



APRIL 2021

RIVER TALK



Our thanks to TIA member and friend, John N. Street,
for providing many of the images used in River Talk each month.



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

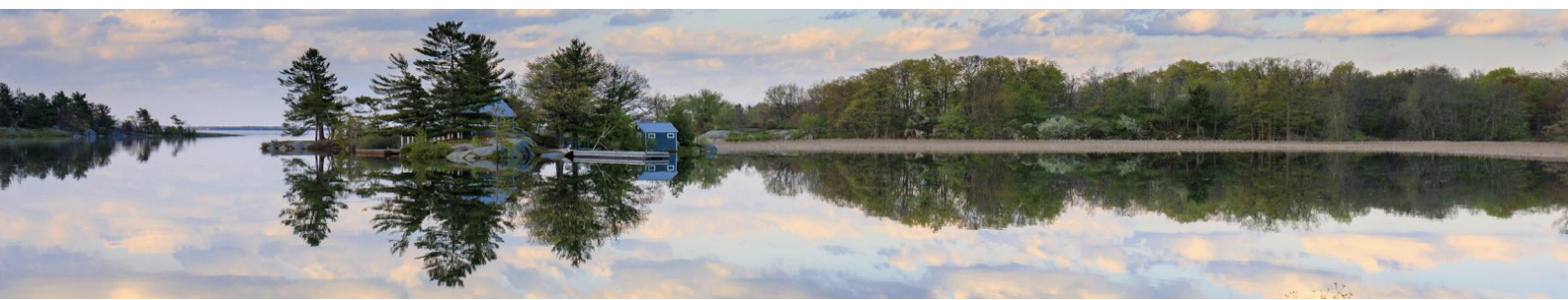
By Peter Fitton

The snow has mostly melted, and the ice is disappearing on the river. We welcome the month of April with its warmer weather, spring colours and the opportunity to be outside.

The month starts on April 1 with many celebrating "All Fools' Day". History tells us people liked to play practical jokes all the way back to ancient Roman times, especially during the Spring festivals. Today it has become a contest for the most innovative jokes. For example, did you know one year Burger King announced a "Left-handed Whopper"? They said they rotated some of the ingredients 180 degrees for left-handed people. A lot of customers came to the restaurant and ordered one!

The month of April has hosted many more important events in history. Earth day was first invented in the USA as an environment education day on April 22, in 1970. Today Earth Day has gone worldwide, and now over 1 billion people do something on or around Earth Day each year to help the environment and to teach people how they can help save the planet. What do you plan on doing on Earth Day this year?

TIA is proud to be expanding its mission of promoting Environmental Awareness and encourages the river community to think "green". For example, we should respect recycling and proper waste disposal, plant trees, plan a vegetable garden, use reusable bags, reject disposable plastic water bottles and packaging, save on energy consumption around the house, and educate our friends and neighbours that working together on this mission can help make the Earth and our precious river a cleaner and better place for everyone.



April is also the usual month for celebrating Easter – the first Sunday following the full moon after the vernal equinox. Beyond its religious significance, the holiday is a significant time for family to come together, and there are secular traditions such as the Easter Egg Hunt. Children search for candy and eggs, often outdoors, and put what they find in their Easter basket. We put out carrots to encourage the Easter bunny to visit us. Other traditions include decorating hard-boiled eggs and enjoying Easter Lily flowers. How do you celebrate Easter, and what are your traditions?

However you choose to spend April, remember to follow your local health guidelines for COVID-19. We have all been advised that receiving a personal vaccination does not exempt you from following the protocols of masking and distancing concerning the public at large.

And remember your spring “to do list” of joining or renewing your membership with TIA. We are a not-for-profit and registered charitable organization, and we rely upon your funding support to keep TIA sustainable. Click on this link www.thousandislandsassociation.com and go to Join Now!

Time to put your winter boots away and get out your spring sneakers ... and think green.

