

Lake Planning Handbook for Community Groups



French
Planning
Services
Inc.



Acknowledgements

The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) and the Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council (HHSC) are grateful for financial support received from the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the contribution and support received from many individuals who devoted time to the development of this Lake Planning Handbook. A special thanks to Samantha Brown (FOCA Lake Planning Coordinator) for organizing and communicating with the pilot group and other parties that assisted in the development of the handbook.

A Pilot Group of people representing lake associations, waterfront property owners, and municipalities in Haliburton County was established to provide insight and advice on the design and contents of the lake planning tools. This group also provided assistance with editing and testing the draft and final products.

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Suzanne Partridge, Paudash Lake Conservation Association and Councillor, Municipality of Highlands East
Mike Whittle, Beech Lake

We are extremely grateful for the cooperative help from the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of the Environment, and the many other agencies, academics and professionals that have contributed to advancing the knowledge and information about our lake ecosystems.

Special acknowledgement also goes to Randy French and Jasmine Chabot of French Planning Services Inc. (FPSI) as the primary contributor to this handbook. FPSI has been instrumental in the creation and pioneering of this community based process in Canada and their devotion to the 'pay it forward' principle has engaged many people to take action in their communities.

And thanks to the many lake associations and FPSI for their valuable contributions to the Resource Kit (see back page for list). All of these associations have produced materials in support of their lake plans to be shared with others. We ask that as new materials are produced that they be forwarded to FOCA and FPSI so that others may learn from your experience.

Photos provided by Randy French and Jasmine Chabot of FPSI.

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Preamble

People residing along the shorelines of the lakes and rivers in Ontario are drawn by the quality of the water, the exposure to nature, the offer of peace and tranquility, and the attraction of sustainable recreational opportunities. What makes each shoreline unique is the particular blend of natural and human communities that thrive there. A growing number of shoreline groups are conducting studies regarding the character and qualities of their respective communities ranging from the casual to the complex. By following their lead, we can establish what it is about our lakes, shorelines, surrounding environment, and communities that should be retained and sustained for future generations.

The study of our lake surroundings and shoreline communities requires knowledge, patience, enthusiasm and persistence. We have the early pioneers in lake planning to thank for paving the way for those who will follow. However, what has yet to be done is to draw upon that collective body of experience in order to lay out the process of lake planning in a simple and easily understood manner. Whether a group is either large or small, of greater or lesser means, or narrow or broadly focused, they all must be able to find, within the pages of this handbook, the information they need to design and support their individual planning and stewardship efforts.

"One of your most powerful tools is to write a report on your own lake and area. After all, who knows your lake and area better than you?"

*...Jerry Strickland
FOCA (1990)*

What does this handbook provide?

This handbook is best described as a self-help guide. Its purpose is to assist shoreline people in both engaging and supporting the members of their community in the exercise of strategic planning. To that end, it offers not only a framework for the undertaking but also provides a forum for the exchange of ideas, options and examples. This handbook is based upon the collective experience and recollections of at least 40 lake associations across Ontario and draws upon seasoned lake planners to provide answers to common questions about the process, roles, steps and best advice.

This handbook has been specifically formatted to provide multiple access points as a way to accommodate the needs of as many shoreline groups as possible. Accordingly, the initial chapters provide an overview of just what lake planning is and the compelling reasons why people are doing it. It is up to individual groups to decide if lake planning is right for them, and whether it should be kept simple or lean toward the complex. Groups ready to proceed with lake planning can go directly to Chapter 2, which outlines: the steps and tasks to be considered; how to get started; how to engage the community; and how to build consensus for the final plan. Chapter 3 provides examples of content, actions and recommendations from other lakes for consideration. The final chapter is a digital resource kit consisting of a variety of approved lake plans, survey templates, resources, sources and references.

In summary, the objectives of this handbook are to provide:

- A framework for community-based lake planning, for both large and small shoreline communities
- A range of stewardship options for shoreline communities to embrace
- Advice and confirmed approaches for building relationships
- Samples, actions, contacts and information links to help people make efficient and effective use of volunteer resources and achieve goals in a consensus-based approach
- Encouragement for the development of new ideas and approaches that meet a variety of local community needs and can be shared with others

This handbook provides ideas and suggestions for you to consider and a framework from which you can pick the parts you need, depending on the needs of your lake community and the number of people willing to help with the lake plan.



Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	(inside front cover)
Preamble and Purpose	i
Quick Find	v

Chapter 1 GETTING STARTED

Section 1 – What is Lake Planning and Why Do It?

What is lake planning?	1
What is the purpose of the lake planning process?.....	2
What are the benefits?	3
Who owns a lake plan?	4
What isn't a lake plan?.....	4
Why do lake plans fail? What can go wrong?.....	5
What are the key lessons learned so far?	5

Section 2 – What Does a Lake Plan Look Like and What is In It?

What will our lake plan look like? What are the options?.....	7
What goes in a lake plan? Where do we put the information that we collect?	9
What are the key factors that influence the quality of life on a lake?.....	11
What are the issues common to most shoreline communities?	12

Section 3 – Other Stewardship Options

What is stewardship?.....	13
What are some common activities that we can do immediately?.....	14

Chapter 2 – DIVING INTO THE PROCESS

Section 1 – Lake Planning Steps

What are the steps?	15
Phase 1 – Getting Organized	17
Step 1 – Garner Interest	17
Step 2 – Set up a Steering Committee	17
Step 3 – Hold Steering Committee Meeting to Scope Project	18
Step 4 – Obtain Initial Approval	18
Step 5 – Seek Funding	19
Step 6 – Announce the Lake Plan	19
Phase 2 – Collect Background Information	19
Step 7 – Determine the Scope of the Lake Plan	19
Step 8 – Prepare Work List of the Information to be Collected	19
Step 9 – Contact Non-Residential Stakeholders	20
Step 10 – Prepare, Distribute and Collate Survey Information	21
Step 11 – Conduct a Residents Workshop and Prepare Summary	21
Phase 3 – Analyze Information and Summarize Background Information.....	22
Step 12 – Analyze Background Information and Summarize Results.....	22
Step 13 – Provide Draft Observations and Recommendations to Public	22
Step 14 – Review Issues, Draft Strategies, and Finalize Draft Plan.....	23
Phase 4 – Prepare Draft Plan	23
Step 15 – Prepare Draft Plan.....	23
Step 16 – Circulate Draft Plan for Internal Review	23

Phase 5 – Review Draft Plan	24
Step 17 – Release Draft Plan for Public Review	24
Step 18 – Conduct Open House	24
Step 19 – Consider Public Comments and Prepare Final Lake Plan	24
Phase 6 – Obtain Approval	25
Step 20 – Provide Intent to Approve Plan	25
Step 21 – Approve Plan	25
Phase 7 – Implement Actions	25
Step 22 – Release Lake Plan	25
Step 23 – Implement Actions	25
Phase 8 – Monitoring and Updating Your Lake Plan	26
Step 24 – Monitor and Update	26

Section 2 - Getting Organized and Laying the Groundwork

Who should be on the steering committee?	27
What is the association’s role?	27
How much will it cost to develop the lake plan?	27
How can we fundraise?	28
How can we reduce costs?	29
How do we define the scope of the lake plan?	29
How do we prepare a vision statement, principles and targets?	30
Can we prepare the plan ourselves? When do we need help?	32
Where do we get information on natural heritage?	33

Section 3 – Engaging Your Community

What is community consensus?	37
How do we provide opportunities for consensus building?	37
What are the ingredients to a successful process?	38
Who is in your community?	38
What are some approaches to communicate with your community?	39
How do we create effective communications?	42
How do we take the pulse of our community?	42
When should we use surveys?	42
Why are workshops effective?	43
How do we recruit and work with volunteers?	43
What are some simple volunteer jobs?	44
How do we motivate people?	46
How do we approve our plan?	47
How do we gain buy-in from our local government?	48

Chapter 3 – LAKE PLAN CONTENT, ACTIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

Section 1 – Content

What could a lake plan include?	49
Preamble and Acknowledgement Page	49
Section 1 – Introduction	49
Section 2 – Vision, Principles and Targets	50
Section 3 – Lake Description	50
Section 4 – Social Elements	51

Section 5 – Natural Heritage.....	52
Section 6 – Physical Elements.....	54
Section 7 – Land Use.....	55
Section 8 – Lake Values.....	56
What maps could we include?	56
Section 2 – Generic Actions and Recommendations	
What are some common actions recommended by most lake plans?.....	57
What are some comprehensive recommendations that many lake plans include?.....	58
Section 3 – Implementation Approaches	
What are some proven methods of implementing recommendations?	59
Chapter 4 – RESOURCE KIT	
Samples and Templates	
Lake Planning Handbook	61
Lake Plans.....	61
Data Collection and Background Studies	61
Presentations	61
Surveys	61
Communications	62
Workshops	62
Funding Opportunities	62
Boating Information	62
Municipal Land Use Policy.....	62
Other Lake Planning Initiatives	62
Links to Resources	
Federal Agencies.....	63
Provincial Agencies.....	63
Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)	63
Funding	64
Federal and Provincial Legislation.....	64
Acronyms	65
Contributing Associations	65
Figures	
1 – Criteria for Content and Focus of Lake Plan Products	8
2 – Examples of the Lake Planning Components.....	10
3 – Key Factors that Influence the Quality of Life	11
4 – The Lake Planning Process Steps	16
5 – Vision Quest.....	20

Quick Find – Select the Chapter you are most interested in:

Chapter 1 – WHAT IS LAKE PLANNING?



Section 1 – What is Lake Planning and Why Do It? defines what a lake plan is and what it can and can't do, including the benefits and key lessons learned so far.

Section 2 – What does a Lake Plan Look Like and What is In It? describes what a lake plan looks like, how you put it together, the issues that are common to most shoreline communities, and the factors that influence the quality of life.

Section 3 – Other Stewardship Options identifies other stewardship options and common activities that can be put in place immediately.

Chapter 2 – DIVING INTO THE LAKE PLAN PROCESS



Section 1 – Lake Planning Steps describes a series of steps to be considered in designing your planning process including: getting organized; collecting and analyzing information; contacting people; and how to prepare, approve, implement and monitor your lake plan.

Section 2 – Getting Organized and Laying the Groundwork provides information on how to get started and who to involve in the process. It provides information on fundraising, reducing costs, and how to define the scope and prepare a vision statement, principles and targets.

Section 3 – Engaging Your Community identifies who to involve and provides approaches to engage and motivate your community and get buy-in from your local municipality. Examples of surveys and workshops are provided, including a list of simple volunteer jobs.

