



ASSOCIATION DES PROPRIÉTAIRES
DU LAC GAGNON

LE REMOUS - WINTER 2023

Happy New Year and best wishes for another year of fun and enjoyment at Lac Gagnon. At the APLG, we will continue to work hard to preserve this extraordinary environment and the quality of life that we have here.

The lake finally froze on January 15th, making 2023 the second latest date for the lake to freeze since 1968. The trend has been consistent since 2000. We are seeing shorter and shorter periods [where the lake is completely frozen](#). The Organisme du bassin versant (OBV) RPNS found our graph very interesting when it conducted the study of the lake last summer. They said it is very rare to have such statistics, which are clear proof of climate change. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to keeping these statistics for the past 55 years.

During the past year, we have spent considerable time on the mining exploration issue, a topic that is gaining momentum not only in our area but in all of southern Quebec. The time spent on the mine issue did not prevent us from advancing other projects, in particular, the long awaited integrated study of the lake. Here is a brief summary of the past year, an overview of the priorities we will be working on and some interesting news.

GRAPHITE MINES NEAR LAC GAGNON?

This is a complex issue, but we will try to explain it briefly. The entire area around Lac Gagnon (as well as other lakes in the Outaouais, Laurentians and Lanaudière) is rich in graphite, an important

mineral for the electric vehicle battery industry. Deposits have already been identified (including the one at Lac Doré, near Duhamel, where work is ongoing). In the last 18 months, mining claims have increased by 80% in the Laurentians, 200% in the Outaouais and 400% in Lanaudière.

Graphite is mined in large open-pit mines that can be very deep (200+ m.). Under current government regulations, such a mine could be located on the shores of those parts of Lac Gagnon that are currently not developed. In the case of developed areas, the best we can hope for is a 600-metre protective strip. If this were to happen, we could say goodbye to all the reasons why Lac Gagnon is important to us. We do not think our members would appreciate living next to an industrial park several kilometres long that operates 24/7, 365 days a year.

The APLG initiated the mobilization movement that is calling for profound changes to the mining development rules in resort and tourism areas. For the past four years, we have devoted a great deal of energy to raising awareness and mobilizing the population and elected officials. Until now, the Legault government has been adamant and has refused all our requests. However, in the last few months the tide has turned.

Mobilization was strong in the Papineau region and is now spreading to all neighbouring Regional County Municipalities (RCMs) and even to the Eastern Townships. The RCMs are asking for significant amendments to the *Mining Act*

that are completely in line with our own demands. The *Fédération québécoise des Municipalités* (FQM) as well as the *Union des Municipalités du Québec* (UMQ) have just taken a position that is also in line with our demands. Furthermore, an important coalition of environmental organizations has been formed to add its voice to the discussion. Lastly, a major coalition of close to 100 lake associations (the QLAIM Coalition) has just been formed to defend the same positions, with the APLG's president, Louis St-Hilaire, [as its current spokesperson](#).

New developments: The far-reaching mobilization and extensive media coverage seem to be producing results: the government that until now has been close-minded has [opened the door to discussions](#).

This movement started at Lac Gagnon with the APLG. We continue to be involved in these discussions and we believe that 2023 is going to be of the utmost importance for the resolution of this situation. We will keep you posted.

For more information: protectionpetitenation.com + [FB RPLPN](#)

2023, THE YEAR WE RECEIVE OUR FIRST REPORT ON THE LAKE'S HEALTH

Three years of perseverance on the part of the Board of Directors has finally paid off. Three years during which we sought funding and held discussions with various partners to obtain an Integrated Study of Lake Gagnon by the OBV RPNS. The data was collected and reviewed in 2022. We have just received the preliminary report and are working on an action plan with the municipality. As we expected, our lake is healthy and well worth protecting. This report will be our reference document for many years to come. It will be made available to all members and will certainly be an important topic of discussion at our next General Meeting. As an association, we could never have afforded the \$18,000 cost of such a study. Our outlay was only \$2,000 and the APLG would like to thank the following partners for their generous contribution.

