



NEWSLETTER

WINTER
2024

We're dedicated to keeping Charleston Lake beautiful in every way!

www.charlestonlakeassociation.ca

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear CLA Members,

This is my first message as incoming President of CLA. What a responsibility! We are Ontario's oldest Lake Association – founded in 1890 – and have worked tirelessly over decades to **preserve and enhance** our beloved Charleston Lake.

Having served as a Director of CLEA, our environmental arm, for the past 5 years, I know that the President is *truly primus inter pares* -- first among equals. Each of our CLA and CLEA Directors commits hundreds of hours in support of the Association. This includes leading our ongoing activities such as Finance & Administration, the Newsletter, the Web Site, the Summer Camps, and the Golf Tournament, as well many special projects. All of us will be counting on the continued commitment of our volunteer Directors as they drive forward with several new initiatives, and we thank them for their commitment and service.

I would like to thank our outgoing President, **Pierre Ménard**. Pierre served on the Board for over 10 years, and, as President, was a steady hand as we emerged from the Covid-19 period, and undertook several new initiatives, notably the boating safety program with its improved signage at boat ramps and an all-new map of the lake, and the launch of our lead-free tackle exchange program last summer in collaboration with leading local retailers (Thank you!).

I would also like to say a special thanks one of our longest-serving Board Members, **Wayne Gill**. For more than a decade, Wayne has served as our Secretary-Treasurer. While in a role that is not as public-facing as those of some of our other Board members, Wayne has been truly indispensable to the good management of both CLA and CLEA, looking after agendas, minutes, all of our financial affairs, and government and regulatory filings, among other tasks.

Wayne has already been a huge help to me as I take on the President's role, and we look forward to his continued commitment and hard work.

This fall, we welcomed **Kristin Ireland** to the CLEA Board. Kristin is a life-long resident of the lake and will bring new energy and ideas.

2026 will mark the 20th anniversary of the **Charleston Lake Plan**. This landmark document quickly became a benchmark for other Lake Associations and community organizations across Ontario. Starting this year, the CLA will be launching the Charleston Lake Plan 2.0. The process will involve measuring our success (or not) vs. the objectives of the 2006 plan, and seeking CLA member input on a refreshed set of priorities and objectives going forward. Please watch our Website for more information as the process gets underway.

Other initiatives for 2024 include:

- Establishing **bass spawning sanctuaries**. One unexpected positive outcome of Covid-19 was the significant growth in Bass populations as pre-season angling was curtailed by lock-down restrictions in Spring 2020. This led scientists to consider whether a sanctuary program could have similar positive effects on Bass populations. The CLA is working with MNR and a team of scientists to implement a program of Bass spawning sanctuaries for limited periods, in certain sections of Charleston Lake. The sanctuaries will allow significantly more young fish to make it to adulthood, improving Bass populations across the whole lake. In an article in this newsletter, one of the scientists, Prof. Dave Phillip, explains how the program will work, and how scientists will measure the results.
- Upgrading and enhancing our **on-line and social media presence**. A group of Directors is working on re-launching

our Facebook Page, and CLA will soon be on Instagram. Please remember to follow us!

- Deepening our **engagement with municipal and provincial authorities**. With the many changes happening around planning and zoning, it is vital that CLA engage constructively to ensure that development on and around Charleston Lake respects the rules and regulations that are in place "to protect our natural environment and lake community"
- Continuing our participation in **land conservation initiatives**. In recent years, we have worked closely with organizations such as the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust to place hundreds of hectares of pristine lands into permanent conservation – this includes areas both on the lake and in its watershed. Most recently, we supported the **Whip-poor-will Woods** project near Leeder's Creek, which you can read about in this edition.
- Maintaining our perennial summer activities, which are already being planned for 2024. This includes our **Summer Day-camp Programs**, and the **Doug Hale Memorial Golf Tournament**. You can read more about them in this edition of the newsletter – details will follow on our Website.

Let me conclude by thanking **you**, our CLA members. Without your support, year after year, we could not do what we do. We are always looking for ideas and volunteers, so if you are passionate about something around the lake and want to work on it, do reach out to me or one of our Directors.

*Yours in preserving and enhancing
Charleston Lake,
Michael McAdoo, President
Charleston Lake Association*

SAVING THE LAND YOU LOVE

There are some 3 million lakes in Canada. And Canada has over 60% of all the lakes in the world. Canada's largest lake, Superior, is big enough that you could fit 14 ½ Prince Edward Islands into it, or Austria, if you'd prefer.

