



THE REMOUS – FALL 2025

CHANGES IN THE APLG LEADERSHIP

OUTGOING PRESIDENT – LOUIS ST-HILAIRE

The decision to step down has been on my mind for some time. Given my multiple responsibilities, it was difficult for me as president to prioritize the APLG. The time required for the mining issue, my role as president of the *Regroupement de Protection des lacs de la Petite-Nation* (RPLPN) and the *Coalition QLAIM*, as well as the Marie-Lefranc-Petite-Nation protected area project, meant that I was no longer able to fulfill the role of president of the APLG as I would have liked.

I am not leaving; I will continue to handle the issues I just mentioned, but after consulting with the members of the Board, I will be handing over the presidency of the association to Mireille Tousignant. Mireille has shown everyone, particularly during the referendum, that she has the requisite leadership skills to take over. Like me, she grew up on the shores of this lake, which holds a special place in our hearts. Mireille will be the second woman to serve as president of the APLG, the first being her mother, Nicole Tousignant. I am convinced, as is the entire Board of Directors, that Mireille is the right person to take the reins of our association. In closing, I would like to thank all the members of the Board of Directors who have supported me over the past seven years, as well as all the volunteers for their involvement in making the APLG an organization unlike any other, just like our wonderful lake.

Louis St-Hilaire

INCOMING PRESIDENT – MIREILLE TOUSIGNANT

It is with great respect and humility that I accept this new challenge. I would like to thank the members of the Board for their trust.

I have always had an unconditional love for Lac Gagnon. I visited it for the first time 58 years ago, when I was just three weeks old. What's more, my partner and I have just moved here permanently.

It will be a privilege for me to defend the interests of the residents who have chosen to settle in this enchanting location. I intend to continue the work begun by my predecessors, and we will do so as a team. When I say team, I am referring not only to the Board of Directors, but also to all of you, the members. Together, we will be able to face today and tomorrow's challenges. We must deal with climate change, which is causing record high and low lake levels. Rising temperatures are also accelerating the proliferation of vegetation in the lake and certainly affecting the populations of fish, birds, and other living creatures that coexist there. We must strive to minimize our human footprint if we are to avoid further damaging the environment. The ultimate goal is to preserve the excellent water quality of Lac Gagnon, the tranquility of the area and residents' investment.

I sincerely believe that the solution lies in raising awareness, educating, and encouraging vigilance and collaboration among all residents. We will also continue the partnership we have

established with the municipality of Duhamel, particularly with regard to boat washing, signage on the lake, and shoreline respect and revegetation, which is a key element in protecting the lake and will be a priority in 2026.

In closing, I would like to thank Louis St-Hilaire for his tremendous work over the past seven years. Not only has he ensured our lake's protection, he has also promoted our region's greatest assets, sparing no effort to protect them. I am thinking, among other things, of the mining issue and the Marie-Lefranc protected area. Thank you, Louis, for thinking big and continuing the work you started!

My thoughts also go out to past presidents such as my mother, Max, Richard, Anthony, André. I hope to live up to their legacy.

Mireille Tousignant

THE AFTERMATH OF THE REFERENDUM

The message could not have been clearer. 98.3% of Duhamel residents and 95.5% of *Alliance des municipalités Petite-Nation Nord* members voted against Lomiko Metals' graphite mining project. So, given that this referendum was consultative and not binding, what do we do with these results?

The task now is to use the political leverage that these results provide. The Alliance, which held the referendum, heard its citizens loud and clear and undertook to call on the government to halt the mining project. It did so by unanimous resolution of the five municipalities, for which it obtained the unanimous support of the 25 municipalities of the Papineau RCM.

With this support and that of our representative, Mathieu Lacombe, the Alliance, the RPLPN, and the group of business people opposed to the Loutre project were able to secure a personal meeting with the new Minister of Natural Resources, Jean-François Simard. After informing him of the issue, we asked him, given the absence of social acceptability as demonstrated by the referendum, to respect their election promise

and do everything possible to stop this project (using section 304 of the Mining Act).

Early indications from the ministry do not suggest a suspension, but rather a promise not to invest in the project and to wait for a decision from the BAPE (*Bureau d'évaluation environnementale du Québec*) if the company reaches that stage.

In the meantime, the company, acting as if the referendum had never taken place, has announced that sampling work (involving blasting) will be carried out on the property between November 23 and February 23.

That's the situation at this point. With the municipal elections over, we will soon be meeting with the Alliance and business people to decide on the next steps and how to respond to the site work that Lomiko will be undertaking in a few weeks.

On a positive note, despite the federal government's announcement of numerous grants for graphite and critical minerals mining projects in southern Quebec in recent days, Lomiko Metals' name is nowhere to be found on the list of selected projects. We cannot be entirely sure, of course, but it is possible that the referendum's unequivocal message has been heard. To be continued.

MARIE-LEFRANC-PETITE-NATION PROTECTED AREA

The project is progressing and is currently in the regional consultation phase in both the Papineau and Laurentides RCMs, where it is located. Covering an area of 117 square kilometres, it is one of the major projects that have been presented. It has been favourably reviewed by the Ministry of the Environment, particularly because of the presence of three old-growth forests, two biological refuges, important habitats for aquatic wildlife, and its key position in a vast ecological corridor project.

