

News Release

Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan

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November 4, 2020

For immediate release

Have Your Say About The Bay

The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan (BQRAP) Restoration Council is pleased to announce that another environmental challenge, identified for the Bay of Quinte, is ready for a status change to restored. The challenge, Degradation of aesthetics has met all its scientific criteria. Now, the public is being asked for their input. Do you think this environmental challenge is ready for a status change to restored? A 30-day public comment period will run from Monday, November 9 – Tuesday, December 8, 2020.

How do we define aesthetics for the Bay? In the Remedial Action Plan(RAP), the criteria states: Nearshore surface waters of the Bay of Quinte are free of any substance due to human activity that produces a persistent objectionable deposit, unnatural colour or turbidity or unnatural odour (for instance, oil slick or surface scum).

A Technical Working Group comprised of experts in their respective fields recommended a weight of evidence approach be used for assessment purposes. It was determined the Aesthetic Quality Index(AQI) methodology used by the Toronto and Region RAP would be the best approach to evaluate the Bay's aesthetics.

The Aesthetic Quality Index (AQI), identifies substances that produce a persistent, typically man-made and non-natural deposit on the waterfront or along watercourses that is objectionable and appears in sufficient amounts to interfere with, or impair, the aesthetic quality and use by the public.

In 2018 and 2019, monitoring staff from Lower Trent Conservation and Quinte Conservation collected water samples from a total of 215 sites around the Bay. The water samples were evaluated on: clarity, colour, odour and debris. These 4 categories were each assigned a score based on the observed conditions, which is then used to calculate a AQI for each site. By combining the AQI of each site an overall score is determined, above 9 is considered excellent.

In 2018, the final AQI score for the Bay was 9.5 (Excellent). In 2019, the final AQI score of 9.8 (Excellent).

Seven environmental challenges are classified as restored - Restrictions on dredging activities, Fish tumours and other deformities, Degradation of fish and wildlife populations, Degradation of benthos, Loss of fish and wildlife habitat, Beach closings and Restrictions on drinking water or taste and odour problems. The remaining 4 challenges are in the process of either having a public comments period, final reports compiled or a final analysis of the scientific data. After all, eleven environmental challenges have completed the formal status change process, the Bay of Quinte can be removed from the Great Lakes Areas of Concern list.

“We all know the Bay of Quinte is one of the most picturesque locations in Lake Ontario, which is why the Bay of Quinte Restoration Council is pleased to announce the commencement of the public consultation process for this environmental challenge. Public input is vitally important to ensure water quality in the Bay is restored and protected for the long-term”, says Rhonda Bateman, CAO of Lower Trent Conservation and Co-chair of the BQRAP Restoration Council.

“Today, improvements to water quality in the Bay of Quinte make it possible to announce another environmental challenge is ready to start the process of being classified as restored. An integral part of this process is public consultation. I encourage the public to participate in this process and submit their feedback on this environmental challenge. Now, it’s your chance to Have Your Say About the Bay”, says Brad McNevin, CAO of Quinte Conservation and Co-chair of the BQRAP Restoration Council.

Restoration Council will review and address all comments received through the public comment period. Next, a final report will be sent to Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for review. At this stage, additional technical review or specific work can be requested, or the report will be approved. Once approved, the reports are sent to the governments of Canada and Ontario to seek formal concurrence on the status change.

The final report and supporting information can be found on the BQRAP web site - www.bqrap.ca. Email your comments on whether you support/do not support the recommendation to change the status of this environmental challenge to restored to – smidlanejones@bqrap.ca

The deadline for comments is: Tuesday, December 8, 2020

The Bay of Quinte Remedial Action Plan is in partnership locally with Lower Trent Conservation and Quinte Conservation

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-Remember, Healthy Bay • Healthy Community.