

LES AMIS DE LA RÉSERVE NATIONALE DE FAUNE DU
LAC SAINT-FRANÇOIS

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



7600, chemin de la Pointe-Fraser, Dundee (Québec) JoS 1Lo

Tel. : 450 264-5908

info@amisrnfalacstfrancois.com | www.amisrnfalacstfrancois.com

Discover the natural diversity of the reserve!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A word from the president.....	3
A word from the coordinator	4

FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE RESERVE OF LAKE ST-FRANÇOIS

Mission	5
Members of the Board of Directors 2020	5
Team members 2020.....	10
Visitor profiles.....	13
Social media	19
Volunteers 2020-2021.....	19
Our 2020 members	20
Our partners.....	21
Community involvement.....	22

Maintenance contract : Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

ECCC contract summary.....	23
Control of the alliaris petiolato (garlic mustard).....	23
Hydrocharis morsus-ranae (frogbit).....	24
Training.....	24
2020 projects & contributions	26
Schedule.....	27
Activities and events: in detail.....	28
New for the 2020 season.....	29
Achievements	31
Photos of our 2020 season.....	32
2020 – Revenue Sources.....	38
A final word	39

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT



Trail of the Digue aux aigrettes (Great Egret)

Last year, the President's word concluded that 2020 was a positive year as the team remained in place and Karina LeClair became our coordinator. ECCC's had officially committed to the construction of a new reception building and to fund the development of updating the activities.

But ... but ... but 2020 had a surprise in store for us ... a pandemic. This disrupted activities, as the reserve closed for a while. A word from the coordinator will tell you more about this very special season. Another positive from the 2020 season was the demolition of the old reception centre and the plans to construct a new one.

The year 2021 will see a brand-new building appear. Activities will resume slowly and another project may take shape... We'll save this surprise for the word from the president of 2021.

Denis Gervais, président

A WORD FROM THE COORDINATOR

My first year coordinating the Friends of the lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area, there were many challenges and unforeseen events, including the pandemic. The priority was to protect employees and visitors from this virus as well as the usual mandate of maintenance, reception services and interpretation.

Due to restrictions imposed by various ministers, we were not allowed to offer our regular activities on the premises. Rather, we have done our part to limit the spread of Covid-19. It is for this reason that the team and myself have emphasized, on finding a way to offer interpretation activities on our Facebook page, in order to include those who could not travel to the reserve, by making them discover the richness of the flora and fauna found on the territory of the reserve. The help and support of the Canadian Wildlife Service (CFS) was greatly appreciated, especially with all the personal protective equipment and various cleaning and disinfection products. This allowed us to ensure quality service and a safe place for our visitors.

2020 has been a year of adaptation for the team and our organization. Despite the pitfalls caused by the pandemic, I believe I have been able to keep the morale and motivation of the team alive during this uncertain time for most of us. Nevertheless, visitors remained consistent and we are proud of the results that we present to you today. This is the result of the work of a strong, determined and combative team.

Finally, allow me to express my gratitude to all our employees and our Board of Directors for their invaluable advice, support and commitments, as well as their encouragement, which is essential to the success of the development of our organization.

Thank you for this unique beautiful season!

Karina LeClair, coordinator

MISSION

To publicize, promote and protect the wetlands of the Lake-Saint-François National Wildlife Reserve.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

During the year 2020, the board of directors and the executive board met 6 times, to ensure that the management of the organization and the ECCC contract are done despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

* The meetings were held by videoconference from April 2020 by the Zoom platform to limit the spread of the virus according to government guidelines

MEMBERS OF THE 2020 BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020



Denis Gervais, President

Representative of the South West Winged Wildlife Observation Society (SOFASO) on the Board of Directors (BD) of the Friends of the Lake Saint-François National Wildlife Area. He has been a member of the Friends' Board of Directors since 1993. He is part of the Board of the ecological group Crivert and of the Haut-Saint-Laurent ZIP Committee.

He is self-employed as a consulting biologist in his company L'Oiseaologue SENC. He characterizes habitats and sites for flora and fauna as well as wetlands. He participated in inventories in 1983, 1984 and 2006 on the Lake Saint-François National Wildlife Area (RNF LSF). He mapped out the various trails in the reserve and produced interpretation documents for various sites in the Suroit district, including the reserve. He has also participated and still participates in various awareness-raising activities on environmental issues in the region for over 35 years.



Serge Bourdon, Vice-president

Retired from his professional life as a craftsman-sculptor. The environment has always been of great concern to him. He sits as director of the Châteauguay Zone Watershed Conservation and Development Company (SCABRIC), sits on the Châteauguay River Rehabilitation Committee (CRRC).

Without forgetting that he was director of the Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area (AMAPRE) from 1997 to 2010, he remains active on the board of directors of AMAPRE.



Johanne Leduc, Treasurer (Representative of Saint-Anicet)

General Manager of Club Joie de Vivre, in Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, for 9 years. This Club is intended as a daytime activity service for people living with an intellectual disability and an ASD.

Originally from Valleyfield, she has lived in St-Anicet since 2006, for the beauty of the lake and its water sports.

Municipal councilor in St-Anicet since 2013 to date and representative of the municipality and treasurer, on the board of directors of the wildlife reserve, for almost 4 years.

She was also involved in various positions within the Optimist Clubs, at the final of the Quebec Games in Valleyfield in 2011 and at the Special Olympic Winter Games in Valleyfield in 2019.



Erin O'Hare, Secretary

Erin has been the Executive Director of the Haut-Saint-Laurent ZIP Committee since 2011.

She has a bachelor's degree in geography and a graduate certification in project management.

She has worked in the field of water management for 10 years and sits on the board of directors of several organizations.



Amy Stolecki, Administrator and translation support

A high school teacher, Amy has lived in Dundee for 20 years. She is interested in several environmental issues, especially the protection of biodiversity. For several years, she has held a position on the board of directors of the Ambioterra group as well as that of the Friends of the wildlife reserve.



