



Ville de / Town of

**BARKMERE**

# *Spring Bulletin*

## *June 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020*

Vol 48, No. 1

## **MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR**



The year 2020 looked so promising. Meteorologists were predicting a warm summer; the Activities Committee of Barkmere and the Bark Lake Protective Association were preparing great activities, like the fishing tournament and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the annual regatta. But a microscopic enemy, much smaller than the diatoms that bloomed again in the Lake this springtime, has compromised all of this.

While in Barkmere, it is easy to forget about the Covid-19 pandemic. We have wide spaces, a lot of fresh air, and the black flies are probably greater in number than the viruses! But we have to be able to make it there. Currently, it is highly uncertain that our citizens of Europe, of the United States and perhaps even from the rest of Canada will be able to come. This makes me very sad, because it is part of the ritual, to reconnect with our friends from everywhere.

It is even sadder to think about all of those who left us too soon because of this disease, to all of those who have lost their employment or got their salary or source of income severely cut back. The crisis is deep and will leave its mark on a generation or two, just like the Spanish Flu and the economical crisis of the 1930s. Yes, it is easy to forget all of that, while looking at the Lake and listening to the birds sing.

But Barkmere is also a force, a tangible proof that a group of human beings who believe in a common goal can succeed. For more than 100 years, the Lake has been protected for the next generations. This is the kind of determination we will need in the future. We will continue in our efforts to conserve the environment, to preserve a different way of life, to ensure the survival of a small community of die-hard lovers of a Lake in the Laurentians. Barkmere is a sanctuary, for animals, for plants and trees, and also for all of us.

This summer, we will have to ensure that Barkmere is also a refuge against this disease. We will have to remain prudent, to keep our distances, to avoid continuing to propagate the virus and put in danger the older members of our community. Let's wash our hands often, but not in the lake and with phosphate free soap! Let's have a thought for all these Barklakers who will not be among us, and welcome all of those who are new in our community. Maybe this summer will be unusual. But let's make sure it will be warm in our hearts.

*Luc Trépanier*  
*Mayor*

## Local Social Activities Committee



Greetings,

We are sorry to inform you that all the scheduled activities organised by the Local Social Activities Committee have been canceled in agreement with the measures taken by the Government and Public Health in order to protect us against Covid-19.

We wish you a great summer and we will be back in force next year! If you have any questions, commentaries or suggestions, do not hesitate to communicate with us at the following e-mail address: [lynevalois62@gmail.com](mailto:lynevalois62@gmail.com)

Thank you!

*Lyne*  
*President*

## Protecting the Inlet

By: Stephen Lloyd



Many families around the Lake will have fond memories of the once-per-summer trip « to the Inlet », to canoe up the headwaters of Bark Lake and see the falls. The Inlet was an almost magical place, to be visited only rarely. You were very unlikely to encounter any other people, but chances are you would run into some wildlife. You would have your picnic, careful not to leave any trace of your visit, and head thoughtfully home, paddling silently through the lily pads. Unfortunately, the arrival of milfoil in Silver Bay has recently interrupted that annual ritual.

Beyond the sentimental memories, there are a number of other reasons to protect the Inlet. It is the main source of all waters flowing into Bark Lake; contaminate the Inlet and you will contaminate Bark Lake. As a fragile wetlands zone, it is itself a habitat for many endangered species that seek refuge within its confines. Finally, the Inlet is part of an overall wildlife corridor in the Laurentians, which corridor is allowing species to slowly migrate north, in reaction to climate change. Larger mammals can also use this corridor to safely transit between protected areas in the south, such as the Kenauk reserve, and Mont-Tremblant park in the north, in order to enhance the scope of their potential mating population.

Or so we think. But now we are going to find out for sure. The Council has retained the highly-regarded firm of Biodiversité Conseil, led by Kim Marineau, to conduct a baseline ecological study of the area. This way we will obtain actual scientific data on how ecologically valuable the Inlet area is. Kim and her team will file a report this summer, assessing the inventory of the species of fauna and flora present, as well as the potential for the area as habitat and as a corridor.

