



Word from the President

As is quite evident, at least to our many longstanding members, this is our shortest newsletter yet. However, 1996 has been the most satisfying and productive season in Action St-François's brief history. We found ourselves so occupied with cleanup operation and other activities that the personnel and time for the newsletter went wanting.

Here's a brief resume of our activities and accomplishments since spring. We received a subsidy from the Federal Environment Ministry which enabled us to hire a co-ordinator, Charles Coulombe, for the cleanup activities. Thank you, Charles, for your enthusiasm, your energy and for a job well done. It is of course understood that in order to receive the subsidy Action St-François must match the funds provided by

Environment Canada. ASF's share consisted of volunteer workers and contributions from various municipalities, businesses and individuals.

Besides, we applied for and received our status as a tax-deductible charity organization, and, due to our work since 1992, we are among the finalists for an environmental award to be granted by the Fondation estrienne en environnement. For on-going discussions and involvement with the regional environment council of the Eastern Townships (CREE), see Clothilde's article below.

So, indeed we have had an excellent year! We on the Board of Directors thank you the members for your generous moral and financial support, for without you, Action St-François could not exist.

WILLIAM LUCY

Cleanup operations

A record year for collecting garbage !

The 1996 season, as shown in the accompanying table, was very fruitful. In fact, more than 60 tons of trash was removed from the banks of four streams in the Sherbrooke area (Brompton Canton, Fleurimont & Rock Forest). A major part of this success is due to an \$18,000 Action 21 subsidy from Environment Canada. As well as covering many of the expenses for the cleanup operations, the money received permitted ASF to hire a co-ordinator for the cleanups.

See over : (A record year)

INVITATION

Hear ye, hear ye, good people!

By virtue of your membership in Action St-François, you are cordially invited to our fourth Annual General Meeting to be held as usual at the Sherbrooke Cegep, November 5th at 7:00 PM in room 52-101, Pavillon 2. On the agenda will be the financial statement, an account of cleanup activities, the election of the Board of Directors, discussions on various topics. Action with a capital A, yes indeed, ladies and gentlemen. Also, if you have a point or points to bring up, the Annual General Meeting is the place to do so.

Once again, ASF seeks your participation. We want and need your ideas, your vision and, joy of joys, your generous participation on one or more of our (your) committees (e.g. newsletter, office, telephone, correspondence, etc.).

It is at this annual get-together with its members, unique and privileged moment, that Action St-François recharges its batteries and prepares full of ideas to launch itself into a new year. We hope you will be part of it.

STATEMENT OF CLEANUP OPERATIONS - SUMMER OF 1996

STREAM	METAL		TRASH		TOTAL	
	lbs	t	lbs	t	lbs	tons
Key Brooks	4160	2,08	3050	1,52	7210	3,60
des Autos	1360	0,68	1150	0,58	2510	1,26
Dorman	4458	2,23	1100	0,55	5558	2,78
Nick	104 620	52,31	6780	3,39	111 400	55,70
TOTAL	114 598	57,30	12 080	6,04	126 678	63,34

PSTT PSTT !

If you are interested in writing about anything that might be of interest to our group or if you simply wish to express your opinion, you are invited to send your text(s) for inclusion in one of our future newsletters. Illustrations are also welcome. Also, for the next issue we looking for more people to translate both from French to English and English to French. You can leave a message on the office phone : 563-5362.

The federal government's Action 21 program is a result of the agreements signed by many countries around the world who attended the 1992 Rio summit. It is a program of financial assistance to community organizations who wish to embark on projects for the conservation, protection and improvement of the natural environment.

The initial project foresaw cleanups operations on nine streams - five of which located in the Massawippi River drainage basin near Coaticook and Stanstead. However, given the magnitude of the work to be done, we had to postpone until next year those operations in



the more farflung areas. In fact the cleanup of Nick stream (Rock Forest) took almost three months and required the use of cranes, backhoes, dump trucks, trailers, pickups and containers. Also, this year we will undertake our first replanting operation on the Nick site.

