



Accès Fleuve / Comité ZIP Ville-Marie deplores the announcement of the discharge of raw sewage in the Saint-Laurent river

Longueuil, October 2, 2015 – The announcement of the the City of Montreal this morning to go ahead with the continuous discharge of waste water over seven days is distressing. Besides the impact on the river's water, the organisation considers that this situation will affect very negatively the progress made in the recent years regarding the perception of the water quality and the access to the river. One of the persistent obstacles which Accès Fleuve / Comité ZIP Ville-Marie faces in its mission to give back access to the river to the populaiton is directly linked to the negative perception of the quality of the water of the Saint-Laurent river.

This perception stems form the fact that in the 1960s and 1970s, direct access to the river for contact activities, such as bathing, were closed because of the pollution in the Saint-Laurent river. However, with the establishment of the Programme d'assainissement des eaux and the Plan Saint-Laurent, from which the organization was created, the situation has improved with the strengthening of laws, regulations, procedures and knowledge as to wastewater management, among others.

The improvement was such that the waters of the Saint-Laurent river became safe for swimming again at the turn of the millennium. Of course, the situation is not perfect, but it is improving year by year. However, the perception of people living on the banks of the river remained marked by closures of the 1960s and 1970. So much so that even today, when asked what is their perception the quality of the river water, the response from residents of Greater Montreal area is overwhelmingly negative.

"This whole situation, and the announcement of this morning to finally go ahead, rolls back a few years all the efforts made by the ZIP" said Alexandre Joly, General director of the organisation. "The perception of water quality in the Montreal region will be severely affected by these emissions and we hope that the City of Montreal puts in place mitigation measures."

The organization, that manages the Route bleue du Grand Montréal, strongly recommends that its users respect the ban on navigation and swimming for at least the 10 days covered. Paddling activities are not recommended in the Saint-Laurent river downstream of the Lachine rapids.

– 30 –

For information :



Alexandre Joly, M. Sc.
Généraldirector
Accès Fleuve / Comité ZIP Ville-Marie
981, rue Pierre-Dupuy, Longueuil (Québec) J4K 1A1
T. : (514) 934-0884 p. 202
C. : (514) 267-0034