The ecological value of a territory as determined by trained biologists can be somewhat counter-intuitive to us non-scientists. While we may appreciate magnificent creatures such as great herons and black bears, these species may actually be less important in terms of ecological value than lesser-known plants, insects or reptiles. The criteria for ecological value is more about aggregate biodiversity and protecting species which are threatened, rather than beautiful landscapes or furry animals which are impressive to us humans. Even though a slimy, but rare, salamander may be much less of a fan-favorite than the mighty moose, in the bigger picture, the presence of a few slimy salamanders can be more significant to the ecological value of the territory, simply because their species is endangered.

Why does this calculation matter? Because ultimately conservation decisions about land are made based on a judgment of its relative economic value vs its ecological value. While the Inlet would seem to have relatively low economic or development value right now (whether for subdivision into more cottages or harvesting of timber), these things can change over time. If we can show that the Inlet has a high ecological value, relative to the other Crown land surrounding it, we

will have a better case vis-à-vis the Provincial government to make it subject to more protective measures. Concretely, that may mean incorporating the Inlet area into the adjacent protected Jackrabbit nature reserve.

We don't know now exactly where this will end up, but the first step is to document formally what we have. Hopefully the scientific ecological value of the Inlet lines up with our sentimental appreciation of it. We think we have something really special in Barkmere – we just need to make sure.