It will now be evaluated along with all the other projects by a panel of scientists, environmental specialists, forestry industry representatives, and various land users. This panel will have to reach a consensus in order to select the projects

to be retained, with the overall goal still being to cover 30% of Quebec's territory. It is worth noting that currently only 5% of the Papineau RCM's territory is protected.

The project is of interest to Lac Gagnon residents since its western border runs along the eastern side of our lake and the entire Petite-Nation Nord River ([see map](#)).

The project is being proposed by the RPLPN and piloted by Louis St-Hilaire. A final decision is expected in 2027. We will keep you informed of developments.

LAKE WATER LEVEL

What a magnificent fall we've had at the lake! However, the dry weather has led to a record low lake level. This raises legitimate concerns about traffic on the lake, getting boats into and out of the water, and drinking water intake pipes. Fortunately, with the rain we've had recently, the lake level has already risen by 15 cm. You can follow changes in the water level and view all the statistics on our [website](#).

Lake outflow, October 16, 2025



SWIMMING WATER TESTS

The water quality at Lac Gagnon remains excellent. Around 50 samples were taken in early August from various locations around the lake and in the river. A dozen additional samples were taken two weeks later to validate certain results. All of the results were excellent. You can view the results in detail on our [website](#).

SENTINELLES PROJECT

The Lac Gagnon sentinels carried out their survey of the lake once again this summer. No signs of Eurasian watermilfoil were observed. However, there appears to have been more abundant growth of Elodea this year at Lac Gagnon and Lac Simon. This native plant is not dangerous, although it is unpleasant to walk on. The drop in water level and high temperatures could explain the proliferation of this fast-growing plant.

Here is a picture of Elodea, for those who are unfamiliar with this plant.



PERIPHYTON

We are now in our third year of the periphyton monitoring study. It is difficult to detect a significant difference in its growth in such a short period of time. However, if you have been visiting the lake for several years, you may have noticed that there are many more slimy deposits accumulating on rocks, boats, and other structures during the summer. This is an early sign of lake aging. We will continue to study the phenomenon, but in the meantime, we must limit the amount of nutrients, including phosphate, entering the lake as this undoubtedly accelerates its aging.

SHORELINE

How can we protect the lakeshore? The buffer zone is 10 metres on flat ground and 15 metres on sloping ground. In this fragile territory, we are not permitted to add landfill, mow the grass, or cut down vegetation. A 5-meter-wide strip may be cleared to provide access to the lake. We have chosen to settle on the shore of a magnificent lake. We must therefore try to live in harmony with nature and preserve ecosystems and their habitats, which are

already affected by climate change. The same applies to preserving the quality of the water, which cannot absorb more nutrients resulting from rainwater runoff into the lake. It is essential that runoff water be slowed down and filtered by vegetation along the lake's edge to prevent eutrophication, or premature aging of the lake, and blue-green algae blooms. That is why the municipality of Duhamel will ensure that the current regulations are enforced!

The APLG has received a grant from the provincial government to help residents correct or optimize their shorelines. The OBV is also a valuable partner with expertise in this area. Please feel free to contact us at info@aplg.ca if you need assistance with your projects.

WATERCRAFT WASHING

Another effective measure in our efforts to preserve water quality and combat invasive species is the systematic washing of all watercraft and equipment that travel from one body of water to another. The system already in place in the village of Duhamel will continue next year. In addition, we will now have a hot water pressure washing station at the start of next season at the Lac Gagnon boat launch. Washing will be free. Non-resident access fees will be managed by the municipality. More details on this subject will be provided in the spring.

COOPERATIVE PROJECT

The cooperative is continuing its efforts to save the gas station in Duhamel. A board of directors has been formed, chaired by Sophie Legault, a Lac Gagnon resident. For information, go to the Coop's website: Coop Duhamel.

CHANGES IN THE BOARD

As mentioned above, Mireille Tousignant is the new President.

Charles De Maisonneuve, who had been responsible for water testing for several years, decided to step down from the Board. Our thanks go out to Charles for all he has done during his tenure.

We are pleased to welcome Olivier Bodard to the Board. He has been doing an exceptional job managing our website since 2017. We also welcome Sylvain Anderson, a permanent resident of Lac Gagnon. Sylvain will be helping us with several issues related to the lake's health.

Board of Directors 2025

Mireille Tousignant, President, Invasive plants, Lake Protection Committee
Anne Wells, Vice-President, Treasurer, Translator
Pierre-Émile Rocray, Secretary
Sylvain Anderson, Lake health
Olivier Bodard, Website, Facebook
Mark Conroy, Navigation
David Gratton, Fishing Committee
Paul-André Laurin, Lake health
Paul St-Georges, Lake health
Louis St-Hilaire, Protected area, Mine issue

Honorary members

Max Bauchet
André Brossard
Richard Chartrand
Anthony Le Moine
Nicole Tousignant

Volunteers

Gérard Bodard, Buoys
Ann Burns Tardif, Periphyton
Richard Chartrand, Chronicler
Marc L. Dufour, Water level
Hélène St-Hilaire, Graphics

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