Chapter 3 – LAKE PLAN CONTENT, ACTIONS & IMPLEMENTATION



Section 1 – Content provides a list of the components in a typical lake plan for which you can select the parts of most interest to your lake community.

Section 2 – Generic Actions and Recommendations provides a list of common actions recommended by most lake plans and provides a link to a list of comprehensive recommendations in the Resource Kit for consideration.

Section 3 – Implementation Approaches provides some proven methods of implementation actions.

Chapter 4 – RESOURCE KIT



The Resource Kit provides a table of contents to a digital reference library located in the CD and at www.lakeplan.com. The CD includes: samples and templates of lake plans, surveys and workshops; a common glossary; communication product examples; and other ideas that you can use and reference. This chapter also includes a list of relevant Provincial and Federal legislation and links to other useful resources.

Chapter 1 WHAT IS LAKE PLANNING

Section 1 What is Lake Planning and Why Do It?

What is lake planning?

*....a Lake Plan is a watershed plan broken up into more tangible and manageable pieces and put into the hands of the community.
...FPSI*

Lake planning is a strategic process that provides the opportunity to engage all people, governments and business operators to develop and implement actions to maintain or improve the natural and social qualities of life on our lakes, rivers and shoreline communities.

Planning and management of our lakes and river systems has been ongoing for many

decades. However, until the recent revival of the lake plan community-based approach in 1999, these processes had been primarily conducted in a top-down manner by federal, provincial and municipal governments. Reasons for their involvement were usually geared towards specific resource uses such as water power generation, water quality and levels, and fish and wildlife management.

The main shift in this new community-based approach is that it puts the process into the hands of the community so that they may have a voice in the establishment of stewardship actions and government (federal, provincial, municipal) planning regulations.

The process embraces the principles and stages of other planning processes for forest, parks, water and resource management planning and for establishing municipal planning policies. Much like the other planning processes, lake planning is to be open and transparent. It includes numerous opportunities to engage people into the process, and attains final plan approval through a community consensus framework.

*The lake planning process is as important as the end product.
...FPSI*

The process must engage all community members (public, private, business, government) and provide ample notification and opportunities to hear from all people. Lake planning blends land use planning and stewardship to provide a comprehensive

approach to protecting the quality of life on and around the lake. It must also consider all pertinent background information so that actions are based upon sound science or community consensus.

The end product could be as simple as taking action on a single stewardship project, or it could be comprehensive by providing detailed recommendations on municipal land use policies, and on water, forest or fish and wildlife resource management plans.



What is Lake Planning?

Lake Planning Revival

The current lake planning initiative was developed in 1999 by French Planning Services Inc. (FPSI) to meet the needs of only one lake association - Peninsula Lake.

In 1998, the MNR funded a series of detailed scientific reports on water quality, sediment loading, paleoecology (the study of core sediments) and land use. The most significant recommendation that evolved from this project was that "local stewardship is required to develop community-based ecosystem health goals and objectives and indicators for sustainable environmental and economic development".

The lake planning process responded to this need and is a community based planning process that has combined the best parts of current planning processes such as municipal, parks, and resource management. The difference is that this process is put into the hands of the community.

...FPSI

What is the purpose of the lake planning process?

The purpose of lake planning is to engage community members to identify and protect the unique characteristics of a specific shoreline community and to recommend land use policy and/or stewardship approaches to ensure long-term protection, sustainability, maintenance and restoration of natural, social and physical features.

It results in 'consensus-based' actions and extends the responsibility of implementation to all people in the community.

The purpose of the lake planning process is to:

- √ **Identify and protect specific lake values** – each lake or river community is unique and has its own character and environment. Local natural and social values such as water quality, boating capacity, fish and wildlife habitat, shoreline aesthetics and capacity should be identified, and this information should be shared with municipal and provincial agencies to be considered in their land use decisions.
- √ **Promote community discussion and action** – your community includes permanent and seasonal residents, commercial operators, government agencies, and local interest clubs (e.g., nature clubs, anglers), and it is essential that everyone in the community has an opportunity to get involved and be heard. Engaging community discussions should be promoted through a series of informal meetings and workshops. Implementation is more successful if consensus is developed through open discussion and an equal exchange of thoughts. The lake plan shouldn't be a document designed to please only one interest group.
- √ **Educate and communicate with all community members** – communication and education will create awareness, and this is a significant product of the process. Opportunities should be promoted to communicate with lake and rural residents, commercial operators, lake users and government agencies.
- √ **Set a future vision for the lake** – a vision describes what you would like your lake to look, feel, and be 20 to 100 years from now. Developing a vision will help your community stay focused and identify priority tasks to be accomplished.
- √ **Set environmental and social targets** – every lake and river is unique and so are their environmental carrying capacities, features and thresholds. Specific objectives and targets should be established to address local circumstances and to ensure no negative environmental or social impacts.
- √ **Recommend stewardship actions** – many values (e.g. water quality, natural shorelines, wildlife) cannot be protected purely by land use regulations, and there are many volunteer activities that "we must do for ourselves". Stewardship actions are essentially volunteer activities that improve the health of the lake community such as shoreline rehabilitation, conservation, water quality sampling or promoting proper boat operation practices.
- √ **Recommend land use policy** – local official plans and zoning by-laws include rules that we all must follow when we apply for building permits or subdivide lands. A review of existing provincial and municipal land use policy will help to evaluate the effectiveness of

"Lake plans are intended to identify, reflect and respond to the character and physical capabilities of an individual water body and shoreline community"



Shoreline Survey on Mary Lake



Lake Plan Workshop on Muldrew Lake

current policy in relation to the specific environmental and social targets to be established. If there are gaps in the current land use policy, then the lake plan could provide recommendations to the municipal council. Awareness of land use policies by both politicians and property owners provide a basis for dialogue.

- √ **Create a current inventory or snapshot of resources** – an inventory will record watershed information, including fish and wildlife species and their habitat, water quality, Crown land location and many other important features. It will provide a baseline for everything you need to know about your community and it will enable the identification and prioritization of important information gaps. Most of this type of information can be collected from the Ministries of the Environment and of Natural Resources.
- √ **Identify issues and impacts** – key issues, concerns and impacts will be identified through meetings, surveys and workshops and will be prioritized for action. Background information on the issues may also have to be collected and analyzed in order to provide appropriate and sound recommendations to deal with the impacts.
- √ **To recognize and address new issues** – the lake plan is a living document and should be revisited as new issues arise and for periodic reviews and updates. A review should happen at least every 5 years, which is the same mandated requirement for municipal review and update of official plans.



Lake Muskoka



Twin Lakes – New Liskeard

What are the benefits?

Those associations involved in lake planning have initiated it for many different reasons. Some of the common benefits identified by these communities include:

- √ **Identifies and vocalizes common values and concerns** – a unified ‘community voice’ can be more effective than a mixture of smaller voices.
- √ **Brings lake inhabitants together as a community** – through workshops, surveys, meetings and planned actions, people will have a chance to work together and discover common values and interests... and become aware of different ones too!
- √ **Engages and represents people beyond association members** – this is an essential ingredient of a successful community plan. The process must provide opportunities for everyone (residents, businesses, non-association members, and even casual and day users) in the community to participate, if they wish to become involved.
- √ **Identifies and develops partnerships** – new partnerships and opportunities are created through discussions and the discovery of common values and concerns.
- √ **Fills an information gap by synthesizing existing information (e.g. history, water quality) and context about the lake** – there may be a lot of existing information regarding your lake and its

community, and it is best to understand the 'state of the lake' based on a complete review of this existing information to identify gaps so that they can be filled to meet the priority needs.

- √ **Engages people to think about the future** – focusing people and discussion on what the lake should be in the future will help them to understand the actions that are required to ensure that the environment and the quality of life is maintained for future generations.
- √ **Instils a sense of responsibility and accountability** (which promotes stewardship) – responsibility and accountability is developed through awareness and a buy-in on the actions to be undertaken. The lake planning process requires committed people to initiate and run the process and to maintain the action plan.
- √ **Engages and harmonizes multi-jurisdictions** (e.g. municipalities, agencies, property owner associations) – there is no other process that brings multiple agencies to the lake community table, in a spirit of co-operation.
- √ **Informs external agencies/organizations about the values and concerns of the lake community** – can be used to shape by-laws, legislation, or judgements that may have an impact on the lake or the lake community.
- √ **Builds awareness through communication and education** – communication and education is the preferred approach for most lake concerns.
- √ **Defines existing and future desired character** – without a statement about what our future looks like, we have no common vision of where we are going.
- √ **Provides a history of the lake community** – to improve general awareness and to provide a legacy for future generations.

Who owns a lake plan?

A lake plan mimics a community plan and its process and principles can be applied to any community strategic planning process whether it be for rivers, shoreline reaches, small communities, neighbourhoods or even urban centres.

Everyone in the community is an owner of the lakeplan. While an association or group of people may facilitate the process, or be the 'keeper' of the plan, the lake plan can only work if there is buy-in by a majority of the community. As such, it should belong to everyone in the community. It is extremely important that everyone who wants to be involved has an opportunity to identify their interest and the actions to be implemented. As well, any future changes to the lake plan should be done with notification to the general lake community.

What isn't a lake plan?

A lake plan is not a legal document and should not be undertaken in reaction to a development proposal or used to regulate or police activities in your community. It has no legal standing such as provincial legislation or a municipal by-law and is, therefore, not enforceable by law. A lake plan is a strategic document to identify and implement priority actions and recommendations for the watershed, the environment and community through the collective action of property owners, non-property owners and government agencies. Its actions may result in

A Lake Plan is not...

- A policing document, or
- A single interest position representative of only one group/person.

The Lake Plan is not an end product, it is the beginning of a long-term process of assessment and evaluation... it is adaptive management...

recommendations to agencies to consider new or amended regulations, such as new municipal land use policy for increased protection for locally or regionally significant ecosystems.

In order for any part of the lake plan to become accepted by a municipality, the municipality must hold public meetings to change its zoning by-law and official plan and approve it according to the requirements of The Planning Act.

A lake plan is not exclusive. Its success is dependent upon the involvement of all community stakeholders. It is, therefore, extremely important that all community members are given the opportunity to be involved in the open and transparent lake plan development process.

Why do lake plans fail? What can go wrong?