André Picard , Administrator

Retired from Canadian National since 2005. He has been a seasonal resident of Saint-Anicet since 2001 and permanent since 2005.

Municipal councillor from 2007 to 2017.

Since 2008, director on the board of the Reserve and since 2019, director on the executive board of the Reserve.

He participated for several years in the management of the Optimist Club of Saint-Anicet and is the President of the Golden Age Club of Cazaville.



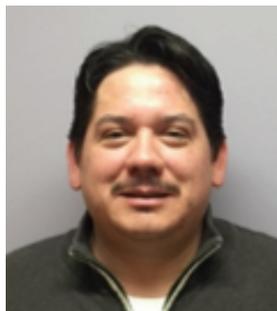
**Yves Lalonde , Administrator
(Representative of Dundee)**

Holder of an undergraduate degree in political science from the University of Ottawa and a master's degree in the same field from the University of Montreal. During his graduate studies (2nd and 3rd cycle), he was a full-time lecturer for 4 years at the University of Quebec in Chicoutimi.

He has devoted almost entirely of his active professional life to the field of local and regional political life. As a member of the Quebec National Assembly, he was responsible, for nearly 20 years, for the political office of the constituency of Beauharnois-Huntingdon. He was one of the main artisans of the creation of the Carrefour-Jeunesse emploi in the county of Huntingdon. Locally, he served as a counselor for the Municipality of the Township of Dundee from 1985 to 1992 and from 2008 to present.

In terms of his social involvement, he was the founding president of the Régie intermunicipale de la patinoire régionale de Huntingdon and a member of its board of directors for 7 years. He was also president of the Saint-Anicet chamber of commerce and a member of the board of directors for 5 years.

Resident of Dundee for over 40 years, he has always been a fiery defender of our wildlife reserve through his various occupations.



**Curtis Lazore, Administrateur
(Representative of the Akwesasne
Community)**

Member of the Kanienkeha:ka (Mohawk Nation) at Akwesasne. Throughout his professional career he has assisted the Haudenosaunee (Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy) with matters directly involving environmental and cultural resource protection. He currently sits on a number of committees, working groups and active boards that functions in and around the Aboriginal community.

Currently employed with the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne as an Environmental Assessment Officer. In this capacity he identifies impacts that affect a wide array of biological species by using a cultural framework patterned after the Ohénten Kariwatékwen (The Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address).

In his spare time, he enjoys playing lacrosse, hunting, fishing, gathering and planting traditional foods for his family and community.

Presently he has identified the importance that food systems play in contemporary Indigenous lifeways and strives to re-introduce the food system of the Akwesasne Mohawk back into the North American cultural fabric.

TEAM 2020-2021

The 2020 team of Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area was made up of:

- A liaison officer and administrative assistant (Dylan Burrows)
- A maintenance employee who retired in July (Daniel Lafleur)
- A full-time maintenance employee (Samuel Girouard)
- A part-time maintenance support employee (Jérémy Girouard)
- Three guide-interpreters (Simon Thibert, Julia Nieuwenhof and Shannan Caza)
- A casual employee: support to the guide-interpreters / maintenance (Poppy Stevens)
- A coordinator (Karina LeClair)



From front to back : Dylan Burrows, Julia Nieuwenhof, Samuel Girouard, Simon Thibert, Karina LeClair, Shannan Caza.

2020 TEAM MEMBERS



Simon Thibert
Interpreter Guide

Interpreter guide since 2019. In 2019, level 1 training in calm water canoe and level 1 in sea kayaking, (CNESST first aid certificate in the workplace: cardio-rescue / DEA / Anaphylaxis)



Julia Nieuwenhof
Interpreter Guide

Interpreter guide since 2017. In 2018, training level 1 in calm water canoe and level 1 in sea kayaking, (CNESST first aid certificate in the workplace: cardio-rescue / DEA / Anaphylaxis)



Shannan Caza
Interpreter Guide

Interpreter guide since 2020, (CNESST first aid certificate in the workplace: cardio-rescue / DEA / Anaphylaxis)

2020 TEAM MEMBERS



Samuel Girouard
Service / Maintenance

Service / Maintenance since 2020, (CNESST first aid certificate in the workplace: cardio-rescue / DEA / Anaphylaxis)



Dylan Burrows
Liaison agent

Head Guide in 2018 and 2019. In 2017, training level 1 in calm water canoe and level 1 in sea kayaking, (CNESST first aid certificate in the workplace: cardio-rescue / DEA / Anaphylaxis)



Karina LeClair
Coordinator

Receptionist in 2017 and administrative assistant in 2018 and 2019, (CNESST first aid certificate in the workplace: cardio-rescue / DEA / Anaphylaxis)

VISITOR PROFILES

Visitor profiles are varied and are much the same as in previous years. However, the profiles encountered highest in frequency are:

- Photographers
- Ornithologists
- Couples
- Families
- Walkers
- Dog walkers *

* On this subject, we receive many positive comments since places where dogs are accepted for hiking are scarce.

It is impossible for us to count the number of visitors who go directly to the trails without going through the reception. Normally our season starts on May 1, but due to Covid-19, we cannot open to visitors until June 22. However, considering the late reopening, between June 22 and October 31, 2020, 2,363 visitors passed through the site's reception desk. We estimate the total number of visitors for the season at 4,150 people (to our surprise), an increase of almost 20% of our usual ridership (especially for the Tower Trail), even if we could not offer activities guided excursions and hikes or events.