Peter Fitton, TIA President



Founded in 1934





COMMUNITY SUPPORT

From the Editor

Spring, the noun is such a strong word. Say the word aloud and it automatically makes you smile. Spring as a season connotes warmth from the sun, longer days, retreating ice, peeping buds, daffodils, birds singing, gardens growing and a sense of newness.

Something new for TIA is our new edition of River Talk. It has a new format and a new team consisting of Allison Burchell-Robinson as Editor backed up by Mike Spies and Frances Tackaberry. You can read it by scrolling down or you can turn the pages. Check out the many links throughout the pages and find out where they lead. All of our Sponsors are linked to their web page. Find out more about them and support them as they support TIA.

We invite your feedback and we invite your contributions. Have a River story that you would like to share, a special picture, tips on improving island life, a memorable boating experience? River Talk is an avenue for all. Just as the loons are talking on the front page of this edition, we want you to talk with us. You can reach the team via our email account thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com. We are all part of the large River Community we call the Thousand Islands.

Just as TIA needs and supports this community, it needs that support back. We need your membership. While the opening of the border is still up in the air (see the report on another page about that issue), TIA is actively engaged and busy. The shoal markers will be out soon. An AGM ZOOM meeting will be held on July 24th. A River Clean Up Day is in the planning stages. Your membership dues support these programs and those already considered for 2022. Anyone out there up for another Dock, Deck & Den Tour? If you haven't already renewed or are considering joining, please go to our website at thousandislandsassociation.com and click the button "Join Now". We can't be who we are without you.

Back to the word Spring. It is a strong verb as well. The verb purports a sense of action as in Spring Forward. TIA is moving forward at an ever quickening pace. Come with us!





If you are Canadian Citizen and lose your Pleasure Craft Operator Card (PCOC), and you took your exam with an accredited course provider then you may order a replacement card by contacting them. The list of accredited course providers can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#) . Course providers may charge a fee for this service.

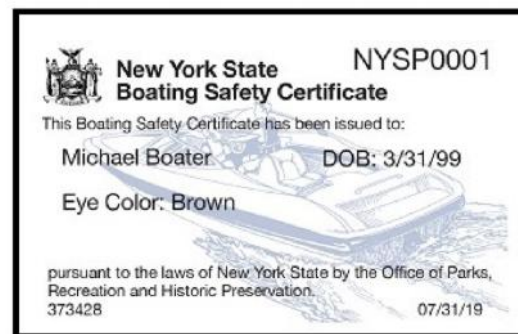
If the course provider is unknown or no longer exists, the person should contact the Transport Canada Boating Safety Infoline at 1-800-267-6687 or e-mail to: pcoc-ccep@tc.gc.ca. The agent will check the individual's name against a national database of PCOC holders and then provide instructions on how to get a new card.” (Source: Transport Canada -2019-11-01)

Now is a great time, before the boating season starts, to make sure you can find your PCOC and that it’s in good condition. If you have more than one boat you can also order additional cards to ensure your PCOC is always on hand !

If you are a USA citizen and boat in the 1000 Islands, therefore New York State, the requirements for a Boating Safety Certificate have changed under a new law known as Brianna’s Law. While some boaters are already required to be certified, all boaters, regardless of age, will be required to be certified in 2025. You can find NYS licensing requirements by [CLICKING HERE](#).

If you have lost your Boating Safety Certificate and/or wish to get certified, a listing of NASBLA approved boating course operators can be found by [CLICKING HERE](#). NASBLA certified courses are recognized both in the USA & Canada. For replacement certificates simply contact the provider you received your Boating Safety Certificate from and they will issue a replacement upon verification.

April is the perfect time to plan ahead and make sure you have the right certifications for the states/countries you plan to enjoy boating in this summer season.



WATER LEVEL UPDATE

By: Ken White and Vince Barton

Highs and Lows (of Water Levels) From the TIA Water Levels Committee

High level of concern over high water levels:

When the calendar turned to 2021, concern over high water levels and the risk of flooding this spring were very high. Lake Ontario started rising in late December, it was about 4" above its long term average for January 1st, and Lake Erie and all the rest of the Great Lakes were still far above their long term averages, meaning there was still plenty of water coming our way.