Some planning processes have been delayed to gain support or to take advantage of another opportunity (e.g., official plan review) but very few have actually failed. The process and the circumstances on every lake will differ and here are some of the challenges that many people face:

- Scope of the plan is too large
- Lack of sufficient volunteers
- Volunteer burnout
- Lack of funding
- Lack of consensus
- Lack of continuity – it takes too long
- Poor communications
- Poor organization
- Lack of fixed target dates and deliverables
- People and personalities
- Did not engage the community
- Language and tone of plan – too telling or regulation based
- Hard to assemble all the volunteers and experts
- Dealing with multiple lakes, municipalities, and agencies
- Validity of lake plan – actions and information were not verified
- Lack of experts
- Issues are too complex

...the process must engage the community so that actions are consensus based.



Lake Plan Meeting on Muldrew Lake

What are the key lessons learned so far?

The lessons to consider:

- √ **Take time to get organized** – the success of the lake plan will depend on a properly planned process that provides lots of opportunity for initial buy-in and long-term discussion. This time is wisely spent because it will promote early buy-in and ownership of the results.
- √ **The process is as important as the product** – try not to rush through the process. Many projects take 1 to 2 years to initiate and then 2 years to complete. You must provide plenty of opportunities for people to participate or else the recommendations may not reflect what the community truly wants.

- √ **Include all people in the community** – there should be opportunities to include all groups on the lake, including residential, business, recreational and other lake users, and agencies.
- √ **Partner with agencies** - time and money can be saved when you work with partners such as municipalities, MNR, Conservation Authorities, other local interest groups. Often these partners will be keenly interested in the project and can provide information, staff resources or other help such as map preparation. These partnerships will also be a benefit when it comes time to implement the action plan.
- √ **Work with Council** – call your local representatives and get the municipal planners on board. Take your local politicians on a boat cruise to view your lake and discuss the issues in your community. Invite them to your AGM or hold an informal meeting to get to know your local councillor(s).
- √ **Work with stakeholders** - contact watershed organizations, commercial and marina operators, other resource users, and shoreline backlot residents.
- √ **Use community resources** – optimize the use of your association and local government resources. This will help to save money, create awareness, open communication linkages, and create a document that belongs to the community.
- √ **Communication is key** – try to be as open and forthright as possible with your community. People should understand what is happening and be given opportunities to provide input or to get involved. If this does not happen then ‘buy-in’ may be difficult.

Advice...

- √ Take time to get organized
- √ The process is as important as the product
- √ Include all community members (property and non-property owners)

Include All People in the Community...

Some associations are nervous about speaking with the business operators. However, business people are very interested in protecting the quality of life on their lake. At a workshop we heard a resort operator say that they have more at stake if the quality of life and the environment were to decline. They have a substantial financial and human investment in their property and if the quality of life (clean water, natural beauty, fish and wildlife) were to decline, fewer people would want to come to their resort. The resort operator stated, “residents have the option of moving, we don’t”.

... Peninsula Lake (Muskoka)



Hughes Island - Bobs and Crow Lake

Section 2 What Does a Lake Plan Look Like and What is In It?

What will our lake plan look like? What are the options?

Lake planning occurs in many different forms. The traditional lake plans were created by government authorities and can be quite comprehensive and detailed because of funding and resources available. Examples include the Lakewide Management Plans prepared for the Great Lakes, or Watershed or Water Management Plans.

The size and shape of your lake plan will depend primarily on the issues that exist and the resources that you have. Lake plans that were prepared during the early 2000s in Ontario were based on a comprehensive approach to collect and analyze as much information as possible. As a result many were 200 pages in length and included a wealth of knowledge but proved difficult to read by a non scientific average person. Since then, lake plans are much shorter, more user friendly and are approximately 20 to 50 pages in length summarizing the critical information, observations and recommendations. Another option is to provide an executive summary that focuses on the key messages and actions. All other information that was collected as part of the background should also be retained and kept as references for future use by committees as the plan is implemented, but does not have to be in the final lake plan.

The size, scope and content of your lake plan will depend on the following criteria:

- √ Size of your lake
- √ Size of your community – who does it involve
- √ the community interest – what do they want to do
- √ Volunteer capacity – do you have enough volunteers
- √ Availability of financial resources
- √ Presence of issues – land use regulations, stewardship and social behaviours
- √ Amount of background information
- √ Amount of detail – particularly concerning scientific information on flora and fauna (i.e., plants and animals)
- √ Types of aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems
- √ Range of government agencies and interests

No matter what size and shape of plan you decide to undertake, the common thread between all current initiatives is the provision of a strategic process to identify issues and put in place actions to improve the quality of life in your

Take a look at the lake plans in the Resource Kit for ideas. Here are some that you will find:

- *Paudash Lake*
- *Bobs and Crow Lakes*
- *Dark and Grace Lakes*
- *Raven Lake*
- *Halls and Hawk Lakes*
- *Peninsula Lake*
- *Fairy Lake*
- *Sturgeon Bay*

...and many others

Your Lake Plan must be Readable and User Friendly

Current lake plans are much shorter, more user friendly and are about 20 to 50 pages in length.

Another option is to provide an executive summary that focuses on the key messages and actions.

Look at Examples of What Other Lakes Have Done...

The Dark and Grace Lake Association had a strong desire to prepare a plan, but did not have a lot of financial resources. They used the Paudash Lake Executive Summary as a template for their 20 page lake plan. Many lakes have used this example as an approach for the process and the plan. Refer to the Resource Kit.

...Dark and Grace (Haliburton)

community. As well, the similar steps in any process are to engage people and assess actions.

Figure 1 – Provides a summary of the options and approaches to be considered. The format and content can be simple such as taking action on priority needs through to a full and comprehensive lake plan. A list of criteria is provided to help you assess whether a simplified or comprehensive approach is required.

Figure 1 - Criteria for Content and Focus of Lake Plan Products

Lake Plan Approaches	Approaches of Documenting Actions	Criteria for Considering Products
<p>Simplified (Scoped) Approaches</p> <p>See examples in Resource Kit – Dark and Grace Lakes, Paudash Lake Executive Summary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record actions in AGM Minutes Prepare 1 page summary of actions Prepare ‘executive summary’ style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smaller lakes and communities with a lake/community organization Existing plan in place Address a few important issues Community desire to focus on stewardship only
<p>Comprehensive (Full) Approaches</p> <p>See examples in Resource Kit – Paudash Lake, Fairy Lake, Raven Lake, Eagle Lake, Peninsula</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amass historical information Prepare background reports Prepare comprehensive lake plan Prepare lake plan executive summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Address a wide range of issues Larger lakes and communities, or multiple municipal governments Involves a wide range of agencies, management policies and plans Desire to provide recommendations on land use regulations and stewardship actions

This handbook provides a ‘wish list’ of things that could possibly be addressed by the lake planning process and it is not necessary for you to collect all information that is identified in order to be successful. Design your process and plan it to fit the scale of your community and your financial and volunteer resources.

This handbook provides a wish list of things that could possibly be addressed in a lake plan. It is not necessary to collect all the information or to complete all the steps that are identified in this handbook in order to be successful. It is very feasible to undertake lake planning in multi-year phases, address the key priorities first (i.e. stewardship actions) and provide recommendations that require the completion of other background data collection and action setting later. For example, if you find there is no information on streams, you may want to identify this gap and provide an action to fill this gap and provide more detailed recommendations later.

Set Your Priorities...

Be ready to participate in the 5 year review of the Municipal Official Plan... The Deep Bay Association wanted to initiate a lake plan, but the Township of Carling was currently in their mandatory 5 year Official Plan review and update process. In order to take advantage of this process the association decided to focus their resources and become fully engaged in the OP review and deferred the preparation of the Bay Plan.

...From Deep Bay (Parry Sound)

It is important that you select and do what is relevant to your current needs. For example, if there is a 5 year Official Plan review occurring, you may want to skip stewardship actions and focus on background information and land use policy creation. There is no right or wrong size or format. It is a matter of what is needed and what works best for your particular situation.

What goes in a lake plan? Where do we put the information that we collect?

It is not necessary to put all the information that you collect into the lake plan. The final lake plan should, at a minimum, report on the observations and major recommendations from the analysis of information. As a result, you will likely end up with three categories of information and conclusions:

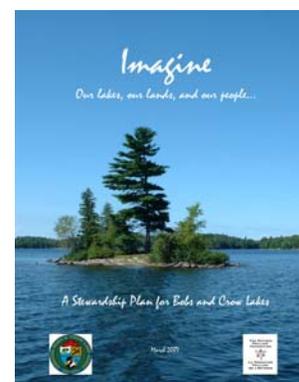
Information Warehouse – the warehouse could either be a storage box or electronic file, but it should contain all the raw background information compiled (see **Resource Kit** for list of background information). This may contain raw information ranging from resident surveys, historical photos, MNR fish stocking data, wetland evaluations to past water quality monitoring data. A copy of the ‘Information Warehouse’ should be stored for safe keeping (local library, association corporate vault) and be ready for reference when needed. Ideally it would be great to scan and store this information electronically on a CD or website.

Assessment of Background Information – this component includes the synopsis or the analysis of the information that you have collected and stored in the Information Warehouse. Depending upon resources, some people have prepared detailed reports that summarize the information collected into a series of major observations. It is from these observations that more detailed recommendations can be made, based on scientific information or a statement of community desire (see Background Studies in the **Resource Kit**).

Lake Plan Document – The lake plan can be as simple as a series of actions agreed to at the AGM and recorded in the minutes, or as complex as a comprehensive plan with detailed and supporting information. The first community lake plans combined the background information assessment and the lake plan product in to one document, which made the document very large and less inviting to read. Although it provided a wealth of information, it was not easy to read. The Paudash Steering Committee decided to prepare a 20 page executive summary of their comprehensive plan, and this model has since been used by many associations as the format of their final lake plan.

The most popular approach is a simplified ‘executive summary’ styled lake plan (no more than 20 pages) that is provided to everyone in the community. Background studies can be prepared and made available should people want to understand the rational for the recommendations and actions. Baptiste Lake is in the process of preparing their final lake plan, and have prepared a number of background reports (e.g., land use, natural inventory, physical and architectural) (see **Resource Kit**).

Figure 2 provides examples of information or reports found in the three lake plan components.