Among all these lakes is Charleston - acknowledged in book after book as being one of the jewels of Canadian lakes. Much of the thanks for that goes to the people like you, who deeply care for the lake, whether living around it all year, or seasonally.

The lake's health is deeply dependent on the quality of the water that flows into it. Considerable flow comes from springs and streams. Much comes from rain and snowmelt. All of it flows over or under ground. How the upland of the lake is treated determines the health and wellbeing of the lake. The "canary in the coal mine" for Charleston is the lake trout – and Charleston is Canada's southernmost lake trout lake. Happy trout – healthy lake.

The Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust has to date helped protect nearly 3,000 acres of lands, forever, where water flows into Charleston Lake. Is that enough? Is that a lot? The answer to both – no – but a very good and important start.

In late spring, TIWLT along with the Charleston Lake Association and the Leeds-Grenville Stewardship Council want to engage with you in a workshop on the many ways to forever protect the lake you love - and therefore so much more of this remarkable region. We'll talk about the many easy and simple things all can do. We'll talk about the tools, the incentives and the means that some of you may use to make great strides in conserving, protecting this Lakeland. There is something in this for everyone, whether a cottager, a business or larger landowner.

And, it's free. This is a joint effort of the Charleston Lake Association, the Leeds-Grenville Stewardship Council and TIWLT. The date, tentatively, June 22, 9:30 am. The place – near Charleston Lake – to be confirmed. To help us plan for refreshments and handouts, please let us know if you can make it, at info@tiwlt.ca.

What and Where is a TIWLT?

We thought you might enjoy hearing what TIWLT – the Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust – has been doing of late.

There are two elements to TIWLT's name. The first is "trust". In law, "a trust is a relationship in which the holder of property gives it to another person or entity who must keep and use it solely for the benefit of another person or group of persons" Wikipedia. And that's what this land trust is all about: TIWLT works with willing landowners with many tools and many ways to forever protect lands and wetlands that are key places for wildlife and services of nature. We do this for everyone in the region, and for the benefit of everyone on this planet.

The second element of TIWLT's name is the watershed of the Thousand Islands. A watershed is the region where all of the streams, lakes, wetlands and rivers flow into some

geographic area – in this case, into the Thousand Islands, from west of Gananoque to the east side of Brockville. This is one of the smallest watersheds of the Great Lakes – but one of the richest and most vital regions for nature in all of Canada. From the map image, the waters north of that squiggly red boundary line flow north, to the Ottawa River. Waters west of that squiggly line flow in the Rideau watershed to the Cataraqui, into Lake Ontario at Kingston. Within the watershed of the Thousand Islands is the narrow neck of the Frontenac Arch, the connective tissue for that links the Canadian Shield to the Adirondack and Appalachian Mountains. This link is key to migration routes – seasonal and long-term, for wildlife and forests alike.

The map shows you where TIWLT has been working over that past 30 years, and general locations of easement and owned properties – from tiny islands to large properties. Shown too are where the trust's properties lie in relation to the national and provincial parks. Of interest, TIWLT has helped add nearly 1,000 acres to Charleston Lake Provincial Park, and doubled the size of Thousand Islands National Park. From the map, you can see an aspect of this land trust's strategy – connecting the dots – the linking to other key protected places.

This circles back to the reason for the upcoming conservation workshop. Everyone can play a role in the long-term projects to protect the best of nature around Charleston Lake. About the time you're reading this, your land trust will have just added another owned location to the map – a ecologically exceptional 147 acres of forests and wetlands along Leeders Creek, that borders on the park. A very large Thanks goes to a contribution by the CLA and donors around the lake – and this is certainly not the first property where the Association has pitched in to protect those 'upstream' lands that are so vitally important to the lake's wellbeing.

The conservation workshop explores the many, many ways that you can participate in conservation, from real estate transaction, generation land transactions, conservation easements, gifts of property, legacy giving to simple donations. Every large or small step we take to protecting the land you love is a step towards resilience in climate change, and safe havens for shrinking wildlife populations.

Please have a safe and enjoyable winter, wherever the note finds you.

