

# BBLA Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2025

## Chairman's Letter

It is my pleasure to warmly welcome back our residents, cottagers, and friends for another memorable summer season on Big Basswood Lake. The summer is off to a fabulous start, as families reunite at the lake we all hold so dear.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the contributions of your passionate, all-volunteer board, which has worked throughout the winter and spring to address a range of issues impacting our shared quality of life. From engaging in municipal efforts to address environmental concerns and working with local authorities on Harris Dam water level management, your board remains deeply committed to protecting and enriching our lake community for generations to come.

The BBLA is a binational community organization, with members hailing from across Canada and the United States. As an American with deep family roots in Canada, I would also like to take a moment—in a year of unprecedented challenges to Canada–U.S. relations—to express my heartfelt gratitude to all Canadian members of our lake community for the continued friendship and hospitality they extend to their American neighbors. I, for one, sincerely hope that brighter days lie ahead.

Now please mark your calendars: our Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held on Thursday, July 17, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at the 12-Sided Barn on Big Basswood Lake Rd. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet new neighbors, reconnect with old friends, and learn more about our work. Your input helps shape our priorities and strengthens our collective efforts. We strongly encourage all new and renewing BBLA members to attend.

## Pipers on Hunting's Dock

Paris Port Dover Pipe Band and  
the Beinn Gorm Highlanders of Collingwood.

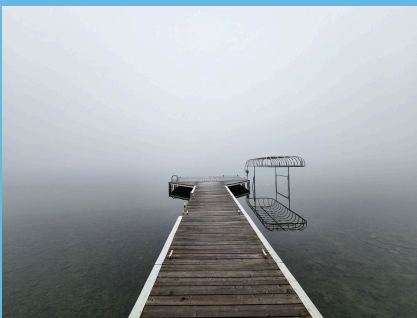
Saturday, July 26th

4:00 PM



### **In This Newsletter:**

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## Chairman's Letter (cont'd)

Other summer events worth noting this year include the third annual Goose and Gander concert on Wednesday, Aug 6<sup>th</sup> and the piper concert on Huntings dock on Saturday, July 26<sup>th</sup> at 4PM. More information on these 2 events in the newsletter.

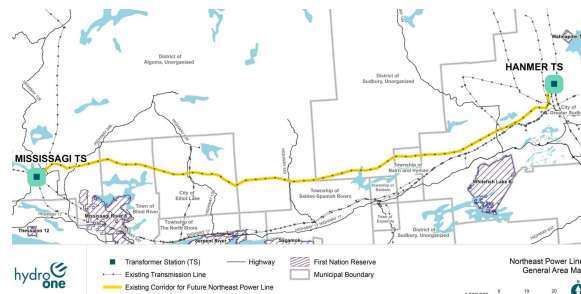
While we continue to work on upgrading our website to streamline membership sign-up and renewals, we encourage all members to renew and pay their annual membership dues by PayPal. You can also sign up for membership or make your annual contribution by cheque or cash directly at the July 17 meeting.

Let's continue to protect the place we all treasure, and here's to another fantastic summer on Big Basswood Lake!

**Matt Aho**

## Northeastern Power Line

Of interest to Big Basswood Lake property owners might be the proposed construction in 2027 of a new power line from a transformer station on Hwy 129, North of Basswood Lake to a transformer station North of Sudbury



Please follow this link for more information on time lines including public consultations next summer:

[Hydro One Northeast Power Line Information](#)

# Highway 17 Construction

## Overview and Update

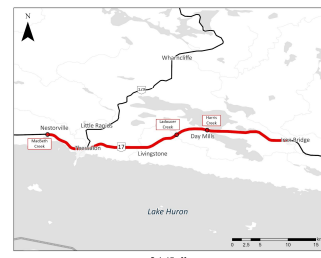
The overall highway project on Highway 17 in Huron Shores is quite extensive, involving over 30 kilometers of the highway. Here are the main components:

- > Culvert Replacements: This includes replacing culverts at MacBeth Creek, Ladouceur Creek and Harris Creek.
- > Grading and Resurfacing: The project involves grading and resurfacing Highway 17 between Iron Bridge and Nestorville.
- > Maintenance: Additional maintenance will be done on ditches and road shoulders.
- > Traffic Management: Expect single lane closures controlled by flagging operations and potential speed reductions from 90 km/h to 70 km/h within construction zones.

The project aims to improve road quality and safety, it began May 20, 2024, and is now expected to run to November 30, 2025

For the most current and detailed information, it would be best to stay tuned to the Municipality of Huron Shores official communications or contact them directly. They will provide updates on the construction activities, including any changes to traffic patterns and alternate routes during the construction period.

