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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MCI CLOSE TO EXECUTING ITS “OPERATION HEALTHY LAKE” STUDY IN VERMONT

At its Annual General Meeting, Memphrémagog Conservation Inc., a non-profit organization with a mandate to protect the health of Lake Memphremagog, announced that a landmark opportunity lies on its doorstep.

As outgoing President, Donald Fisher put it: “ At 9:00 AM, Monday morning, August 8th, the four divers we have commissioned from RAPPEL will present themselves at the custom house located at Derbyline, Vermont. Having done our due diligence we are confident they will be granted NAFTA TN visas permitting them to perform the same study on the Vermont shoreline of Lake Memphremagog as they did last summer on the Québec side of the border”. He went on to remark that this would set two precedents: it would produce a health assessment of the entire Lake for the first time and would be the first time that Americans had welcomed a Canadian study executed by Canadians in American waters.

MCI gave a progress report on “ Operation Healthy Lake” – Phase II which sets out to correct some of the more serious problems uncovered by last summer’s Phase I. The second phase includes a shoreline rehabilitation project plus an 18-month student m.a. research project to arrive at an environmental analysis of the North end of the Lake. The latter will be under the supervision of the *Observatoire de l’Environnement et du Développement Durable* of the *Université de Sherbrooke*

MCI Vice-President, Gisèle Lacasse Benoit, reported that a decision has yet to be made by the Government with respect to a proposed real-estate project within the borders of Mont-Orford National Park. She reviewed what had been done to combat this threat to the integrity to the park including: many appearances at BAPE hearings and the presentation of a 57-page brief ; the formation of the coalition : *Regroupement Orford pour un parc sans condos* for which she was spokesperson and the collection of 8300 individual signatures which were deposited at the National Assembly. Quoting Lacasse Benoit: “ We hope the Government will not allow this development to go ahead within

the present limits of the Park because it will violate both the spirit of its Loi sur les parcs and the integrity of its own *Sustainable Development Plan*.

Unveiled by President Fisher at the meeting was the *MCI Gordon Kohl Memorial Award* “ Given by Memphrémagog Conservation Inc. in recognition of an individual who has made an extraordinary contribution in preserving the environment for the enjoyment of future generations.” The first recipient of the award presented by Vice-President Lacasse Benoit was Mr. Stewart Hopps. Mr. Hopps is an icon of the environmental community in the region.

New Board of Directors are: Gisèle Lacasse Benoit (President), Donald Fisher (Vice-President), Madeleine Saint-Pierre (Vice-President), Jean-Claude Duff (Treasurer), Thomas Fletcher (Secretary), Robert Benoit, Jacques Charbonneau, Andy Cowell, Bruno D’Anglejan, Matthew Farfan, Louise Lapointe, Wilder Lewis, Jan Lungren, David Monty, Pat Trudel, John Ward