



CSJ Blue Community Updates January, 2022

Extraction Coalition

On Tuesday, January 25th at 7pm the newly formed **Reform Gravel Mining Coalition** will announce something big that will protect the existing natural landscape from uncontrolled gravel mining and empower communities across Ontario. [RSVP here](#).

Online Documentaries

ReFrame is back in a virtual format, from January 27 – February 4. The 18th edition of the festival will offer on-demand viewing of over 70 films that bring the world into your living room. **The CSJ Blue Community is a community sponsor for this event.** They have matched our support with these two documentaries: [The Ants and the Grasshopper](#) and [Manzanar, Diverted: When Water Becomes Dust](#).

New this year, audiences from across Canada will be able to enjoy ReFrame. ReFrame is dedicated to presenting the year's most important, thought-provoking, and inspiring documentary films rooted in social and environmental justice. Get informed, stay connected and take action through nine days of film, discussion, Q&As, panels, special events, and more! [Full festival information is here](#).

Cleaning Up

Underwater Photographer Reveals Plastic Pollution in Great Lakes

"Every person on this globe should be responsible for doing something to help keep our waters clean," he urged. "Practice Leave No Trace principles combined with recycling, and take part in small group or single-person cleanups of your local areas. We can all do our part and change the impact plastic pollution is having in our freshwater lakes." [Read the full story here](#).

A Deep Read (or listen)

A CONVERGENT IMAGINING

What if Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rachel Carson had met? Imagining an exchange in the year 1964, as the civil rights and environmental movements were forging parallel and increasingly urgent paths into American culture, J. Drew Lanham explores the power and necessity of convergence.

I'm hoping that we might congenially discuss what I trust will be our shared mission to make this world better for all beings—for every living thing. Our singing birds. Our fight for civil rights. I know that you may have had your fill of all things political. I'm asking not that you commit to marches or more congressional hearings but, rather, to brainstorm with me on how to expand this movement and enlarge the one that I believe you've set fire to. Thinking on it, I find it hard to see how one can love the earth but not fellow human beings. And also, it seems incongruous that one could love humanity and exact sins of degradation against nature. I think we'd be closer to getting this act passed with more pressure and some political will, which might happen if we could stretch the concept of civil rights to the very air we breathe—the air we share with your beloved birds.

[Read \(or listen to\) the full article here.](#)

Are You and Your Waterbodies Protected?

Keeping Ontario's Drinking Water Safe

The legacy of events in Walkerton, Ontario that occurred in May 2000 has resulted in a significantly improved legal framework for drinking water protection that includes a multi-barrier approach. As the 20th anniversary of the Walkerton Inquiry Reports approaches in 2022, full implementation of the inquiry recommendations has yet to be achieved. This leaves significant unfinished business that must be urgently addressed to ensure drinking water safety for all, particularly the 18% of Ontario's population that is not currently covered by existing source protection plans. [Read the full article here.](#)

Driving Fish Out of Water

The Next Source of Trouble for Great Lakes Fish Populations Might Be Tires

In the Don, which runs next to the busy Don Valley Parkway, she measured the chemical at more than twice the concentrations that killed the Seattle salmon and levels remained elevated for up to 14 hours after rainstorms.

“This is a brand-new chemical contaminant and not all labs can analyze it,” said Jonathan Ruppert, an ecosystem and climate scientist with the Toronto Region and Conservation Authority, whose mandate is to safeguard watershed communities in the Toronto region.

The TRCA already monitors for various contaminants in rivers flowing into Lake Ontario and, with the help of Trent University’s labs, plans to add 6PPD-quinone to its list this year. [Read the full story here.](#)

2021 Great Lakes Regional Poll

Excerpt from the media toolkit: <https://www.ijc.org/en/wqb/great-lakes-poll>

As outlined in the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the Great Lakes Water Quality Board (WQB) serves the International Joint Commission (IJC) in an advisory capacity. The WQB includes an Engagement Work Group, established to fulfill the WQB’s growing need to strengthen and expand its public engagement efforts to reach non-traditional audiences through a wide range of communication techniques and strategies.

The Engagement Work Group recognizes that it is important to ‘meet people where they are’ and attune the WQB’s communication products to people’s varying attitudes and understanding of Great Lakes issues. Therefore, every three years the work group conducts opinion polls to gauge public perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and understanding of Great Lakes environmental issues, and can inform decision makers to undertake actions to protect and restore the Lakes.

The WQB offers the following information and guidance about its 2021 Great Lakes Regional Polling efforts, highlighting the important differences and similarities between the random phone poll report findings and the anecdotal online poll findings.

What do you think of these poll findings? Visit the link above to see the full report and the remaining key findings. This update will highlight 3 themed findings: drinking water, views on regulation, and valuing the lakes.

Get in touch if you have ideas for our next Blue Community update:

info@bluecommunitycsj.org

SOURCES

NEARLY
HALF
OF PEOPLE

said **THE GREAT LAKES**, local lakes or rivers are the source of their tap water.

MORE THAN
1 in 4
PEOPLE

said **MUNICIPAL WATER** is the source of their tap water.

DRINKING WATER

HALF
OF PEOPLE

agree that all members of their community have **AFFORDABLE, EQUITABLE ACCESS** to drinking water.

ACCESS

SAFETY

1 in 3
PEOPLE

believe it **IS SAFE** to drink water sourced from their nearest Great Lake, and 1 in 3 believe it **IS NOT SAFE** to drink water sourced from their nearest Great Lake.

30% of people think their drinking water **IS SAFE** and 30% think it is **NOT SAFE**.

Half the people think that water access is a key issue.

Half get their water from Great Lakes source waters, while 25% get their water from municipal sources (which also come from source waters).

So there is **MUCH** work to do for 100% agreement that everyone should have access to clean and affordable drinking water.

There is also **MUCH** work to do for 100% of people to trust that their tap water is safe.

VIEWS ON REGULATION

NEARLY
4 in 5
PEOPLE

agree that the **ECONOMY OF THE REGION WILL SUFFER** if the Great Lakes are not healthy.

MORE THAN
1 in 3
PEOPLE

believe the **FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS SHOULD BE RESPONSIBLE** for protecting Great Lakes health and water quality.

NEARLY
3 in 5
PEOPLE

feel there are **TOO FEW POLICIES AND REGULATIONS** in place to protect the Great Lakes.

Only 30% of people think Federal governments should be responsible for water protection. How else can we collectively govern transboundary waters?

80% of people agree that a healthy economy needs healthy waters. Why is there often a conflict between clean water and good economics?

A majority of people want more regulations. Why do governments often choose to reduce the protective regulations?

VALUING THE LAKES



90% of people know that water protection is important. 80% agree that actions should be taken NOW. 80% are also likely to take action when it comes to at-home water use and disposal practices.

What about collective action and what KINDS of action will make the biggest impacts? How are we understanding and applying strategic actions to these complex, longterm, and persistent water challenges?

Looking at the water issues in just this ONE newsletter update we can see that individual actions are not enough. People CARE, people want ACTION, and people do not TRUST the current situation.

Water protection needs to include how industry makes our car tires, the persistence and lifecycle of consumer plastics, the patchwork of protections for drinking water, the intersection and need for both social and ecological justice, and the extraction of finite resources from the earth. We need this across borders, between countries, and amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous leadership, and for this generation and the ones to come – how about 7 generations?

If you haven't seen our website lately, there are updates as we move into 2022. Visit the program here: <https://www.bluecommunitycsj.org/>

If you use Facebook, please follow us since that is the easiest way to stay current with ideas and actions on water: <https://www.facebook.com/bluecommunitycsj>