***Calder Schweitzer, Executive Director,
Thousand Islands Watershed Land Trust
Michael McAdoo, President, Charleston Lake Association
Karen Brown, Chair, Leeds-Grenville Stewardship Council***

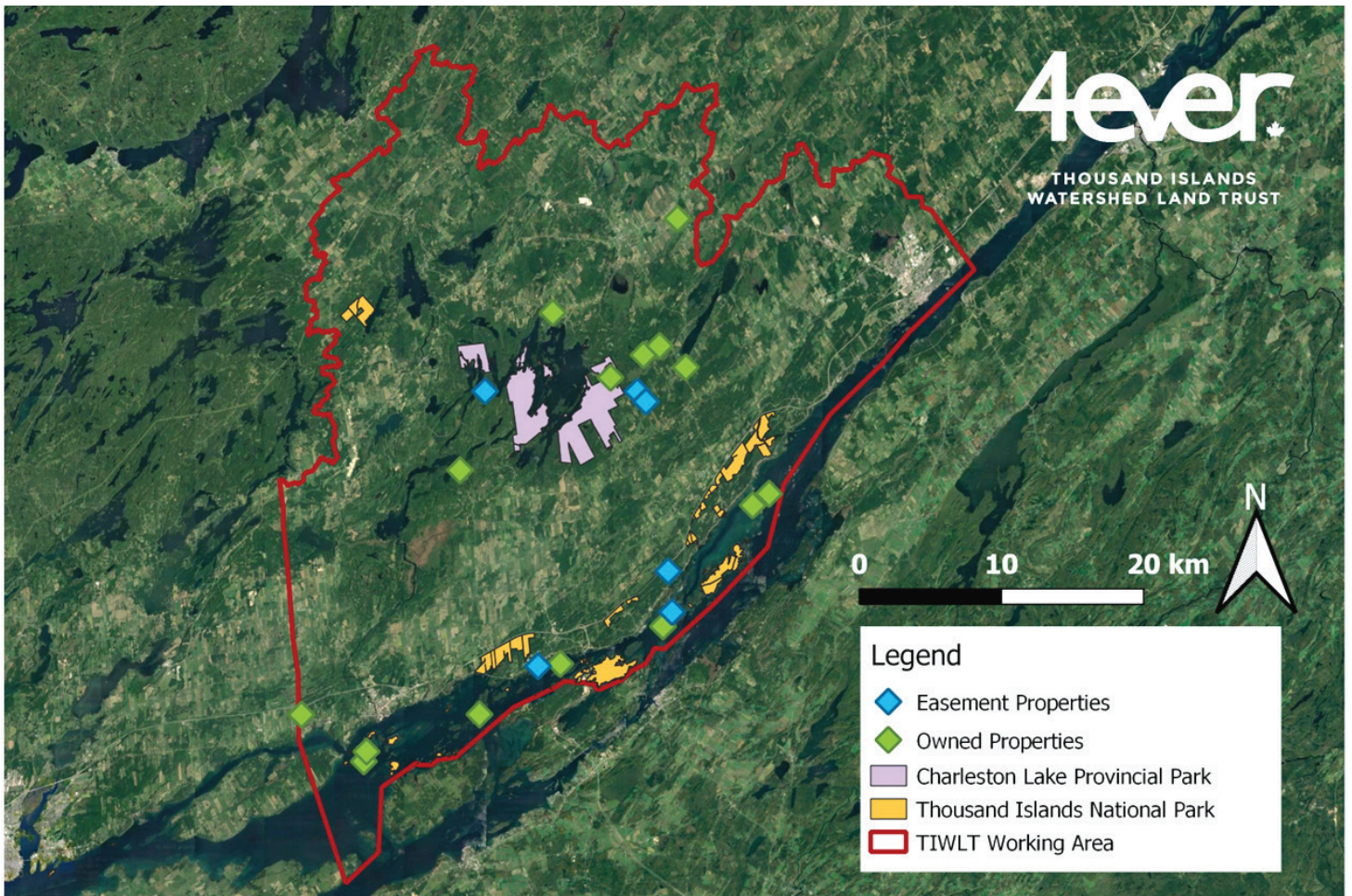


Photo courtesy of Brenda Evers

STUDENT BURSARY OPPORTUNITIES

On an annual basis, the CLEA provides bursaries for three students graduating from high school. Eligible students will be entering into a post-secondary program for the upcoming year. The preferred field of study would include environmental studies, natural resource management, land use planning, or a similar program. There will be one bursary granted for a student at the Athens District High School (ADHS); one for a student graduating from the Gananoque Intermediate & Secondary School (GISS) and one for a student who is a family member of a current Charleston Lake Association (CLA) member in good standing.

