

COMMUNIQUÉ

Pour diffusion immédiate

sEAUvegarde Vallée-de-la-GatinEAU

Maniwaki, June 26th, 2009 – This past November, following the recommendations of the follow-up committee for the summit on the protection of Gatineau Valley RCM lakes and rivers, the region's 17 municipalities were encouraged to unite their forces for the creation of the inter municipal sustainable development fund (temporary name).

Thus, eight municipalities (Gracefield, Aumont, Grand-Remous, Montcerf-Lytton, Ste-Thérèse-de-la-Gatineau, Délage, Bouchette et Blue Sea) responded to the invitation sent by the SADC Vallée-de-la-Gatineau, the MRC Vallée-de-la-Gatineau, and the Federation of lakes and rivers associations, in a positive manner. The union of the municipalities' financial strengths, totalizing 29 840\$, permitted to gather the total sum of 120 706, 50\$ allowing the realisation of the first-year's actions of the five-year plan.

The first-year's actions of the five-year plan can be defined by a communication plan and its associated actions, a reforestation incitement program, the characterization of lakes, and the training of municipal inspectors. These actions will collectively contribute to the protection of the integrity of our waters.

First and foremost, the communication plan will allow the education, sensitization, and instruction of the various water users (waterside residents, elected officials, contractors, and the population in general) on the importance of the protection of our water bodies and on the long-term effects of a successful protection, guaranteeing a quality of life to the future generations. The delivery of this plan is hoped for mid October of 2009.

Concrete actions such as the reforestation incitement program are planned for July 2009. This program is destined to increase the number and rate at which shores are being reforested. To do so, the program offers financial aid to waterside owners desiring to reforest their shores. Note that this action is in perfect accordance with the new regulation on the protection of shores adopted by the MRC Vallée-de-la-Gatineau.

The characterization of lakes will become a helpful decision tool specifying in details the composition (geology, movable deposit, territory occupation – agriculture, forest, waterside residents, urbanization...) of each lake of the region. The acquisition of the results for this action is expected during the following year.

Finally, give the municipal inspector positions a professional profile. This action will support the importance of these agents in protecting our shores by giving them the proper tools needed to accomplish the complex tasks required of them, having effects today as well as for the future generations.

The Fonds **SEAU**vegarde Vallée-de-la-Gatine**EAU** committee has, since February 2008, met at 4 occasions to undertake the fund's actions. The committee will continue to supervise the application of these actions and will assure that these actions are in conformity with the action plan presented on May 9th, 2008 at the follow-up meeting for the summit on the protection of Gatineau Valley RCM lakes and rivers.

In the pursuit of these objectives, the SADC Vallée-de-la-Gatineau proceeded with hiring a student in order to assist with the application of these actions, in particular the reforestation incitement program. Ms. Karelle Vachon remains available at the SADC (819-449-1551) to answer any questions related to this fund.

The protection of our water bodies is a long-term engagement that involves us all. Each and every one of us has a role to play in the protection of our lakes and rivers. The Fonds **SEAU**vegarde Vallée-de-la-Gatine**EAU** is just a beginning. Perseverance and vigilance will be required of us all to give the future generations the quality of life associated with our exceptional water bodies.

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