Links to executive summaries are provided in the Resource Kit

- *Paudash Lake*
- *Halls and Hawk Lakes*
- *Kennisis Lake*
- *Others*

Figure 2 – Examples of Lake Planning Components

Information Warehouse	Assessment of Background Information	Lake Plan Document
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Survey Information • Workshop Summaries • Municipal and Provincial Land Use Policies • Information on Fisheries, Wildlife, Natural Areas and Wetlands, Species at Risk • Water Quality – Lake Partner – MOE • Water Quantity – Lake Levels and Erosion • History of the Lake Community and Region • Landscape Features and Processes • Ecological Issues – Climate Change, Land Use Changes, Invasive Species • Action Plan Alternatives • Follow-up or Maintenance Process • Aboriginal Background Information • Pictures • Major Events – social and physical 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land Use Study • Natural Heritage Inventory • Physical Elements Study • Recreation/Social/Cultural • Historical • Architectural • Summary of Recommendations/Actions • Wildlife fluctuations • Ecological changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stewardship Actions and Recommendations • Simplified Lake Plan • Executive Summary • Comprehensive Lake Plan • Results of Actions



Building Blocks for Clear Ston(e)y White Lake Plan



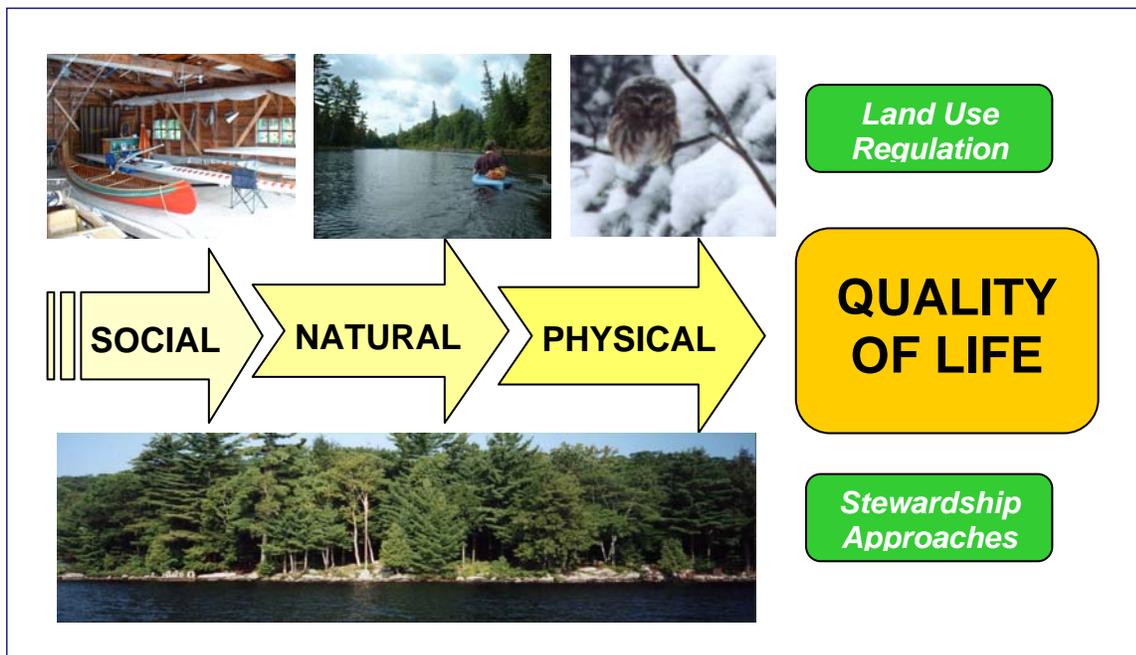
Paddling on Bobs and Crow Lake

What are the key factors that influence quality of life on a lake or river community?

The quality of life in lake and river communities is dependent upon Natural, Social and Physical elements. Figure 3 provides a list of the key factors that influence the Quality of Life on lakes and rivers.

Figure 3 - Key Factors that Influence Quality of Life

Natural	Social	Physical
Wetlands	Recreational Activities	Water Levels
Fish Habitat	Aesthetics	Water Quantity
Wildlife Habitat	Boating Capacity	Soils
Threatened/Endangered Species	Cultural Heritage Sites	Geology
Environmentally Sensitive Areas	Community Character	Ground water
Water Quality	Landscape	Topography
Vegetation	Noise	Hazardous Areas
Economics	Outdoor Lighting	Narrow Waterbodies
Ecological Issues	Septic Systems	Navigation Hazards
	Roads	Shallow Waterbodies
	Businesses	Steep Slopes



What are the issues common to most shoreline communities?



Blue Green Algae – Three Mile



Protected Wetland Sign – Clear

- The most common issues include:
- Water quality, clarity, quantity, and water level fluctuation – the protection of water is an issue that binds all people
 - Indigenous species – understanding what wildlife exists in the area and how to co-exist
 - Invasive species – alters the natural ecosystem by causing in-balances in animal and plant diversity
 - Surface runoff/non-point source pollution – alters water quality through the addition of nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen), pathogens, sediments and other materials. Typically, landscaping choices, lifestyle and septic systems are the main anthropogenic (human) sources of these nutrients
 - Algae blooms – are the result of both natural and anthropogenic impacts
 - Loss of wildlife, nesting grounds, fish habitat, natural shorelines, and native plants
 - Erosion control
 - Boating practices – speed, wake, oil and gas pollution
 - Lighting, noise, and air pollution
 - Development, subdivisions, density (lot frontage and area), shoreline setback, scale and massing of residences, boathouses, and docks (height, width, size)
 - Redevelopment – scale and massing, commercial redevelopment
 - Recreational activities
 - Shoreline businesses (marinas, restaurants, camps, etc.)
 - Maintaining naturally vegetated buffer areas
 - Road building and maintenance
 - Emergency preparedness and 911 infrastructure maintenance
 - Fire preparedness and insurance and risk management
 - Communication
 - Local by-laws and land use regulations

What were some of the challenges that faced the Clear/Stony/White Lake Plan?

The size and complexity of our constituent group covered three lakes, four municipalities, five lake associations and over two thousand residents. In addition, none of the lake associations were the driving force behind our desire to write a lake plan. A group of interested persons from the three lakes had met over the past five or six years and shared the need for a mechanism to look at issues from a larger and longer perspective. We strongly believed that we needed to develop a consensual rather than an adversarial approach to problem solving.

The outcome of this, following an initial meeting of stakeholders chaired by Randy, was the formation of a Steering Committee. The composition of this committee included interested members of the previous informal group and representatives from each of the four townships, the five cottage associations, several commercial operators, and local residents. The advantages of this composition were that all stakeholders would have a voice ensuring that the final report would be reflective of many interests on the lakes. The challenges were: meeting times and places; formation of the agendas to maximize the use and time of our members; properly consulting all stakeholders on each issue; lack of specific talents required to further the work, and finances.

How did we do?

- *We found it very difficult to properly represent our constituent groups.*
- *Our public meetings drew only a small fraction of the totality of commercial operators and lake residents*
- *Some township representatives saw their part as equal contributors, others as merely observers*
- *A group of five people became the unofficial "inner core", planning meetings and following up*

The results: after two and one half years we presented a report which, we feel, accurately reflected the position of our lakes and our stakeholders. Least represented were the commercial operators and the First Nations. Our challenges were: the size of our study, the number of stakeholders to consider, communications, and finances.

...Rob Little – CSW Lake Plan Steering Committee www.stonylake.on.ca

Section 3 – Considering Other Options for Stewardship

In some situations a lake plan may not be the preferred approach. Regardless of the type of planning process a community takes, voluntary stewardship within the community is always important.

What is stewardship?

Stewardship is a focus on actions that individuals take to improve or sustain our natural systems and on the actions of organizations that support those individuals. On an individual level, stewardship could be ensuring that septic systems are properly maintained, or choosing to plant native plants instead of exotic ones. On a community level, stewardship may be measuring and documenting water quality or the posting of “No Wake” signs around a water body to prevent erosion and protect nesting birds.

It is in everyone’s best interest to practice and promote good stewardship of the lake environment. Even if you are doing all that can be done on your property, reaching out to your neighbours and association and enlightening them of the benefits of sustainable waterfront living should also be a part of your mandate as an environmentally responsible shoreline resident.

Lake associations, in many cases, are already set up to initiate a ‘stewardship movement’ at the lake. They usually have individuals that are ‘go getters’ and an association that exists for the betterment of the community. If there is a designated lake steward and volunteer committee(s) then you are already off to a good start!

Determine what types of simple stewardship actions you can participate and spread the word to your neighbours. Community members should ensure that their actions and those of their neighbours are consistent with providing long-term benefits to the environment and community. As a solitary waterfront property owner there are many good stewardship actions that you can do on your property including planting native plants, using environmentally friendly products, and installing dark sky friendly outdoor lighting. For more information on stewardship of your own property please see the **Resource Kit** in this handbook and [Take the Plunge](#).



On the Living Edge: Workshop with Olive Callaway and Muskoka Heritage Foundation

Starting a Lake Stewardship Program...

Many lakes have started their Lake Stewardship program by encouraging individuals to undertake easy stewardship activities such as using lead-free fishing gear and planting native plants instead of exotic ones. Many associations take water samples measuring for Phosphorous and Water Clarity levels, and submit that data to the Ministry of the Environment, as part of the Lake Partner Program. A stewardship program can include activities related to fish, shoreline vegetation, invasive species monitoring and prevention, demonstration sites, tree planting, workshops, events, and more.

Recognizing those groups or individuals around the lake that go above and beyond with an annual stewardship award or mention in the newsletter can help to increase participation and really make people feel good about the work they have done.

...Pilot Group (Lake Planning Handbook)

What are some common activities that we could do immediately?

Stewardship can also mean developing programs in education and conservation and encouraging the grass roots involvement of the community. It is a powerful tool to build positive attitudes toward natural and cultural resources and encourage all sectors of the community to undertake projects to conserve, develop and regenerate the natural environment.

Here are some common stewardship activities that can be done immediately on your lake:



Marine Patrol – Sturgeon Bay



On a Local Township Road



Loon on Baptiste Lake

1. **Monitor Water Quality** – join the MOE’s Lake Partner Program. The program provides tools and techniques to measure and record water clarity, total phosphorus levels and possibly other chemicals in your lake. Final results are analyzed and published for long term assessments of water quality changes across the province.
2. **Stewardship Awards** – recognize the efforts of people and draw attention to good examples of property stewardship (e.g., shoreline restoration program).
3. **Septic Systems Education** – contact your local municipality and health unit to identify and publish information about maintaining septic systems
4. **Communication Plan** – organize and implement a comprehensive approach for communicating key messages.
5. **Shoreline Rehabilitation** – identify priority shoreline areas for rehabilitation and design a program that encourages property owners to maintain/rehabilitate natural shorelines.
6. **Loon and Heron Survey** – undertake a project that inventories all common loon nesting sites and Great Blue Heron colonies to determine the extent of the local population.
7. **Boating Awareness** – promote the safe and environmentally friendly operation of boats on the lake, (see Ontario Marine Operator’s Association’s Clean Boating Program www.marinasontario.com)
8. **Demonstration Sites** – work with landowners to implement best management practices (e.g., shoreline buffers) and use as a demonstration project for learning opportunities.
9. **Monitoring Programs** – implement programs to monitor the diversity, breeding locations and population sizes of local aquatic and terrestrial species, including benthos (animals that live along the sediment bottom of a lake, river, stream or wetland) birds, fishes, wildlife and invasive species.
10. **Docktalk** – see the methods and messages from the FOCA Docktalk program to support positive action on the waterfront. See www.foca.on.ca

Contact your Stewardship Council for help...