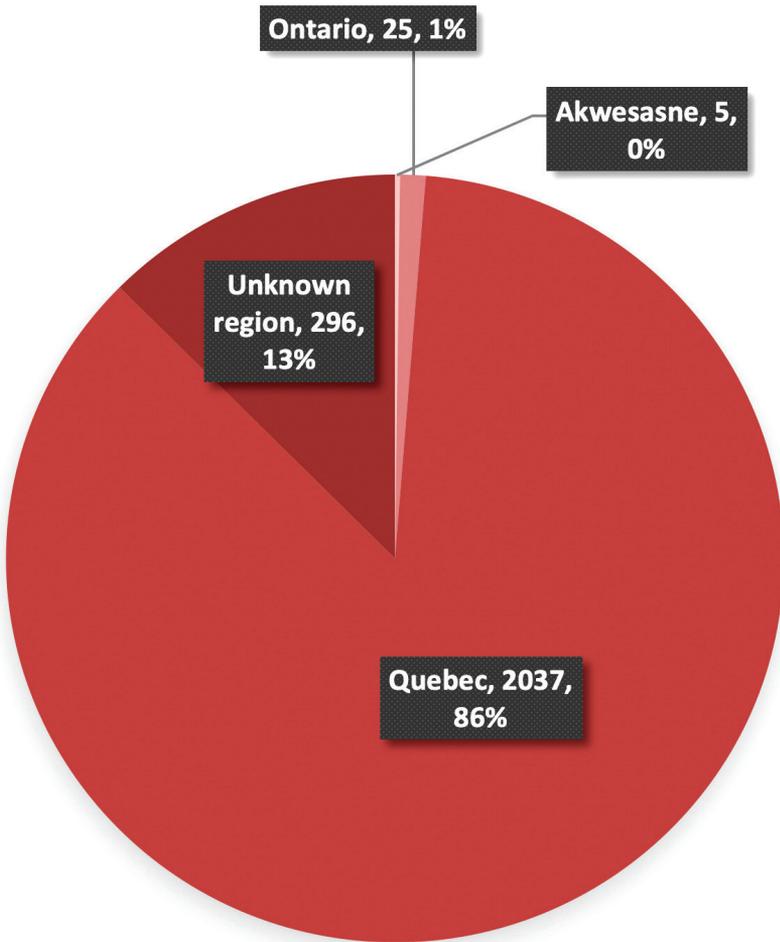
Our 1000th visitor this season was received on August 15th, we gave him a “VIP Family” membership card worth \$ 35.00 and a gift certificate of 50% off our store or any activity or event. times we can offer them again.



The citizens of Haut-Saint-Laurent visit the trails of the Reserve on a regular basis, but due to the pandemic and the closing of the borders, we have welcomed the majority of our visitors from the province of Quebec. We estimate that the French-speaking clientele is 73% against 27% for the English-speaking population.

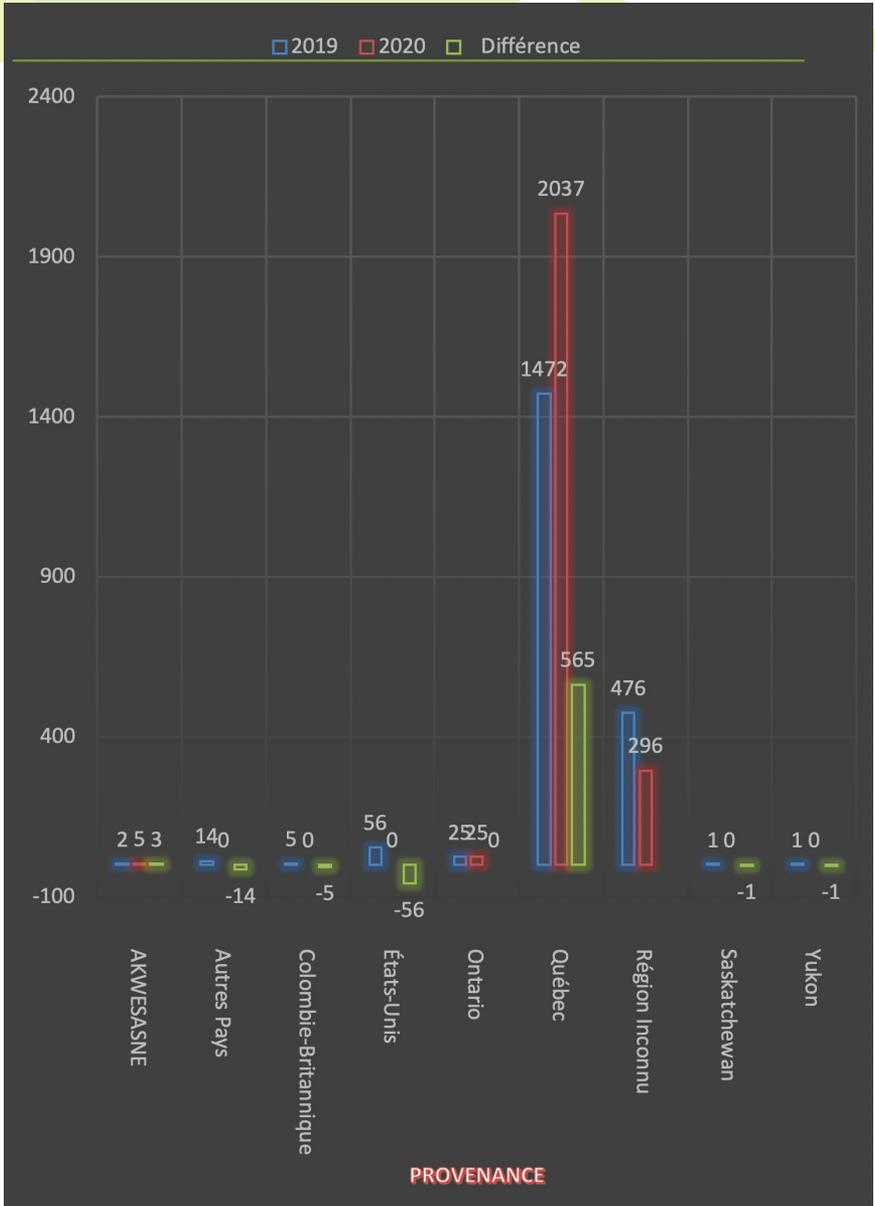
Various tables showing the statistics of visitors received are presented to you on the next few pages.

