

OTTY LAKE POLLUTION CONTROL COMMITTEE REPORT

November, 1972

On July 15, 1972, our Annual Meeting was held in Perth. A new Constitution was adopted, and officers were elected for one to three year terms. Copies of the Constitution are being sent to members of the Executive, and interested persons may obtain details from their Area Counsellors.

The following members were elected to the Executive for the periods indicated, with effect from the 1972 Annual Meeting:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Term</u>
Chairman	John Kimble Abbott	Two Years
Secretary Treasurer	Mrs. John Burns	Two Years
Vice Chairman, Environmental Management	Donald Hill	One Year
Vice Chairman, Pollution Control	Dr. Fred Green	One Year
Vice Chairman, Wildlife and Fishing	Michael Quinn	Three Years
Vice Chairman, Membership and Special Events	Peter Code	Three Years
Vice Chairman, Recreation	David Code	Three Years
<u>Area Counsellors</u>		
Area 1	William Roy	Three Years
Area 2	Kenneth Daines	Two Years
Area 3	Lawrence Little	Two Years
Area 4	Frank Staab	Three Years
Area 5	Lyman Playfair	One Year
Area 6	Allan White	Two Years
Area 7	David Mears	Three Years
Area 8	(to be filled by the Executive)	
Area 9	Mrs. R. B. Code	Two Years
<u>Advisory Council</u>		
Medical Adviser	Dr. C. B. Church	Three Years
Legal Adviser	Donald Hill	Three Years
Scientific Adviser	Dr. I. Hoffman	Three Years
General	Mrs. C. B. Church	Three Years
	Kenneth Barr	Three Years
	Lyman Playfair	Three Years

Mr. Donald Hill, our Legal Adviser and Vice Chairman for Environmental Management, visited Toronto last summer for meetings with government officials and others concerned with pollution control. He has examined new environmental management legislation and has obtained the various formulas, being used by the Government of Ontario, for determining most favourable lake populations. It is significant that, by all standards, Otty Lake has too many shoreline cottages. This is a serious situation which requires a thorough examination and control.

We have written to the Minister for the Environment for Ontario, the Chairman-Ontario for the CORTS Water Study Group, the Chairman of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, and the Reeves of the municipalities of North Burgess and North Elmsley, to ask them to declare moratorium on all further building at the Lake, until a long-range development plan has been drawn up and approved.

We are pleased to report that the Town of Perth and the surrounding municipalities, including North Burgess and North Elmsley, have formed a Tay Valley Planning Board to examine problems of environmental management and to make recommendations for future development. The Planning Board will engage consultants to study the area and make recommendations. This is a good move which is supported by your

Committee; however, it is in the formulative stage and it will take several years to get results.

As part of our contribution to environmental management in the Tay Valley, your Committee will hold a conference in Perth on Saturday, January 27, 1973. It will be a private meeting restricted to the members of your Executive, the Minister and officials of the Ontario Department of the Environment, members of the Tay Valley Planning Board, the Chairman of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, and representatives from the CORTS Committee and Pollution Probe at the University of Toronto, with whom we are affiliated. The objective is to consider a plan for long-range development and environmental management on Otty Lake, and through private session to allow for a complete and open discussion without running the risk of misinterpretation or misunderstanding. The agenda will cover land use, the establishment of green belts and game sanctuaries, the preservation of recreational land, and population control.

The Pollution Control Programme has continued this summer under the direction of Dr. Fred Green. Most of the serious cases have been dealt with, and action is pending on the remainder. There are still a few property owners who have not been advised about required sewage disposal modifications, but we hope to have all cases cleared by next spring.

The excessive number of shoreline cottages is a serious pollution threat in spite of the action that has been taken to improve sewage disposal systems. Under ideal circumstances a lake can only handle a given number of cottages. The sewage must go somewhere, and the best systems only provide the most effective conditions for nature to reconstitute the refuse and return it to a useful state in the environment. If we have too much sewage for nature to handle we can reach a point of no return in pollution control. It will then be impossible to control pollution levels, so it is important for us to keep on top of the problem to avoid any possibility of this occurring.