The Ministry of Natural Resources supports a Stewardship Council in each county of Ontario and in the northern districts. The Stewardship Coordinator brings together a council of local landowner representatives who identify needs, projects, and areas for improvement in the community. The council leverages funds and networks amongst local, provincial, and federal groups to get projects on the ground. To find out about your local council visit:

www.ontariostewardship.org

Chapter 2 DIVING INTO THE LAKE PLAN PROCESS

Section 1 – The Lake Planning Process

What are the steps?

The number of phases and steps that you follow for your community planning process will depend on the local circumstances, the range of issues and the number of people. There can be up to 8 phases from getting started (Phase 1) to monitoring the effectiveness of your plan (Phase 8) (see Figure 4).

Many of the individual steps required for each stage are interrelated so your progression through the steps may vary. For example, if your committee has information gaps you should begin writing what you know and continue interacting with your partners and researching new information sources until those gaps are filled. Keep the process moving forward and don't lose sight of your goal. Some tasks that you may not be able to accomplish could be an important action for you to implement through the final lake plan action stage. For example most lakes do not have good information on streams, and this should be identified as an action item in the plan... "to work with MNR to inventory and monitor streams and tributaries".

The following provides general information on the 8 phases provided in Figure 4 (Lake Planning Process Steps) and describes the 24 steps to be considered. This section focuses on 'what' you should be considering throughout the process. More detailed information about 'how' you will complete these tasks is found in the following chapters.

While the handbook provides a number of different options and steps, it is important to realize that not all of these steps may be necessary to achieve the goals that your community has established. There are, however, a number of essential steps that have been identified as necessary (noted by an asterisk *) to the development of sound community-based actions, including gaining community consensus and committing to an action plan and goals.



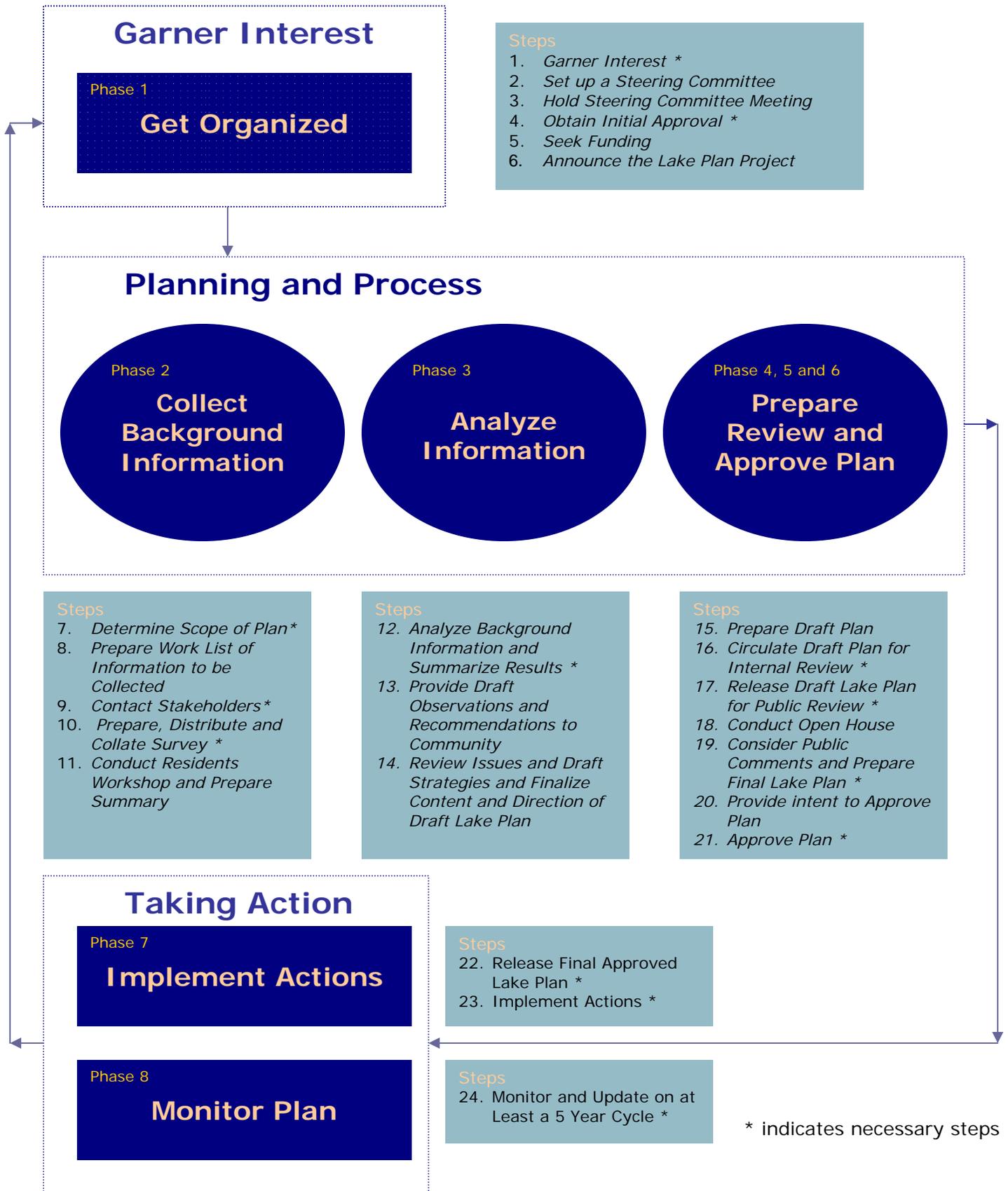
Residents Workshop – Bots and Crow Lakes

The process is as important as the plan!

Don't try to rush through the process. Most plans are conducted over a 2-year period. If you do not provide plenty of opportunities for people to participate and review the results, the recommendations may not reflect what the community truly wants.

...FPSI

Figure 4 – Lake Planning Process Steps



PHASE 1 – Get Organized

The first phase is to get people from your community interested in the process. Educating your community about current issues and best practices will help to get people thinking and garner interest. This 'start-up' time, however, may sometimes take one to two years. Therefore, it is important not to rush into the process without organizing your troops, or else you may find yourself on a crash course with a committee of one.

The purpose of this phase is to layout the groundwork for the rest of the project. Getting organized is often the hardest phase because it involves pulling together a working team (i.e., the steering committee); preparing a vision; creating the framework or the "terms of reference" that establishes a working schedule and identifies the content of the plan; organizing volunteers; and putting the lake plan into action.

Step 1 – Garner Interest

It takes one person with the idea to get started, then through a conversation with a spouse or friend the idea evolves and becomes validated by others. You should initially complete your research and speak to other like minded people to determine if there is an interest to get involved and a person(s) to champion the process. Ideally this is the stage to prepare a term of reference (proposal) for the project.

The idea (terms) then needs to be shared with the association's Board of Directors to determine if there is support and potential start-up or long-term funding available. All associations should survey the community first to see if there is an interest and determining their needs and wants. It would also be a good time to present the idea to your municipal council (or planner if available) to gather interest and support; the earlier they are considered in the process the better buy-in to the outcome. Discussion with municipal people will also help you to determine the scope, whether it will include land use considerations or strictly be a stewardship plan.

Sometimes the initial interest for a lake plan comes from a negative reaction to a development plan. However, the lake planning process should not be initiated in reaction to a development application or any other time-sensitive decision. At this point it is suggested that the barriers or challenges that may exist be addressed prior to commitment. The process works best in a positive environment where consensus is not mandated by a decision-making authority or group.

A small group of interested people should meet and form the initial members of the steering committee.

Step 2 – Set up a Steering Committee

The purpose of the steering committee is to coordinate the process and the development and approval of the plan. The steering committee should include about 4-8 people and could be comprised of members and non-members of the association, an executive board member and possibly the municipality, conservation authority and other government agencies.

Advice...

Use Community Resources and optimize the use of association and local government resources. This will help to save money, create awareness, open communication linkages, and create a document that belongs to the entire community.

Advice...

The lake planning process should not be initiated in reaction to a development application or any other time sensitive decision.

Steering Committee Members can include...

- Association Members
- Non-Association Members
- Businesses
- Executive Board Member
- Municipal staff or Councillor
- MNR/ MOE staff
- Conservation Authority staff

Steering committee members may meet a few times yearly over the course of the process and may assist with the collection and analysis of information and the preparation and review of the plan. The steering committee will also be responsible for undertaking and delegating other tasks such as the survey, conducting workshops, and preparing news releases and other communications.

Too many people on the steering committee can make it cumbersome. Not all of your volunteers need to be on the steering committee and it is wise to hold some in reserve to conduct specific tasks assigned by the committee. Depending on your relationship with the association's Board of Directors, you may also want to confirm the membership and role of the committee with them and identify 'resource people' who will be called upon in an 'as needed' situation only.

Step 3 – Hold Steering Committee Meeting to Scope Project

The steering committee should hold at least one start-up meeting to review the process steps, confirm the purpose and scope of the plan, set clear objectives, confirm timelines, establish a work plan (see **Resource Kit**), confirm a schedule and define member responsibilities for the collection of information. Some of the additional questions that may be considered are: What area does it apply to? What is the schedule? What type of plan do we want? Is it focused on stewardship, or will it include recommendations for municipal and provincial land use planning? Do we need advice from a professional?



Baptiste Lake Steering Committee

Step 4 – Obtain Approval

Once the steering committee has identified the desire to undertake the lake planning process, approval from the association or community members should be obtained. If there is an established community association, the Annual General Meeting (AGM) provides the best venue to obtain approval. Otherwise, depending on the circumstances, a special meeting could be called or a decision can be made by the Board of Directors. A formal resolution should be prepared ahead of time and a 'seconder' ready to support the resolution. The best approach is to provide a presentation on the scope, purpose and anticipated costs of the process (see **Resource Kit**).