Things have changed quite a bit since then! As seen in the red oval in the Lake Ontario Water Level Forecast included in this article, Lake Ontario's level dropped more than 6" from January 1st through late March (at a time when the lake is normally rising), and it is now about 8" below its long term average for late March. That's a huge change of 12" relative to long term average in just under 3 months (from 4" above on January 1st to 8" below in late March).

What happened to cause this change?

First, the International Lake Ontario – St. Lawrence River Board (ILOSLRB) deviated (above Plan 2014 calculated outflows) to let out as much extra water as they could throughout January and February. These deviations resulted in removing an extra 3.7" worth of water from Lake Ontario. Ice conditions on the St. Lawrence River were also generally favorable, enabling these high outflows.

Second, conditions have been extremely dry in 2021. The Lake Ontario basin saw just 49% and 55% of average precipitation in the months of January and February, respectively. March has been even drier – through March 21st, the basin has received just 10% of its average precipitation to that date in the month.

The combination of deviations and dry weather significantly reduced the risk of spring flooding and led the ILOSLRB to write the following on March 1st:

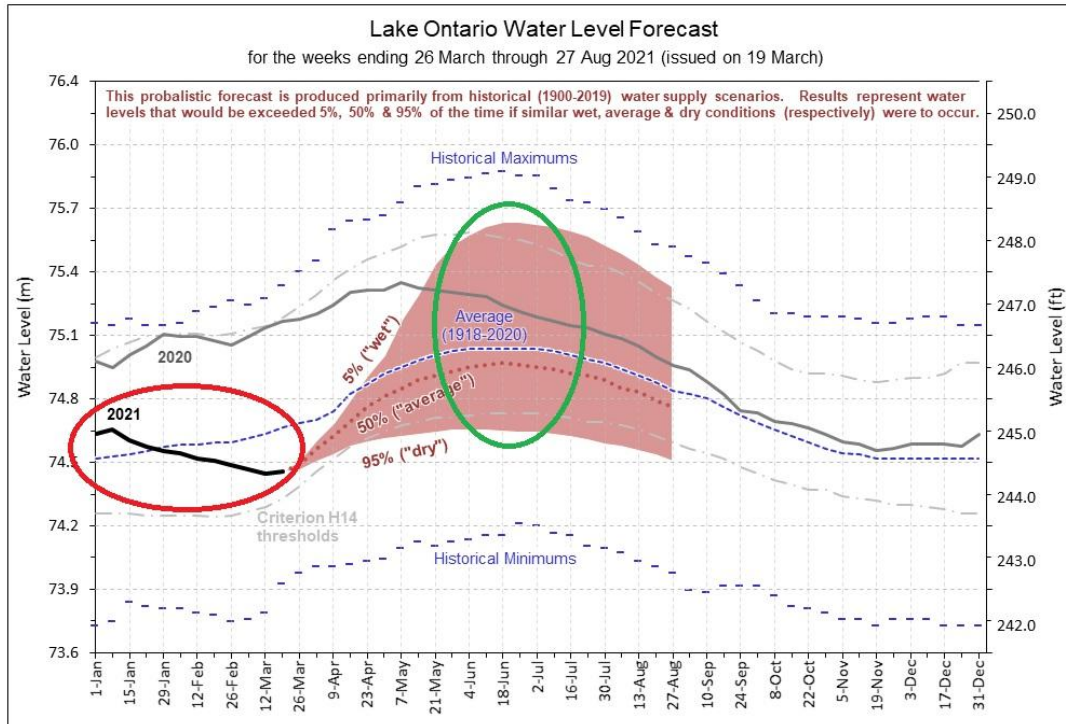
"The risk of flooding on Lake Ontario and the upper St. Lawrence River has declined from moderate in December 2020 to low. In December, the risk analysis indicated a 28% chance of water levels exceeding a threshold at which damages occur in many shoreline communities. The risk is now down to 8%."