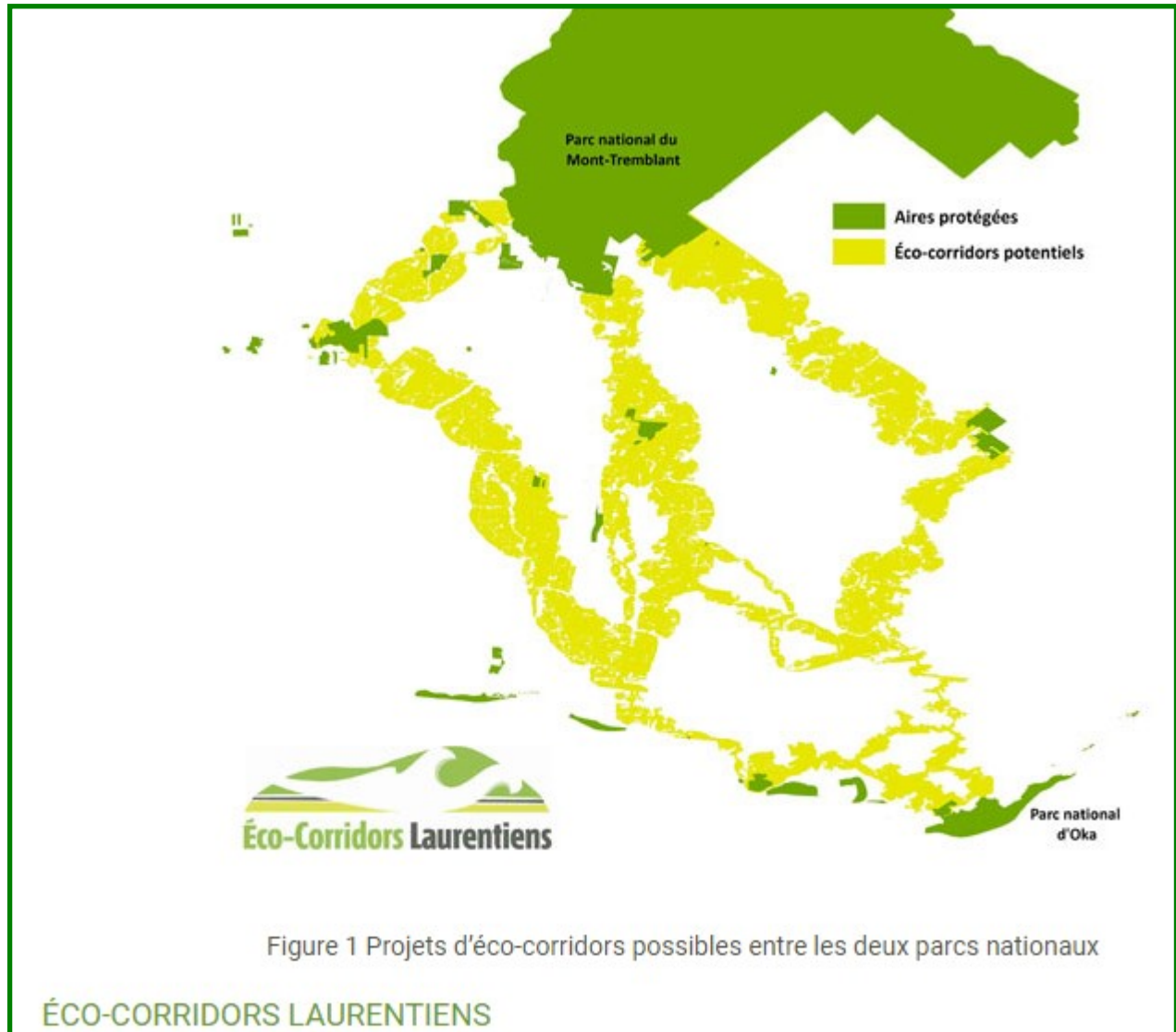


Figure 1 Projets d'éco-corridors possibles entre les deux parcs nationaux

ÉCO-CORRIDORS LAURENTIENS

## Taxes in Barkmere

By: Marc Frédette



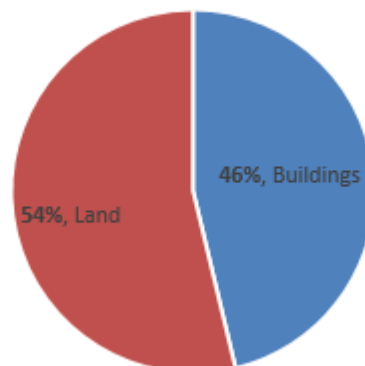
Every year, during the budgeting process, the tax rate is computed based on total taxable value for Barkmere as a whole. Currently the total value of all of our cottages, land, boat-houses, sleeping cabins, the town hall, crown land, etc. is \$85 million.

Relatively speaking this amount is small for a town. Tremblant is at \$4 billion and Ste. Agathe at \$2 billion. Barkmere is worth Tiger Wood's salary for 2019.

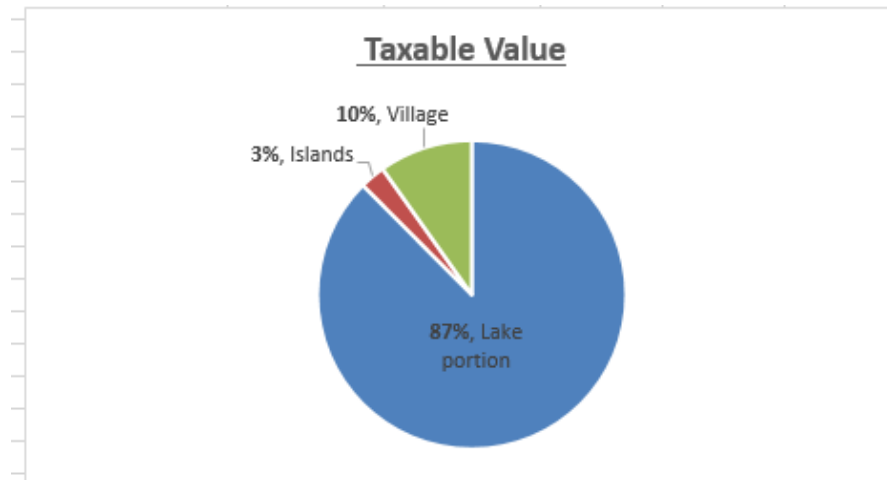
That amount includes about \$4 million of tax-exempt properties such as crown land and the town hall. For purposes of computing the tax rate, we need to deduct these properties resulting in a taxable value of \$81 million. Interestingly, this value was \$80 million in 2011 for a net gain of \$1 million over a ten-year period. The increase in value over the past decade has been well below inflation. The value is established by the MRC's valuation department every year.

