



Monthly Digest Vol. 2 May 2026

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Wahwashkesh Rising – and Recovering

We on Wahwashkesh are no strangers to spring. Each year, we expect the freshet – typically a 2–3 metre rise – and we’ve learned to live with it. Our docks, boathouses, and cottages are built with this rhythm in mind.

But this year... was different.

What we experienced this spring tested even the most seasoned among us. Water levels surged beyond the norm, and many properties felt the impact. There’s no denying it – this was a challenging and, for some, devastating season.

By the Numbers

- **Peak Level (April 20):** 11.85 feet above the dam (ATD)
- **2019 Comparison:** ~11.3 feet ATD (April 25)
- **1998 Flood:** Comparable levels to 2026 (pre-Hobolink data)
- **Current Level (May 2, 4 pm):** 4.77 feet ATD
- **Water Drop Since Peak:**  ~7 feet

What Happened?

An intense winter followed by snowmelt and heavy spring rains created a perfect storm. The lake was fed from all directions, with significant inflow from multiple lakes and rivers along with the Magnetawan River system via Ahmic Lake. The challenge?

All that water had only one way out – through the narrow gorge at Canal Rapids. The volume coming in far exceeded what could flow out.


Flood Recovery Efforts

Community & Municipal Support

We are incredibly grateful to the Municipality for **waiving dump fees**, helping ease the burden for many property owners during cleanup.




Dumpsters at Access Points (In Progress)

We are actively working with the Municipality to place temporary dumpsters at key lake access points.


 **Important:** Please follow all disposal guidelines at these sites to ensure we protect our lake environment during cleanup.

Neighbours Helping Neighbours

Led by **Paul Thompson** (WWK Association Director), this initiative is connecting volunteers with those who need help most.

-  Barge and trailer support is available to move debris
-  Online sign-up sheets (via Google Docs) coming soon
-  Volunteers and those needing help can register

 Watch your inbox and our **Facebook, Instagram, and website** for updates

 Or contact Paul directly: paulthomson@cogeco.ca

What Can You Do? (Prevention Tips) *(Adapted from Cottage Life)*

At the Shoreline

- Preserve natural vegetation along the waterfront
- Avoid hard surfaces like concrete or stone that disrupt water flow

Around Your Cottage

- Clean eavestroughs and downspouts annually
- Extend downspouts at least **6 feet away** from the structure

On Your Property

- Ensure grading slopes **away** from your cottage
- Keep sewer grates clear (if applicable)
- Remove debris from under buildings
- Secure outdoor furniture

Sewage & Plumbing

- Install backwater valves

- Inspect and clean them **twice yearly**

⚡ Sump Pumps

- Install a sump pump (plus backup and generator if possible)
- Test regularly – a simple bucket of water will do

🏠 Inside the Cottage

- Raise electrical panels, outlets, and HVAC systems
 - Store valuables on higher levels
 - Secure fuel tanks
 - Turn off electricity, water, and gas before flooding
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♥ Stronger Together

This year reminded us that while Wahwashkesh can be unpredictable, our community is steady. We want to give a shout out to the full time residents of the lake who stepped up and collected debris, posted photos for those who could not make it to the lake

From neighbours lending a hand, to coordinated recovery efforts, to simple check-ins – it's clear that resilience here isn't just about how we build... it's about how we show up for each other.

Next Steps

As we look ahead, the Lake Wahwashkesh Conservation Association remains committed to working closely with the Municipality to support cottagers through the cleanup and recovery process. At the same time, we will actively pursue opportunities to better understand what happened and explore practical measures that could help reduce the impact of events like this in the future.

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Lake Wah Wash Kesh Conservation Association



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