

July 18, 2009

Gatineau River water testing results for July 13st 2009

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 La Pêche, Cantley and Chelsea and clubs and associations that use the river for recreational purposes.

The first of three days of water testing for the 2009 summer season was conducted on Monday, July 13th. This series of test results, based on over 80 watersamples taken from Farrellton to the Farmers Dam indicated that the Gatineau River is of excellent to good quality recreational water. Abundant rain in June and early July resulted in postponement of testing and of some variations in water quality in comparison to previous years.

In undertaking the tests, 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 MicroB, a Québec government certified laboratory.

For Lapêche, the waters at the Farrellton Bridge rated “A” or excellent. On the basis of a few samples, the Wakefield Covered Bridge also rated “A”. The test of the mouth of the Lapêche River indicated a “B” rating of ‘good’. The Wakefield public dock also indicated “B” on the basis of a few samples but significantly better than the Lapêche River mouth. At the lower limit of the municipality the tests indicate an ‘A’ rating..

In Chelsea, the water quality at the Farm Point Community public dock showed a “B”, or ‘good’ rating as did the Cascades Club water front, and the Burnet Rd. access point. Tests at the Gatineau River Yacht Club indicated a ‘good’ or “B” rating. Water at the Tenaga Property Owners’ Association Beach also indicated a “B”, or good rating.

In Cantley, the Mary Anne Phillips Park beach showed an ‘excellent’ ‘A” rating. Tests at the outflow near Romaniuk Rd were significantly degraded to a ‘C’ or ‘acceptable’ rating. The Blackburn Creek tests indicated a rating of ‘B’ or ‘good’.

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, oxygen and turbidity. Average water temperature on July 13st in the lower Gatineau was a cool 19.6 Celsius, again reflecting the abundant rain. We also test strategic points for nutrients to create a baseline of data for future comparisons.

For further information: Alain Piché, (819) 827-3750 www.for-arg.org
Ronnie Drever, (819) 459-3037