It's always a good idea to check these sources regularly for the latest information on road construction projects, especially if you're planning travel through the area. The Ontario 511 Traveller Information website is also a useful resource for up-to-date status of road closures and delays you may encounter.



George Craigie

# 2025 Annual General Meeting



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**Thursday, July 17, 2025**  
**7 - 9 PM**

12 Sided Barn  
Big Basswood Lake Road  
Sowerby

For those unable to attend in person,  
we will broadcast the event on Zoom ....

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86999128726?pwd=bV8cta6E8YaOO2LbigHNwjeNQNiRqP.1>





# Membership

As we begin yet another summer enjoying all that beautiful Big Basswood Lake has to offer, we remind you that now is the time to renew your annual membership. The BBLA works diligently to preserve and protect Big Basswood Lake and its watershed, so that generations of families can continue to enjoy this very special and unique summer experience year after year.

In 2024, 74 families joined the association, a drop in numbers from 2023 which saw 85 cottage owners purchasing memberships. We still have still have a long way to go to achieve the full participation of the Basswood lake property owners. Pre-pandemic numbers reached a high of 115 paid memberships and still, this number only represents 50% participation by the lake owners. Going forward, we hope to develop strategies to attract new members and adapt our technology to make it easier for new members to sign up.

So why is membership in your lake association important? The association aims to care for our lake. Currently there a number of issues that threaten to affect the quality of Big Basswood if left unchecked. Our efforts in addressing these issues are more effective when backed by robust membership numbers.

Your annual membership in the Big Basswood Lake Association also provides several tangible benefits:

- Annual events focused on Lake Stewardship, area History, and ongoing education.
- Automatic membership in FOCA (The Federation of Ontario Cottages Association) which provides access to the many informative publications concerning issues faced by cottage owners.
- Participation at the Annual General Meeting which offers the opportunity for you to provide your input on the issues that affect property owners and the preservation of the Basswood Lake environment
- Savings on Cottage Insurance through FOCA Membership

We appreciate your continued support of the BBLA. Along with becoming a member, we would also welcome your active participation and input. If you would like to join the the board in their endeavors to protect our lake, please reach out to us. If you have a new neighbour, or a neighbour who is not yet a member, let them know about the benefits of joining the BBLA, and invite them to meetings and activities supported by the association.

The annual membership fee remains at \$25 per year. Non-voting Associate Memberships are also available to local Businesses and friends and family who visit the lake frequently. You can purchase a membership with PayPal or by cheque payable to **Big Basswood Lake Association, P.O. Box 337, Thessalon, ON P0R 1L0**

*Cynthia Woods*

# Melwel Lodge Severance

As reported in our fall newsletter, the owners of Melwel Lodge were granted an "Application for Consent" to sever the existing property into 8 individual lots with the intent of selling each of the lots individually. The 8 lots correspond to the locations of the existing 8 cabins on the property. As part of the application, they requested some minor changes in the setbacks and a rezoning of the properties from "Recreational Commercial" to "Waterfront Recreational and Waterfront Residential". Also included is an application to provide drainage easement together with an easement to establish long-term access over the existing private drive. A map of the proposed severance is included with this article.

At a public meeting that was held on Wednesday, Oct 9<sup>th</sup>, the municipality's planner Peter Tonazzo presented a report on the application recommending acceptance. At that meeting, Mr. Tonazzo, along with the current owners, Frank and Christian Provanzano, made a presentation on the reasons for the request, outlined the planned severance, and responded to questions by many members of the public that attended in person and virtually.

At the subsequent regular council meeting, council voted unanimously to approve the severance, subject to conditions.

Several key concerns were addressed at the meeting ....

Site development – property owners on Basswood Lake were concerned that approving this severance would result in unchecked development at the site. The existing owners explained that, in fact, this rezoning constituted a "down zoning". As noted, the lodge site is currently zoned "Recreational Commercial" which offers significant flexibility for development, and the potential to create a multi-unit resort or similar destination-oriented development, akin to the style and amenities seen in popular resort areas. By rezoning as "Waterfront Residential", the new owners will be restricted to a single detached or recreational dwelling. Any development of a new seasonal or full-time residence that expands beyond the existing cabin footprint must be separately approved by council.

Precedence – much concern was expressed by lake residents that this would establish a precedent on Big Basswood wherein any large property owner could apply for creation of multiple lot subdivision, thereby increasing lake density. Mr Tonazzo addressed this citing the existing Official Plan which states that "up to two consents for residential uses may be granted for a lot as of the approval date of this Plan (excluding the retained lot). Special consideration may be made to a limited number of existing lots in the municipality which is occupied by more than one dwelling unit where such dwellings existed as of May 25, 1985.