BY REGION

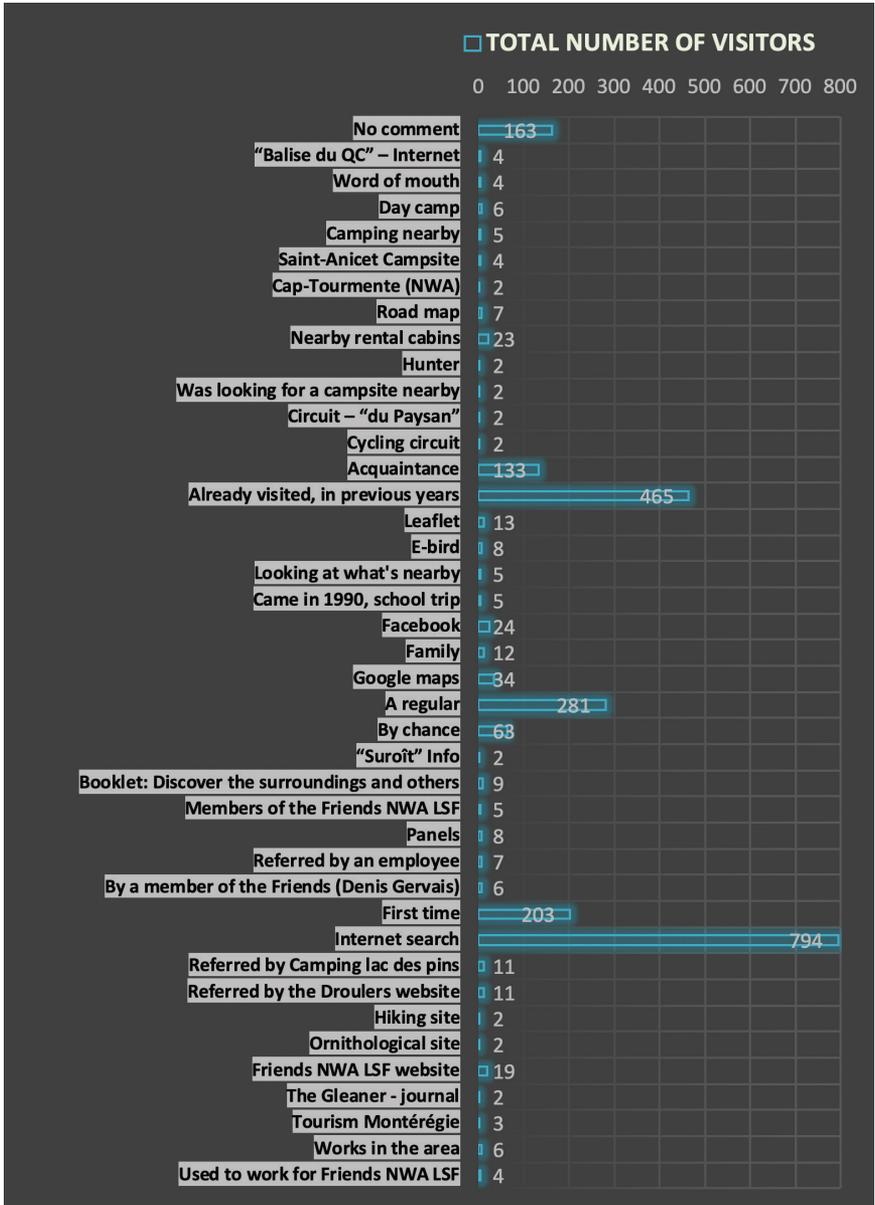


■ Akwesasne ■ Ontario ■ Quebec ■ Unknown region

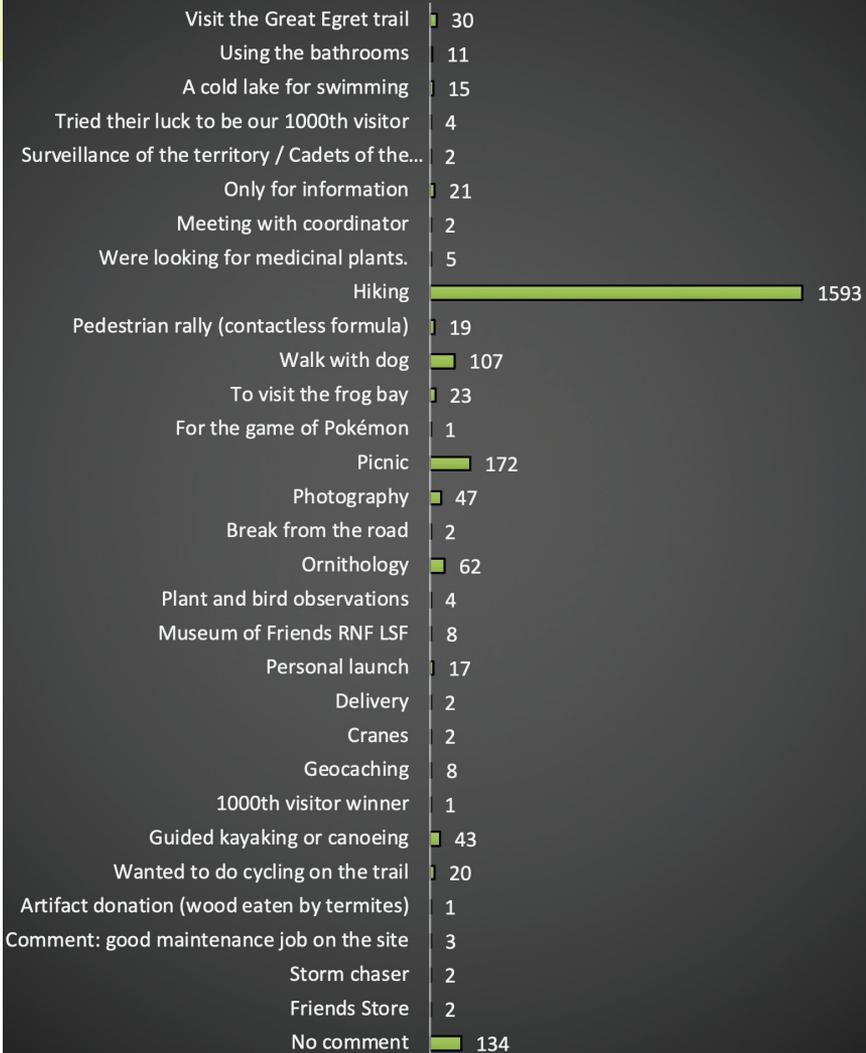
VISITORS COMPARISON BETWEEN 2019 & 2020



HOW DID THEY HEAR ABOUT US ?



VISITORS INTERESTS- 2020



SOCIAL MEDIA

Those who subscribe to our page:	February 28 th 2020	February 28 th 2021	Increase or reduction of our subscribers:
FACEBOOK 	2012 people	2268 people	+ 256 people
INSTAGRAM 	36 people	78 people	+ 42 people

VOLUNTEERS 2020-2021

The Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area thank all those who have volunteered during this season:

- Denis Gervais, president, CA des Amis
- Serge Bourdon, vice-president, CA des Amis
- Mr. and Mrs. Leduc, volunteer to fill the feeders in winter

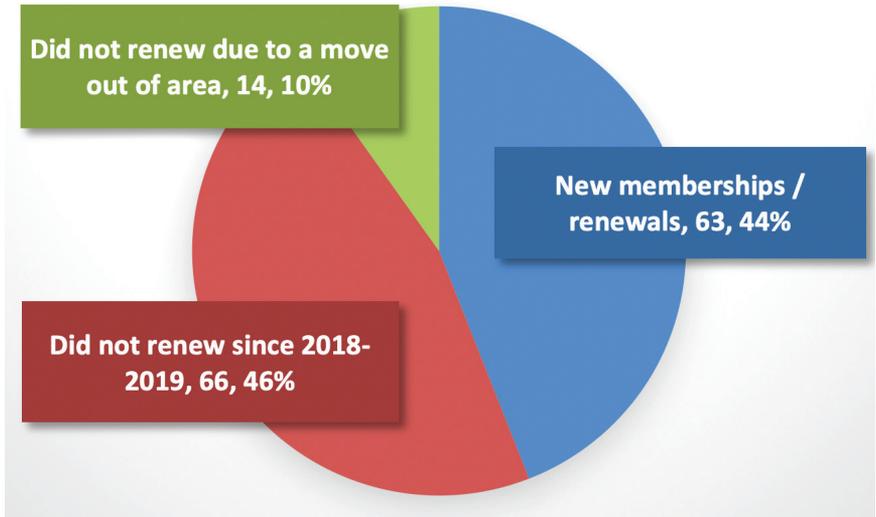
OUR MEMBERS

The number of members has not increased much this year and we believe this is caused by the current pandemic. For this reason, we have offered a promotion to all of our members and all new memberships to become a member for two years for the price of one year.

Since 2017, we have seen an increase of approximately 10% in membership or renewal of our members, but this year has been difficult for us to maintain the same increase.

To date, we have 143 members, more precisely broken down in this list:

- 63 people have joined or renewed their membership this season.
- 66 people who have not renewed their membership to date since 2018-2019
- 14 people who have confirmed that they will not renew their memberships due to their moving out of province.



OUR PARTNERS

The Friends of the Lake Saint-François National Wildlife Reserve thank all those who supported us this season:

- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Local employment center (Emploi-Québec)
- Project Learning Tree (PLT Canada)
- Service Canada (Summer Job Canada)
- The Haut-Saint-Laurent MRC
- Haut-St-Laurent CDC
- Tourism Montérégie
