

Complete “As Heard” findings of the Rideau Lakes Watershed Management Plan Public Meeting

3-5 p.m. Sept 12, 2005, Westport

Question 1:

What is your vision for the Rideau Lakes/Rideau River system so that 20 years from now this is still a great place to get away to, have fun and live in? Imagine we are in this meeting room in the year 2025 and we are celebrating the success of the visioning and planning we did September 12th, 2005. The outcome has been successful beyond our expectations. What does this look like, sound like, feel like?

Recreation

Watercraft

- ◆ Motor size on small lakes is controlled, in some cases motors have been banned
- ◆ Non-gas powered motors
- ◆ Safe boating
- ◆ Noise and pollution from all types of watercraft is controlled

Shoreline

- ◆ Healthy shorelines (x2)
- ◆ Clean healthy waterfronts on private lots and public camps/trailer parks
- ◆ Good waterfronts
- ◆ Natural looking shorelines
- ◆ Good natural habitat kept along shoreline for fish, birds

Water levels

- ◆ Lake levels are controlled only when necessary
- ◆ Water levels are better controlled to prevent ice damage in spring
- ◆ Natural water levels

Noise

- ◆ Quiet environment

Water Quality/pollution

- ◆ Use of fertilizers is regulated
- ◆ Good water quality (x3)
- ◆ High water quality
- ◆ Cattle are excluded from lakes
- ◆ Clear water
- ◆ Weed-free water

Other pollution

- ◆ Neat garbage dumps with recycling, less being thrown away
- ◆ User friendly, economical garbage dumps
- ◆ Packaging on products has been reduced

Septic

- ◆ There is septic approval on all resale properties
- ◆ Efficient, pollution free septic systems are required
- ◆ There is a septic reinspection program standard in all municipalities
- ◆ Septic reinspection program is regulated but not so much so that it results in costs to landowners that are out of reach

Economy/Development

- ◆ Homes and cottages that complement the environment
- ◆ Low population density at the shoreline

Wildlife/Nature

- ◆ Invasive species have been eliminated
- ◆ No invasive species

Social

- ◆ All lake users are concerned about the environment
- ◆ People have a better environmental ethic
- ◆ Improved communication through a newsletter

Government

- ◆ Regulations are specific to each individual lake e.g. gabion baskets
- ◆ Regulations are unique and flexible for each lake

Question 2:

What are the major issues and challenges facing this area that can cause problems or are causing problems now?

Recreation

Watercraft

- ◆ Too many big boats for the size of the lake, causes safety issues

Other recreational vehicles

- ◆ ATV safety
- ◆ Illegal access to private property with ATVs

Shoreline

- ◆ Too many big boats for the size of the lake, causes erosion

Water levels

- ◆ unnatural water levels fluctuate

Noise

- ◆ ATVs
- ◆ Too many big boats for the size of the lake, causes noise

Water Quality/pollution

- ◆ cattle access to lakes
- ◆ increasing numbers of geese and deer causes pollution

Other pollution

- ◆ not enough environmental cleanup programs
- ◆ low participation in ongoing environmental cleanup programs

Septic

- ◆ no regular septic inspection

Wildlife/Nature

- ◆ not enough education about zebra mussels/invasive species
- ◆ commercial fishing (want none)
- ◆ beavers damage the trees
- ◆ invasive species
- ◆ too many deer

Social

- ◆ lack of education of the people and government staff and elected representatives
- ◆ lack of communication about new regulations, lake protection, programs, etc.

Government

- ◆ Overregulation may cause people to not be able to afford to stay on lake

Question 3:

What issues need to be addressed/improved now and how might we start doing this?

Recreation

Watercraft

- ◆ Zebra mussel checks of boats entering into a lake
- ◆ Monitor holding tanks on yachts prior to allowing them to lock through the system

Shoreline

- ◆ Shoreline clean-ups are more accommodating and are run by local government

Water Quality/pollution

- ◆ Enforce existing grey/black water discharge from boats
- ◆ Enact a law to prevent cattle access to lakes

Other pollution

- ◆ Townships should facilitate means of getting rid of garbage, household hazardous waste through reduced fees and increased opportunities
- ◆ More accessible and convenient recycling/garbage disposal
- ◆ Provide incentives for shoreline and litter cleanup
- ◆ Don't pay (or reasonable amount) for garbage removal/disposal
- ◆ Use of clear garbage bags (with legislation) to encourage recycling

Economy/Development

- ◆ Market and educate about responsible tourism
- ◆ Ban the sale of water (Federal) e.g. the Tay River

Wildlife/Nature

- ◆ Provide information/advise on how to eradicate invasive species and how people can help

Social

- ◆ A hotline number for active lake associations
- ◆ Initiate a program to educate everyone (TV, radio, print media)
- ◆ More meetings about issues, updates (improved communication) with all government, regulators and residents
- ◆ Education and communication about environmental issues
- ◆ Marketing and education of visitors to the watershed about expectations on them regarding behaviour but also encourages them to frequent the area as well
- ◆ Improved education about commercial fishery benefits to the sport fishery

Government

- ◆ Regulatory bodies work more closely together e.g. Ministry of Northern Affairs and Mining, RVCA and Ministry of Tourism
- ◆ Take environmental issues into consideration when making decisions

Question 4:

What issues do we need to address immediately and in the near future? “Top Priorities”

Recreation

Watercraft

- ◆ Restrict boat sizes

Water Quality/pollution

- ◆ More frequent e-coli monitoring and communication of findings
- ◆ Cattle access

Septic

- ◆ An active septic reinspection program in the lakes and waterway with respect to old systems
- ◆ Environmental clean-up

Economy/Development

- ◆ Boost tourism and marketing of waterway

Government

- ◆ known standards for ecosystems being monitored and develop and enforce standards