outaouais](#)

2) The Eurasian Watermilfoil issue

The Eurasian Watermilfoil is also very high on our list of priorities. There was no evidence of this invasive plant in the lake when the last plant inventory was done in 2017 and we do not believe there is any at this time. However, it can be found in lakes in the surrounding area. Since this plant is mainly spread by boats travelling between lakes, we feel it would be useful to put an action plan into place to prevent its spread to our lake. The Board member in charge of this issue is Pierre Bélisle and he takes this matter very seriously. We invite you to read the document [posted on our website](#), which contains the main lines of our action plan. We have met with lake associations that are dealing with the problem, and we can confirm that prevention is far better than cure.

3) Water management plan

We are holding discussions with the *Organisme des bassins versants* (OBV) (Watershed organization) to develop a water management plan for Lac Gagnon. The project involves having experts prepare a diagnosis of the lake’s health, a statement of issues and an action plan. Discussions are underway between the Association, the OBV and the municipality to finance the plan. The Board member handling this is Charles de Maisonneuve. We will keep you informed about developments, especially since we will need volunteers if the project is accepted.

4) We will, of course, continue to provide the usual services of monitoring the water level, installing buoys, at municipal council meetings, testing swimming water and lake water quality and naturally, we will keep you informed on all our platforms in both languages.

Thank you to all our volunteers, to all those who dedicate time and energy to maintain the quality of life and preserve this exceptional site that is Lac Gagnon.

Thank you for your support and best wishes for 2020.

Board of Directors 2019

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