

# RIVER TALK

JANUARY/FEBRUARY

# 2022



THOUSAND  
ROCK ISLANDS  
ASSOCIATION



*Founded in 1934*

**RIVER SAFETY**

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT**





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***WE MARK ROCKS  
AND SAVE PROPS!***

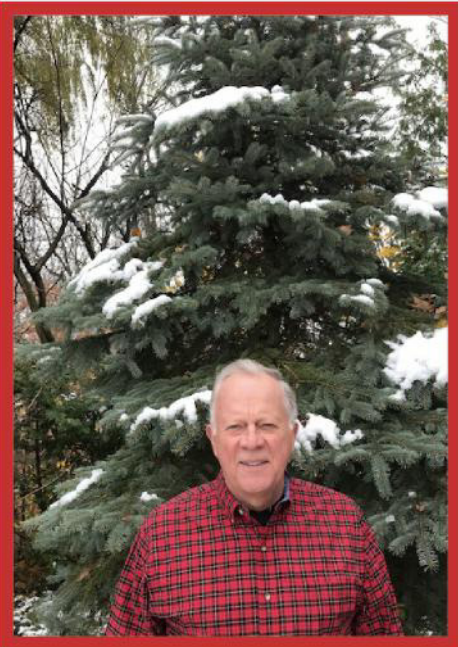
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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Peter Fitton**

Welcome 2022 and a new start for our river community.

Despite the unwelcomed arrival of COVID Omicron, we pray that the pandemic will come under control with the increase of vaccinations and all of us practicing public health measures. There is, however, a sense of new beginnings as the days start to get longer again and we enjoy the light's re-emergence.

To start the year right some of us welcomed New Year's Day with a polar bear swim <https://www.cbc.ca/archives/who-started-the-polar-bear-dip-every-jan-1-anyway-1.5390585> How many of you took advantage of the open river to do so? We can endure winter months with traditional events such as Super Bowl Sunday and watching the playoff games leading up to the big game. To apologize to our spouses don't forget Valentine's Day on February 14!

So, what's new with TIA? Membership dues can now receive a tax receipt – find more information in this issue by [clicking here](#). We were successful with receiving grants from the Davies Charitable Foundation supporting our environmental program and again from the Great Lakes Foundation supporting the replacement of tired shoal markers. We are grateful for their recognition of our mission and support. TIA also plans to hire another summer co-op student to further develop and implement TIA programs and communications with our membership. We invite you to visit the job posting Environmental Program Co-Ordinator. [CLICK HERE to view](#)

TIA continues to build on its governance model. The Board is proposing a Members-at-Large Advisory Group comprised of membership volunteers from various mainland and island neighborhoods. ([CLICK HERE to view](#)). The Board has also established 2022 Committee Objectives and Volunteer Opportunities ([CLICK HERE to view](#)) for our membership to find ways to become more engaged with TIA and the river community.

The bottom line is that TIA plans to grow while delivering on its Mission of River Safety, Environmental Awareness. Without membership TIA cannot exist, you make it happen. I call out to our Canadian and American friends to please renew your membership support today and receive your tax receipt! [www.thousandislandsassociation.com](http://www.thousandislandsassociation.com). Secondly, please review our documents on volunteer opportunities and come forward to get onboard with TIA in one of its many committees.

Stay warm and safe, and dream about good times on the river.





# FROM THE EDITOR

**Allison Burchell-Robinson**

The New Year has arrived bringing with it cold and even colder weather. The ice is moving further and further out and ice houses are springing up. An air boat goes out and comes back two hours later. The snowmobiles are on the alert. I am in a new town with a completely different perspective than I have previously experienced. I don't see sky scrapers or woods when I look out my window but I do have the River, big, broad and beautiful and constantly changing. I've spent most of my summers on this river but seeing it now is a new and unique experience. Sunrise and sunset are magical. Watching the freighters in the fall, even recognizing a few is invigorating. Where have they been and where are they going. Traveling on one all the way to Lake Superior would be a fantasy come true.

The move was my big change. You can also expect big changes from the Thousand Islands Association, the first being that tax receipts will now be issued for all memberships. Read more about this significant change in this issue of River Talk.

