

August 5, 2006

Gatineau River water testing results for August 2th 2006

Friends of the Gatineau river (FOG) – Amis de la rivière Gatineau (ARG) is a non-profit volunteer organization that is committed to the preservation of the Gatineau River watershed. FOG conducts water quality tests of the Gatineau River as a public service with support from the municipalities of Cantley and Chelsea and clubs and associations that use the river for recreational purposes.

The second of three days of water testing for the 2006 summer season was conducted on August 2nd. In general terms, the testing indicated that the Gatineau River is good quality quality recreational water. Major rainfall on July 31st increased turbidity and result in a significant degradation of water quality in all area, but especially in the Wakefield Bay and LaPêche River mouth. Unfortunately lack of fund has seriously curtailed testing in this area resulting in fewer samples which were completely funded by FOG.

In undertaking the tests in funded areas FOG respects the standards established by the Québec Ministry of the Environment . An “A” rating – excellent for recreational purposes, is between 0 and 20 coliforms per 100ml, “B” – good is between 20 and 100 coliforms per 100ml, “C” – acceptable is between 100 and 199 coliforms per 100 ml and “D” – not recommended above 200 coliforms per 100ml. Analysis is done by a certified laboratory.

For Lapêche, the Wakefield Covered Bridge Park degraded to a “D”. The Railway Turntable Park rated a “C” and the public dock an “D”. The test of the mouth of the Lapêche River indicated a “D” , ‘not recommended’ rating.

In Chelsea, the water quality at the Farm Point Community public dock showed a higher “B” rating as did the Cascades Club dock Water quality at the Burnet Rd. access was a “B”rating. Tests at the Gatineau River Yacht Club indicated a “B” rating. At Tenaga Property Owners’ Beach showed an “B” rating.

In Cantley, the Mary Anne Phillips Park beach reduced to a “B” rating, as did the outflow near Romaniuk Rd. It is also notable that Blackburn Creek mouth tested at an “C”rating for fecal coliform.

In addition to the E Coli testing FOG has, with the assistance of the Chelsea H2O program, expanded the range of tests being performed to include a series of other factors including water temperature. Average water temperature on Aug. 2nd in the lower Gatineau was 24.5 Celcius. We have also started testing strategic points for nutrients to create a baseline of data for future comparisons.

For further information: Alain Piché, 827-3750 or Neil Faulkner, 459-3810