# Melwel Lodge Severance (cont'd)

Lake quality – concerns were expressed about increased septic loading on Big Basswood. Council placed conditions on the application for consent that will require the owners to obtain appropriate Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks and/or Algoma Public Health approvals as it relates to the decommissioning of existing septic systems, where required, as well as any necessary pre-development approvals for new septic systems.

Road easement – as part of the development plan, a series of easements will be granted to provide long-term, registered and surveyed access to Proposed Parts 2-7 on the site plan. A new private road is to be built at the rear of the property. Although an existing road exists, the new routing will be further back from the lake.

As reported in the fall, the owners of Melwel planned to continue with business as usual in 2025. We are told by the owners that, in fact, this is the case and they are open for business in 2025.

If you have further questions, please contact Matt Aho ([imomateo@yahoo.com](mailto:imomateo@yahoo.com)) at or reference the Huron Shores website ([huronshores.ca](http://huronshores.ca))



**Larry Allcorn**

# Water Rangers

You may recall that last year, members of our lake community participated in the provincially sponsored Water Rangers Program. Specifically Bobby Swain in the east basin and Paul and Tania Hazlett did testing in the West Basin and submitted their results to the Water Rangers test site.

Over the winter, Dr Ho-Tassone of the Nordik Institute contacted the Environmental Services Committee of Huron Shores about a project that she was initiating to collect do fresh water sampling along the North Shore. Here is a write up describing her program:

*This initiative is part of a community-led effort operated by the NORDIK Institute. The goal is to empower local residents to collect consistent, meaningful data on the health of our local water bodies — including lakes, rivers, and creeks throughout Huron Shores and surrounding communities.*

<https://www.sootoday.com/local-news/new-nordik-project-focuses-on-water-quality-in-the-north-9570165#:~:text=A%20new%20NORDIK%20Institute%20research,water%20quality%20across%20northern%20Ontario.>

*The project builds on successful models used in other Northern communities and is designed to fill data gaps in areas where there is little to no regular environmental sampling. While this is not a regulatory or enforcement-driven program, it can help provide valuable baseline data that contributes to public awareness, long-term planning, and resource protection.*

*The project includes:*

- Weekly water quality sampling (May–Sept) using test kits
- Parameters like pH, temperature, clarity, and conductivity
- Volunteer training and safety guidance
- A shared digital database to support transparency and learning
- A fall data workshop to review findings together as a community

Dr Ho-Tassone requested that the EAC find volunteers in various water bodies within Huron Shores to collect samples and submit them to the program. Since the program is being run using the Water Rangers protocols, the BBLA volunteered to incorporate their program with Dr Tassone's program.

For 2025, three locations on Big Basswood Lake are being used for sampling:

Continued testing by the Hazletts in the west end

Testing by Christine Coutu and Jason Naccorato in Philips Bay

Testing by Peter Falk near Harris Creek in the East End

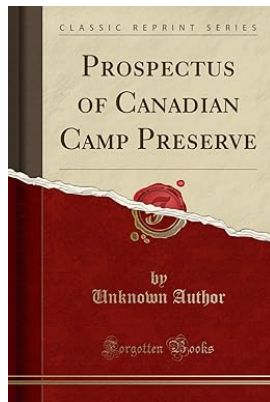
The results are being submitted thru the Nordik initiative and being posted to the Water Rangers website.

Larry Allcorn

# History Corner

While researching information for the story posted on the Basswood Lake Outfitters website about the Canadian Camp Clubhouse on the north shore of Big Basswood Lake, title "1902 - New York City Meets Basswood Lake" (<https://www.basswoodlake.ca/s/stories/1902-new-york-city-meets-big-basswood-lake>), we located a digital copy of a booklet prepared in 1902 for American investors who might be interested in the purchase of a preserve of wilderness land including, and stretching north from Big Basswood Lake. The booklet is intriguing and lays out the plans for the preserve including the possibility of transforming a Goldenberg farm into a golf course and the construction of the Clubhouse building in the north east corner of Big Basswood (Lake Waquekobing).

As mentioned, this booklet makes for compelling reading for anyone interested in the rich and colourful history of Big Basswood Lake. The link to the digital copy is [Prospectus of Canadian camp preserve](#). A reprint of the booklet is also available on Amazon [Prospectus of Canadian Camp Preserve \(Classic Reprint\): Unknown Author: 9781332868032: Books - Amazon.ca](#)



## Prospectus of Canadian Camp Preserve (Classic Reprint)

Excerpt from Prospectus of Canadian Camp Preserve . During the past year many of our members have expressed a wish that the Officers of our Camp might secure for them a fishing and hunting territory in the wilds of Canada, amid Virgin forest and waters unfrequented by sportsmen.

