



Pike Lake Post

The Post's 32nd Year, Summer 2026

LET'S CELEBRATE PIKE LAKE!

PIKE LAKE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

SATURDAY JUNE 13

**COFFEE AND REGISTRATION AT 8:30
MEETING 9:00 – 11:00**

STANLEYVILLE HALL, STANLEY RD.

BETWEEN STANLEYVILLE RD. AND NARROW LOCKS RD.

LAKE STEWARSHIP UPDATE

What does it really take to keep Pike Lake clean, healthy, and thriving? Join us for an update on the new Pike Lake Stewardship Handbook packed with practical ideas you can start using right away. We'll spotlight the big priorities: protecting water quality, keeping shorelines natural, preventing invasive species, and supporting wildlife, and what they mean for our lake.

From shoreline naturalization to loon monitoring, there are easy ways for everyone to get involved. A few small changes can make a big difference – come see how.

- Meet Your Neighbours
- Join the Lake Stewardship Steering Committee
- Volunteer to fill the opening on the Board
- Contribute Your Ideas
- Buy your 2027 Pike Lake Calendar

The draft 2025 AGM minutes, Agenda for the 2026 AGM, and the proposed 2026 Budget will be posted on the PLCA website www.plca.ca by May 30.

THE PIKE LAKE ICE CREAM BOAT



MAY BE COMING YOUR WAY!

BOAT-IN



The Fowlie and Sibbit families invite you to the **14th Annual Boat-in Movie Night**. Join your neighbours for this family event at sundown **Saturday August 1**. Look for the big screen on the boat house on Route 17A, Donnelly Bay. Rain date: Sunday August 2.

PIKE LAKE EXPLORER: SCAVENGER HUNT

Explorer Name: _____ Date: _____



#	THE CLUE	FOUND IT!
1	The Water's Edge Welcome: I'm a green aquatic plant (not purple!) near the shore.	☐
2	A Feathered Fisherman: Look for an Osprey or Bald Eagle diving for prey.	☐
3	The Paddler's Glide: Find a human-powered kayak or canoe.	☐
4	The Lake's Namesake: Find a sign or depiction of a toothy Pike.	☐
5	Companions on the Waves: Look for a motorized boat with a furry friend.	☐
6	The Forest Sentinel: Find a large evergreen tree with cones.	☐
7	The Basking Beauty: Look for a turtle sunning on a log.	☐
8	The Cottage Comfort: Find a fire pit where stories are shared.	☐
9	The Sweet Treat Source: Look for strawberries or raspberries.	☐
10	The Shoreline Decorations: Find a piece of dried up driftwood or pile of rocks.	☐

MISSION LOG

- TOTAL FOUND: ____ / 10
- FAVORITE DISCOVERY: _____
- WILDLIFE SPOTTED: _____

ADVENTURE AWAITS!

Welcome to the **Pike Lake Explorer Scavenger Hunt!** (See previous page.) It is time to sharpen your eyes, lace up your shoes, and dive into the wonders of the wild. Whether you are exploring the shoreline, wandering through the woods, or scouting the yard, there are hidden treasures waiting to be found all around you. This isn't just a quest for objects – it's a quest for discovery! Keep your eyes peeled for local wildlife, unique plants, and those perfect lakeside moments.

How to Play

- **Explore** Use the clues provided to track down every item on your list
- **Capture** Take a photo to document your find
- **Stay tuned** Watch your inbox and social feeds for upcoming announcements.

Information on prizes and deadlines will be detailed by e-mail and on social media in June. In the meantime, get started and take pictures of your discoveries! We can't wait to see what you find and the incredible photos you capture along the way. Happy exploring!



MEMBERSHIP

Your membership is critical to supporting the initiatives of the PLCA. To renew your membership, or become a member, please submit your completed membership form and annual fee. Simply

- Complete and submit the "Online Membership" application form found at <https://www.pikelake.ca/membership>
- Send an e-transfer for \$30 to info@pikelake.ca

MESSAGE FROM YOUR BOARD

The May long weekend and the delivery of the *Pike Lake Post* are signs that summer has arrived.

The PLCA Board has had a very busy and productive winter. The fire on the island at the west end of the lake prompted us to look at ways to work with the Fire Rescue Department to assist with improving the Service's ability to respond in case of a fire. We expect this will largely include road maintenance suggestions and finding more places to launch Fire Rescue boats. More info to follow.

The Constitution Committee reviewed the Constitution and Policy Manual to remove a few duplications and inconsistencies and to streamline some of the processes. These are housekeeping "tweakings", not major changes.