The Environmental Committee is planning more River Clean Up Days this year along with some other very exciting programs. Catch up with Chair Janet Smith-Staples further in this issue.

The number of TIA's followers on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter has been steadily increasing and I urge any of you who are not followers to get on board. We want our visibility and our voice to always increase. River Talk is back on board, two months holiday more than sufficient. Unfortunately, my co-worker and the man responsible for the new look last year of River Talk is stepping down in the spring. His creativity, enthusiasm and patience will be missed.

So, that's another change for TIA. We are looking for someone to step in to work with me on River Talk, to plan and layout River Talk, suggest ideas, help find authors. It's fun, it's challenging and it's rewarding. For all who have an interest in this work, please contact me at our website: [thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com). We can talk about it, throw ideas back and forth, make plan for future articles and over all keep River Talk going strong.



# ENVIRONMENTAL UPDATE

Janet Smith-Staples



I am staring at a partially frozen St. Lawrence River and finding it hard to imagine warmer temps and summer fun, however I do know spring is coming and with renewed enthusiasm and a host of opportunities to get involved.

Keeping this in mind we are busy planning events with one scheduled to happen in March! COVID rules may only allow for 10 -15 participants however we are partnering with **Parks Canada's Mathieu Lecompte**, who will lead a workshop for building turtle nest protectors. We will be building nest protectors, learning where they should be placed and what to watch for as we get into the active months when turtles start to lay their eggs. Mathieu will be able to inform and answer questions in this fun & informal setting. Watch our social media platforms in the coming weeks and months for more information and sign-ups.



We have more events in mind as summer kicks into high gear. Our Trash Free River Clean Up initiative continues, including a two-day event shared with **Save the River**. Mark your calendars for Friday July 29th and Saturday July 30th for these two River Days will be a binational effort to collect trash from both sides of our river, and with luck we will all be able to gather Saturday July 30th from 5pm-8pm at DeLuke's/Northern Flow in Clayton to meet all volunteers and celebrate everyone's efforts. Reminiscent of the good old days when we could easily cross the border and share with river friends from both sides. Here's hoping!

We will also plan to have a Trash Free River clean-up day in June and in August and will be posting those days once we have the dates confirmed.

I want to take a moment to thank members who have emailed us and offered to help in our efforts to build on our environmental commitment. I look forward to working with you as we develop more opportunities for our river community to come together and learn. Your enthusiasm and time are greatly appreciated!!





Photo courtesy of GoFon.com

## A Favourite Winter Visitor

Stuart Arnett

It seems more often now than before every winter our Thousand Islands are becoming a destination for a popular northern resident, the Snowy Owl.

The Snowy owl is one of Canada's most easily recognizable owls due to its white plumage. You can also tell the difference between a male and female Snowy by their plumage. The male species is almost entirely white, while the female Snowy has feathers barred with dark brown.

Another reason why the Snowy owl is popular with birders and wildlife photographers is that the snowy owl is diurnal meaning it actively hunts during the day rather than at night. This bird of prey is a great judge of distance which allows it to swoop down and catch its prey. The circle of feathers surrounding its eyes helps reflect sound to its ears, a feature that comes in handy when vision is limited.

Numbering close to 30,000 in North America, the Snowy owl is not considered at risk in Canada. They normally reside year round in the Arctic and, breed in the northern tree line. They are known to migrate south in search of food and that is what brings them to our area. The Snowy Owl by weight is the largest of our owls. They are monogamous and mate for life. Their nest, a simple scrape on the ground, is usually positioned in a raised area such as a hummock or boulder that provides a good lookout spot. The birds aggressively protect their nest and young against intruders such as gulls, foxes, and wolves.

The female Snowy, whose mottled plumage provides good camouflage against the tundra, takes on all the egg incubation and chick care, while the male brings food to the nest. In lean lemming years, a pair may not produce any offspring at all but during lemming population booms Snowy Owls can raise broods that are several times their normal size, sometimes laying up to 11 eggs. This is another example as to how interconnected our wildlife is and why it is important to understand the relationships between species and their environment.





# Membership Update



## Membership Tax Receipts

Something new for 2022 – membership dues in TIA will now receive a tax receipt! The TIA Board investigated how to make membership dues in TIA tax deductible for your personal tax returns. This applies to both Canadians and Americans.