For the first time in our history, we appealed to non-members as well as members to help in the cleanup operations. This was a direct consequence of last year's Annual General Meeting. Also making it easier for non-members to participate was the fact that the subsidy covered the C.S.S.T. costs of all volunteers. Up to September 22nd, 75 different individuals have participated to the cleanups which took place every Saturday since May 18th. Considering that many came out more than once, we can say that 200 volunteers have worked on 50 cleanup operations for a total of over 1,000 hours of work. And the season's not yet over.

We warmly thank all the volunteers. This involvement makes ASF a very active group in the process of achieving its objectives. It is equally important to recognize the support given by the Municipality of Sherbrooke (free access to the landfill site), the Municipality of Rock Forest for its help with Nick stream, and Olympic Metal who during the entire season provided us with containers. Finally, we thank all of those who offered their services at a discount rate as well as the members who graciously lent equipment, all of which led to smooth-running operations.

In retrospect, Action St-Francois will have collected since 1992 close to 90 tons of trash from stream banks in and around the Sherbrooke MRC. A complete accounting of the 1996 season will be disseminated in the media after the end of the season, as well as in our April 1997 newsletter.

MANSOOR DANIS
CHARLES COULOMBE

Action St-Francois and the CREE

In March of this year, ASF participated in a workshop sponsored by the regional environment council of the Eastern Townships (CREE). The workshop brought together many regional associations interested in the protection of lakes and waterways of the St-Francois watershed. The goal of the meeting was to discuss the problems experienced by the various groups and to prioritize two of the ten themes presented.

The majority of the participants were lakefront property owners and/or residents. Even though our interest vary, we rally behind similar objectives e.g. water protection, public awareness and influencing political and governmental decisions. The two priorities agreed upon were "Municipal regulations more or less respected" and "Information and education".

Work committees were formed. An attempt will be made to try to profit from on-going revisions of the urban development plans, especially in the area of municipal regulations concerning the environment. Concerning information and education, the comity will work on developing a manual for riverside dwellers as well as on

organizing conferences and symposia that address themselves to the targeted groups e.g. municipal officials and association members. A member of ASF's Board of Directors will work on the guide to riverside dwellers comity in order to widen the scope of said guide to include stream and riverside dwellers in both urban and rural areas, particularly in the agricultural sector. We will not lose sight of our goal of protecting water from the source, in other words upstream from the lakes and rivers.

We also met with representatives of CREE interested in our drainage basin approach. Such an approach continues to gain more acceptance in environmental management circles. So much so that the theme of the next Estrie Zone Verte symposium, to be held November 2nd, will be "**Towards a planned management of the St-Francois river watershed**". All citizens are invited to participate at this event. For more information, contact CREE at (819) 821-4357.

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AUGUST 1992 SAW THE BIRTH OF ACTION ST-FRANÇOIS, A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION BRINGING TOGETHER CITIZENS WHO ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE QUALITY OF OUR ENVIRONMENT. THE MAIN GOALS OF OUR ORGANIZATION ARE TWO-FOLD : FIRSTLY, TO REHABILITATE AND RESTORE TO THEIR NATURAL STATE THE STREAMS, BANKS AND FLOODPLAINS OF THE ST-FRANÇOIS RIVER WATERSHED AND SECONDLY, TO CONSERVE AND PROTECT SAID ECOSYSTEM. WE HAVE BEGUN A STREAM CLEAN-UP PROGRAM AND WILL BE INITIATING A PROGRAM OF EROSION CONTROL. WE WILL ALSO BEGIN TO REPLANT THE BANKS AND FLOODPLAINS WITH INDIGENOUS SPECIES ENCOMPASSING THE RANGE OF PLANT LIFE NATIVE TO THE REGION WHEREVER POSSIBLE. IN THE AREA OF CONSERVATION, OUR GROUP HOPES TO MOTIVATE AS MANY RESIDENTS AS POSSIBLE TO TAKE PART IN THE PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT OF THIS PRECIOUS WATER SYSTEM. OUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS \$25.00 AND PLEASE DON'T HESITATE TO CALL US AT (819) 563-5362.