The Pike Lake Stewardship Committee has incorporated your input into key priorities and ideas for the way ahead. Join us at this year's AGM on June 13 where we'll bring you up-to-date.

Next year is also election year. No voluntary association can succeed without the work of countless volunteers. We encourage you to think about joining the Board. New Board members bring new ideas and a fresh perspective. Being part of the Board is a great way to meet some of your neighbours around the lake. What's more, the work is rewarding. If this tempts you, talk to a board member or send an e-mail to info@pikelake.ca

Have a wonderful summer!

YOUR 2025-2026 PLCA BOARD

President	Kathy Noxon
Vice-President	David Scott
Secretary	Susan Niles
Treasurer	Nancy Johnson
Communications	Kathy Noxon
Lake Steward	Cathryn Bjerkelund
Membership	Ian Forsyth
Director of Events	Caitlin Sinclair
Director at Large	vacant
Past President	Lois Johnson

CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES: WHAT'S CHANGING

You may have seen recent discussion about changes to conservation authorities in Ontario, including the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA). Here's a summary of what's changed and how to stay informed.

What does RVCA do?

Under Ontario's Conservation Authorities Act, RVCA's mandate is to manage and protect the Rideau River watershed's natural resources and reduce risks to people and property across the Rideau watershed, which includes Pike Lake. Its core mandate is to protect people, property, and water resources by

- Monitoring flooding and water levels,
- Regulating development near lakes, rivers, and wetlands, and
- Protecting drinking water sources.

RVCA also supports lake health through water quality monitoring, shoreline planting, and stewardship programs, often in partnership with lake associations. For example, Pike Lake water quality sampling has been provided by the RVCA since 2001.

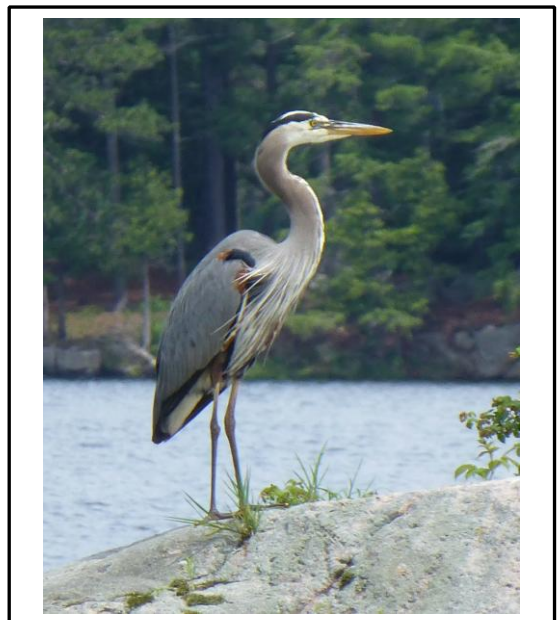
What's changing?

Four years ago, Bill 23 made changes to Ontario's *Conservation Authorities Act* and last year, Ontario overhauled the Species-at-Risk legislation under Bill 5. This year, Ontario announced plans to consolidate the 36 conservation authorities into 9 regional bodies.

- **Revised Statutory Purpose** The CA legislation now includes "social and economic considerations" and the need for "sustainable economic growth" alongside species protection.
- **Reduced Wetland Protection** The regulated buffer zone around Provincially Significant Wetlands was reduced from 120 metres to 30 metres, thereby decreasing the area where CAs can require a permit.
- **Potential Land for Housing** requires CAs to inventory their land holdings to identify properties that could potentially be used for housing.

- **Registration-First Approach** Most activities that previously required a site-specific permit will now only require online registration.
- **Political Discretion in Species-at-Risk Listing** The government now has the discretion to add or remove species from the protected list.
- **Narrowed Habitat Definitions** For animals, "habitat is a dwelling place or the area immediately around it, such as a den, nest or other similar place, that is occupied or habitually occupied by one or more members of a species for the purposes of breeding, rearing, staging, wintering or hibernating." That means the areas needed for other processes critical to a species survival – like finding food – are no longer protected.
- **Removal of "Special Concern" Protections** Species classified as "Special Concern" (such as the Monarch Butterfly) will no longer receive provincial protection, reducing the protected list from approximately 271 to 169 species.

For more information, google the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association (FOCA), Ontario Nature, and World Wildlife Fund Canada (WWF) as well as legal firms such as Gowling and Denton, plus the Canadian and Ontario Public Health Associations.