The purpose of these bursaries is to encourage youth who are connected to our area to develop their environmental interests, and to promote environmental activities in their community.

Please visit our website for details on the process to apply.

WATER QUALITY 2023 SURVEY INITIAL RESULTS

In 2023 Gary Nielsen and John Willson continued the water sampling that has been done annually for over 20 years. During the summer, forty-two phosphorus samples and water clarity recordings were collected over the period May 24th to October 30th inclusive; six samples from each of seven basins in the lake. The phosphorus test results from the Lake Partner program are not available yet.

During the spring, summer and fall of 2023, Charleston Lake once again experienced excellent water clarity (Average Secchi depth 8.30m); this value is higher than the last 5 year average of 6.66m and closer to the 2009-2013 period when the zebra mussel colonization was at its peak. When compared to the first five years (2000 to 2004 inclusive) of clarity data the improvement is remarkable. The mean water clarity value for the first five years is 4.30m. The largest part of the improvement in clarity is the result of the zebra mussel colonization of the lake, but that appears to have been stable for a number of years

and the results continue to improve. Donaldson Bay had the highest average clarity at 9.32m, ranging to Southern Waters at 7.15m average

Water clarity has improved so much in recent years that the mean value for the 22-year period of record (6.252 m) places Charleston Lake in the oligotrophic category for the entire time frame, despite the fact that for the first five years of that period (2000 to 2004 inclusive) the water clarity averaged only 4.305 m. Oligotrophic lakes have a water clarity > 5.0 metres.

Through a combination of good luck and good management we have seen Charleston Lake return to near pristine conditions from where it was a generation ago. We can't take it for granted but we can enjoy the result and do what we can to make sure it stays this way.