To accomplish this, Dr. Green is instituting a water quality monitoring system in cooperation with the Water Quality Control Branch of the Department of the Environment, to keep us informed about water quality levels and the need for further corrective action if necessary. This raises questions about the methods we may use if pollution levels continue to increase. It would be highly speculative to comment at this stage, except to say that we will not act prematurely or without expert advice. However, if we are satisfied that the Lake is deteriorating, we will act promptly through whatever channels are appropriate.

The water quality level data, obtained through the survey, will not be made public in its raw form, or before meaningful trends and patterns are established. This is being done to avoid unqualified speculation. We all tend to become alarmed by sensational water readings, that later, in the light of proper analyses, may prove to be indications of trends rather than absolute assessments. We must not cry wolf, or have others paint gloomy and unreliable pictures for us, or we may have trouble being listened to when we have real problems.

Michael Quinn, Vice Chairman for Wildlife and Fishing, is conducting a study of the Lake environment to establish a well balanced programme for wildlife and fish management in cooperation with the responsible government agencies. He will be reporting in more detail later, but has recommended immediate action to preserve the Great Blue Heronry, and has asked us to inform property owners about beaver control arrangements.

We have written to the Chairman of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority recommending that the Heronry be protected and it is understood that action for its conservation will be considered in the near future.

The increasing beaver population is beginning to cause some damage in certain sections of the Lake. It is reported that, in one case at least, these little fellows chewed out the foundations of a boat house and cut down a large number of trees. *The wildlife authorities have*

informed Mr. Quinn that Ken Richardson of Perth has been designated to handle beaver control problems. If you should have a problem, get in touch with Mr. Quinn or Mr. Richardson. As control measures are usually carried out in December, this should be done promptly.

David Code, Vice Chairman for Recreation, organized and staged the Otty Lake Regatta last summer. It was a successful beginning to what we hope will become an annual event. The pattern of recreation on the Lake is changing, and you may have noticed the growing number of canoes and sailboats. We expect that this trend will continue for, in the years to come, motors and the pollution they create will become increasingly unattractive. However paddling and sailing require greater skills than the simple running of outboard motors, and can be dangerous if undertaken by inexperienced persons. To increase water safety, the Committee is considering a sailing and canoeing course next season that will be open to all members and their families. If you are interested, get in touch with David Code at the Lake or write to him at 456 Hillcrest Avenue in Ottawa. This should be done within the next few weeks as arrangements must be made this winter.

Once again we are indebted to the young people on the Lake who made a special drive to distribute the new Pollution Probe Booklet "Keep It Clean", and to help with our membership campaign. We do not have a generation gap, and if the rest of us gave half as much time and energy, there would be few unresolved problems. Three representatives from this group have been invited to attend the Conference in January.

The Secretary Treasurer, Mrs. Burns, reports that our finances are in good order and that we should have sufficient funds to carry out this year's activities. Some of you may wonder how we are able to accomplish so much with a two dollar annual fee. All members of the Executive give their time free and Mrs. Burns keeps a tight rein on the purse strings. But we also receive assistance from other public-spirited members who have produced materials, provided typing assistance and generally assisted in various ways that would have been expensive through commercial channels. Many thanks.

We have now been in operation for three years. Much has been accomplished but we are still far short of a relatively pollution free lake environment. It is easy to become complacent after the first glow of concern is over, or to assume that all is well simply because a preliminary examination of sewage systems and water quality levels has been completed. We certainly do not want to become obsessed with imaginary problems but we must remain vigilant. A Committee can do a little, Government agencies can help, but in the final analysis success will depend upon the individual. We must avoid rationalizing marginal sewage systems or of subconsciously setting double standards that allow us to put off improvements that we know are necessary. Each one of us must obey all of the rules. Do not allow any foreign substance to enter the Lake from your property. Keep it clean. It is a precious resource that cannot be replaced.