



## **STEWARDSHIP REPORT (2019 AGM) by Brenda Martin**

The Lakes Stewardship Committee has experienced an overwhelming year of challenges. Some aspects of the Lake Plan implementation will be on hold until we find some control to the EWM crisis. At our MALLA events (starting with June AGM, July Bass Derby and our August Corn Roast) members of the Stewardship Committee made presentations and gave demonstrations about the removal of EWM. We have some rakes, cultivators, sample scoops and mesh bags for safe removal of EWM when members tackle their own dock and beach areas. Support from the membership has been heart-warming! LSC recognized that the control issue is far beyond our lakes capabilities and the Township needed to join the action plan.

The presentation by student Ryleigh Rioux at the AGM clearly indicated the ability of monitoring the EWM through the drone program "Above & Beyond". The baseline data from 2017 will allow comparison with re-mapping in the fall. The amount and quality of the data far exceeds what we could have achieved with previous methods. Our preliminary mapping to provide GPS co-ordinates was a positive step in the plan. These maps are available on the website. Mapping in October produced videos that clearly show the rapid expansion of EWM in both lakes. Further examination of the maps happened in the fall and winter.

MALLA's presentation at the August 24<sup>th</sup> Council meeting received immediate attention with resolutions to support the requests. Many follow-up aspects are underway, with many more yet to be completed.

- 1) As a result of our education session with the Township, we applied for grants to obtain materials. The Township in their 2019 budget deliberations supported MALLA with a summer student to be an integral part of the pilot project. Ryleigh Rioux has been hired.
- 2) LSC designed signage that would be appropriate for each of the public boat launches in the township. The signs were not funded with 2019 budget. The Stewardship Chair requested signage from FOCA to match the "Clean, Drain, Dry Your Boat" sign that we have at our boat launch. FOCA responded positively and forwarded signs for each of the Township boat launches.
- 3) MALLA was asked to determine the location and feasibility of installing boat wash stations in each Ward of the Township. At this time, it is MALLA's opinion, there are not suitable water or hydro systems in place to be able to recommend sites. Cost will be prohibitive.
- 4) MALLA applied in December for the continuance of our MNRF work permit and a Letter of Authority was provided in January of 2019. Property owners are still encouraged to hand-pull

any EWM that you can from your shoreline and beach areas as you do not need a permit to remove EWM in this manner.

5) In December we added a vital partnership to our project. Prof. Jesse Vermaire of Carleton University specializes in the study of aquatic invasive species- particularly EWM. His EWM project in the Ottawa area was delayed waiting for a permit, so he was able to dedicate time and staff to our pilot project. A graduate student, Patrick Beaupre will take the lead and liaise with our MALLA and Above & Beyond team this year.

6) Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority provided a YSI meter to measure dissolved oxygen levels on Malcolm Lake and when feasible on Ardoch Lake. Measurements were conducted January-April. A summary will be provided by Kelly Stiles.

7) LSC is working closely with the drone deploy program "Above & Beyond" throughout the year to improve resolution of vegetation mapping photos. This fall, polarized filters were added to the camera lens. Drone mapping will resume by the end of May and continue throughout the summer and fall. Of special interest will be the "burlapped" areas and to re-map previous sites to have comparison data.

8) The Stewardship Chair worked with the township staff and submitted a grant application to TD Bank "Friends of the Environment" for burlap. We were notified in April that the proposal was not accepted for funding.

9) Communication with MALLA members is an important component of the pilot project. The EWM Report 2018 was provided in the winter. In April a comprehensive document, MALLA Integrated EWM Management Plan (2018-2020) was revised and posted on our website. This document provides extensive details about the project.

10) A grant application submitted to Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters for funds to build a barge was also unsuccessful. MALLA is indebted to Jerry White who has donated the use of his barge this summer for our lake project.

11) Thanks to 12 volunteers a section at Ardoch lake was covered with burlap and held with riverwash stones. We look forward to the May EWM sampling activities for results to assist with future planning.

12) MALLA Executive has determined that more burlap and riverwash stones need to be ordered. FOCA may have a grant application in June to which we have been encouraged to apply. A fundraising request has been sent with the membership renewal memo. The Fishing Committee members have agreed to resume burlap laying by the end of May.

13) There are 5 certified scuba divers among our property owners who have been "volunteered" to remove EWM in at least one area using hand-harvesting. This will also be an experiment to determine if the extent of labour involved is worth the effort. The barge will be instrumental in this activity as well as with the burlap laying.