Before the AGM, it is important that the Board of Directors are aware of the request, and have tentatively bought into the project pending AGM approval. It is also wise to have talked with as many people as possible before-hand to garner interest and support for the project. Sometimes, there is a decision to defer the project until additional information is obtained such as grant funding or a decision to work with a consultant. When this occurs, some associations have passed a resolution providing the Board of Directors with decision-making authority so that the initial steps are not delayed an additional year.

Advice...

A meeting with your local Council early in the process to obtain buy-in of the end results is important.

Step 5 – Seek Funding

All associations must seek funding for their initiatives. The amount of money needed will depend on the scope of this project, but some funding will be needed.

Step 6 – Announce the Lake Plan Initiative

Once approval to proceed is obtained, it is now important to let everyone in your community know about the lake plan process. Using of a combination of media tools will increase the likelihood that people will receive the message. A list of communication tools such as newsletters, website, blogs, Facebook®, mass emails, and news releases are provided on page 39.

The key messages in this announcement should include an introduction to lake planning (what it is), the process and schedule, and how people can participate. Also included in this communication is a request for people to become involved with the steering committee and the lake plan process through workshops, surveys and other identified opportunities. As well, a letter or notice and/or a presentation should also be provided to government stakeholders such as MNR, MOE and your local municipal council.

Advice...

Don't get bogged down in trying to gather all background information. Some things can be collected and reviewed as an action item of the plan.

PHASE 2 – Collect Background Information

Step 7 – Determine the Scope of the Lake Plan

Will the plan be limited to a stewardship program or will it be a complete and comprehensive strategic plan? Not all plans are the same and some organizations may not be ready for a complete plan. Defining what goes into the plan will determine the amount of time needed to prepare the plan, the number of people needed and the funding required. It will also determine whether outside expert assistance is needed. Without this step, it will be difficult to determine what information is needed and how to allocate resources.

Step 8 – Prepare Work List of Information to be Collected

It is important to base recommendations on your analysis and synopsis of true and reliable facts. Misinformation or no information can lead to actions that are counter to environmentally sustainable principles or not supported by the community.

Background information can include:

- A collection of existing scientific research applicable to the lake system
- Information from existing sources such as the MNR, MOE, Conservation Authorities
- A collection of community opinions of the values and issues to be addressed through workshops, surveys, meetings and request for information through newsletters and special notices
- Information about what families originally settled on the lake including stories about early life on the lake

Advice...

A sample work list and example background studies (from Baptiste Lake) are found in the Resource Kit.

The intent of this step is to collect and evaluate existing background information on your lake's natural, physical and social elements and land use considerations. The steering committee will confirm the scope of the information to be collected and assign responsibilities.

A sample work plan is in the **Resource Kit**, which provides a comprehensive list of background information that you may decide to collect. Use this list to determine what information is available and to assign someone with the responsibility to collect, prepare the analysis and summary of the key facts. A qualified resource person may be needed to collect and analyze certain types of scientific information (e.g., biology background).

It is not necessary to complete every item on the list. You should do an initial scan of the issues you would like to address and then collect only the information that is relevant. Some of the information categories may be identified as information gaps and can be inventoried in the future as a recommendation or action of the lake plan.

Step 9 – Contact Non-Residential Stakeholders

All government and business stakeholders should be contacted to gather background information and to understand their concerns. The purpose of this contact and discussion is to generate a list of the values and issues to be considered as well as any additional background information. Engaging all stakeholders is an extremely important step to obtain buy-in to the project and to identify opportunities for financial and people support. Key participants include upper and lower tier Municipalities (e.g., County and Township), MNR, MOE, Conservation Authorities and business operators.

There are several 'contact' options:

- Initial personal contact and follow-up with a letter or phone call
- Send them a letter and follow-up
- Attend a Council meeting or arrange a face-to-face meeting with appropriate staff and elected officials
- Conduct a Stakeholder Workshop for business operators, government agencies and non-government organizations. If there are many stakeholders (business operators, government agencies, non-government organizations) it may be more appropriate to conduct a workshop or meeting. Attendance at this workshop has been increased when it is held outside of the summer operating season.
- Informal face-to-face meeting with selected agency officials. If there are few agencies involved, it may not be necessary to conduct a stakeholder workshop. A face-to-face meeting with individuals may produce similar results as well as build important relationships.

Step 10 – Prepare, Distribute and Collate Survey Information

A community survey is necessary to identify the main values and interests that should be included in the plan. Without this step, it will be difficult to determine what initiatives the lake community will support. Even more important, a survey will ensure that the plan does not conflict with the values of the lake community.

A residential and business operator survey should be prepared and distributed to all property owners on the shoreline and in the surrounding rural and urban areas. The survey will provide an opportunity for everyone to identify values and issues and provide input into actions to be undertaken. An additional survey may be considered for people who stay at local parks or commercial resorts. The extent of its distribution beyond shoreline properties depends on the scope of the project.

Survey advice...

Including a stamped addressed envelope increases the rate of return of your survey.

The survey may be mailed out to all shoreline property owners; however, the best approach is to conduct a face-to-face interview. Interviews may be accomplished by dividing your lake into a number of neighbourhoods and assigning specific association members with the responsibility to deliver and conduct the survey. A summary of results should be made available as soon as possible following the survey (survey examples are provided in the **Resource Kit**).

There are many website services that provide inexpensive approaches to preparing, distributing and collating survey information (e.g., www.surveymonkey.com).

Importance of a Survey...

Any association which does not do a survey would find it difficult, if not impossible, to claim to know what their residents' concerns, needs, recommendations etc. truly are.

Our Municipal Council wanted to know how we knew what the property owners felt. When they saw the results of our survey, their attitude became positive and confrontation gave way to co-operation. The survey also allowed everyone to feel that they had a part in the process.

Meetings give you a general feeling, but you are hearing mainly from the converted. We had the comment from many people who have been on the lake for 30+ years, that they had never been asked how they felt about anything.

The survey also helped to identify people who were interested in becoming more involved.

...from Mountain Lake

Step 11 – Conduct a Residents Workshop and Prepare Summary

A workshop should be held for all permanent and seasonal residents, businesses and recreational lake users. The purpose is to promote awareness, set objectives, and discuss important values and issues. The information from these workshops will form the base for identifying and confirming the issues and actions to be considered in the final plan. A sample workshop agenda, brainstorming sheets and workshop summaries are provided in the **Resource Kit**.

A summary of the workshop should be prepared and made available to the community as soon as possible following the



Residents Meeting at Halls and Hawk Lakes

event. The summary may be made available on a website, circulated within a newsletter, or made available by email or specific contact points around the lake. The purpose of the summary is to promote awareness, to report on the findings of the workshops, and to determine if there are any objections or comments on the discussions to date. It is an essential component to keeping the process open and transparent.

PHASE 3 – Analyze and Summarize Background Information

Step 12 – Analyze Background Information and Summarize Results

The synopsis or analysis of the background information should be recorded and made available for anyone to review in either a separate background document or in the lake plan. The way you present your analysis will depend on the scope of your plan, the amount of information you collected, and the number and type (e.g., communication, land use, boating safety) of actions that will be recommended.

For small scoped plans a separate summary may not be required because the necessary information, observations and recommendations can be simply provided in the lake plan. However, if you are involved in a more comprehensive review another option is to prepare a summary of the information collected with the major observations and recommendations. This approach will likely produce a long list of recommendations, but it is important to recognize that not all of these recommendations may be selected for the final lake plan.

Several lakes, including Baptiste, have selected an option of preparing individual background reports (see **Resource Kit** for examples):

1. Land Use
2. Natural Areas and Features Inventory
3. Physical Elements
4. Social Elements
5. Architecture Study

When numerous reports are prepared it may be necessary to prepare a Summary of Observations and Recommendations for community members (**Resource Kit**).

Step 13 – Provide Draft Observations and Recommendations to Community

A summary of the findings from the background information should be made available to the community. A newsletter can be used to communicate the issues and provide a summary of information that has been collected. Other options are to provide all studies on a website and notify residents that the information is available and how to obtain a copy. Hardcopies of reports and studies should also be made available for those who do not have access to the internet.

Depending on the range of observations and recommendations, another workshop may be held to present the key findings and to seek consensus on the information to be discussed in the lake plan. This workshop should involve all the stakeholders including residential, businesses and municipal agencies. Any decisions or recommendations arising from the public review should be noted and made available for any interested parties.

Step 14 – Review Issues, Draft Strategies and Finalize Lake Plan

The steering committee should review the results of the workshop and the summary of background information and then prepare a list of priority actions (top 10 recommendations) and the content of the first draft lake plan. As well, any edits to the background information arising from the public review should be completed.

Play the “Development Game” to determine what the current official plan and zoning by-law would allow on your lake...

Develop your lake to the maximum according to current municipal land use regulations. What uses are permitted? What uses are prohibited? Are farms and golf courses permitted along shorelines as of right? Are environmentally sensitive areas like streams and wetlands protected?

Here is how you play:

- 1. Obtain copies of your current official plan and zoning by-law, and the schedules and zoning maps. If the zoning maps do not show property lines, try to obtain a copy from your local municipal office. Some municipalities have websites with linkages to documents and maps or interactive map programs. Other resources that provide good information are air photos (available from municipal office or MNR). Google EARTH is another excellent and easy tool that provides visual information on vegetation, streams, shorelines and terrain, although the resolution varies according to geographic location.*
- 2. Review the OP and ZB schedules (maps) and identify the applicable land use designations and zoning by-law provisions. Review the policies and provisions.*
- 3. First, identify your property and review the provisions. Are they appropriate?*
- 4. Review all residential properties. According to the required minimum lot frontage, how many more residential lots could be created along the shoreline or in the rural areas?*
- 5. Identify all provincially, regional and locally significant wetlands. Are they protected?*
- 6. Identify stream systems. Are they protected?*
- 7. Identify the location of commercial properties. What is the maximum permitted density of resort, or private camps?*

The discussion and results from this exercise will help you to determine whether the land use regulations that apply to your lake are appropriate and provide adequate protection.

...FPSI

PHASE 4 Prepare Draft Plan

Step 15 – Prepare Draft Plan

The purpose of this step is for the steering committee to consolidate all the information collected and prepare the draft lake plan. At this stage it is best to assign one person that is responsible for editing and distributing the draft plan for review and comments.

Step 16 – Circulate Draft Plan for Internal Review

The draft plan is circulated for an internal review by the members of the steering committee before it is released to the public, and as a result this step may require several reviews. It may also be helpful to have other people such as members of the Board of Directors or other interested individuals review the draft plan and provide their comments. This ‘outside’ perspective can often help to identify incorrect or misconstrued messages due to the form or tone of the language or

Advice...

