

## ISSUES

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The magnificent Lac Saint-François is the first natural widening of the river downstream of the Great Lakes. For more than 175 years, it has undergone human interventions that have significantly changed its nature. We highlight here the significant issues affecting Lac Saint-François which deserve special attention.

These issues were first identified during public consultations in 1995 by the Haut-Saint-Laurent Area of Prime Concern (ZIP) Committee and published in March 1997 in the Lac Saint-François Ecological Remedial Action Plan (ERAP).

The Haut-Saint-Laurent ZIP began in April 2016 with a process to update the ERAP and the issues that will be targeted for action. The ASLSF will make sure to raise the issues concerning its members.

In the following list, the issues have been classified under the same four themes used in the ERAP: Pollution, Recreotourism, Natural resources and Health.

If you feel that an issue is not on the list, you may contact the ASLSF by **clicking [here](#)**.

### Pollution

Municipal pollution

- Elimination of septic systems on the lake shore that are still not in compliance.

Agricultural pollution

- Significant reduction of erosion in the basin of Rivière La Guerre and other tributaries (major issue for the ASLSF!)
- Identification and implementation of a preferred solution to the problem of the effluent of Rivière La Guerre (major issue for the ASLSF!)
- Responsible use of fertilizers and pesticides by all, including riparian residents
- Industrial pollution
- Emergency measures in case of discharges

### Recreotourism

- Maintenance of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area
- Revitalization of the shoreline
- Reduction of the impact of the docks (visual pollution, hindrance to navigation)
- Civism in boating – reduction of noise pollution, safety
- Baie-des-Brises breakwater

### Natural Resources

Management of the water levels in the lake

- We have to make sure that the issues of Lac Saint-François are well taken into account in the revision of Plan 1958-D by the International Joint Commission and its International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board (previously called the International St. Lawrence River Board of Control) (via the Haut-Saint-Laurent ZIP)

#### Decline of fish stocks

- Many citizens and stakeholders agree that fish stocks have greatly reduced in Lac Saint-François. There is no reliable data on which to base a scientific analysis identifying the causes and potential solutions.

#### Proliferation of aquatic plants

- These plants disturb recreational boating, they decrease the circulating water causing a potential proliferation of bacteria, and accumulating on the shoreline, creating a significant nuisance in some bays.

#### Protection of wetlands

- Riparian wetlands are essential to the overall productivity of Lac Saint-François (quality of the water, birds, fish). The remaining wetlands should be protected effectively.

#### Impacts of climate change

- The rise in temperatures brought by climate change across the globe leads to the increase of the water temperature, which has harmful effects on fish and stimulates the growth of aquatic weeds.
- It is feared that if the average flow of the Great Lakes is noticeably reduced, it would lead to a significant slowing down of the shoreline water flow of Lac Saint-François with, as a consequence, an increased concentration of pollutants near the banks, an increase of aquatic weeds, and higher risk of bacterial or harmful algal blooms.

#### Alien invasive species

- Some invasive species (the zebra mussel, the lamprey, etc.) have a significant impact on Lac Saint-François.

### **Health**

#### Drinking water quality

- Many vacation homes get their water directly from the lake, which has risks for health.

#### Quality of bathing water

- The water quality on the shoreline of Lac Saint-François is strongly influenced by the quality of the water from the tributaries of the lake, especially Rivière La Guerre during pumping, and the presence of many non-compliant septic systems.