- The COOP Unifrontières - BMR (Sainte-Barbe)
- Municipality of the Township of Dundee
- Municipality of Saint-Anicet
- Municipality of Elgin
- Municipality of Sainte-Barbe
- City of Huntingdon
- Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
- Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe
- Mohawk Nation Council of Chiefs
- Claude Debellefeuille, Member of Parliament for Salaberry-Suroît
- Charles Gascon, adj. parliamentarian of C. Debellefeuille
- Madame Claire Isabelle, Member of Parliament for Huntingdon
- Mrs. Marie-Claude Picard, political attaché in the office of Mrs. Claire Isabelle
- Dorthy Lazore, Mohawk translation
- Members of the Friends of the Reserve
- Visitors who donated anonymously
- Nature Conservancy of Canada
- And all those who support us, year after year!

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Despite the pandemic, the Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area continues to get involved as often as possible in various ways in the community. Here's how we got involved this year:

- Member of the CDC Haut-Saint-Laurent
- Member of Tourism – Montérégie
- Member of the Beauharnois-Valleyfield and Haut-Saint-Laurent Chamber of Commerce & Industry

During the 2020 season, we gave gift certificates to the following organizations:

- MRC Haut-Saint-Laurent (50% discount in our boutique or activities, and a VIP Family membership card, a total value of over \$ 50)

MAINTENANCE CONTRACT (ECCC)

For 27 years now, the Friends of the lake Saint-François National Wildlife Area have been responsible for the reception, maintenance, animation, surveillance and security of the site, as well as the essential disinfection of the site 2 to 3 times a day to limit the spread of the virus. This year again, we honored our contract by fulfilling our mandate with rigor and professionalism. The objectives of the organization were also achieved, despite the constraints of the virus.