[www.amazon.ca](http://www.amazon.ca)

We hope you enjoy this little treasure detailing some of the history of this beautiful area.

Special Note: Please ensure that your septic system is operating properly and that your septic tank is pumped out at least every three years. Help preserve the water quality of our lake!

Bobby Swain  
Basswood Lake Outfitters

## MNRF/Water Levels

As of July 10, 2024 the current water level is 1" to 2" the wing wall at Harris Creek Dam – quite high for this time of year. The gates have been opened about 4" to reduce water levels.

Members may have noticed a fair bit of activity in and around the dam in recent weeks. This activity is driven by the need to reduce the flow of water down Harris Creek to facilitate the replacement of the culverts under highway 17 (please see George Craigie's report on the highway 17 construction in this newsletter

There was some discussion with the MNRF about lowering the water levels in Basswood this summer to facilitate this project and ensure minimum water flow down the creek in the event of a high rainfall event while the construction was ongoing. However, the MNRF has chosen to protect against high water flows by placing sand bags on the dam wing wall and just above the culverts.

Huron Shores and BBLA will continue to monitor activity as the project unfolds this summer and continue to engage with the MNRF throughout the summer to monitor ongoing water levels as the season unfolds.

*Larry Allcorn*

## Goose and the Gander 3 Both Sides Now Concert



Featuring songs of Peace ☐

Wednesday, August 6th,  
12-Sided Barn.

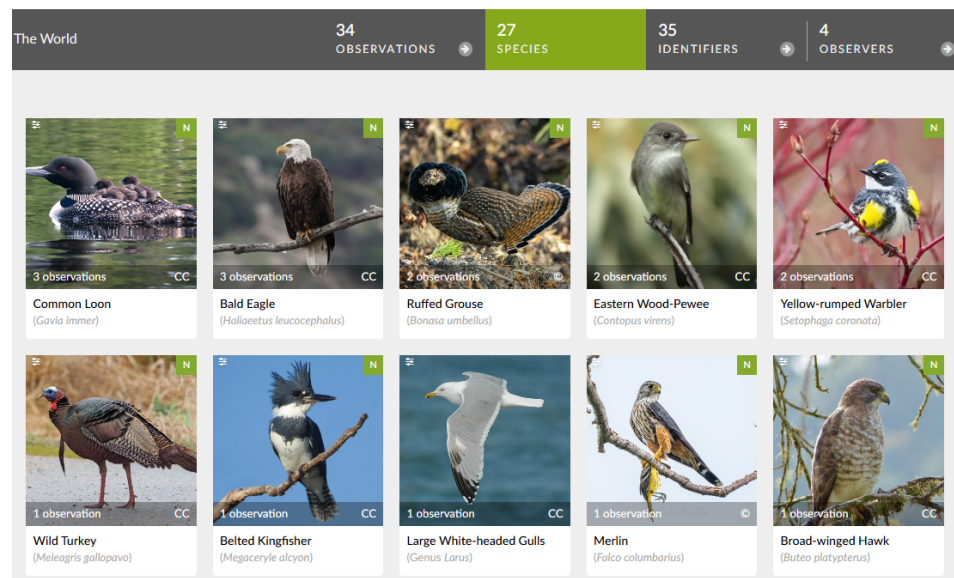
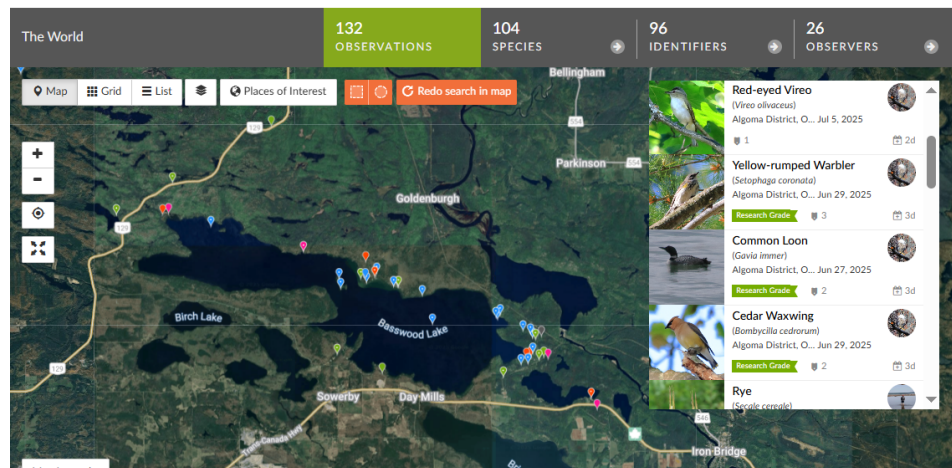
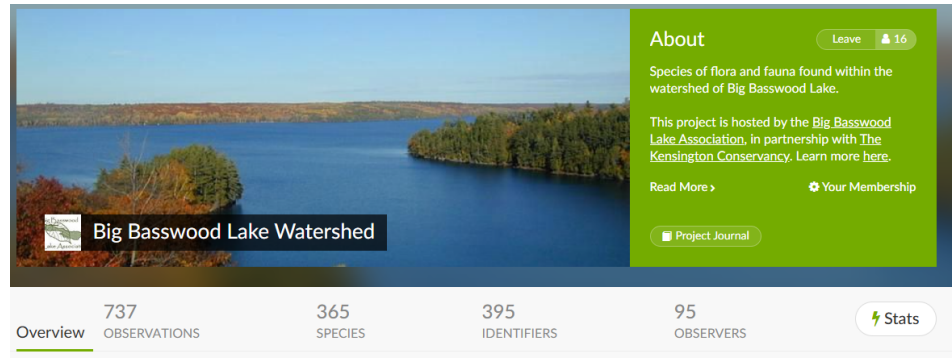
7:30 doors open at 7:00

