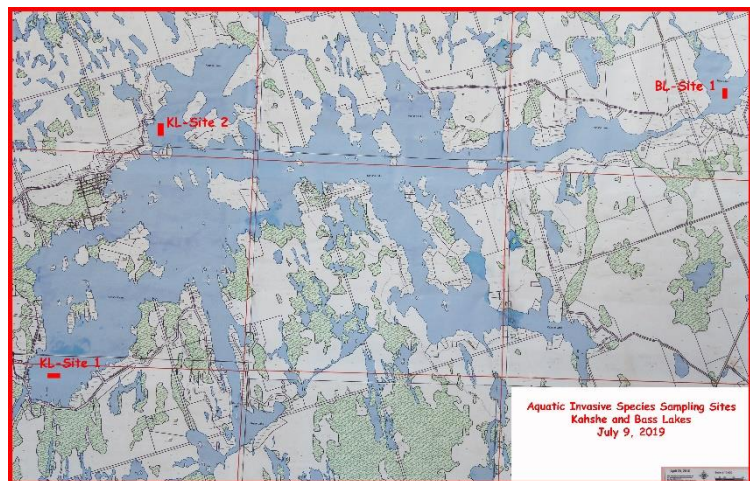


Invasive Aquatic Species Sampling – Kahshe and Bass Lakes - 2019

In 2017, the KLRA applied for and was awarded a small grant from the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) to carry out aquatic invasive species sampling of Kahshe Lake. The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Association (OFAH) also partnered with FOCA to provide sampling equipment and analysis support for the project. The results of that investigation, which included six sampling locations on Kahshe Lake, were summarized in a report that can be found on the KLRA web site. The analysis results were all negative for the presence of zebra mussels and spiny water fleas. Although the laboratory did not report on the presence of fresh water jellyfish, the author found no visual evidence of these organisms during the sampling program.

In 2019, the Province of Ontario cut the funding for this program; however, a group of concerned Lake Stewards across Haliburton and Muskoka responded to this funding decision and a decision was made to keep the program alive via funding from their own lake associations. The OFAH assisted in this endeavor by providing the sampling kits. As the Lake Steward for Kahshe and Bass Lakes, I supported this decision and the KLRA Conservation Committee agreed to financially support (just over \$100) the sampling and analysis of three sites. The laboratory conducting the analysis of the samples also agreed to include a search for fresh water jellyfish, as these organisms had been reported to be present in Kahshe Lake in 2005.

The sampling was conducted on July 9, 2019 and included two locations in Kahshe and one in Bass Lake (see figure). The figures below show the equipment being submerged in hot water prior to sampling (to ensure that no organisms from other lakes are accidentally introduced via the shared equipment) and the samples being collected by hauling the net through the water for 7m at a depth of approximately 2-3m. The mesh of the



net is 63µm, and this allows the water to pass through, but not the living plankton. After the sample has been bottled, the organisms in the bottle are preserved rubbing alcohol.

The laboratory results have now been received and both Kahshe and Bass Lakes have again been found to be negative for zebra mussel veligers (larvae), spiny water fleas and freshwater jellyfish. As both Kahshe Lake samples were adjacent to boat launching ramps, this provides a reasonable level of certainty that these organisms have not yet been introduced via the launching of contaminated boats or fishing gear from other lakes.



As soon as the results from the other lakes sampled in 2019 have been plotted, we will have a much better idea as to how extensive the spread of these organisms has been in Muskoka.

Ron Pearson - Kahshe and Bass Lake Steward