The Friends of the lake Saint-François National Wildlife Area greatly appreciated the support of ECCC throughout the season, especially in the context of the current pandemic.

Among the specific tasks to be accomplished, the control of invasive species is a major challenge for our organization, as it must be done during peak times of our season, that is to say at the opening and during the month of July, when visitors are in greater numbers. In addition to buckthorn, we have the responsibility of controlling, under the supervision of ECCC, *alliaria petiolato* (garlic mustard) *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* (frogbit).

Control of *alliaria petiolato* (garlic mustard)

This year, due to the pandemic, the start date for *alliaria* control had been delayed by several weeks.

We have completed the uprooting of the *alliaria* in the Piasetski trail at all the sites identified between June 19th and July 9th, 2020.

The abnormal heat made it difficult for the employees. They were dressed in coveralls to protect them from ticks and furthermore they had to wear the necessary PPE (personal protection equipment) for their protection, due to the virus, as they would work within two meters of each other. For this trail it took 16 hours. (8 two-hour sessions between 6.30 a.m. and 9 a.m.)

As for the Digue aux aigrettes trail (Great Egret), we checked the site from July 10th, and the work on this trail that had been carried out during the winter gave us the impression that there was no garlic mustard in the sectors identified in the summer of 2019. So, for the Digue trail there was no uprooting of garlic mustard.

The work was carried out on average by 2 employees between June 19th and July 9th, 2020.

Here are some observations related to this work:

1. The growth and flowering of the plants were very large, abundant and visible on their first visits. In addition, the vegetation in the off-trail areas they had to do, made the task unpleasant. Indeed, since they had started later in the season, the vegetation had become denser.
2. It is difficult to quantify the number of uprooted plants. We filled 23 garbage bags weighing between 15 and 20 pounds each. Compared to previous years, we filled 8 bags in 2017, 11 bags in 2018 and 12 bags in 2019.
3. Which shows the importance of not delaying this task too much for next season.



Control of Hydrocharis morsus-ranae (frogbit)

This year, due to the pandemic, the start date of the control had been delayed, especially since this task only started after the garlic mustard removal work was carried out.

For this reason, and the fact that the heat waves seemed to accentuate the growth of this plant, this task was very time consuming for the AMAPRE team. With the support of ECCC's Senior Protected Areas Specialist, we were able to hire two more staff members to help the team accomplish this important task. After our best efforts, we were able to remove about 97% of what was in the Frog Bay area (launch area) to the end of the creek.

TRAINING

With the return of the entire 2019 team, our interpreter guides had completed their first aid, kayaking, canoeing, rabaska and flora and fauna training in 2019.

We have made the decision this year to have the entire 2020 team, do their first aid training in the workplace on June 16th and 17th, 2020.

AMAPRE employees also received training on the Covid-19 virus between June 1st and June 10th. This consisted of reading and understanding numerous documents, video capsules on the procedures to be taken for the protection of visitors and employees against the virus during our daily tasks and as to the end of our day at home.

2020 PROJECTS & CONTRIBUTIONS

FARR PROJECT :

In 2019, we received from the firm Arpent a feasibility study (FARR), with very interesting data which aims to identify opportunities for the development of an “atypical accommodation” branch in order to allow our visitors to be able to stay near the reserve and enjoy several activities during their stay.

At the end of the 2019 season, we had decided to revisit this project in 2021. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we believe we will revisit this project at a later date.

CONTRIBUTIONS :

Several projects are to be monitored in 2021.

Contribution project 2019-2023 (ECCC)

As part of this new 2019-2023 ECCC contribution project, we have recruited the services of the Zip Committee, a non-profit organization that shares our values and that stands out for their dynamism and a network of diversified collaborators to complete this project.

The latter will take care of developing an activity on aquatic fauna (fish), the enhancement and animation of the “Trille penché” Trail, developing a creative animation workshop on fauna and its habitat, making featured cards of the RNF LSF (hockey style cards) and finally the update of our action plan.

Contribution project 2020-2023 (ECCC)

A new contribution project was funded to us on a three-year basis.

This contribution, aimed for the first year, to finish the redevelopment of our Pavilion of the Great Migrators (multi-purpose room) and to help us with our needs for the storage of our belongings, in preparation for the new reception center expected towards the end of 2021.

For the next two years of this contribution, we have to design an interpretive panel on the mission of the Friends of the national Wildlife Area of lake Saint-François (Friends NWA LSF), design an interpretive panel on the edible and inedible mushrooms found in the NWA LSF and why there are no rights to harvest on the reserve, design interpretive brochures on a dozen trees on the Marais Fraser trail (the Tower). We have also recruited the services of the Zip Committee to help us complete this project.

SCHEDULE

Saison 2020 : *June 22nd to October 31st

Opening hours:

June 22nd to August 15th
Tuesday to Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm

August 16th to October 31st
Wednesday to Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm

*late opening due to the pandemic

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Throughout the season, we offered visitors various activities to make them aware of the biodiversity of the flora and fauna and of our wetlands found on the Reserve in a non-contact format due to the pandemic:

- On our Facebook page: the question of the day
- On our Facebook page: charade of the day
- At the site: a pedestrian treasure hunt-style hike
- (a draw on October 17 was held for the participants and the winner received a gift certificate of \$ 50.00)

Guided excursions on the water by sea kayak or rabaska, the family GPS rally “Sur la piste de Ouaoaron” and the international geocaching network and our usual events could not be offered due to the restrictions imposed by the various ministries. and government to limit the spread of the virus.

For this reason, we have decided to reinvent ourselves during the season.