1410 Basswood Lake Road,  
Sowerby, Ontario



# iNaturalist

Some examples of information that has been gathered on the BBLA watershed project in the last year. Please reference inaturalist.ca website for more examplese. We hope to have Jim Falconer walking us through some of these examples at the AGM on July 17th



Jim Falconer

# Big Basswood Loon Survey

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The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey (CLLS) by Birds Canada has been monitoring loon activity since 1981 and has expanded to include almost 4500 lakes.

Information from the CLLS indicates loon productivity which is measured as the number of six-week-old young per pair per year. The main focus of the survey is nesting pairs and the survival of any chicks hatched by a nesting pair of loons.



There are three critical periods that need to be reported on based on the observations of a dedicated group of volunteers around the lake: nesting - early June to mid July, hatching - early to late July, and chick survival - mid to late August. The number of nesting pairs and single adults is recorded as well as the number of chicks hatched and the number of large young (at least 6 weeks old) that have survived to the end of the season.

Last summer several adults were observed but only one nesting pair was observed near Phillips Bay. Two babies hatched and made it to adolescence.

For more information on the CLLS, you may be interested in reading the 40-year Canadian Lakes Loon survey report. You may access the report here: <https://www.birdscanada.org/bird-science/canadian-lakes-loon-survey>

We are always looking for help observing the loons in our lake.

*Marilyn Kellum*

# Members Survey

Dear Members,

We invite you to participate in our membership survey, which will only take a few minutes of your time. Your responses are completely anonymous, and we will not collect any identifiable personal information. We will ask for some basic demographic details to better understand our community's makeup and needs.

The primary goal of this survey is to gather insights on what matters most to you. This information will guide us in leading your Association and identifying initiatives that will enhance our Lake Community.

We hope to have sufficient responses to share some preliminary results at our AGM. The full survey results will be published in our Fall Newsletter.

George Craigie

# Municipal Affairs

As you may have already heard, there was quite a bit of activity on the Huron Shores council over the winter season.

In January of this year, council accepted the resignations of both mayor Matt Seabrook and councilor Roger Mulligan.

Council chose to appoint a new mayor from the current council members rather than hold a new by election. As a result, Councilor Jane Armstrong was sworn in as the mayor prior to the February, 2025 regular council meeting.

This left two seats on council open and the members of the community were asked to step forward if they wished to fill these vacancies. The result was that two new councilors were sworn in prior to the March/2025 regular council meeting:

Councilor Luke Vine in Ward 1

Councilor Danielle Brown in Wards 3 and 4

The current council consists of the following members:

Mayor Jane Armstrong

Ward 1 – Councilor Luke Vine

Ward 1 and 2 – Councilor Blair McKinnon

Ward 2 – Councilor Peter Falk

Ward 3 – Councilor Tim Currie

Ward 3 and 4 – Councilor Danielle Brown

Ward 4 – Councilor Jock Pirrie

In addition, there are two BBLA board members who currently hold positions on Huron Shores council committees. Larry Allcorn serves as a committee member to the Environmental Services Committee (ESC), and Christina Coutu for the Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC).

The BBLA will continue to collaborate closely with the Municipality of Huron Shores as an important stakeholder in the municipality.

