



2016 Activities Report **Improvement in water quality...**

The 2016 season experienced good water quality results. There was relatively little snowfall, the summer season was hot and dry and there was little in the way of torrential rains. Result: there were no major flows of water into the lake. In fact, the level was quite low, hindering the smooth outings of pleasure boaters.

In contrast, the lake resisted well to cyanobacteria until the end of August. Renaissance Brome Lake (RBL) also observed a net improvement by the town's public works personnel in the way they managed the drainage ditches and stripped soil situations.

Brome Lake is unique and there is nothing to replace it if we do not make the effort to preserve it for the benefit of future generations. We will therefore continue with the course set in 2014: carry out concrete actions for the sustainable management of the territory including preventive actions related to water runoff and the accompanying volumes of sediments and phosphorous that are still too high.



RBL continued to work on the extensive project of restoring the Quilliams floodplain which is in the agricultural zone. Some 2.0 km of shoreline was renaturalised as well as stabilized in some sectors. This project, largely financed by Environment Canada, began in 2015. Québec's agriculture ministry, the MAPAQ, through its Prime-Vert program, also supported this major initiative.

In ongoing projects, RBL has prepared the plans and specifications needed for an intervention on a small body of water that carries too much sediment to the lake from the Alizés and Bondville sectors (2017 project).

In managing runoff situations, the work on two municipal sites was partially carried out by the municipality, with planting planned for 2017:

- Pine Street (raising the drainage ditch, water garden and shrub planting);
- Domaine Brome road (filled ditch and redirection at the low point for infiltration and rain garden).

RBL negotiated a partnership agreement with Ville de Lac-Brome to characterize (describe) all the shorelines around the lake. Some 466 properties were visited; as you might expect, these areas are generally in bad shape. 90% of them do not conform to norms and many contain little vegetation. Much work needs to be done here. A program to provide assistance to accompany property owners to renaturalise their shores will be undertaken in 2017. A healthy shoreline area offers many benefits: water filtration, sediment barrier, shelter for wildlife, etc.

RBL believes that private ponds constitute an interesting barrier against erosion and poor water quality. RBL inventoried all the ponds in the drainage basin, that is 460 private bodies of water. They were assessed as follows: location, surface area, link to hydrology network and banks. The promotion of appropriate stewardship practices is planned in the coming years.

To better portray the natural beauty that surrounds us and to encourage citizens to protect our natural heritage, RBL created a circuit featuring some 10 sites along the Quilliams shoreline in the Quilliams-Durrull natural reserve. Greatly appreciated by visitors, this project was carried out with the collaboration of the Brome Lake Land Foundation and the MRC Brome-Missisquoi.



To continue its work on fish populations and the need to protect their habitats, RBL conducted an exhaustive inventory of the yellow pike populations. Samples were captured following a rigorous scientific protocol and the fish captured were measured, weighed and assessed for abnormalities and deformities. The same protocol will be applied in the fall of 2017 to provide an overall picture of the yellow pike.



RBL is always on the lookout for land to be protected in perpetuity, whether wetlands or forests of interest containing bodies of water that could affect the health of the lake. Such a property was brought to our attention in 2016 and we are closely monitoring this situation in conjunction with our partners at ACA (Appalachian Corridor biologists).

In this same spirit, RBL hopes to see an important project featuring a substantial wetland near the lake carried out successfully. 2017 will no doubt be a pivotal year for what we hope will be the Brome Lake Nature Park.

In conservation and special projects, RBL has adopted rules of governance to ensure sound management of its occasional budget surpluses. The internal rules were revised and adopted at the Annual General Assembly held in May, 2016.

RBL has defined and put in place a tribute award for persons or groups that have made an exceptional contribution to our local environment, including the water quality of the lake. In 2016, this prize was awarded to the Fisher-Kerrigan family for its enormous commitment over five generations. We have only to think of the Fisher woods, the Brome Lake Conservation Association and the founding of *Tempo*, our town newsletter, among other community enhancement gestures. Receiving this award on behalf of the two distinguished families at our last AGA, was Mrs. Claire Fisher-Kerrigan.

RBL deposited a brief to the town on the matter of revising certain zoning bylaws. It dealt with erosion control, natural cover, runoff water management and protection of wetlands. It appears that Ville de Lac-Brome already boasts some of the most adequate measures in this regard; the challenge is making sure they are properly enforced.

Brome Lake is especially popular for pleasure boaters. RBL has been asking for several years to put in place a real lake management policy: management of spaces on the lake to deal with “wake”, water skiing, etc.; protection zones; corridors to depart from bays; access ways, parking, two-cycle motors, etc. We must have a lake management policy!

RBL benefits from the support of the general population as well as municipal authorities. As of December 31, 2016, RBL counted 712 members and received an annual grant from the town of \$25,000 of which a spending breakdown is provided twice annually. The merchants-advantage pricing program is also greatly appreciated.

Other projects are being prepared for 2017:

- solving and reworking a problematic body of water on Tibbits Hill;
- continuing to work on the Quilliams floodplain;
- deployment of a shoreline enhancement program;
- continuing our yellow pike inventories on Brome Lake;
- promotion of a nature park within the municipality.

So there you have it, an interesting and motivating track record!