Over the last season and the one to come, we will adapt the activities that are already in place and develop new animation activities such as the guide training, the anurans, to name only a few, which can be offered online from the comfort of their homes. These activities and others that are in development are intended almost for all ages (from 6 years and over) wishing to familiarize themselves with the profession of a tour guide as well as they learn, among other things the basics of identification. fauna and flora, the art of recovering the passage of an animal and the art of communicating its learning to others. These activities are offered at a very affordable price or even sometimes free in this difficult time for everyone. Our goal is to try to break the isolation for everyone, but especially among young people.

NOVELTIES OF THE SEASON

Due to the crisis, we have not been able to offer our customers much of our new services.

Thanks to the contribution funding mentioned on page 27 and 28, we have been able to modify our multi-purpose room (Pavilion of the great migrants), so that we can accommodate school groups, day camps and families once our regular activities can resume with the public. These modifications are: the addition of a bench, 4 large tables and 25 modern chairs, a blackboard and a white magnetic board, small lockers and hooks for coats, a screen and projector, non-slip mats at the entrance of each door.

Visitors were anxious to see the work we were doing, and they can't wait to benefit from it.



PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

The Friends of the Reserve have made the decision not to invest too much money in new promotional material due to the pandemic and of the declining self-sustaining income.

However, we had our logo pins made and for our employees an additional uniform (big long-sleeved sweater with a hood and our logo) so that visitors could see us faster during the colder days in the fall.



That said, in December, we opened our online store on our website. www.amisrnlacstfrancois.com/en/store/

All the same, we want to increase our product line for the coming season and to be able to increase our independent revenues and our visibility. Visitors have mentioned their interest in adding children's hats, water bottles, tick clip, sweaters and key chains. These proposals will be studied and new products should be available on our online store during the 2021 season.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This year we had several challenges and it was difficult to be able to accomplish or form new alliances with organizations in the indigenous community and in our region, as many had decided to remain closed or to minimize their service because of the pandemic.

This year, for the Friends, we can proudly say our accomplishments were:

- The success of protecting our team and those of our visitors.
- The success of offering our customers contactless activities through social media.
- To keep the interest of the general public to continue to visit us despite the lack of activities that we were not able to offer them.

PHOTOS OF OUR 2020 SEASON



Work done in the Frog Bay: 7 floating islands removed, of which this one was the most difficult due to its size.



(ARTICLE IN THE GLEENER NEWSPAPER, DATED SEPTEMBER 23RD 2020)

A season to celebrate at the Lac-Saint-François National Wildlife Area

The 2020 season of the Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area will officially come to an end on Oct. 31, but coordinator Karina Leclair has already declared this season a success.



“It was an extremely hectic year due to the delayed reopening caused by the pandemic,” admits Karina Leclair. “Because of COVID, we had to reinvent ourself,” she says, suggesting that she and along with her team, had to learn to work with the different measures imposed by the virus, and not in spite of them. She says she owes a great deal of thanks to her employees for the extraordinary work they were able to accomplish, including the development of new activities via social media that kept members and the general public interested in the reserve even though on-site activities were severely limited. “Throughout the years, the Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area have had many summer students and employees, but this season is a memorable one.

In the years to come, we will be able to say that we have lived through a pandemic together,” says Leclair. “Despite all the disinfectant, we still managed to make it fun,” she laughs, explaining that the team held weekly meetings to not only talk about how to improve the visitors’ experience at the wildlife reserve, but to check in and make sure everyone was adjusting to the new reality as well as possible. LeClair even put in place what she refers to as a COVID day, which allowed employees a paid day off “if ever just need a break.”

In July, the team lost one of its senior members with the retirement of Daniel Lafleur after five years of working at the site. LeClair is quick to recognize his contribution over the years. She is also very grateful to the organization’s board of directors and the people she has worked closely with at the Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada for their support and encouragement.

In the end, she feels the experience of keeping the organization running during the first wave of the pandemic will only help to make sure they are prepared to open again next spring. And, thanks to the engaged employees, this season, they have a number of exciting new plans for activities once the site can be reopened completely.

Sarah Rennie

The Gleaner

september 23th 2020

In January 2020, Serge Bourdon (vice-president of the board of directors of Friends) and Karina LeClair (coordinator) participated in the workshop to reflect on the interpretation plans of the National Wildlife Areas of Lake Saint-François and of the Cap-Tourmente in Saint-Joachim, Quebec with members of the Cap-Tourmente National Wildlife Reserve team.



Photo courtesy : Chantal Lepire & Francine Rousseau

Program Agent –Protected Areas/ Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area

Environment and Climate Change Canada / Government of Canada

Thanks to the purchase of a truck to facilitate trail maintenance tasks, we were able to bring three picnic tables to the Érablière- Piasetski trail. This has been a request from visitors since 2017.



With the support of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) for the development of new interpretive activities, the future is promising for the Friends of the Lac Saint-François National Wildlife Area.

Reception facilities for groups will be improved. ECCC is currently working on the development of a construction project for a new reception center, of which the demolition of the current reception center was demolished in mid-January 2021 and the call for tenders for the construction of the new reception was done at the end of March 2021. More information to come.