Christina Coutu/larry Allcorn

# Lake Partners Report Summary

Volunteers from Big Basswood Lake have been collecting and submitting water samples for Ontario's Lake Partner Program for over 20 years [The Lake Partner Program](#). The sampling methodology and protocols are actually quite rigorous and when completed, the water samples are shipped to the Program office in padded test tubes and capped containers on a priority basis to ensure the freshness of the samples [Lake Partner Program: Sampling Instructions | ontario.ca](#).

Following is a summary of the observations and recommended actions. Please see the fall newsletter for a more detailed write up:

## Total Phosphorus:

*(Increases in phosphorus may stimulate algal growth, resulting in decreased water clarity, reduced deep-water oxygen concentrations that can affect fish health, and, in extreme cases, cause algal blooms that may produce toxins, affect the aesthetics of the lake, and/or cause taste and odour problems in the water.)*

**Analysis** - Total Phosphorous readings on the bar graph in the report indicate that BBL has the lowest phosphorus reading of any of the sampled lakes in Ontario (note the vertical dotted line indicating BBL's results). The area of concern is that the results for the last four years have been above the trend line indicating that there appears to be an increasing level in the lake basins.

**The statistical increase is below the threshold of "trend indication", however it is an indicator that future problems may occur if lake properties are not diligent about maintaining naturally vegetated water fronts and efficiently operating septic systems. All property owners should review their septic systems and if you are not aware of how your system is operating you should contact Algoma Public Health for assistance (please call the Environmental Health team at 705-759-5286).**

## Calcium:

*(Calcium, the "backbone of life," is an essential nutrient for all living organisms. Calcium levels are declining in Canadian Shield lakes, which can lead to stress on aquatic ecosystems, especially when combined with warmer temperatures that are predicted with climate change.)*

**Analysis** - Calcium levels in Big Basswood Lake are very near the lowest of the sampled lakes for calcium concentration. This may be due to the large volume of spring fed water maintaining the lake levels.

**Considering that calcium is necessary to maintain many aquatic species, the declining graph line is an area of concern as given the current trend indicated in the graph, at some point in the not too distant future, the calcium concentration will drop below 1.5 mg/litre which will not support aquatic life. Since natural forest run-off is critical to maintaining calcium levels it is important for the Municipality and land owners to carefully regulate the clearing of trees and plant life in the Big Basswood Lake Watershed.**



# Lake Partners Report Summary

## Chloride:

(continued)

*(Freshwater lakes and rivers naturally contain low concentrations of dissolved salts including chloride (Cl). Cl is an essential element in freshwater lake ecosystems, but elevated concentrations are toxic to aquatic organisms. In North America, sodium chloride (NaCl) or magnesium chloride (MgCl) are salts often used to manage roads in the winter months. These molecules are highly soluble and mobile, meaning that they can easily enter lake watersheds and subsequently, lakes.)*

**Analysis** - Big Basswood Lake is very near to the lowest Chloride concentration in all of the sampled lakes at 1.6 mg/litre. This is a positive result considering that the mean of all lakes is 7.6 mg/l.

**The important consideration again is that the trending graph is going in the wrong direction with an increase in Chloride levels indicated over the past decade. It is important again to ensure that buffers are maintained along the shoreline to filter any run-off where road salts are used for winter maintenance. The main areas of susceptibility are along Highway 129 in the**

## Water Clarity:

*(Light penetration into the lake can be controlled by dissolved organic carbon (DOC), biological turbidity (e.g. algae) and non-biological turbidity, which can influence the colour of the lake. Water clarity readings with a Secchi disk are valuable for tracking change in lake transparency that may not be observed by monitoring TP concentrations alone. For example invasive species (e.g., zebra mussels) can alter water transparency, as can the presence of wetlands in a watershed.)*

## Analysis:

As many BBLA members are aware, Big Basswood Lake has consistently ranked as the Ontario lake with the highest clarity readings observed using the Secchi Disk. This standing has continued throughout the 25 years during which test results have been recorded. Big Basswood Lake has Secchi readings in the range of 12 metres compared to the average of all tested lakes at 3.9 metres (only a very small percentage of lakes have a reading over 6 metres).

**Once again, as with other results the overall trend indicates a reduction in lake clarity over time. It is important for the BBL property owners to monitor clarity and prepare to lobby jurisdictional authorities to undertake steps to ensure that Big Basswood Lake does not continue to lose clarity. These may include taking steps to control development through site plan approval, monitor use of boat launches and look to ensure that boats from other lakes do not carry invasive species, mandate septic system inspections and preserve the forested lands contiguous to the Big Basswood Lake watershed.**



# Lake Partners Report Summary

(continued)

## Conclusions:

The Lake Partner Program analysis of the data gleaned from many years of volunteer water sampling indicates that Big Basswood Lake continues to maintain a high level of water quality when compared to the other 500 lakes monitored in the Service Ontario program. We have reviewed this data with knowledgeable experts who confirm that the lake is relatively stable, although trending somewhat downwards due to continued impacts of climate change and development, there will be more stresses on the lake and it will require diligence by all involved to ensure that the next generation of lake users will benefit from the stewardship of the current lake residents.