PIKE LAKE STEWARDSHIP HANDBOOK UPDATE

We're pleased to share that work on the updated Pike Lake Stewardship Handbook is well underway. The goal is to create a practical, easy-to-use guide that helps residents protect the lake while still enjoying everything that makes Pike Lake special.

The handbook is being updated with the latest information and web links plus practical tips that are easy to put into action. Key priorities identified during the Fall 2025 survey focus on protecting water quality, maintaining natural shorelines, preventing invasive species, coping with water levels, and supporting fish and wildlife habitat.

Some of the key stewardship actions highlighted in the handbook include:

- maintaining a natural shoreline buffer
- keeping septic systems well maintained
- reducing or eliminating fertilizer and chemical use near the lake
- practising Clean, Drain, Dry for boats and gear
- slowing down near shore to reduce erosion and protect loon nesting areas
- watching for invasive species and harmful algal blooms

Let's Keep Pike Lake Healthy for All!



Aerial view of Pike Lake taken from the west by Friends of the Tay Watershed.

Shoreline naturalization is one of the most effective ways to protect the health of Pike Lake. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and Watersheds Canada offer a generously subsidized shoreline naturalization program, covering up to 90% of eligible project costs for waterfront landowners in the Tay/Rideau watershed.

We are developing a series of new infographics and visual quick-reference guides for inclusion in the handbook, future newsletters and on the PLCA website. These will include seasonal stewardship tips, emergency preparedness checklists, invasive species identification guides, and children's nature activities.

We look forward to sharing more at the Annual General Meeting, where we will provide a short presentation on the handbook update, stewardship priorities, and opportunities for you get involved.



PROTECTING LOONS ON PIKE LAKE

The call of a loon is one of the defining sounds of summer on Pike Lake. Beyond their beauty, loons are also a key indicator of lake health, when loon families are thriving, it's a strong sign that water quality, fish populations, and shoreline habitat are in good shape.

Pike Lake provides important nesting and feeding habitat, but loons are especially vulnerable during breeding season. They build nests right at the water's edge, often on quiet shorelines, in marshes or small islands, making them highly sensitive to disturbance.

Loons typically nest in May and June, with chicks hatching in June and early July. During this time:

- Boat wakes can flood nests or wash away eggs
- Getting too close may cause adults to leave the nest
- Chicks can become separated from their parents

One of the biggest threats to loons is unintentional disturbance. A good rule is to stay at least 50 - 100 metres away, especially near shore. If a loon is calling repeatedly (the "tremolo" call), diving often, or moving away from you, it's a sign you're too close.

Protecting loons comes down to simple, everyday actions:

- Slow down near shorelines and wetlands to reduce wake
- Avoid landing on small, undeveloped islands
- Maintain a natural shoreline buffer of 30m, this provides important nesting habitat

Loon with chicks

- Keep pets away from nesting areas
- Avoid using lead fishing tackle; it's the major cause of death for loons
- Keep shorelines clean to reduce predators attracted by garbage

We're looking for volunteers to help track loon activity on Pike Lake this summer. Monitoring supports conservation efforts led by Birds Canada and the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA), helping scientists understand loon populations and lake health over time.

Getting involved is easy as 1, 2, 3:

1. You will be assigned a section of the lake near your property to monitor the loon population
2. Count the number of loon pairs in June, baby chicks in July, and surviving chicks in August
3. Submit your observations to the PLCA at info@pikelake.ca We will submit the data to Birds Canada and be able to track the loon population on our lake.

Please contact info@pikelake.ca to participate this summer. We need several volunteers to cover different areas of the lake.



ICE-OUT ON PIKE LAKE

The ice went off Pike Lake on April 14 this year. The day before, a pair of loons were seen in the patches of open water near Route 11.

The PLCA contributes the ice-out data to IceWatch, one of a number of citizen science programs. Ice events – the freeze and thaw dates of lakes and rivers – help scientists monitor the effects of climate change on Canadian ecosystems. The Canadian ice phenology data records dating back to 1900 show a strong trend line for the ice to melt earlier than before – a clear indication of climate change. For more information, google www.naturewatch.ca/icewatch

Photos courtesy of Cathy Cameron, Gerry Greensalde and Richard Murphy



BASS AND WALLEYE ARE SPAWNING – HERE'S HOW WE CAN HELP

Every spring, Pike Lake's shallow waters become a nursery. Bass and walleye move into the bays and rocky edges near shore to spawn, and for a few short weeks, the future of our fishery is playing out in just a few feet of water. Here's what's happening, and how we can all give them a hand.

