

# HISTORY OF KIPABISKAU WATER QUALITY COMMITTEE

APRIL 2021

As background Kipabiskau Lake has several small creeks and springs however there are 3 major sources of water and nutrients coming into the lake. One source is from the Mizhashk - Fox lake complex which drains into Kip just east of the old cabin on our south shore. Another is a draw area near Souter's farm which drains to a large slough just south of Kip and then drains into Kip just west of the old cabin. Our main source of water and nutrients enters through the bridge on our west end coming from ditching south of highway #349, into Kitako lake, then into Slough creek which meets up with the Barrier River a few hundred yards from the bridge. Barrier River head waters are west of highway #6 draining from Pleasantdale through the Kinistin Saulteaux Nation and into Slough Creek.

In the fall of 2006 residents of our lake noticed large quantities of water and debris coming into Kip from the creeks near the old cabin.

Investigations into the event indicated that 3L Cattle Company had breached beaver dams and Ducks Unlimited licensed structures on Fox Lake, Kitako Lake and the rock crossing on the creek west of the old cabin in an attempt to gain land being flooded during wet years. No consideration in our opinion was given to the down stream effects of this drainage.

It is recognized that these waters are going to enter Kip however with controlled flow from the D.U. structures and beaver dams the nutrients from many years had a chance to settle out and not allowed to drain from the bottom of lakes with years of sediment.

The owner of 3L was unapproachable over concerns of nutrients entering Kip and on Sept 18/2007 a meeting was set up by our Park Board at the Kip Hall with the involved Government Agencies in attendance. The Department of Agriculture agreed to report back to the Board regarding indiscriminate drainage into a fishery, removal of D.U. structures and the wintering cattle on Kitako Lake and near creeks flowing into Kip. The report eventually received after followup with Departments of Fisheries and Ocean, Environment, Water Security Agency, Agriculture was that 3L had done nothing outside their lease.

In 2009 the Park Board formed the Kipabiskau Water Quality Committee over concerns that nutrient levels in Kip had increased significantly. Investigations lead to the fact that the U of Regina had been sampling Kip

spring and fall as part of a 23 lake study since 2002. These tests supported a 10 fold increase in phosphorus levels in 2007.

In 2010 the Board authorized an \$8000 expenditure to have the U of R do a spatial survey of our lake to determine sources of nutrient inputs around the lake to support our claims of pollution by 3L and to stop the ongoing drainage. ( this report can be found on the Kip Website ).

Our committee sampled other breaches in 2011 and 2013 plus they did additional sampling in 2015 and 2016 involving 29 samples to support our claims that the ongoing drainage was hurting our lake. During the period 2011 to 2016 we had meetings with the local office of Agriculture and Water Security in Nipawin with no resolve.

In January 2017 our committee met with Upper Management of Agriculture, Water Security and Environment in Regina with no department agreeing to take action on our behalf.

That spring 3L was sold to Morsan Farms and also that spring our committee met with the Morsan Farms Manager to establish a relationship and express our concerns with the past owners. The new owners allowed DU back on the leased land to manage their structures, moved wintering of cattle away from creeks, move cattle from corrals on their home base to the feedlot area and in general had a welcomed concern for their activities on their down stream neighbours. This relationship continues.

During the period around 2013 our committee also got involved with the Board in cleaning up our own backyard and taking steps to lessen our footprint on Kip. The following outlines steps we have taken as a Board and a Committee to help our overall water quality and nutrients getting into the lake :

- decommission our garbage pit
- sewage now dumped in Kinistin lagoon
- update Park bylaws regarding outhouses, outdoor showers and septic tanks
- fines were increased up to \$5000 for any one polluting the lake
- lot inspections with violation followup
- no outdoor toilets not on pump out vaults
- no outdoor showers except for rinsing off
- ring additions on all tanks subject to seasonal flooding
- install sewage tanks on all seasonal RV sites
- lake front public washrooms now on tanks instead of pump outs
- upgrades to new wells and water treatment
- drainage work to lessen silt into the lake
- upgrades to Montgomery Hall

- repairs to weir and \$17,000 environmental study for weir license ( still pending )
- new shower house
- Sarcan recycling
- Recycling bins
- Commercial garbage cans in high traffic areas
- Leases obtained on all non owned land touching the lake
- Educational water quality signs throughout the Park
- Doggie stations
- Clean up every spring of debris left on the lake after winter ice fishing season.
- Zebra mussels monitoring stations on 10 locations on the lake
- Park staff trained on protocol for suspected boats coming into the park with possible zebra mussel contamination.
- Ongoing relationship with U of R as their staff sample Kip spring and fall ( winter samples taken last 2 winters)
- Monthly nutrient samples taken by our committee since 2017 as part of a new study by U of R
- New project this summer involving machine removal of weeds pending WSA license and related funding.
- Ongoing nutrient reduction efforts and testing to improve water quality.

Kipabiskau is presently one of the few lakes in the Province with a Water Quality Committee that is taking steps to improve the water in our Lake. As farming and our population grow we are putting more pressure on our lakes and adding increased nutrients to waterways which affects overall water quality. Algae blooms and water quality are becoming more of an issue each year with all lakes in the Province. Future Government regulations are needed however we can all take steps now to lessen our footprint and start realizing that every ones little bit does add up.

If you are aware of things we can do to improve our water quality or would like to join the committee please contact any Board member.