John Willson and Gary Nielsen

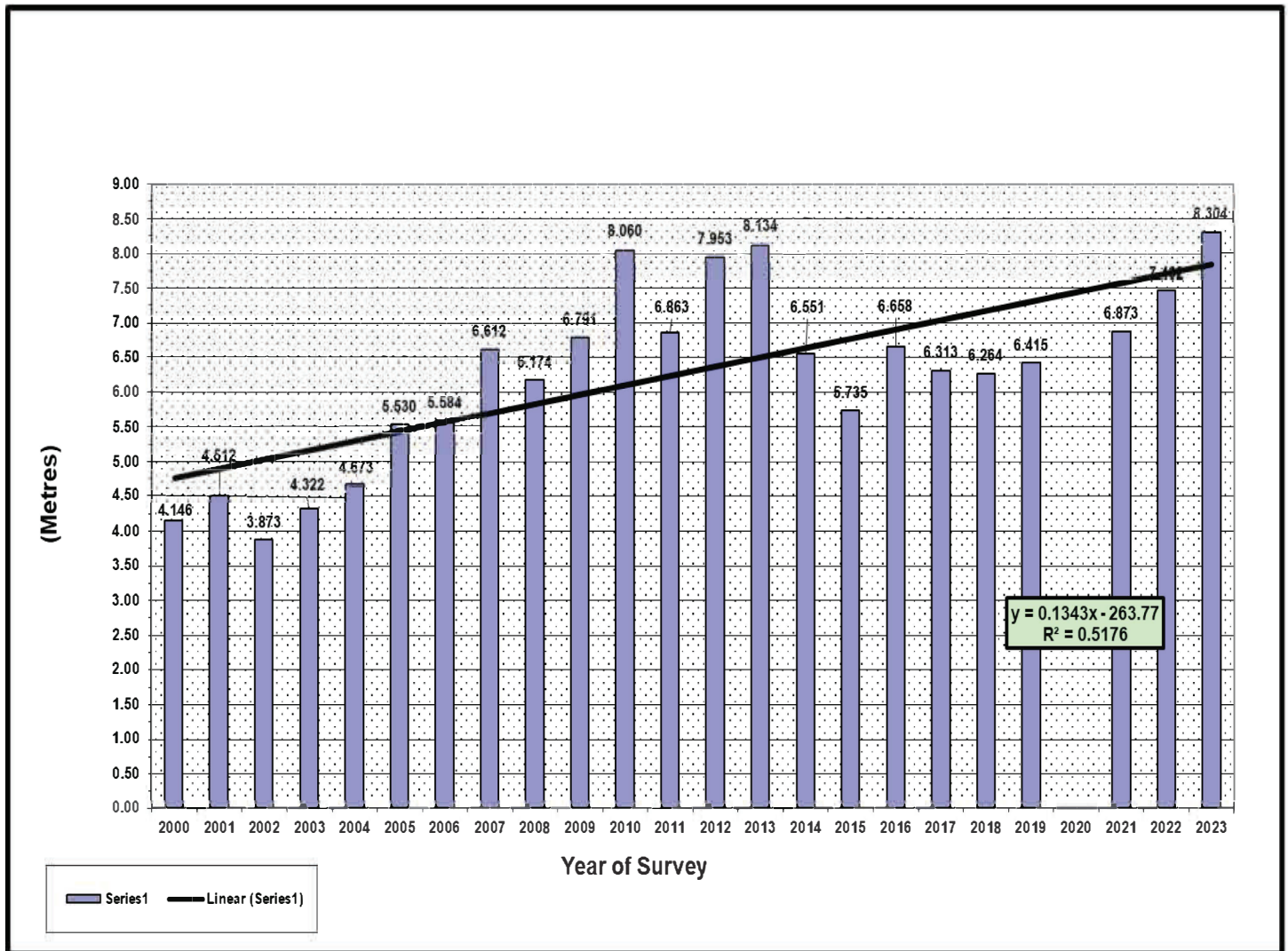


Table 1: 2023 Charleston Lake Water Clarity Results

CHARLESTON LAKE ASSOCIATION SUMMER CAMPS 2024

SAND BAY COUNTY PARK, CHARLESTON LAKE.

Camps are from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. and are open to children from 5-10.

NATURE CAMP - JULY 8 - JULY 12

Games, crafts and water activities, with an emphasis on the environment and outdoors.

ADVENTURE CAMP - JULY 15-19

Activities which allow and encourage children to explore and experience outdoor adventures.

SPORTS CAMP - JULY 22 - 26

Sports Camp emphasizes land and water sports to develop fitness and fun.

Fees for each camp are \$80.00 for CLA Members and \$120.00 for non-members.

Registration forms and liability waivers will be available on the website by March 2024. Fees are payable by e-transfer to: info@charlestonlakeassociation.ca

For more information, email Mary Mansworth at: mmansworth@truespeed.ca

DOUG HALE MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT 2024

SATURDAY, AUGUST 10

Details and registration forms will be on the website in May.

— SAVE THE DATE! —

HOW TO BECOME A STUDENT PARK RANGER AT ONTARIO PARKS

@CharlestonLkPP

Applications for our summer student positions are open! Apply early for the best chance to join us for the season. We're looking for gate attendants, maintenance workers, Discovery rangers, and more!

Apply now:
<https://www.ontarioparks.com/careers>

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2024

**SATURDAY, JULY 27th
9:30 AM**

Holy Trinity Church, Oak Leaf Road

— ALL WELCOME —



Photo courtesy of Brenda Evers

CAMP DIRECTOR POSITION

CLA Summer Camps are seeking a mature individual with proven organizational skills for the position of Camp Director. The camps run for three consecutive weeks in July, starting on July 8. The successful candidate will be responsible for preparing the activities for the camps, as well as supervising the counsellors and lifeguard.

Remuneration is \$1000.00 a week for three weeks.

Please submit your resume to Mary Mansworth at: mmansworth@truespeed.ca before March 31, 2024.

LIFEGUARD AND CAMP COUNSELLOR POSITIONS

Qualified lifeguard and three camp counsellor positions are also open. Please send your resume to: mmansworth@truespeed.ca by March 31, 2024.

BASS SPAWNING SANCTUARIES COME TO CHARLESTON LAKE

Coming this Spring (2024), there will be a new experimental management strategy employed in two lakes in southern Ontario, Charleston and Opinicon. Following the recommendations provided by the Fisheries Conservation Foundation (FCF, the organization that has coordinated and facilitated past research efforts), the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) has instituted two Bass Spawning Sanctuaries in each of these two lakes. This action comes after decades of research by a consortium of scientists and students from several different Canadian and US universities working in concert studying the impact of angling for nesting bass on their spawning success and production of young,

Bass Spawning Sanctuaries (BSSs) are areas of each study lake that will be CLOSED TO ALL FISHING from April 15 through the Friday before the first Saturday in July. In 2024, bass fishing in these BSSs will not be allowed until Saturday July 6. See the maps below that show the locations of the BSSs in Charleston and Opinicon. Those regulations and the descriptions of the BSSs are now included in the OMNRF's official Fishing Regulations for 2024. There will be signs on the shorelines near and in the BSSs as well as at boat ramps and other lake access points to help everyone understand and comply with these new regulations. There will be increased enforcement attention for these BSSs by the OMNRF, and our research team will have an almost daily presence on these two lakes. That said, if you see someone breaking this new regulation, get their boat number (a photo of the boat is good) and inform them politely of the new regulation and ask them politely to comply. There is no need for confrontation beyond that...just inform the OMNRF or our team and we will follow up.