If we break down the value, the buildings represent 46.3% while land is at 53.7%.

Taxable Value



Another way to look at it is by location. The islands are at 2.6%, village properties at 9.8% and the lake portion at 87.6% of the total taxable value.



Given our size, we as a community need to be humble and manage the ever increasing expense pressure while providing an excellent service to the taxpayers. For Barkmere, small is beautiful.

## The Inspector's Column

By: Marc-André Paquin

Hello to all the citizens of Barkmere,

### Property Works

Most works on your property (construction, renovation, others) have to be authorized by a permit. It is easy to get information beforehand, and it is wise to do so.

### Tree Cutting

In most cases tree cutting is prohibited unless expressly authorized by a certificate. There are no costs for issuing such permit.

### Camp Fires

Small camp fires are permitted without a permit if constrained to dimensions of 1 metre by 1 metre. Other fires have to be covered by a permit, and requirements are strict.

### Shore Protection Strip

The 15 metres environmental protection strip from the lake and streams is of outmost importance. Very few interventions can be authorized in that protection zone, and its surveillance is constant.

Good season to all the people of Barkmere!

## Public Security

By: Kim Lamoureux



## NAVIGATION

For most residents on Bark Lake, rocks and shoals are known. However, newcomers or people who rarely venture out onto the lake are not familiar with these hazards. Rocks and shoals are usually identified by a large white buoy with orange stripes. Stay clear of the buoys when navigating on the lake. More often than not, these buoys drift away during Spring and when water gets high. I urge you to make a note of the dangerous areas before heading out in your boat.

If for some reason, the buoys break free, you can mark the spot with a white floating marker and then advise the building inspector [inspecteur@barkmere.ca](mailto:inspecteur@barkmere.ca) as soon as possible either by calling the town hall or simply sending an email. The same thing goes for floating wharves that go adrift during storms and high water. You can tie the floating wharf to the nearest dock and usually, the owner will come by and retrieve it when they notice their wharf is no longer where it was supposed to be. It is certainly a good idea to identify your floating wharf with your LDE number to make it easier to identify the owner.

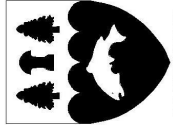
In Spring, it is common for Barklakers to circumnavigate the lake to check out our lovely scenery, report the odd broken dock and retrieve driftwood. Large logs that lie just below the waterline are difficult to see and can cause damage to small watercraft. Those too can be retrieved and left at the nearest dock for security purposes and as a courtesy to other boaters.