Particularly important is the health of your septic systems and the maintenance of natural shore line buffers. We encourage all residents to get involved in monitoring all aspects of lake health and doing your part to preserve this wonderful water body.

We also encourage residents to make their voices heard with the provincial government on the importance of the lake partner program. This spring, there was some concern that the program would not be continued. Thanks to intensive lobbying by FOCA, this important program did end up being renewed and we encourage you to continue to lobby for it to be continued in the future.

# Invasive Phragmites

Invasive *Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis* or Common Reed —not to be confused with the native *Phragmites australis* subsp. *americanus* is a relatively new arrival to the Algoma Region. Often described as bamboo-like due to its height and density, this aggressive grass has already caused widespread damage in Southern Ontario. To prevent a similar outcome in Algoma, Lake Huron North and its partners have established the Algoma Region Phragmites Working Group to coordinate early detection, rapid response, and long-term management.

## How Did Phragmites Arrive in Algoma?

The invasive subspecies of *Phragmites* was first introduced to North America via ornamental plant trade and ballast water discharge. Valued for its height and aesthetically pleasing seed heads, it was commonly planted around ponds and wetlands. However, it quickly escaped cultivation, spreading across natural ecosystems throughout the northeastern United States and eventually into Southern Ontario. In Ontario, its spread has largely been driven by the movement of contaminated soil containing rhizomes or seeds—via off-road vehicles, boats, and construction equipment. In Algoma, it is believed that *Phragmites* primarily arrived through contaminated construction machinery, as it is frequently found along roadways

## The Impacts of Invasive Phragmites:

- **Loss of Biodiversity:** Invasive *Phragmites* forms dense monocultures that crowd out native plants, reducing habitat quality for birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles, and insects. This is particularly damaging in wetland ecosystems—some of the most biologically diverse areas in the region. In Ontario, *Phragmites* is estimated to negatively impact 25% of species at risk.
- **Habitat Degradation:** Native wildlife that relies on wetlands for nesting, feeding, and breeding are significantly affected. The tall, dense stands of *Phragmites* restrict access to open water and limit space for native vegetation critical to healthy ecosystems.
- **Alteration of Wetland Function:** *Phragmites* disrupt water flow, increase sedimentation, and alter nutrient cycles. Its dense root systems can even form soil banks in shallow streams, blocking migratory fishlike salmon, trout, and walleye from reaching their spawning grounds.
- **Increased Fire Risk:** *Phragmites* accumulates a high volume of dry, dead stalks, which are highly flammable and elevate the risk and severity of fires—especially in areas adjacent to infrastructure.

# Invasive Phragmites

## Regional Response Efforts: (continued)

The Algoma Region Phragmites Working Group, led by Lake Huron North, includes local municipalities, Invasive Species Centre, First Nations communities, CAFC, private landowners, and government agencies. In 2024, the group:

- Mapped thousands of kilometers of roadway from Blind River to Sault Ste. Marie, Wawa, and Chapleau to document Phragmites spread.
- Developed a Field Maps data-sharing app to streamline population reporting between partners.
- Held a training workshop on plant identification and control methods. • Conducted DNA analysis to confirm difficult-to-identify patches.
- Planned a strategic, region-wide control initiative focusing on leading-edge populations and ecologically sensitive areas

## What's Next in 2025?

This year, the initiative is scaling up:

- Expanding mapping efforts to include coastal wetlands along the North Channel, Lake Superior's bays, and the Goulais River.
- Hosting new training sessions with Garden River and Batchewana First Nations. • Starting active management with selective backpack spraying in high-priority locations.
- Hiring a summer student to assist with treatment and monitoring.
- Conducting mechanical control at Sagamok First Nation.
- Performing follow-up treatments in Blind River and near the Goulais River.

## What You Can Do to Help:

Protecting Algoma's wetlands from invasive Phragmites is a shared responsibility. Community members play a vital role in detection, prevention, and control. Here are a few ways you can help:

- Report Sightings: If you spot invasive Phragmites, report it on iNaturalist or contact Lake Huron North's Project Coordinator directly at [dfeatherstone@ssmic.com](mailto:dfeatherstone@ssmic.com). Photos and location information are extremely helpful.
- Learn to Identify It: Familiarize yourself with the key differences between native and invasive Phragmites. Invasive types grow in dense, tall stands (often over 5 meters), with stiff stems, tan or grayish seed heads, and a lack of biodiversity underneath.