Low water conditions seen in this March 18th, 2021 photo submitted by a TIA Water Levels Committee member near Grass Creek

WATER LEVEL UPDATE

By: Ken White and Vince Barton



Source (including a description of the forecast methodology): <https://ijc.org/en/loslr/b/watershed/forecasts>

Should we be worried about LOW water now?

That question was inconceivable just a few months ago! However, all the Great Lakes water basins have had well below average precipitation so far in 2021, and they've all been below average for precipitation over the last 12-month period. Whether or not the high-water cycle we've seen for 4 years now continues will depend a lot on how much precipitation is seen across the Great Lakes over the coming months.

For Lake Ontario in particular, water levels are lower than they've been in late March since 2015 (and prior to that, they hadn't been this low in late March since 2003). Will there be enough water for our docks and boat ramps?

The good news is that we're at the bottom now, and levels will only go up from here. As seen in the green oval on the above forecast (from the ILOSLRB), there is still a wide range of water levels in the shaded band that we could see later this spring for a peak and then throughout the summer. It all comes down to how much precipitation we get in the Lake Ontario and Ottawa River basins this spring along with the magnitude, duration, and timing of the Ottawa River freshet. The "best guess" is the red dotted line (which they call the 50% "average" condition – half the time it's wetter, half the time it's drier). That red dotted line tracks along about 3" or so below long-term average throughout much of the spring and the summer.

Until someone can accurately predict the weather months in advance, only time will tell – if it's wetter, our water levels will be higher than the red dotted line; if it's drier, our water levels will be lower.

For more detailed background to this article, [CLICK HERE](#).



TIA has partnered with Save The River in a united effort to help keep our river clean! This summer TIA will be hosting our 2nd annual Trash Free River Cleanup on Saturday, August 7th and we hope to see you there!

We are joining Save The River's effort to help keep the upper St. Lawrence "swimmable, fishable, and drinkable now and for generations to come". These cleanups are community-based and volunteer oriented. Due to COVID and border restrictions, we are unable to share this event in person. However we can share in mutual care and effort.

The problems of trash in the water of the St. Lawrence River have been well documented and can be observed on a daily basis by islanders and boaters. Removing plastics and other man-made debris from the St. Lawrence River is a pressing concern, and with our *Trash Free River* cleanup we hope to start an annual tradition of shoreline and river bottom cleanups removing a major source of pollution from the River.

How it works:

Teams will register in advance and will be assigned their cleanup areas in advance. They will be able to pick up their cleanup kits and t-shirts in advance at a yet to be determined place . Releases must be signed prior to participation in the cleanup

Day Of:

- ☐ Check-in if needed day of.
- ☐ Teams are at the assigned location by the designated time to start the cleanup.
- ☐ Disposal of all/final trash by teams at a time TBD.



Teams of 3-5 will work together along the shore and from the water via kayaks to clean up areas up to 10 ft above and below the shoreline. Teams will be given a cleanup kit with trash bags and trash grabbers and other necessary items to safely remove trash from the shoreline and water.

There will be a designated area for teams to dispose of their collected trash

Who Can Participate?

-Families are also encouraged to register as teams, this is a family-friendly event but anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

-Individuals are also encouraged to register and will be assigned to a team and a specific zone.

-Calling all kayakers! We are hoping that our network of volunteers will help provide coverage from the water with your own personal kayak.



FRIENDS OF TIA

FEATURING

SAVE THE RIVER



Save The River is proud to offer a Wine and Cheese Cruise for 2 from Garnsey's Classic Island Cruises for their winter/spring raffle. The basic Wine and Cheese Cruise runs for 3 ½ to 4 hours and includes a bottle of Coyote Moon wine of your choice, a platter of local meats and cheeses from Gold Cup Farms featuring River Rat Cheese and Croghan bologna. The lucky winners will get to experience the beautiful St. Lawrence River from Muskie, a 1953 Chris Craft.

This prize is valued at \$225.