## FIRE PUMPS

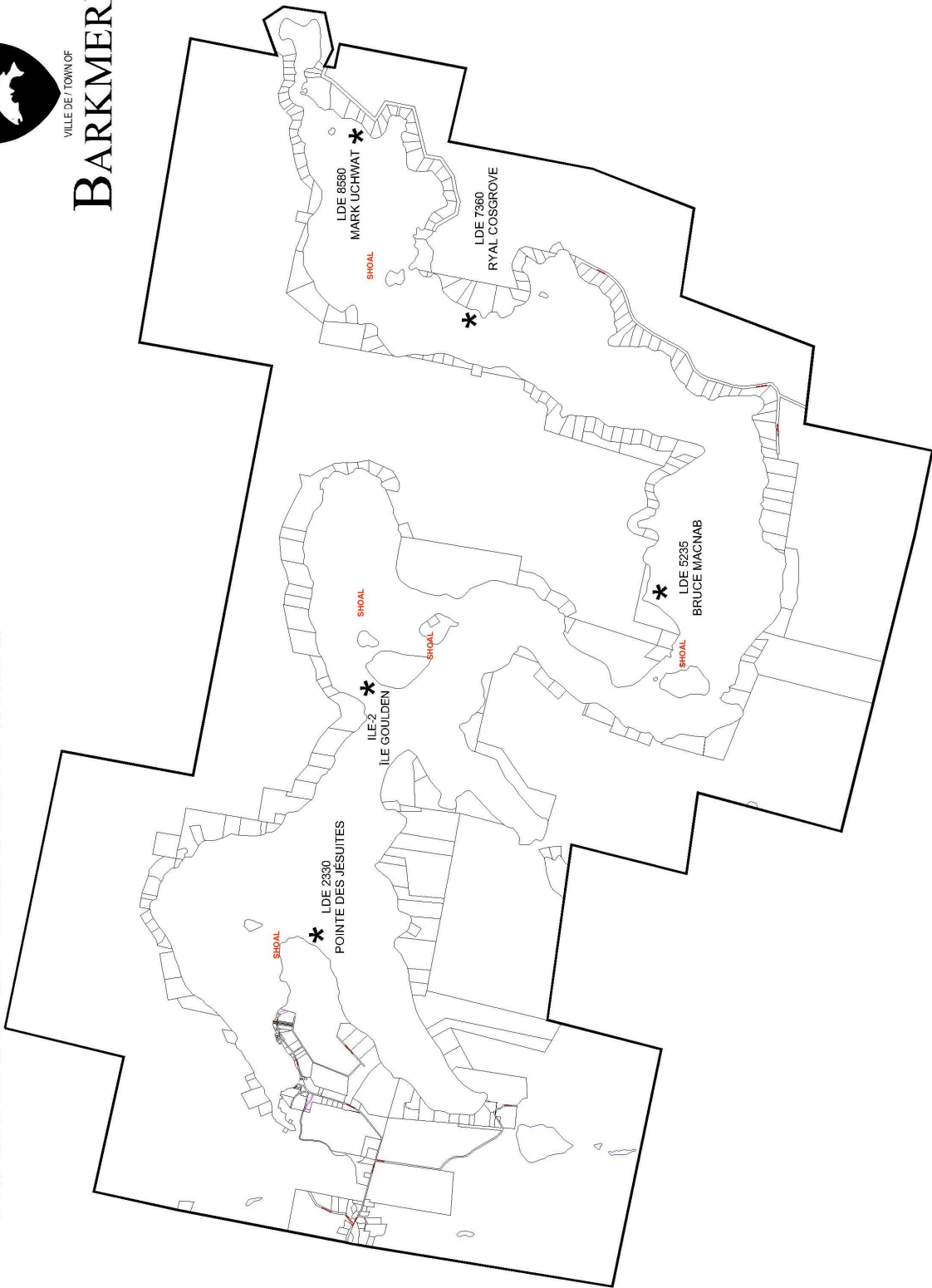
Spring is also a common time for forest fires. Everyone who lives lakeside should be aware of the 5 fire pumps and their location on the lake. You may not need it for your own cottage but perhaps a neighbor may need a helping hand one day and you will be called upon for help. I suggest that you familiarize yourself with operating instructions. These can be found inside the fire pump box and on the town website [www.barkmere.ca](http://www.barkmere.ca) on the *Contact Us* page, under *Emergency—Police and Firemen*.

Next page, you will see the map with the location of the fire pumps and shoals.

# LOCALISATION DES POMPES À INCENDIE LOCATION OF THE FIRE PUMPS



VILLE DE / TOWN OF  
**BARKMERE**



## Infrastructure, Services

By: Marc-Olivier Duchesne



### Something new on Goulden Island!

At the end of 2019, a new sanitary block\*\* was built on Goulden Island to replace our old toilet and storage facilities which were frankly, completely obsolete and in poor condition. The installation will also provide a source of electricity for the installations, activities of the APLE and for our community with a few solar panels. The equipment will be put into service in the coming weeks and will be accessible as soon as the government allows it to be used. This investment was made possible through subsidy programs. This announcement is very modest considering all the preparation efforts required for this project by the community and the municipal administration. We will therefore make an official launch when the distance rules allow it.

### Important forest fire a few kilometers from Barkmere!

It is not our habit to comment on regional news in this Bulletin, but this event concerns us and is relevant to our life in Barkmere. You may have seen it in the *Info du Nord* a report that a major forest fire forced the intervention of SOPFEU a few kilometers from Barkmere on May 22 in the vicinity of Montée Tassé and Lac Sauvage.