Walleye slip into the shallows in mid-April to early May, seeking clean rocky or gravel bottoms to do their thing, mostly at night, mostly unseen. They're vulnerable during this window, which is exactly why the season is closed until the third Saturday in May. Until then please leave them alone.

Once the season opens, remember Pike Lake's 40 - 50 cm slot limit. That giant 20 inch trophy? She goes back. She's got years of spawning ahead of her and the lake needs every one of them. Keep a few in the slot for a great shore lunch, but resist filling the cooler, more fish in the lake means better fishing for all of us. Walleye are Pike Lake's crown jewel. Let's protect them.

Bass spawning occurs a little later, in late May into June, settling into the rocky bays you can see right from your dock. Those clean circular patches of gravel in the shallows? Bass nests. That big fish hovering motionless over them? That's Dad, and he hasn't taken a break in days.

Here's the part that matters: pull him off that nest for even a few minutes and predators will empty it before he returns. Worse, that guarding instinct continues well into mid-July, weeks after the season officially opens in late June. The Ontario Ministry of Fish and Wildlife is already piloting bass spawning sanctuaries on nearby Opinicon and Charleston Lakes. Nearby, the Christie Lake community has asked for a voluntary avoidance of shallow fishing until mid-July.

We think Pike Lake might be ready for some fishing conversations too. Back in 2012, Pike Lake completed fish habitat enhancement projects through the Ministry of Natural Resources to help our walleye population. The Steering Committee is investigating many aspects of fishing in Pike Lake and wants to hear ideas from you. Got a thought? Drop us a line at info@pikelake.ca

For more information:

- <https://watersheds.ca/our-work/habitat-programs/in-water-structures/>
<https://charlestonlakeassociation.ca/fishing/>
- <https://fishconserve.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Opinicon-Spawning-Sanctuaries.pdf>
- <https://www.ottylakeassociation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/BSS-update.pdf>



Bass spawn in shallow, 1 - 5 foot deep water, creating a 1 - 2 foot diameter, bright, clean, bowl-shaped crater nests on hard bottoms (sand, gravel, or clay). They prefer protected, calm, sunlit areas like backwater pockets, boat docks, and around cover (stumps, reeds) to defend against predators, typically in water temperatures between 13 - 21°C.

YOUR SUBMISSIONS



Tarv the Turtle, as the Cunliffe family calls this snapping turtle, came to check out their "Lily Pad". Tarv enjoyed swimming under the Lily Pad a few times.

Hamming it up for the camera on create a t-shirt day at the Cunliffe cottage. Macaroni and spray paint produce marvellous results – including on crocs.



Baby snapping turtle pondering its next step.



Life guard on duty.

FIRE BOWLS VERSUS FIRE PITS

Wood-burning fire bowls offer significant fire safety advantages over in-ground fire pits and traditional open campfires, including fires on a rocky point. They

- contain the fire within a controlled, non-combustible container
- reduce the risk of runaway embers
- elevate the heat source off the ground virtually eliminating the risk of inadvertently starting a fire underground which can smolder for days before flaring up (as we saw last year with the island fire)
- mesh screen contains embers
- easier and faster to extinguish

Propane fire bowls are the best fire-safety option

- no sparks or embers
- instant and complete shut-off
- certified safety standards



The cost to buy a wood burning fire pit ranges from \$100 - \$300; a propane burning fire pit ranges from \$300 - \$950.

VOTE FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR COTTAGE MUNICIPALITY THIS OCTOBER

In Ontario Municipal elections, you are entitled to vote where you own property. Therefore, you have the right to vote at your cottage riding as well as your permanent residence this October.

Voting will be electronic in both municipalities. To find out more, check your municipal website

- Tay Valley Township
<https://www.tayvalleytwp.ca>
- Township of Rideau Lakes, visit
<https://election.rideaulakes.ca/>

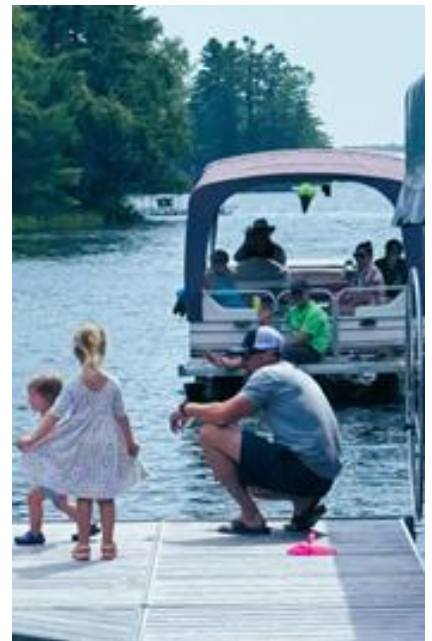
THANK YOU TO MEMBERS OF THE PIKE LAKE COMMUNITY: ALMOST 50 VOLUNTEERS!