The Thousand Islands Association for the Preservation of Water Quality Inc. and the Thousand Islands Association, Inc., collectively known as TIA, are not-for-profit corporations with charity registration status in both Canada and the United States, respectively. Memberships can qualify to receive a tax receipt provided the member does not receive a tangible benefit.

Previously TIA surveyed the membership about the free AGM breakfast which would be considered a tangible benefit. A number of replies noted it was not essential to supporting TIA as a member and many do not attend the AGM and enjoy the benefit.

Due to COVID-19 and the border closure, TIA has experienced a 25% decrease in membership renewal. During this time TIA has had two virtual AGMs without a breakfast. We are hopeful for an in-person AGM this year but upon investigating the cost of food and catering we find the breakfast has become unaffordable without increasing membership dues.

Therefore, in the interest of TIA sustainability, the free breakfast needs to be removed as a benefit in 2022 and replaced with a user pay option.

When you renew online be sure to choose Canadian Membership if you are a Canadian Citizen and choose American Membership if you are an American citizen. This allows our database to correctly identify you with the proper tax receipt.

Without memberships TIA cannot exist, you make it happen. Please support TIA by visiting our website today and purchasing your tax-deductible membership.

[www.thousandislandsassociation.com](http://www.thousandislandsassociation.com)

**Please note TIA membership in FOCA expired the end of 2021. If you want to continue with access to FOCA member benefits, please contact them directly as individual members of FOCA.**





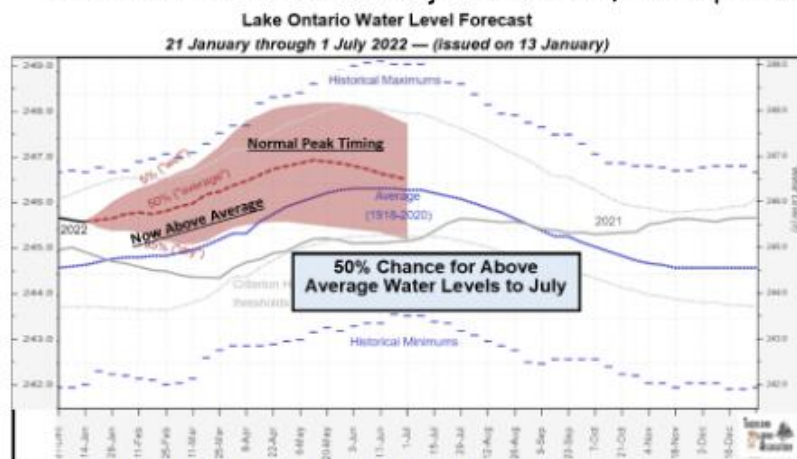
# WATER LEVEL UPDATE



## Water Levels 2022 Mid-Winter Update, Ice Formation Status & 6-Month Forecast TIA Water Levels Committee (1/20/22)

During the winter the IJC's ILOSLR Board has two major jobs:

1. Regulate water levels on LO & SL River according the regulation Plan 2014, balancing interests across the water basin. *Ideally* levels would be maintained *low enough* to handle high spring flows, yet *high enough* so we emerge at or above average after the “spring uncertainty mist clears”.
2. River housekeeping to ensure formation (and survival) of stable, smooth ice sheets so flows can be adjusted at will, while preventing ice jams and flooding.



<https://ijc.org/en/loslrb/watershed/forecasts> Edits by TIA

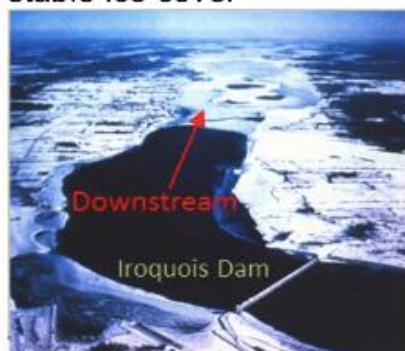
Flow reductions began on January 10<sup>th</sup>, from 8100 m<sup>3</sup>/sec with the Lake Ontario Outflow (Week Ending Fri, Jan 28 2022) at ~6200 m<sup>3</sup>/s, a 23% overall decrease, returning to normal when ice formation is solid.