The fire, with an estimated area of 24 hectares, is qualified as: "possibly the largest fire recorded so far in the Laurentian region in 2020." The director of firefighters of Mont-Tremblant, Mathieu Darmana, commented on the situation: "It's a good part of the mountain that burns". This situation is all the more dramatic and affects private owners with nearby residences ...

We are used to hearing about forest fires in distant regions of Quebec or in other provinces, but this event reminds us that this can also happen in Barkmere and I cannot imagine 24 hectares of our fabulous hills in flames with our nearby residences and especially families who may be directly at risk.

Beyond the notices from the SOPFEU and the regulations available on our website which aims to frame our collective security, I invite all of us to take advantage of the summer with full vigilance and to educate our visitors to have fun around the fire in all caution. Finally a thought goes to families in the neighboring valley who have lost their forest, often the dream of a lifetime. I wish you a great summer!

<https://infodunordtremblant.ca/faits-divers/2020/05/22/important-feu-de-foret-a-mont-tremblant/>

Hope to see you soon!

\*\* See picture on last page of Bulletin

## Environmental Matters

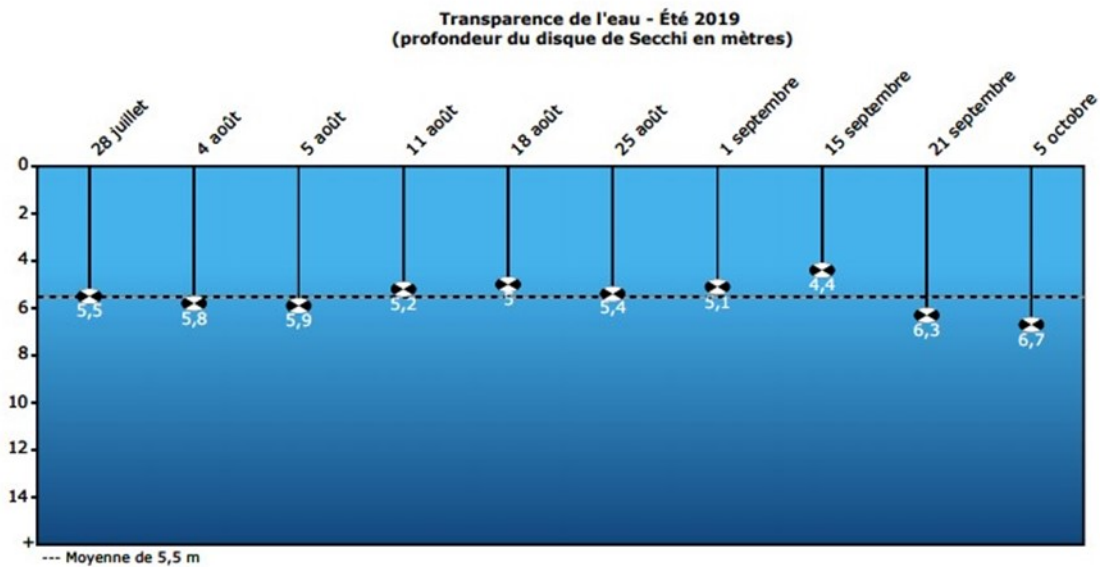
By: Jake Chadwick



### Water Quality results

Together with BLPA we participated in the annual RSVL (Réseau Surveillance Volontaire des Lacs) program of the Ministère de l'Environnement et Lutte contre les changements climatiques (MELCC). In addition, the CCE conducted additional water quality measurements. Below is the usual chart of results from the RSVL. We have superimposed with a red x the results from prior year for comparative purposes.