No voluntary association can succeed without the work of countless volunteers. Thanks for all you do!

- Our Board Members: Cathryn Bjerkelund, Ian Forsyth, Lois Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Scott Malcolm, Susan Niles, Kathy Noxon, David Scott, and Caitlin Sinclair
- All who delivered the 2025 *Pike Lake Post*: Susan Cook, Ian Forsyth, Dorothy Forsyth, Naomi Fowlie, AJ Hinke, Nancy Johnson, Scott Malcolm, Susan Niles, Chris Noxon, and Marty Van Gaal
- The 2026 Pike Lake Calendar Committee: Tracy Armstrong, Maureen McDonald and Jim Tasker
- All who helped with the 2025 AGM: Ian Forsyth, Lois Johnson, Nancy Johnson, Chris Noxon, Kathy Noxon, and David Scott
- The hazard buoys team: Rob Greer, Greg Nyman, Mike Shore, Paul Swift, and Craig Sinclair
- Jen Sinclair, Caitlin Sinclair and Kathy Noxon, our Facebook Administrators
- Lois Johnson and Jim Tasker, our Webmasters
- The Fowlie and Sibbit families for hosting the annual Boat-In Movie Night
- Our "Lake Loonies": all those who submitted data on the loon pairs and baby chicks to the Lake Loon Survey
- Ice Cream Boats: Cathy Cameron, Nancy Johnson and family, Naomi Fowlie, Grant Fowlie, Kent Fowlie, Jenny Fowlie, Sterling Fowlie, Harlow Fowlie, Adrienne Fowlie Larocque, Sylvain Larocque, Quinn Larocque and Erika Larocque, Chris Noxon, Chloe and Aubrey, Kay Rogers, Caitlin Sinclair, Craig Sinclair, and Jen Sinclair
- Alison Bone for producing the fall newsletter
- Lake Stewardship Action Plan Steering Committee: Cathryn Bjerkelund, Lois Johnson, David Scott, Paul Swift, and Brian Weitzman
- Constitution Review Committee: Lois Johnson, Nancy Johnson and Kathy Noxon
- Those who helped with the Eurasian Milfoil Mapping: Cathy Cameron, Paul Swift, Kelly Aelong, Geoff Anderson, Cathryn Bejerkelund, Dorothy Forsyth, Jim Tasker, Mike McManus, and Kay Rogers.
- Those whose photos are in this year's *Post*: Cathy Cameron, Maureen Cunliffe, Fowlie Family, Lois Johnson, Melissa Moffat, Jen Sinclair, and anonymous
- Caitlin Sinclair for the Pike Lake Explorer Scavenger Hunt
- Kay Rogers, with support from Cathy Cameron, for producing the *Pike Lake Post*, and AJ Hinke for preparing ad submissions for use in the *Post*

LET'S CELEBRATE PIKE LAKE

2025 ICE-CREAM BOATS AND BOAT-IN MOVIE



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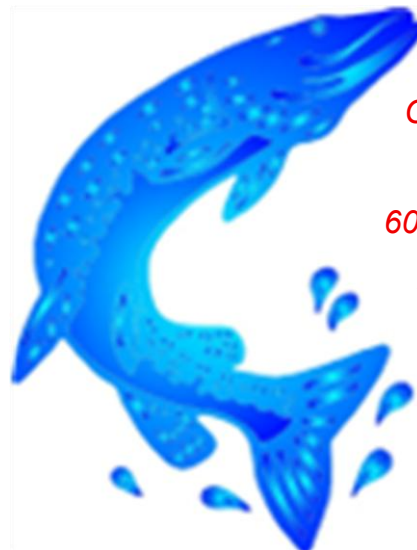
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A Royal Flush Beats A Full House



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Bryan's Cell: 613-264-3356
Brooke's Cell: 613-483-1573



Let's
Celebrate
PLCA's
60th Birthday
in 2027!

Watch for
info on
special
events
and
more!