<https://www.opwg.ca/phragmites/native-vs-invasive/>

# Invasive Phragmites

(continued)

## What You Can Do to Help (continue):

- **Avoid Spreading It:** Refrain from driving off-road vehicles, ATVs, or heavy machinery through stands of Phragmites. Seeds and rhizome fragments can stick to tires and equipment, leading to accidental spread.
- **Clean Equipment Thoroughly:** After working, hiking, or driving near infested areas, clean boots, vehicles, and tools to prevent spreading fragments to new locations.
- **Don't Plant It:** Avoid planting ornamental grasses unless you're certain they are native or non-invasive. Invasive Phragmites is still sometimes sold under misleading names.
- **Spread the Word:** Share information with your friends, neighbours, and local community groups. The more people who can identify and report invasive Phragmites, the better our chances of eradicating it from the region.

## Looking Ahead:

Lake Huron North and its partners are increasing public awareness, expanding control efforts, and continuing to host working group planning meetings. The goal: to eradicate invasive Phragmites from the Algoma Region by 2030, transitioning to long-term monitoring to prevent invasive phragmites from establishing future footholds in the Algoma Region.



# Melwel Road Guide Rails Study

Kresin Engineering Corporation was retained by Huron Shores to complete a review of roadside guide rail installation standards applicable to the section of Melwel Road between Melwel Lodge and Clubhouse Road. Specifically, the Municipality required input on the placement of guide rails to maintain adequate road width, as well as to provide proper guide rail performance. Kresin delivered a report in February 2025 which focuses on the section of Melwel Road to Clubhouse Road

Kresin describes the subject section of Melwel Road as “a gravel surface, low volume local road providing access to predominantly seasonal properties. The horizontal and vertical alignment of the road is characterized with sharp curves and steep hills, while the driving surface appears narrow in certain locations as there are steep embankments and rock cuts on either side. The legal speed limit is currently 80 kilometres per hour”.

This report contains recommendations which include

1. Reducing the posted speed limit on the subject section of Melwel Road. A posted speed of 50km/h will allow narrower travel lanes, tighter curves and steeper slopes.
2. Where insufficient width is available, consider reducing the speed limit surrounding deficiencies and hazards to 40 km/h or less and posting appropriate warning in accordance with the OTM.
3. Where possible, install guide rails in accordance with current OPSDs.

A full copy of the report is available to Huron Shores property owners if requested.

As of July, 2025 council has passed a resolution to reduce the speed limit on this section of Melwel Road to 50 km/h (and to 30 km/h on 3 hazardous sections). Signage has not yet been posted to reflect these new speed limits.

In addition, a tender was issued in May/2025 for quotations on installing guide rails at a number of sections along this stretch of road.

*Larry Allcorn*



A reminder to all of our current and potential new members that a membership in the Big Basswood Lake Association includes a membership in the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association. FOCA is now currently over 550 members associations representing over 50,000 families in the beautiful province. They provide us with a number of valuable services:

1. Membership in FOCA provides you with a discount on your cottage insurance, often times for a greater value than the \$25 membership in BBLA. This, for no other reason, is a great reason to join BBLA. But, FOCA also does more.
2. Being a part of FOCA allows us participation in their lake partner program. We submit our lake test results for clarity and phosphorous levels to the lake partner data base every year. This data base continues to show Basswood as one of the clearest lakes in Ontario and will help us maintain it as such a special place for generations.
3. Being a member of FOCA through BBLA allows for attendance at the spring and a fall meeting every year, which feature valuable information for lake and cottage issues. The spring event was held in Toronto this year. Our own Larry Allcorn attended this meeting in person to represent Big Basswood Lake.
4. The FOCA web site contains a large amount of valuable information on lake stewardship and the ongoing initiatives that FOCA is working on. Please visit the website at [http:// www.foca.on.ca/](http://www.foca.on.ca/) for more information. There are resources for not just lake maintenance but also cottage roads, rural services and more that help make your time at the lake enjoyable and relaxing.
5. FOCA also organizes Online Seminars for individual lake associations. We took advantage of this service previously with the successful sponsorship on Cottage Succession Planning (something we all should think about to preserve the legacy of Basswood for our families).
6. FOCA is a valuable lobbying resource that can speak effectively on behalf of the member associations to the provincial government on matters that impact lakes like ours.

There is a lot more that FOCA also offers in services, ongoing discounts on a number of products and services and resources. These are also listed in the website above

John Glaser



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