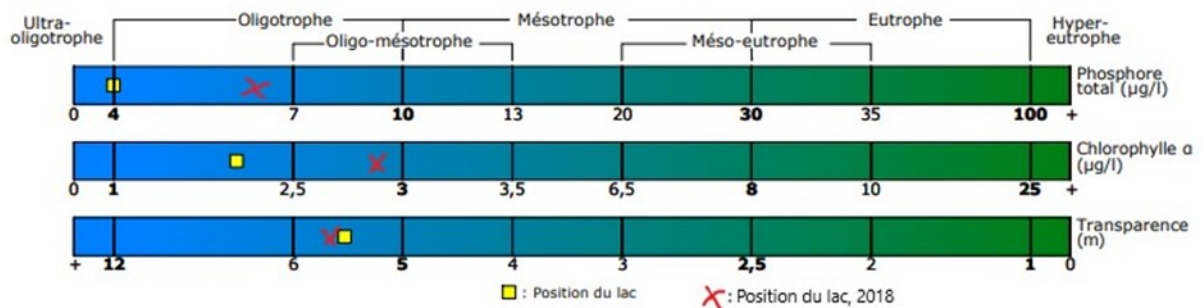
**Réseau de surveillance volontaire des lacs**  
**Lac des Écorces (0596A) - Suivi de la qualité de l'eau 2019**



**Données physicochimiques - Été 2019**

Date	Phosphore total (µg/l)	Chlorophylle a (µg/l)	Carbone organique dissous (mg/l)
2019-06-24	4,1	1,2	3
2019-07-21	3,4	1,7	3,3
2019-08-18	4,4	3,2	4,2
<b>Moyenne estivale</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3,5</b>

**Classement du niveau trophique - Été 2019**



Below are the adapted comments of the MELCC.

### Physio chemistry

Bark Lake has 3 monitoring stations. This data above presents the results of station 0596A (Wentworth Bay). The average summer transparency of the water was obtained by taking 10 measurements using the Secchi disc method. The resultant average transparency of 5.5 m characterizes clear water. This variable locates the trophic state of the lake at this station in the oligo-mesotrophic transition zone. The 2019 result was slightly lower than the 2018 average reading of 5.7m.

The average concentration of total trace phosphorus measured is 4 µg / l, which indicates that the water is not very enriched by this nutrient. This variable places the trophic state of the lake at this station in the ultra oligotrophic class. This measurement is a great improvement over the level of 6.4 µg / l of 2018. You will recall that there were changes to the sampling and measurement protocols for phosphorus in 2018 therefore we question the 2018 figure as we have never had such a high reading. Nevertheless, we are happy to see that the revised testing system brings us back to the levels seen in prior years. The 2019 figure also corresponds well with the average phosphorus levels from CCE sampling of 4.3 µg / l.

The average concentration of chlorophyll a is 2 µg / l, which reveals an environment whose biomass of microscopic algae suspension is weak. This variable places the trophic state of the lake at this station in the oligotrophic class. This result is also an improvement over the 2018 result of 2.9 µg / l and in line with historical averages.

The average concentration of dissolved organic carbon is 3.5 mg / l, which indicates that the water is slightly colored. The color has probably a small impact on water transparency. This is very much in line with prior years.

### Trophic status and recommendations

All the physicochemical variables measured at station 0596A place the trophic state of the lake in the oligotrophic class. The summary of the results of the monitoring years for this station is illustrated in the multi-year file (see <http://www.environnement.gouv.qc.ca/eau/rsvl/relais/index.asp> under *Écorces, Lac des*).

The integration of the data collected at each of the monitoring stations makes it possible to locate the trophic state of Bark Lake in the oligotrophic class. ***The lake continues to shows little or no signs of eutrophication.*** This body of water is to be protected. To maintain its condi-

tion and its uses, the MELCC recommends the adoption of preventive measures to limit the intake of nutrients from human activities.

### pH Levels

We also measured pH levels in the lake during the summer. The average result was 7.3. This is a slightly higher level than the 7.1 reading in 2013. The MELCC states that pH should lie between 6.5 and 9 for good aquatic life (MELCC, 2005a). It is noted that the lower pH values are good vis-à-vis Zebra mussels who tend to thrive in more alkaline environments with a pH from 7.2 to 9.0 so we are pushing against the lower threshold.