Some of these steps may not be applicable for small lakes. You have to design the process that is right for your community.

recommendations. It is important that the lake plan message is not perceived as a threat and is something that everyone can agree to and support.

Once the steering committee has reviewed the draft plan, comments can be provided by either a meeting, by email or a combination of both. This editing process can involve 2 or 3 rounds of review; however, it is important that there is consensus among the steering committee members before it is released to the public. It may be advisable to have a third professional party review the plan, validate the science findings and offer comments. An outside opinion may also help to ensure that the messages are correctly delivered and the material is readable, easy to understand and does not alienate specific groups.

If a contentious issue occurs that is not reconcilable, you may decide to simply record this issue in the plan and defer any action or recommendation until the issue is settled.

PHASE 5 – Public Review Draft Plan

Step 17 – Release Draft Lake Plan for Public Review

The intent of this step is to circulate the lake plan for review by community members including shoreline and non-shoreline residents, the steering committee, the Board of Directors, the municipality, government agencies, non-government agencies, stewardship organizations, commercial operators and any other stakeholder involved in the process.

Ideally, a notice should be provided to every household or business in the community. The communication should indicate where to obtain a copy of the draft lake plan, if and when there will be a public meeting, the duration of the review period, including the last day for comments. If notice is provided in a regular newsletter, put it on the front page. Copies of the lake plan should be made available through website postings, delivered door-to-door or available at selected locations (e.g. marinas, stores, homes).

During this step, the steering committee should also present the draft plan to their Municipal Council to seek their comments and support for the proposed actions. It is important that ample time be scheduled for this review in order to provide everyone with the opportunity to review and comment. A 30 to 60 day review period is a common timeframe and extensions should also be considered depending on your schedule.

Step 18 – Conduct Open House

An open house or workshop should be held to provide a face-to-face opportunity for people to discuss their comments and concerns, and provide their support. While this can commonly be held at the AGM, it may be necessary to hold a separate meeting, particularly if there are a significant number of non-association members on your lake. The open house may also provide an opportunity to seek additional volunteers who would like to participate in any of the recommended actions. Sign up sheets should be provided at the open house and people should be personally engaged to identify those actions they would like to be involved with.

The open house should provide an overview of the content and actions of the lake plan and an open discussion period to seek comments. A comment sheet may be provided for those who have something to offer, but do not like presenting their ideas in front of an audience.

Notice for the open house should be provided at least 30 days in advance and distributed through a combination of approaches to ensure as many people as possible are contacted.

Step 19 – Consider Public Comments and Prepare Final Lake Plan

The steering committee should hold a final meeting to discuss the results of the public review and confirm consensus on the final content of the lake plan. After all the comments are received and considered, the final lake plan will be prepared, and reviewed by the steering committee before release.

PHASE 6 – Obtain Approval

Step 20 – Provide Intent to Approve Lake Plan

After the steering committee has prepared the final lake plan, it should be posted and a notice of intent to approve it provided to all community members. The notice should provide information on how to access the plan and when and how it will be approved.

Step 21 – Approve Lake Plan

After the steering committee has prepared the final lake plan, it should be presented at the association's AGM for endorsement by the members of the association. Other opportunities for non-members to approve the lake plan must be provided to ensure an inclusive process.

PHASE 7 – Action Plan Implementation

Step 22 – Release Lake Plan

A copy of the lake plan should now be available for everyone. Some associations have built the cost of publication into their process and have provided a copy to every household and business in the area. Others have provided notice and have made it available on their website for free and have sold hard copies for a nominal cost.

Step 23 – Implement Actions

It is now time to start implementing the actions of your lake plan. Hopefully, key individuals will have already been identified through the workshops or other actions. Review the action plan and identify the key players on your team that would be successful in managing and implementing particular actions or tasks.



*Clear/Storey/White Lake Plan – Official Ceremony Involving the Honourable
Donna Cansfield*

PHASE 8 – Monitoring and Updating Your Lake Plan

Step 24 – Monitor and Update

Your lake plan should identify a method of monitoring and updating the plan in a five year cycle or as new issues arise. The five year period for review should coincide with the 5 year Municipal Official Plan review required by the Planning Act. The key method of monitoring is for the steering committee to revisit the lake plan periodically to confirm the progress of the actions and to confirm that the original plan is still appropriate. The Peninsula Lake Plan was approved in 2000 and is one of the few lakes that have had a chance to review the original lake plan recommendations. One of the approaches they used was a new survey to determine whether the values or issues had changed since the plan was in place.

Section 2 – Getting Organized

Initiating a project and getting organized can be one of the toughest jobs. Whenever possible, the best approach is to utilize resources within your community, local municipal offices, and provincial agencies. Maximizing the use of local people and resources will result in many benefits including: reduced costs, increased awareness, encourage local stewardship, and create a network of local experts. As a result, the process has to remain flexible and the steering committee has to continually seek new people and ideas. A person dedicated to volunteer engagement and support would be helpful. Communication and education are essential components of this initiative.

Who should be on the steering committee?

The steering committee is a small team of people that will oversee the entire planning process including identifying the purpose and scope, objectives, timelines and work schedule. The composition of the team could include 4-8 friends, neighbours, and influential people including:

- Property owners and recreationalists
- Representatives of lake or ratepayer association(s)
- Representatives from Environment Council
- Local Municipal Councillors
- Local business/commercial operators
- Regional, local and provincial agency representatives (e.g., Trent-Severn Waterway, Ministry of Natural Resources, Conservation Authority, County Health Department, Ministry of the Environment, and local environmental non-government organizations)

Ideally, the team should include a broad range of skill sets including research, project management, facilitation, report writing and communication. A team leader (or co-leaders) should be identified to oversee key tasks in the process.

What is the association's role?

The lake plan is based on the consensus of all interested people in the community. The association has to play a careful role to ensure that it does not impose its own objectives and override or disregard some comments and concerns. Generally the role of the association includes:

- Facilitator of the process (depends on interested agencies)
- Fundraiser
- Communicator
- Consensus builder
- Approver

How much will it cost to develop the lake plan?

The cost of your lake plan and the process will depend on the same factors considered when deciding the scope and content of the plan and whether you would prefer professional assistance. The average cost of a small scoped lake plan could be between \$2,000 and \$5,000, while others can average between

Take Time to get Organized

It is important to take time to get organized when initiating the project.

This time is wisely spent because it will promote early buy-in and ownership of the results.

What can you afford?

Power Boat – 10 h.p., runabout or a cruiser?

Non-Power Boat – canoe, row boat or a sailboat?

\$5,000 and \$20,000. Some very comprehensive lake plans are more costly and have ranged from \$30,000 (Paudash Lake) to \$78,000 plus (Bobs and Crow Lakes).

The key thing to remember is to design the process to meet your needs and financial resources and not overburden the project with costs.

How can we fundraise?

There are many resources available through FOCA that can possibly support your efforts financially. As well, organizations such as Imagine Canada and Charity Village have great websites with a lot of great information about fundraising; how to do it and where to seek it.

The **Resource Kit** also contains a chart of additional funding opportunities, however, these are more related to implementation of the actions of the plan.

If you are seeking financial support from the community, there are 3 basic principles for successful fundraising that has been identified below by Andy Robinson¹.

1. **Identify your prospects** – strangers do not usually give to strangers and prospective donors must meet at least two of the following qualifications
 - a. Ability – Do they have any available money to give?
 - b. Belief – Do they care about the issue?
 - c. Contact – Do they have a relationship with any board members, volunteers or major donors?
2. **The closer you get, the more you raise** – people give money to people and not organizations. Therefore, you want as much human contact with the donor as reasonably possible. In terms of solicitation strategies, the following list descends from the most effective to the least effective:
 - a. Personal face-to-face contact – team of two preferred over one
 - b. Personal letter on personal stationary; telephone follow-up will improve the results
 - c. Personal phone call and a follow-up letter will improve results
 - d. Personalized letter
 - e. Impersonal letter (direct mail)
 - f. Impersonal telephone (telemarketing)
 - g. Fundraising benefit/special event
 - h. Door-to-door canvassing
 - i. Media/advertising

Good Links about Fundraising

www.imaginecanada.ca
www.charityvillage.com
www.on.ec.gc.ca/funding_e.html

The gift range chart – in a typical annual campaign, the money that organizations raise each year for general support:

- a. 10% of the donors yield 60% of the money
- b. 20% of the donors yield 20% of the money
- c. 70% of the donors yield 20% of the money

In other words, most organizations rely on a handful of major donors to generate the majority of their funding. Other fundraising approaches used by lake associations have included:

¹ Andy Robinson. Big Gifts for Small People

- Increase association membership fees for a designated period of time (1-2 years), or request an additional donation
- Request corporate donations from commercial or industrial operations in the watershed
- Cost sharing arrangements with your municipality, or conservation authority
- Run local fundraisers such as a cook book, art auctions from artisans on the lake, raffles at the corn roast, barbeque, and silent auction. (*Baptiste Lake Association raised about \$30,000 in one combined dinner and silent auction event*)
- Severn TIM-BR Mart Booster Program – the Severn TIM-BR Mart provided a new Booster Card which when used at the time of purchase will generate a 1% rebate on the total sale less applicable taxes to an escrow account for the Severn River Property Owners Association
- House parties
- Seek charitable status

How can we reduce costs?

The more you can delegate to volunteers for in-kind support or volunteer hours the more you can reduce your expenditures. Cost savings will be achieved when you are able to:

- Recruit volunteers
- Obtain free services (printing and office services)
- Get the municipality or other local agency to undertake mapping or consider the use of their staffing resource
- Trade advertising space in your newsletter for service
- Hire summer students
- Recruit your local stewardship or Ontario rangers
- Consider spreading the project over a longer period of time

How do we define the scope of the lake plan?

Scope deals with two components; geography and content.

Geography – ideally a lake plan should encompass the immediate watershed that flows directly into your lake. Some lake plans have initially applied to only the shoreline residential and business and government properties; however, more recent initiatives have included lands within the watershed and/or the viewscape. The watershed includes all streams and land that drain into the lake, and the viewscape is all lands that can be seen from any point on the lake.

Content – the content of the lake plan will depend on the approach you choose: stewardship, land use or a combination of both (see Chapter 3 and the **Resource Kit** for examples of lake plans).

The Vision Statement
describes what your Lake should “look, feel, taste, smell and be” in the future.

How do we prepare a vision statement, principles and targets?

A vision statement identifies future direction and it is an essential component of the community planning process. The vision statement describes what your lake should “look, feel, taste, smell and be” in the future. The vision statement also provides a general description of the characteristics that are important to all people: residents, commercial and government stakeholders, and lake users.