### Observations

- January began as a dry month, however with the significant storm that developed over the region January 16<sup>th</sup>, the monthly precipitation appears to be on par with January averages. The rest of the Great Lakes (GL) remain dryer than average.
- Lake Erie/Huron and Michigan continue to have average water levels trending down. In fact Lake Erie is a full two feet lower than in 2020. Ultimately this means lower GL flows into Lake Ontario and thus lower levels in the Thousand Islands.

### ILOSLR Board's 'Weekly Regulation Summary' (Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> – Jan 28<sup>th</sup>)

**“Ice continues to form in the critical sections of the St. Lawrence River, and Lake Ontario's outflow will continue to be operationally adjusted to assist the formation of a stable ice cover”**



Click [HERE](#) to read the **Full article** and learn some amazing facts about the importance and process of Ice Formation in the critical areas of the St. Lawrence River.

# MEMBERS-AT-LARGE ADVISORY GROUP

## A Volunteer Opportunity

Peter Fitton and Jim Côté

As part of building the TIA Governance model, the Board has considered the importance of engaging its membership with representative voices along its vast territory of the river community –85 km from Kingston to Brockville running parallel to Save the River's shoal marker territory from Cape Vincent to Ogdensburg.

The Board recognizes the many mainland and island group neighborhoods that unify TIA's territory. Yet TIA is run by a Board of only up to twelve volunteer Directors that are spread thin. We believe a solution to bridge the gap is to create a Members-at-Large Advisory Group of volunteer members resident in these neighborhoods.

Members-at-Large can be invaluable to the TIA Board and the Association as a whole. Their varying interests, assignment roles, and experience on the river can help influence and make great contributions to TIA achieving its goals. They can also help improve on the engagement of the general TIA membership in TIA mission programs within the river community.

A Member at Large volunteer need not attend Board Meetings or have any regular scheduled participation in TIA affairs. A Member at Large may be asked to collaborate with a Committee Chair and serve as a liaison between a committee and the river community, possibly in the river neighborhood where the Member at Large resides, to relay information to and from the river community. Members at Large, over time and depending on their willingness and interest, may fill the role of vacant Committee Chair or Board positions.

There is no fixed term minimum or maximum for this volunteer position. It is intended to be an enjoyable experience among friends in the community who wish to share their love for the river. Members at Large may determine their own time commitment as it suits them.

If this sounds like an interesting opportunity to become more engaged in the TIA river community, please contact us at [thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com) and follow these links containing more details.

[TIA Members-at-Large Advisory Group Appointment Criteria 2022 and,](#)

[TIA 2022 Committee Objectives and Volunteer Opportunities](#)





## *The Alliance for the Great Lakes: Protecting Water, Sustaining Life*

*The Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River are massive and awe-inspiring. But if we don't take care of them, they are at risk from issues like invasive species, plastic pollution, and toxic algal blooms.*

The Alliance for the Great Lakes is a nonpartisan nonprofit working to protect our region's most precious resource: the fresh, clean, and natural waters of the Great Lakes. With headquarters in Chicago and staff in Ohio, Michigan, New York, and Wisconsin, their team develops fact-based policy solutions, advocating for Great Lakes protection policies at regional and local levels. The Alliance works primarily in the United States but coordinates closely with Canadian nonprofits and government agencies.