### Other Test Results

Other test results conducted by the CCE (oxygen and temperature profiles, fecal coliforms measurements in the lake, tributary phosphorus levels, etc) were all in line with prior year results leading us to conclude that the lake remains in very good health with no alarming issues to report. Water quality testing will be reduced significantly this summer due to the closure of provincial laboratories and suspension of the RSVL program indefinitely as a consequence.

### **Our Continuous Battle Against Milfoil Propagation**

As reported in the Fall 2019 bulletin, we had another successful program searching and removing Eurasian milfoil last summer. The number of plants found and removed decreased to just 187. A meaningful 62% reduction from the previous summer. We are hoping for the continuation of this trend this summer. We are planning to increase our community participation in these efforts with the formation of the "Community Environment Action Patrol". This initiative, created together with the BLPA, will motivate all cottage owners to help survey the lake in front of their cottages for invasive species. Actions and results will be monitored on a specially designed interactive map. You will learn more about this program in the coming weeks.

## Mini Echoes from Barkmere

By: Chantal Raymond



- Due to the pandemic of Covid-19 and by decree of the government of Quebec, our council meetings are closed to the public and held via video-conferencing that you can watch on the home page of the town website at [www.barkmere.ca](http://www.barkmere.ca) under the title 'video-conference of the council meeting'. You may send your questions prior to these meetings to [dq@barkmere.ca](mailto:dq@barkmere.ca)
- For a few years, the council has been aiming at protecting the water of the lake and to this end, the Town wants to protect the region around the source of the lake, upstream from Silver Bay and called the Inlet, particularly the wet lands filtering the head of the lake and its adjacent land. The Town was advised to first do a study of the land to quantify the animal and vegetal species and the ecology of this environmentally sensitive zone. The Town has therefore hired Mrs. Kim Marineau, biologist, to do a study of this zone during the course of this year.
- The town is looking for a project manager to start the reconfiguration of the Marina and the Landing area. If you know anyone, please advise our Director General at [dq@barkmere.ca](mailto:dq@barkmere.ca)
- The Town Hall is opened, but with restrictions (one person at a time, distances to respect). However, the Community Centre and the public washrooms will remain closed according to the directives of Public Health. The boat cleaning service is also available and compulsory, again with rules to respect. Also, we are asking the population to follow the rule of **one family per wharf during loading and unloading.**
- The Town informs its citizens that for those who have paid their taxes by installments, cheques postdated June 1<sup>st</sup> will not be cashed before August 1<sup>st</sup> and cheques postdated August 1<sup>st</sup> will not be cashed before October 1<sup>st</sup> (2 months later as passed per by-law 256-1). The interest on late payments will be incurred starting October 1<sup>st</sup> this year and the penalty fees will start only on November 1st 2020.
- The town has approved an urban planning mandate for Ms. H el ene Doyon, Urbanist, to prepare a draft by-law concerning 3 items that were discussed at our public consultation last August: 1) exterior lighting; 2) form, permitted construction materials and colour of boathouses; and 3) approval by the CCU of new boathouses. We are looking into a way to hold another public consultation to discuss the fine print of this new by-law with citizens. We will let you know as soon as possible.

A lot of the information above-mentioned was published in the *Echoes from Barkmere*. If you haven't registered yet to the *Echoes*, go on our website at [www.barkmere.ca](http://www.barkmere.ca) on the Communications page and register.

Have a great summer!

Picture of the new bath room /shed on Goulden Island



INFORMATION ON CITY HALL

OPENING HOURS

May to September

*Monday to Saturday:*

*08:30 AM—04:30 PM*

Mayor

819-681-3374

maire@barkmere.ca

General Director and Treasurer

819-681-3374 , ext. 5101

dg@barkmere.ca

Finances (tax bill)

819-681-3374 , ext. 5102

finance@barkmere.ca

Urbanism and infrastructures:

819-681-3374 , ext. 5103

inspecteur@barkmere.ca

Communications

819-681-3374

communications@barkmere.ca