FUTURE ECCG RECEPTION CENTER



**PROJET NON APPROUVÉ
NE PAS DIFFUSER**





ÉLEVATIONS
PRÉSENTATION DU CONCEPT



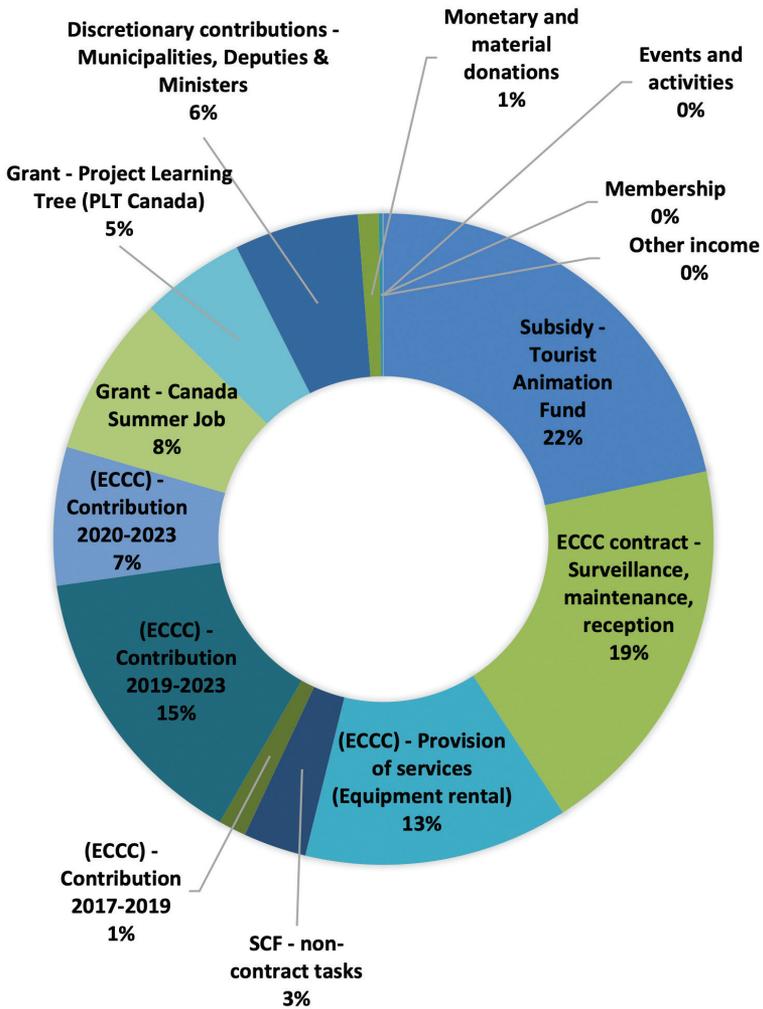
Public Works and Government Services Canada
Travaux publics et Services gouvernementaux Canada

**BÂTIMENT ACCUEIL
RÉSERVE NATIONALE DE FAUNE
DU LAC ST-FRANÇOIS**

Dessiné par	No. de projet	Date de dessin
M. Kelly / L. Girard	8.09493.001	3/11



2020 REVENUE SOURCES



A FINAL WORD

Passionate about flora and fauna, it is with enthusiasm that I take on the role of coordination for the organization of the Friends of National Wildlife Area of the Lake Saint-François (Friends NWA LSF), especially since they are recognized for their perseverance.

Much effort is put into sensitizing elected officials and local partners each year to renew their financial support, and this has not changed despite the pandemic. After all the efforts we put in, we are proud of the trust our MRC and the Canadian Wildlife Service place in us each year.

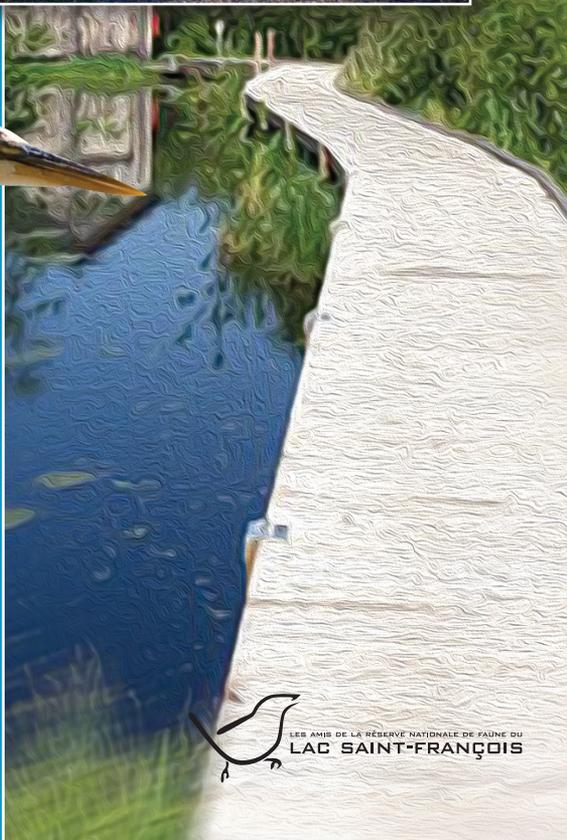
We would like to thank the Canadian Wildlife Service and Ducks Unlimited for the repairs that were necessary in the Digue aux aigrettes trail (Egret) for the safety of all flora, fauna and our visitors. We look forward to being able to show it to our visitors next season.

The Reserve is unknown to the local and regional population and this is a situation that we want to remedy in the coming years. The activities offered by our organization help attract thousands of visitors annually. A considerable impact for the region's tourism industry, but also the possibility of raising awareness among a wider public about the protection of wetlands. New activities are in development and will be developed in 2021 in connection with our interpretation plan and we hope to put into practice other aspects identified in this plan such as offering as many activities on the site, as well as more activities of a contactless formula through our social networks. This idea came to mind because of the current pandemic situation, and we have received several good comments on the activities we have offered on our Facebook page this season.

I wish for the 2021 team, health of course, but above all a lot of courage, because the next coming season will not be easy with this prolonged pandemic and with the work of our new reception center. That said, I look forward to working with each of you for the sustainability of this organization whose mission is so important in the current environmental and political context.

Never forget that the Lake Saint-François National Wildlife Area is a gem of biodiversity and opportunity: let's continue to work together to protect it and educate our visitors and promote it beyond our borders.

Let's be positive, 2021 will bring us some great new things that we can't wait to share with you!



LES AMIS DE LA RÉSERVE NATIONALE DE FAUNE DU
LAC SAINT-FRANÇOIS