FCF, together with scientists and students from Carleton University, the University of Illinois, and the Queen's University Biological Station will assess how much those BSSs protect nesting bass from preseason angling, as well as how much they increase bass reproductive success and production of young. This will be accomplished using a two-pronged approach. First, we will conduct snorkel surveys every few days throughout the BBS seasonal closure period (4/15/24 - 7/6/24) to assess how many bass of each species (Largemouth and Smallmouth) build nests, spawn, and successfully produce offspring that are capable of surviving after the presence of the male guardian parent has ceased. Those metrics will be measured both inside and outside of the BSSs. Later in the year (August/September) our team will conduct a second set of snorkel surveys in the same areas to count the number of young produced from spawning during both earlier that year (as 3-4 month old fish) as well as the year before (as 1 year old fish). Those data will be compared with data collected in an

identical manner in the same places over the last two years (2022 and 2023), before the BSSs were in place.

Second, in addition to our general bass reproduction surveys, our team will also be conducting an acoustic telemetry study to assess movements of nesting bass of both species during and after spawning to assess fidelity to spawning areas, summer home foraging ranges, and overwintering areas. For that study we will angle selected nest-guarding male bass, bring them into the boat, surgically implant an acoustic transmitter, let them recover in the boat, then release them back onto their nest to resume their nest-guarding behavior. The following procedures have been developed to ensure that males remain on their nests and continue their parental care duties. That is, during the surgical procedure, a snorkeler will be in the water physically guarding that male's brood from predators, then when ready, release that male directly on its nest. Snorkelers will then monitor those nests every few days until the broods are successful at reaching independence.