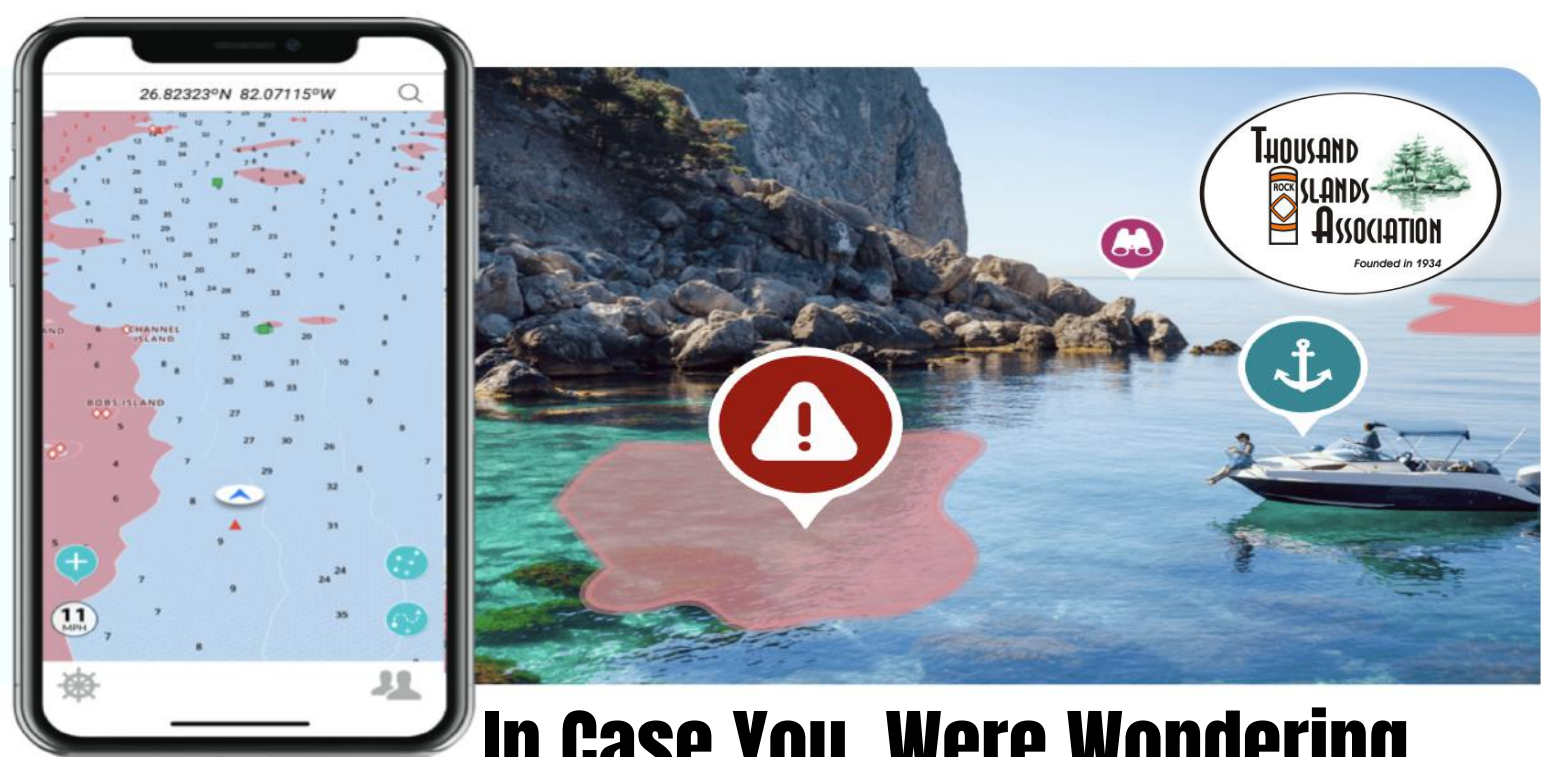
The Alliance takes three connected approaches to protect the lakes:

- **Advocacy & Leadership** – The Alliance partners with communities and decision-makers to develop actionable solutions that protect the lakes and our communities. As an example, the Alliance is a leader in the campaign to stop invasive carp from reaching the Great Lakes. And, the Alliance fought to secure federal funding to fix the region's crumbling water infrastructure, which will reduce sewer overflows and protect drinking water in communities in all eight Great Lakes states.
- **Education & Action** – Through action-oriented information and programs, the Alliance empowers people and communities to protect the lakes. Their Adopt-a-Beach volunteer program involves nearly 15,000 volunteers each year in shoreline cleanups that keep litter, most of it plastic, out of the lakes. Volunteers also collect valuable data that provides scientists and policymakers with critical information about plastic pollution.
- **Research & Analysis** – The Alliance is a trusted, non-partisan source of information to inform community leaders and guide policy to protect the Great Lakes. As an example, each year, the Alliance releases its annual federal legislative priorities. The list outlines a federal Great Lakes policy agenda and identifies the next steps Congress should take to protect the lakes. The Alliance will release its 2022 federal priorities via a public webinar on February 3.

