
Lake Memphremagog Steering Committee Meeting

Réunion du comité directeur du lac Memphrémagog

November 10, 2020 | 9 AM - 12 PM | Microsoft Teams meeting

OPENING REMARKS - PETE LAFLAMME AND NATHALIE PROVOST

INTRO / GO-ROUND

- Ariane Orjikh, MCI
 - Zebra mussel monitoring
 - 3 exotic snails found – Chinese mystery snail, banded mystery snail, New Zealand mud snail
 - Creating interacting maps

- Chloe Boucher-Ravenhorst, MAPAQ
 - Representing eastern townships

- David Largy
 - 25 water sampling sites on tributaries
 - Working on boat washing awareness campaign to prevent AIS spread
 - Spread of zebra mussels downstream, south towards VT

- Jean Pierre Fortier, Ville de Sherbrooke

- Josiane Pouliot
 - Representing City of Magog; city council just adopted first climate change plan and moratorium on all properties where significant wetlands are present
 - Educational campaign on water birds
 - Septic system and shoreline assessments
 - Integrating bylaws on erosion control

- Julie Grenier, St. Francis River Watershed Governance Board
 - Working on drinking water source protection with cities
 - Updating major action plan for St Francis Watershed

- Lisette Maille, Municipalite Austin
 - Head of sustainability committee at MRC

- Rosemarie Leger, MCI
 - Working on interactive web maps with Ariane
- Alexandra Roy, MRC
 - Drinking water review includes recommendation on PFAs
- Vicki May Hamm
 - City of Magog
- Beth Torpey
 - MWA & Orleans County CISMA (cooperative invasive species association)
- David Blodgett
 - NRCS Newport, financial/technical assistance with farmers
 - Promoting no till practices and converting cropland to hay
 - Work with 4 farms in the Memphremagog watershed on storage facilities and stormwater control
- Mary Pat Goulding, MWA
 - Just completed restoration/stabilization on Prouty Beach
 - Just completed stormwater design for downtown Newport
- Ben Copans
 - Will give updates on Act 76 and tributary sampling
- Douglas Coutts
 - Board of MCI and MWA
 - New group: Memphremagog Community Maritime, going to start floating classroom! Hope to cater to both US and CA students
- Karen Freeman
 - VT Housing and Conservation Board, Future Memphremagog Clean Water Service Provider
 - Returning unused ag lands to natural state, 13000 acres conserved this past year
 - Funding the new recreational bridge from Prouty Beach to Bluffside Farm
- Michael Laitta, IJC
- Oliver Pierson, VT DEC Lakes and Ponds
 - Coordinating LMP, Lake Wise Program, and Permitting/regulations work on the lake
 - Will present on in-lake monitoring data

- Amy Polaczyk, VTDEC Wastewater
 - Will present on WasteWater and Water incident Communications Protocol
- Sarah Damsell, Orleans NRCD
 - Working with farms / farmers in the watershed on pollution reduction, tributary sampling
- Pete Stangel VT DEC
 - Sampled 2 stations on a biweekly basis this past summer
- Tom Berry, Senator Leahy's Office
 - US Congress has not passed spending bills for FY21
 - US Senate will be posting appropriations bills which will provide an idea of spending bills
 - Level funding set for Great Lake Fisheries Bill

SUMMARY OF MAY 2020 TECH COMMITTEE - JEAN-FRANCOIS CLOUTIER

- MCI, MWA, VTFW, VDEC, MELCC
- Coventry landfill is ongoing issue that Quebec is paying attention to
- Corrections to MSAG report requested by VTDEC and made; IJC gave update that recommendations were sent to government, good reactions from both US and CA
- Monitoring calcium with respect to zebra mussels
- MELCC trying to work through issues with sampling data and remove bias in historical sampling
- VTFW still working on bullhead lesion question

WQ FOR IN-LAKE AND TRIBUTARIES - OLIVER PIERSON, BEN COPANS, SARA DAMSELL

Memphremagog Tributary sampling (Ben and Sara)

- 4 major rivers: Black/Barton/Johns/Clyde River
- Spring high flow sampling in major rivers missed due to covid-19
- Sampling also going on in smaller tributaries, as a partnership with Orleans NRCD
- Working with farms: saw significant reduction in nutrient loading on farms with no-till and cover crop; one farm sold and then bought cows, which saw a corresponding decrease and then increase in nutrient loading
- Working with Agency of Ag and other groups to publicize the above results and highlight farm success stories
- Looking ahead for funding sources to continue sampling

In-lake sampling (Oliver)

- LMP and TMDL monitoring; 2 sites in main lake on VT side, 1 in South Bay

- No significant trends in Chlorophyll A or TP in main lake, however Secchi reading is decreasing over time (sedimentation?)
- Chlorophyll A in south bay has increased significantly
- Lake Score Card shows watershed as “highly disturbed”

MAP OF MEMPHREMAGOG – ARIANE ORJIH AND ROSEMARIE LEGER

- Shows boat wash stations, boat wastewater dumping stations, border control, speed zones, bathymetry, wind speed, water level, zebra mussel presence and density
- Questions included can we stitch together the VT and QC maps? Include landcover overlays?

INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL – AMY POLACZYK AND PETE LAFLAMME

- Sept 22 discharge event
 - 7000 gallons of untreated wastewater in Newport WW Treatment Plant
 - Relatively small discharge and likely very localized impacts if any
 - Likely caused by blockage in collection system
 - EEO conducted investigation
 - A lot of media coverage despite relatively small discharge event
 - Online public notification of discharge event; anyone can sign up for alerts
 - Here is the link for the discharge notification system:
<https://dec.vermont.gov/watershed/wastewater/discharge-notifications>
- Draft of International Communications Protocol
 - The protocol will cover the types of incidents that require information sharing (WW discharge, dam failure, hazardous spill, invasive species, fish kills) and who to contact on both VT and QC side.
 - Once finalized, the protocol will be shared with all parties.
- How will cities on the QC be informed? Addendum from previous minister requires notification by emergency response system
- Some concern that the Sept 2020 event was not reported to Quebec municipal governments promptly, and they had to find out from other sources

ENTRY POINT SIGNAGE FOR MEMPHREMAGOG WATERSHED – DOUGLASS COUTTS AND MARY PAT GOULDING

- Raise awareness and educate public on what a watershed is
- Signs in both English and French
- Need Govt’s on both sides to approve signage, in Vermont it is likely Agency of Transport and Municipal Governments

NEW REGULATIONS FOR IMPACT ACTIVITIES - JEAN-FRANCOIS CLOUTIER AND ARIANE ORJIKH

- Permittees need to certify their projects will have minimum impact on environment

CLEAN WATER SERVICE PROVIDERS AND ACT 76 – BEN COPANS

- Each basin has clean water service providers that manage available funding
- Aimed at non-regulatory water quality projects
- Service providers selected, formal rulemaking to be completed in 2021
- VT Housing and Conservation Board is selected CWSP for Memphremagog basin

WRAP UP AND NEXT STEPS

- Spring 2021 meeting: tentatively **May 4 in Magog or virtual**, will monitor covid-19
- General question: boat impacts on lake? Add to spring agenda