To Purchase 1 Ticket for \$5 [CLICK HERE](#)

To Purchase 5 Tickets for \$22 [CLICK HERE](#)

Save The River's Sewage Handbook

Be on the lookout this month for a fresh take on the Save The River's Sewage Handbook. STR has been updating the guide over the winter from a printed pamphlet to a web publication hosted on their site, www.savetheriver.org.

Save the River is fortunate to be working with Eric Murdock, P.Eng. of OnSite Engineering, PLLC. Eric and his company specialize in innovative design techniques for installing septic systems at challenging sites that do not have the space, soil type or soil depth traditionally needed to install a more traditional septic system. OnSite systems use in-tank treatment methodologies to bioremediate and disinfect wastewater, resulting in clean water.

Easily accessed via the web, this resource will help everyone stay up-to-date with new wastewater technology, regulations, funding opportunities, and best management practices. The project is made possible by a donation from long-time STR member Judy Sweet of Indian Point.



**Virtual learning resources for
home and school.**

**Read all about Save The River's
Virtual Learning Program by
[CLICKING HERE](#).**

**Everything from painted turtles to
wood ducks to Rock Island
Lighthouse and more.**



Noteworthy News I

Town of Gananoque Marina Master Plan Working Group

The Town of Gananoque has initiated a project to produce a comprehensive marina master plan for the Gananoque Municipal Marina to guide the growth and future decisions for the Marina. The task was to detail and map current conditions, include a feasibility study, and propose a future plan for the marina including short term (year to 3), medium term (years 4 to 9) and long-term targets (years 10 to 15 and beyond).

Greer Galloway Consulting Engineers was awarded the project and, in concert with planners JP2G Consultants, they submitted their report to Council in December 2020. [CLICK HERE](#) for a link to download the complete Gananoque Municipal Marina Master Plan Report. (Please note - the report is a LARGE PDF file on Gananoque's website and may take a long time to download, even with a fast internet connection.)

Council approved a motion to direct staff to establish a Gananoque Municipal Marina Strategic Working Group to review the options as identified in the Master Plan and prepare a specific plan including estimated costs for Council's consideration. Staff contacted TIA and advised it was important that TIA be invited to have a representative on the Working Group, and TIA accepted.

Accordingly, our membership is invited to review the Master Plan Report and to provide TIA with comments that you think should be considered. You can send TIA comments by email addressed to thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com. Please label your email SUBJECT: COMMENTS ON THE GAN MARINA MASTER PLAN REPORT and submit by April 15 latest.

Thank you for your attention to this important river community initiative.

Peter Fitton, TIA President



**Get Social with
TIA in 2021**





Noteworthy News II

TIA Cross-Border COVID Task Force

Our Board established a Cross-Border COVID Task Force composed of Board Members Peter Fitton, Orm Murphy, Thornley Stoker, Alec Turner, Ken White, and non-board members Stephen Friot and Philip Murdock. Stephen lives in Oklahoma City in the winter and summers on Tremont Island. Phil lives on Vancouver Island in the winter and summers on Murray Isle. Both Stephen and Phil contributed to our submission to the Wilson Center in Washington, D.C. This is a Canadian/American Think Tank. Among its mandates is to make recommendations to the United States and Canada regarding the reopening of the border.

Our Task Force has used our submission to the Wilson Center to reach out to various Members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Parliament and twenty-five members of the U.S. House of Representatives Northern Border Caucus. In addition, Senators Charles Schumer and Susan Collins have been approached about our unique situation.

I say “unique” because landowners and boatowners in our region suffered historic high water in 2019, which caused serious damage to the shoreline and shoreline structures. In many cases, these damages were not able to be remediated last year because of the cross-border travel restrictions. We have asked that cross-border property owners and boat owners, and their families, be classified as essential travellers and be allowed to cross the border in order to restore and maintain their properties. This will be subject to the prevailing public health requirements at the time.

Once the Wilson Center recommendations are released, we intend to distribute those recommendations to the policy makers on both sides of the border. We hope to achieve our request to permit cross border property owners to return to their summer homes.

