

Health of Musselman's Lake concerns residents

Safety of Ninth Line an issue, as well

BY HANNELORE VOLPE
Staff Writer

Musselman's Lake is slowly choking on weeds.

Fish are being threatened and youngsters can no longer swim in the lake.

After seeing the lake deteriorate for several years, local residents Kathi Gray and Steve Rivard went to the

Whitchurch-Stouffville environmental advisory committee for help.

The situation is getting "worse and worse," she said. In past years, several residents would rake weeds out of the lake, but fewer are coming out to do the yearly chore.

The huge piles of weeds that were raked out seemed to grow bigger each year.

Their neighbour, Neil Aird, agrees.

"I have been living here for 20 years and it's not getting any better," Mr. Aird said. "Kids can't swim because of the weeds."

A major part of problem is because the community is on septic tanks rather than a municipal sewage system. Run-off from septic systems contributes to weed growth.

After Ms. Gray and Mr. Rivard told their story to the environmental advisory committee,

members decided to ask the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority to focus on Musselman's Lake, Councilor Susanne Hilton noted.

She is one of three councillors on the 12-member committee.

The safety of drivers travelling on the Ninth Line as it weaves around Musselman's Lake is another major concern of area residents.

"We have seen several cars slip down and hit a

tree," Ms. Gray said.

The trees are the only reason the cars didn't slide into the lake.

People driving the winding, narrow road often speed, endangering themselves and pedestrians.

"People are walking along the sides (of the road)," Ms. Hilton said. "It does not strike me as a very safe situation for pedestrians and drivers."

York Region has so far only installed a few barriers on the lake side of the road, Ms. Hilton said, adding the project has yet to be completed.

The committee will alert the region about the unsafe condition of Ninth Line around the lake.

In addition to responding to residents' concerns, the committee is hosting its Greenspeak series April 19 with the executive director of the York Region Environmental Alliance discussing alternatives to residential pesticide use.

The environmental committee is including Musselman's Lake as one of its Earth Day sites April 22.

"Each year we work on expanding our Earth Day activities in the community," committee chairperson Vince Brewerton, said.

Members will also have a booth at the Strawberry Festival and are hosting a day where people can bring unneeded items to one location for Good Will Industries to collect them.

A local environmental group, The Friends of Musselman's Lake, recently completed a survey of area homeowners about their concerns and has also published the Musselman's Lake Homeowners Guide for a Healthy Community.

The group holds two litter clean-up days each year around the community.

This year, the group is conducting a fish study, local resident Mark Carroll said.

Anglers will be asked



SUSANNE HILTON: Bring in conservation authority to help fix lake, Stouffville council member says.

what kinds and quantities of fish they're able to catch.

The intent is to eventually work with the Environment Ministry on a tagging study.

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Mayor Sue Sherban said she wants to hold a meeting shortly to bring all stakeholders concerned about the health of Musselman's Lake together.

They would include Musselman's Lake residents, members of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority, Friends of Musselman's Lake, the environmental advisory committee and town staff.

People with environmental concerns can contact the environmental advisory committee by calling 905-640-1910, ext. 707.

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