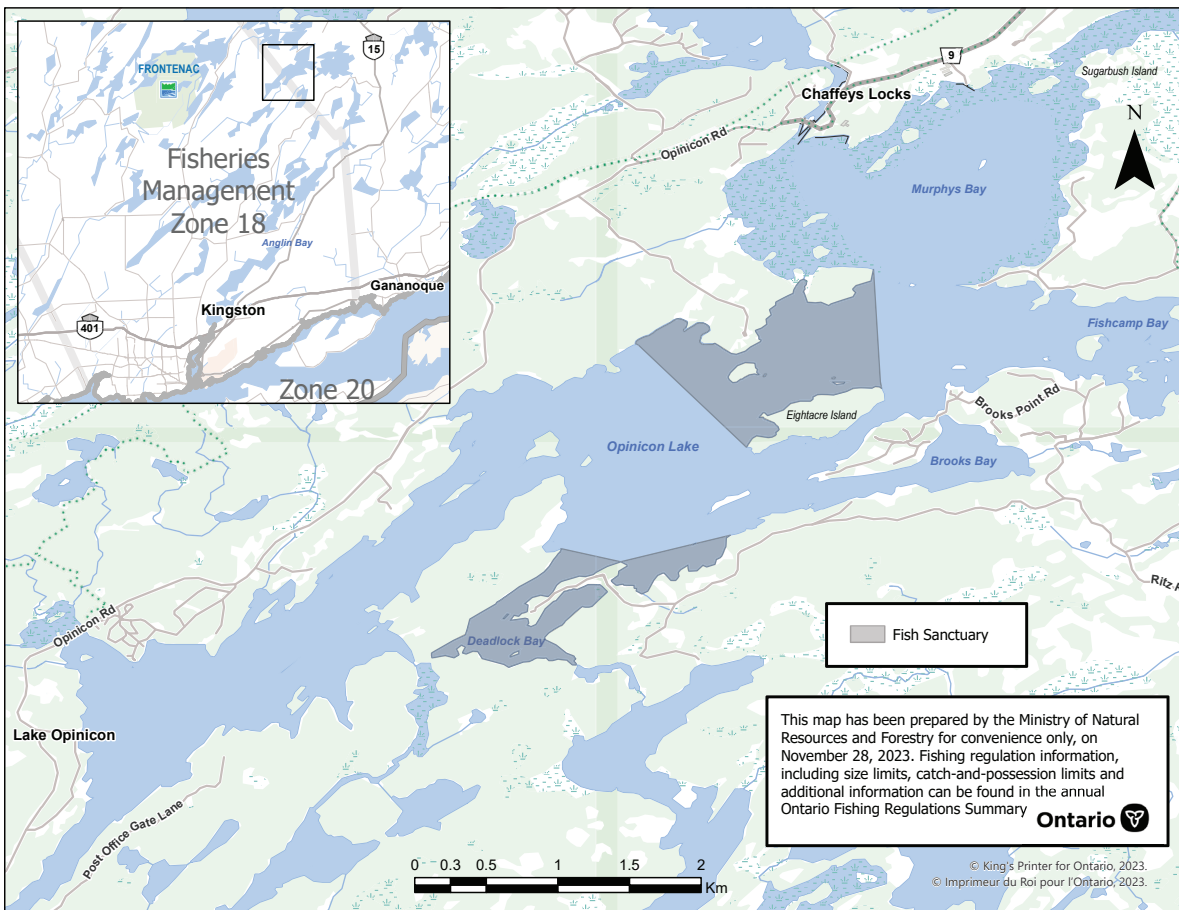
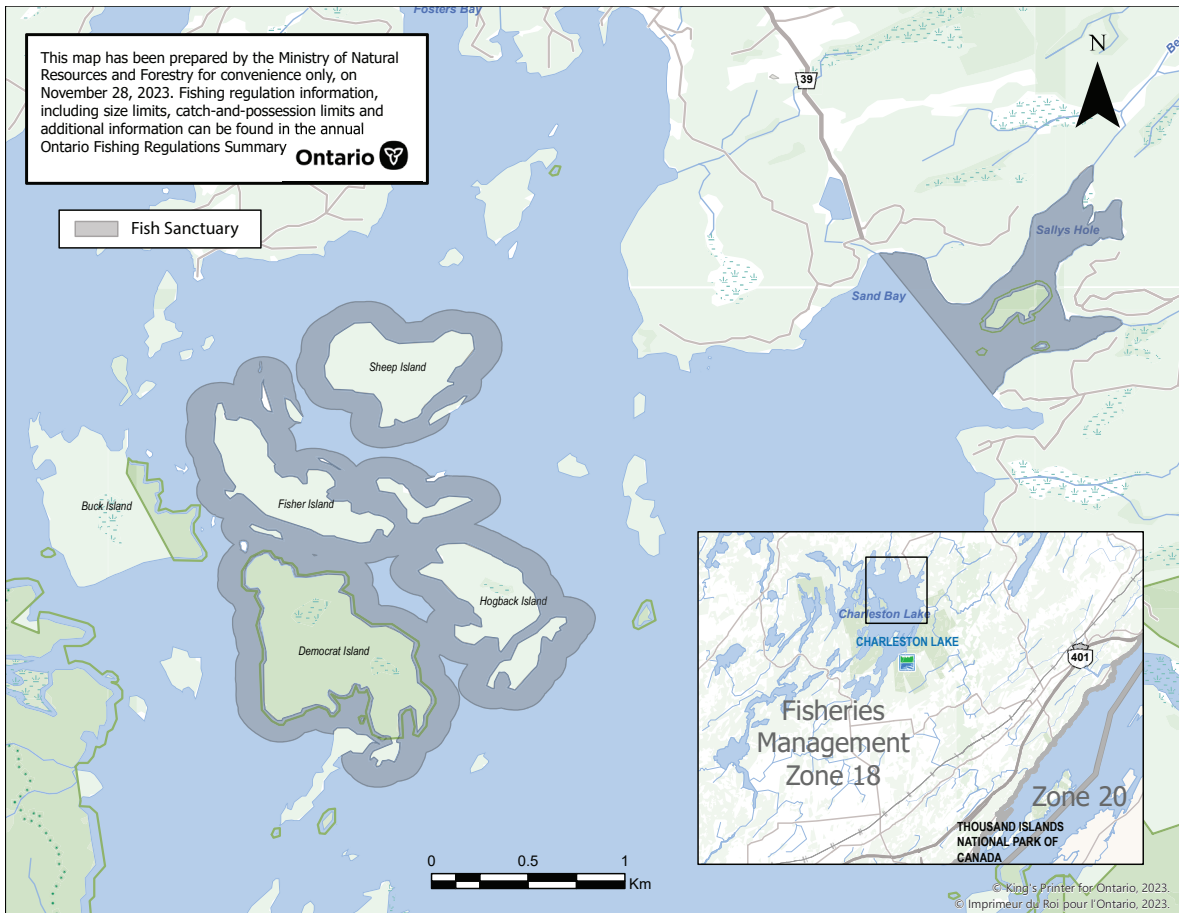
Our team will have special research permits allowing us to snorkel and angle fish for this study inside and outside the BSSs before the bass fishing season opens officially. As such, we will be the ONLY people that should be fishing within the BSSs then, and we will have our boats clearly labelled. Anyone else fishing in a BSS should be told that they are fishing illegally. To help assess how everything is working, we will also have team members boating through the areas performing creel surveys and opinion interviews, as well as serving as outreach resources to explain the basis for the study and to answer any questions. So again, we will have an almost daily presence on the two study lakes.