People have the power to protect the lakes, and everyone can help by getting involved as an advocate, donor, or volunteer. Learn more and signup for email updates at [www.greatlakes.org](http://www.greatlakes.org).



Did you know that TIA will issue you a tax receipt for any donation over \$10? We also issue both Canadian and US Tax receipts. Learn More by [CLICKING HERE](#)



# In Case You Were Wondering.....

Alec Turner and Dave McWilliams

It is close to that time of the year again...Yes, the happiest day of the winter: Groundhog Day! Just six more weeks (or thereabouts, being hopeful) to being able to soak up the warmth of the sun, enjoy sunset cruises, fish, and play on the river once again (COVID permitting). Before we know it, it's soon time to dust off our boats and think about everything we need to do to get ready for the summer.

Even before we venture outside, your tech is probably in need of some updating...Perhaps you use WAVVE and your subscription has lapsed ([wavveboating.com](http://wavveboating.com)), or the Discover Boating Safety app from the Manufacturers Association (NMMA app) that is full of a lot of useful stuff needs an up-date too. If you are a Garmin / Navionics user check to see their recent updates and changes to subscriptions.

No matter what APP, Program or Device you use for navigation these long cold winter evenings are the perfect time to hone your skills on their use and a great time to update too.

**Addendum:** In case you were wondering about boat shows...At the time of release of River Talk the virtual Toronto International Boat Show (Jan. 22nd to 30th) ([torontoboatshow.com](http://torontoboatshow.com)) may have occurred. Sorry to say that the Central New York Winter Boat Show in Syracuse scheduled for February has been cancelled. However, the 30th Annual Wooden Boat Show, in Mystic Seaport is scheduled for June 24-26, 2022, as well there are a bunch still happening elsewhere especially in the US, but not so much in Canada.

**wavve**  
BOATING

**discover**  
BOATING





# TIA Needs Your Help to Publish River Talk!!

Do you have a keen eye, Digital Media & Publishing Skills?

TIA is actively seeking volunteers to publish River Talk

River Talk is published 10 times per year

Jan/Feb, March, April, May, June, July, August, Sept, Oct & Nov/Dec  
(Starting in May of 2022, TIA is considering moving to 8 Issues per year)

## What's Involved...?

Co-ordinate & organize a timely publication working with TIA's editor  
Assemble submitted articles and provide design layout of publication

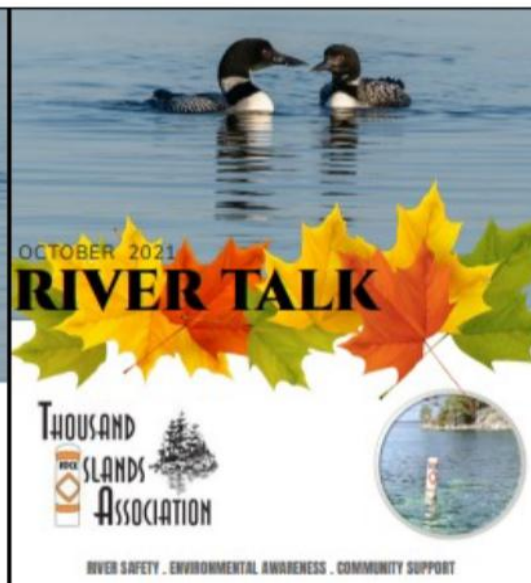
Add graphics and content as needed

Establish themes and have fun being creative

River Talk is currently published using Flipbook & a PDF  
version is made available for download

Interested? Please email [thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com](mailto:thousandislandsassociation@gmail.com)  
We'll call you back to answer any questions!

Previous River Talks can be viewed at [River Talk Library](#)



Pictured above are 3 of River Talk's most recent covers



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## Wolfe Island Snowy

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# Thousand Islands Association (TIA)

Due to seasonality, varying water levels, vandalism and equipment failure, the Thousand Islands Association (TIA) 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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## TIA's Three Pillars

River Safety

Environmental Awareness

Community Support