If you wish to follow the Wilson Center report, [CLICK HERE](#)

Orm Murphy, TIA Board Member



Did you know that TIA is a not-for-profit organization that issues both Canadian and US Tax receipts for any donation over \$10. [Learn more here.](#)



Show **TIA** you **LOVE** our **ROCK** markers by becoming a **TIA** member today. Your membership helps fund our shoal marking program.

CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE



Enjoy the ripple effect of advertising with TIA by becoming a
2021 Business Sponsor



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2021 Business Sponsorship Packages
Captain Level \$150
Admiral Level \$500



SCAN ME



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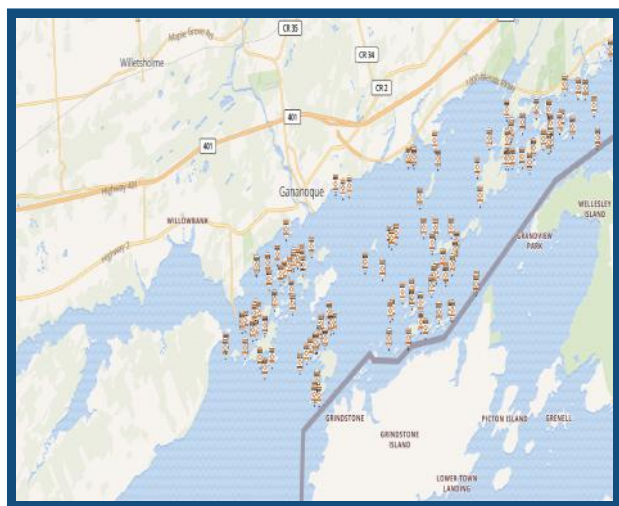
RIVER SAFETY



“April showers bring May flowers.” An old but familiar saying that confirms we have persevered through yet another winter emerging with hope, enthusiasm and hopefully, a spring in our step! From cleaning out the garage to raking the lawn to dragging out the patio furniture, spring always brings with it a long list of chores. It is also the time of year when TIA fully gears up for another summer of shoal marking.

Every Spring TIA places just over 200 orange and white ROCK markers between the eastern tip of Howe Island and Brockville. The work is completed by Ian Huntley of Huntley Marine Construction and a group of Brockville volunteers, led by TIA member David Tolton. It's a huge undertaking that involves hard work, long hours and a little bit of luck. The weather plays a huge role in our ability to place markers and the challenges associated with the work. High winds and rain make the work difficult. We pray each spring for a string of sunny calm days.

Thanks to the help and support of [Adam Allore and Wavve Boating](#), TIA has created a map of the ROCK markers that we place each summer in the St. Lawrence River. This map is designed to give our membership, sponsorship and grant partners a deeper appreciation for the work we do. The map allows you to see a broad overview of our shoal marking territory, or you can zoom in on one specific marker. CLICK on the map and see if you can find the one closest to your marina, home or cottage.



We hope you enjoy the new map and here's hoping your spring chore list goes as planned and that summer comes early to the river.

wavve
BOATING

CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD
THE WAVVE APP

*Map is for illustration purposes only and should never be used for navigation. TIA always recommends using navigation maps or apps like the Wavve Boating App when on the St. Lawrence River.

