

January 31, 2007
Petitcodiac Riverkeeper

Petitcodiac causeway continues to top "pollution" list

Nothing has changed in eight years according to Riverkeeper

Causeways, sewage discharges, urban sprawl, abandoned dams and pesticides continued to harm the Petitcodiac River ecosystem in 2006, just like they did in 2005 or 1999 according to a report unveiled today by the Petitcodiac Riverkeeper.

The fifth annual exercise conducted by the Riverkeeper to identify the issues that have the greatest negative impact on the Petitcodiac River ecosystem, its "10 Worst Pollution Sources" list, is meant to educate the public on the most urgent environmental issues facing the watershed and also to encourage the parties responsible for the negative impacts to take corrective action.

The term 'pollution source' employed by Petitcodiac Riverkeeper in its report refers to an activity by individuals, corporations or public agencies that has caused or continues to cause a single or multiple negative impact on the water quality, the habitat and the ecological integrity of the Petitcodiac River system (the 3,000 km² Watershed and its tributaries that comprise the Petitcodiac River, Memramcook River and Shepody River ecosystems).

"Over 90 percent of the damage to the Petitcodiac River system is still being caused by governments", says President Michel Desjardins. Public agencies such as the Province of New Brunswick and the Greater Moncton Sewerage Commission were again signalled out in the report for continuing to lead the pack of the region's "worst polluters" in 2006. The Top-10 list reads as follows (with the full report available on the Riverkeeper's web site - www.petitcodiac.org):

The 10 Worst Pollution Sources in 2006	Responsible Party(ies)/Owner(s)
1. Petitcodiac causeway (1,350 km ² affected)	Province of New Brunswick
2. Greater Moncton Sewerage Treatment Plant	Greater Moncton Sewerage Commission
3. Leachate - Moncton riverside landfill	City of Moncton
4. Memramcook causeway (350 km ² affected) & Shepody causeway (400 km ² affected)	Province of New Brunswick
5. Urban sprawl - watercourse and habitat destruction	Various private developers, various municipal governments
6. Various abandoned dams and barriers of all types (203 km ² affected)	City of Moncton (Jones Lake Dam – 48 km ²), Town of Riverview (Navy Dam – 50 km ²), Tandem Fabrics Ltd. (Humphreys Brook Dam – 37 km ²), City of Moncton (McLaughlin and Irishtown Reservoirs – 34 km ²), Province of New Brunswick (Fox Creek aboiteau – 34km ²)
7. Sediment pollution	Various private developers, various municipal governments, Province of New Brunswick
8. Untreated stormwater discharges	Province of New Brunswick, municipal governments
9. Untreated sanitary sewage discharges	Various municipal governments including the Greater Moncton Sewerage Commission
10. Widespread cosmetic pesticide use	Cosmetic pesticide users, various landscape contractors, various municipal governments

Two of the top-three worst pollution sources, the Petitcodiac causeway and leachate discharges from the former Moncton landfill, have been determined to be in violation of the federal Fisheries Act since 2001 and 2003 respectively. "It's taking much more time than we had anticipated to get these offenders to comply," admits Desjardins. "Our region is not leading by example."

Since first publishing their annual list in 2002, none of top offenders have even moved according to the Petitcodiac Riverkeeper organization. "We're hearing a lot of talk and promises but the reality is that the ecosystem is in much worst state than it was one, 10 or 20 years ago," says Desjardins.