We believe that this innovative conservation approach to manage angling for bass in local lakes is imperative to protect the health of the bass populations and the quality of the fishery. The Bass Spawning Sanctuaries will provide full protection for the many bass spawning within them, thereby serving as an important source of production for young bass across the entire lake.

For more information, see the following citation and link for a recent publication published in Fisheries Research that presents data showing the potential for the BSS strategy

Philipp, D. P., A. Zolderdo, M. J. Lawrence, J. E. Claussen, L. Nowell, P. Holder, S. J. Cooke. 2022. COVID-19 reduced recreational fishing effort during the black bass spawning season, resulting in increases in black bass reproductive success and annual recruitment. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fishres.2022.106580>

David Philipp Fisheries Conservation Foundation



SUMMER STUDENT 2024 – JOB OPPORTUNITY

The Charleston Lake and Charleston Lake Environmental Associations will require a summer student to manage our information centre and perform the duties of camp counsellor during the three weeks of our summer youth camp. The information centre is located at 109 County Road 40 (Charleston Lake Road).

The job will be from Monday, July 1st until Monday, September 2nd.

Prior to the completion of the high school year some weekend work may be required.

You will find below the details of the job responsibilities and the requirements of the successful candidate.

Job Title – Information Centre Manager and Youth Camp Counsellor

Reports to the – Secretary Treasurer of the
Charleston Lake Association

Job Responsibilities

1. General office duties
2. Interaction with the public visiting our information centre
3. Sale of environmental products and CLA merchandise, including petty cash management
4. Membership correspondence
5. Assist with the annual golf tournament
6. Youth Camp Counsellor

Hours of work – 6 hour day (10:00am – 4:00 pm),
including ½ hour paid lunch

Work week – 5 days per week, off Tuesdays and Wednesdays. During the three weeks of youth camp this job will be 7 days per week

Rate of Pay - \$17.00 per hour, plus 4% vacation pay less statutory deductions

Job Requirements

1. Must be at least 15 years of age
2. Must possess excellent personal computing skills in excel & word
3. Must demonstrate good organizational and communication skills
4. Previous experience in an organized youth camp would be an asset

Application submission

The application deadline will be May 26th, 2024.

If you are interested in applying for this position, please mail your completed resume to:

Charleston Lake Association
PO Box 609

Athens, ON K0E 1B0

Or Email to: charlestonlakeassociation@outlook.com



Photo courtesy of Brenda Evers

CHARLESTON LAKE ASSOCIATION DIRECTORS

Michael McAdoo - President

pres@charlestonlakeassociation.ca

Wayne Gill - Secretary/Treasurer

Bill Hallam - VP South

Rocci Pagnello - VP North/ Fish and Wildlife/
Ontario Youth Summit

Sue Willson - Website/ Golf Tournament

Robbie Gibson - Safety and Law Enforcement

Dwayne Struthers - Fish and Wildlife

Mary Mansworth - Newsletter/ Youth Programs

CHARLESTON LAKE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

Nicole Rozario - Boating Safety Program

Roy Angelow - Municipal and Government Liaison

Linda Whitmarsh - Member at Large/

Get The Lead Out Program

Katie Baker - Fish and Wildlife

Kristin Ireland - Member at Large/ Information Centre

John Webster - Boating Safety Program/ Website

Ron Evers - Fish and Wildlife