- Municipalité de Duhamel
- MRC Papineau
- Fiducie Lauzon
- Mathieu Lacombe, Papineau MNA

We'd also like to thank Charles de Maisonneuve and Paul St-Georges for their significant involvement in this project.

EURASIAN WATERMILFOIL: THE SENTINELLES' REPORT

Once again, thanks to the participation of our group of over 35 Sentinelles, we were able to confirm that there is no Eurasian watermilfoil in our lake. What's more, our monitoring practice is spreading to the lakes around us, which helps to protect us. Thank you to the entire team led by Mireille Tousignant and assisted by Paul St-Georges. As a result of observations by the Sentinelles and on the advice of the OBV, we will add monitoring periphyton* growth this year. Ann Burns-Tardif, a very dedicated Sentinelle, will lead this new team.

*Periphyton: you may have noticed it on your dock ladders or rocks. Periphyton is a complex mixture of algae, cyanobacteria, heterotrophic microbes, and detritus that is attached to submerged surfaces. It is due to phosphorus concentrations in the water resulting mainly from human activity. It seems that its presence is growing and that is what we want to measure.

WATER QUALITY TEST RESULTS

Once again this year, we measured the quality of the lake's swimming water. The results are "excellent" as you can see [on our map](#). It takes the better part of a day to collect 50 water samples from all around our lake (almost 50 km, including the river) and then to transport them quickly for analysis. Thanks to Charles de Maisonneuve and Mireille Tousignant for their work. Charles also did the tests for the *Réseau de surveillance des lacs*, and the test results indicate that the lake qualifies as oligotrophic (i.e., clear, cold and biodiverse).

NAVIGATION 2023

We are quite pleased with how our [navigation map](#) has been received. Of course, we know that not everyone follows it, but we think that it is achieving its intended goal of being a common navigation code. There is one area where there is room for improvement and that is in the river. Several residents have told us about significant land loss due to wave action in that area, whereas the river should be a wave-free navigation zone. This is where we will focus our awareness and signage activities this summer.

HIGH-SPEED INTERNET: SLOWLY BUT SURELY WE'RE GETTING THERE

We had been promised service by last September 30th, which did not happen. However, lately, we have started seeing the installation trucks in the village and they are getting closer to the lake at the time of writing. For the time being, fibre cables are being installed on the main and secondary roads. The residential installation phase will soon follow.

Currently Xplore only offers a single 100 Mbps package at \$74.99/month + a \$99 installation fee for a one-year contract. You need to sign up and agree to the installation by contacting Nathalie Gareau at 1-866-841-6003, extension 5551023. Once you have given your consent in writing, we are told the home installation should take place between April and July.

Internet Papineau told us they will continue to offer their service and may amend their packages.

MUNICIPAL TAX BILL

In December, we attended the municipality's presentation on the 2023 budget and the summary of the impact of the budget on this year's tax bill. There are two major factors that affect this year's tax bill, inflation and the revision of the assessment roll, which, as you can imagine, reflects the strong increase in property values that we have seen in recent years. The average increase of 3.9% is largely explained by inflation. On the other hand, there are significant assessment value variations

between different parts of the municipality, whether it be the rural areas, the different lakes and even in different parts of Lac Gagnon. This is attributable to the revision of the assessment roll in the summer of 2021 by Servitech. The impact can therefore vary greatly depending on where you are in the municipality and the evaluation of transactions that occurred in these areas.

Board of Directors

2023

Louis St-Hilaire, President, Mines issue
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Pierre-Émile Rocray, Secretary
Mark Conroy, Navigation, representing the north end of the lake
Charles de Maisonneuve, Water quality
Paul-André Laurin, Navigation
Pierre Martel, Member, representing the river sector
Mireille Tousignant, Sentinelles

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Ann Burns Tardif, Periphyton
Richard Chartrand, Chronicler
Paul St-Georges, Sentinelles
Hélène St-Hilaire, Graphic design

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