Spring Maintenance: How To Get Your Gas BBQ Ready for Grilling Season

CLICK HERE FOR SOME TIMELY TIPS



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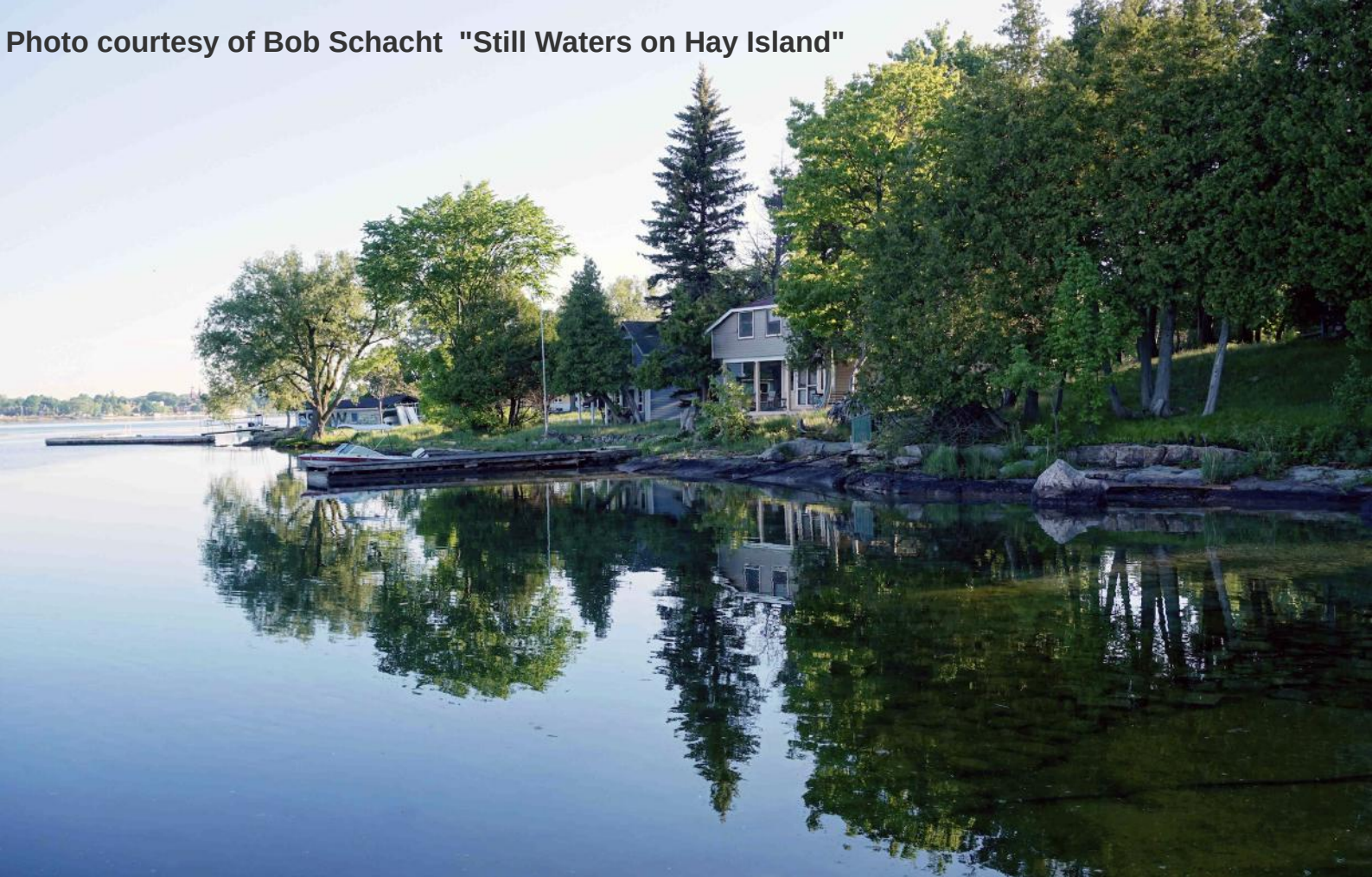
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Photo courtesy of Bob Schacht "Still Waters on Hay Island"



If You Have A Favourite **River Photo**
Please Share It With **TIA.**

You can email it to us at:

thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com

Thousand Islands Association

Due to seasonality, varying water levels, vandalism and equipment failure, the Thousand Island Association disclaims any liability for the absence of any of its shoal markers from time to time.

The Thousand islands Association (TIA) is a not for profit organization that is proactive in addressing safety on the river, promoting environmental preservation and supporting the interests of the Community for the benefit of the 1000 Islands region of the St. Lawrence River.

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