These characteristics and values are the most highly valued by its community members and the intent of the vision is to clearly identify and seek their protection and enhancement, so that they may be enjoyed by current and future generations.

Understanding what your vision, principles and targets are will provide a very clear statement of what you are striving for and how the process will be conducted. The vision will help to prepare consistent messages and actions, promote public understanding, and will enable you to monitor your actions to determine their effectiveness.

The questions in Figure 5 – Vision Quest tool will help you to develop a vision for your lake plan.

Figure 5 – Vision Quest

	Definition	Task
Vision or Big Picture	A vision statement provides general guidance for what your community should be and will look like in the future. It describes a common focal point that is important to all community members.	What do you want your lake or river community to be in the future?
Principles	Principles identify the fundamental beliefs or values that the community has regarding the preparation and implementation of the lake plan. They are the rules to follow through the process.	What are the guidelines to be followed in preparing and implementing the lake plan?
Targets	Specific targets should address the values or issues that you are dealing with. Most lake plans address 7 categories (see below) but you must decide which targets best apply to your lake. For each target, provide a definitive statement about what you want to achieve in the future.	What are the specific targets that you want to achieve/maintain?

Source – French Planning Services Inc.

Your association’s by-laws may have a set of objectives that should be considered. Here are a couple of sample vision statements prepared by Paudash

and Fairy lakes that reflect the values and future vision that residents, commercial operators and government stakeholders share.

***Our vision for the future of OUR Lake is...** A place where water quality, wildlife habitat, natural beauty, recreational opportunities, and peace and tranquility is maintained and improved for present and future generations to enjoy.*

...Paudash Lake

***Our Community Envisions OUR Lake to be a place where...** The beauty of the landscape, the tranquility of the surroundings and the quality of the water are reserved; wildlife, fish, and plant habitat are safeguarded; the community is actively involved in stewardship; there is an appropriate balance between economic development and the preservation of the environment; and local residents and visitors to Muskoka will have access to the lake's recreational opportunities.*

...Fairy Lake

Principles identify the fundamental beliefs or values that the community has regarding the preparation and implementation of the lake plan. They can be considered to be the rules to follow through the process. The following are examples of principles:

1. **Protect Lake Character** – the natural, social and historic character of the lake must be protected, enhanced and rehabilitated.
2. **Focus Plan on End Results** – the plan will focus on end results and balance a range of means to achieve those results such as regulation, communication and education.
3. **Implementation Approach** – implementation will favour educational processes and voluntary compliance over legislative and regulatory constraints.
4. **Adaptive Management** – adaptive management is a long term process which allows for continual adjustments to the system to obtain improvements to the natural ecosystem.
5. **Planning Based on Best Available Information** – the best available information at the time of decision-making must be used.
6. **Thorough Assessment of Options** – a thorough assessment of options and approaches must be undertaken in an open and participatory way.
7. **All decisions are based on an effort to achieve community consensus** – without consensus, even the best of plans will be open to objections and ridicule from stakeholders.

Targets are a specific set of end points that can be used to measure the success of activities. Here is a list of common targets to consider:

1. **Water quality** – the water of our lake should not contain contaminants or nutrients in excess of current Provincial Water Quality Objectives.

2. **Fish and wildlife** – our lake should support a sustainable fish population including optimum habitat for its naturally reproducing native fish and maintain stability in the biodiversity of wildlife species and their habitat. The introduction of “invasive species” such as zebra mussels and purple loosestrife must be prevented and existing populations need to be managed to minimize impacts.
3. **Natural shorelines and riparian areas** – the shoreline can be described as the “ribbon of life” that supports a diverse range of fish and wildlife species. The protection and rehabilitation of the shoreline (littoral, riparian and upland areas) should be promoted to increase the amount of natural shoreline.
4. **Natural appearance and vistas** – the natural vista should be maintained for future generations. The size, location and design of buildings and structures should have a minimal impact on the natural appearance of the shoreline and the landscape.
5. **Economic and property development** – the competitiveness and viability of existing resorts and commercial operations are to be supported. A cooperative working relationship has to be fostered between residential and commercial members of the community to ensure that proposed commercial and residential developments and activities respect the environment and character of the lake, as well as maintain property values.
6. **Historical, cultural and natural character** – the historical, cultural and natural character of the lake is to be recognized, protected and restored, where appropriate. Future public, commercial and residential development must complement and be compatible with the historical, cultural and natural character of the lake.
7. **Social life** – a range of social and recreational activities are to be encouraged that are consistent with the natural character of the lake, preserve the health and ambience of the lake, and as foster a sense of community around the lake.

Can we prepare the plan ourselves and when do we need help?

The concept of community-based planning is to put the process and activities into the hands of the community. The benefit of this approach is that people on the lake are educated and continue to work and share their knowledge with others on the lake. Hiring someone to complete a plan entirely for you without community engagement or participation will produce an ill-fated plan that will likely end up on the shelf. Where possible, always engage people in the process of preparing the plan.

Every lake or shoreline community and their resources are unique and every association has taken a slightly different approach to ‘doing it themselves’, due to the availability of local resource people and financial support.

The process and content of the lake plan should be flexible in order to maximize the talents of the members of your association. One of the first tasks to be accomplished will be to identify who is willing to help and what people can do: (see **Resource Kit** for the Volunteer Skills List)

- Skills that will benefit the association include editing, publishing, typing, biologists, naturalists – birders, botanists, desktop publishing, GIS mapping, field technicians, anglers, etc.
- Resources and tools that will help include printing, photography, facilitation, coordination, recruiting volunteers, fund raising, etc.

The hardest, yet most rewarding approach has been the use of local resource people who are willing to volunteer to collect information and prepare portions of the plan.

Where you lack the human resources, an option is to work with a consultant to assist and coach you through the process, or who may provide research, planning or science-based knowledge in order to verify information and public reports. There are many reasons why a consultant may be considered:

1. Ensure the lake plan represents the interests of all community members
2. Confirm that the process has been open and transparent
3. Verify scientific information to maintain credibility
4. Provide third party facilitation or mediation
5. Provide direction and focus for the group based on experience

Sometimes seeking professional advice at the outset of the process may provide timely assistance, especially in scoping out the goals, objectives and options available.

Where do I get background information on natural heritage?

The **Resource Kit** provides a sample work list of potential sources of information for you to collect; however, it is not necessary to complete every item on the list. You should do a preliminary scan of the items you would like to address and then collect the pertinent information. Several of these information categories listed in the **Resource Kit** may be identified as information gaps, which can be inventoried as an action item of the lake plan.

The following is an approach for collecting natural resource information:

- a) Collect information from MNR and MOE
 - √ Water Quality Information – contact the Lake Partner Program (MOE). The goal of MOE program is ‘protecting the quality of Ontario’s inland lakes by involving citizens in a volunteer-based water quality monitoring program’. The focus is on Water Clarity and the Total

Water Quality Information Source

Contact the Area Biologist / Ecologist at the local MNR District Office and the local MOE office, as well as these web sites:

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR
www.ene.gov.on.ca/
www.ec.gc.ca/
www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/lake_partner/index.htm

Phosphorous content of lakes in Ontario. This program has been in place since 1990, and the data (collected by lake association members) is readily available (for no charge) on their web site.

- √ Fish Community Information – contact the local MNR area biologist or planner for historical data including: water quality; fisheries; fish community, fish habitat and rehabilitation projects; natural heritage information; past and current programs and projects; and communications with the public (letters and other personal information under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIPPA) are not allowed to be photocopied). Most MNR files will have ‘lake data sheets’ for fisheries that have information regarding dissolved oxygen and temperature profiles, as well as alkalinity, conductivity, nutrient levels and organic carbon.

Fish Information Source

- √ Contact the Area Biologist/Ecologist from the local MNR District Office, as well as both the MNR and NHIC web sites:

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR
www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/nhic.cfm

Future Fish Projects

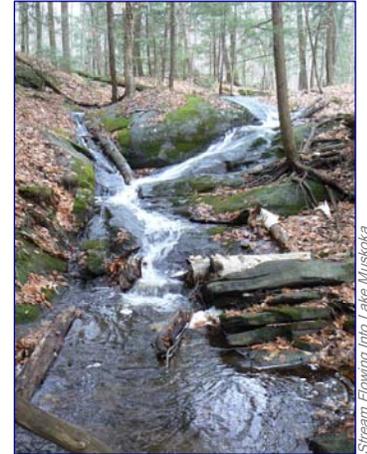
If MNR does not have fish habitat mapping information, MNR will often work with Associations to map Bass/Sunfishes spawning areas. If you are interested in collecting this type of information you could initiate a shoreline tour and GPS nest site locations. Bass and sunfishes are particularly easy to identify spawning areas because they all build nests (circular gravel nests or sand and vegetation piles), which are quite obvious structures along the lake bottom near shore.

Heritage – contact the local MNR area biologist or planner for natural heritage information such as: conservation reserves; ANSI’s – Areas of Scientific Interest; provincially significant wetlands and other wetlands; species at risk occurrences; heronries and raptor nests; wintering deer yards and other wildlife habitat; invasive species; any planning (conflicts) issues; and shoreline vegetation inventory. Some of this information is considered sensitive, so MNR may be hesitant to provide this information. The location of important deer wintering yards may be identified on the Crown Land use Atlas website <http://crownlanduseatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca/>.

- b) Contact other sources such as stewardship councils (see FOCA list of Contacts in **Resource Kit**), local heritage foundation and other local agencies. The information you should be requesting includes: heritage sites; shoreline inventory program data; water quality testing data; dark skies initiative outline; and other local stewardship programs. Most of the information is found on-line and some municipalities such as the District of Muskoka also have on-line mapping which may provide locations of key features. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO, Fish Habitat Management Branch) may also be an additional source of these types of data.
- c) Collect information from the field – if no other information exists and it is needed to prepare the first draft. When information is not available it is often

identified as a gap and its collection is prioritized with other data needs. Examples of potential field data collection by association volunteers over the spring, summer and fall include:

- √ **Inventory Streams** – spring (at peak flow) and summer/fall (at low flow). Volunteers could tour the area to inventory the number of streams flowing into your lake or river; this includes permanent and seasonal streams (you may find areas that look like streams but without water flow – these should be counted). Take a handheld GPS (geographical positioning system) and take a location point and a picture. Take notes about the stream substrate type (sand, gravel, cobble, rock, and boulder); is there vegetation; what land use is occurring along its shoreline; and are fish or wildlife present.



Stream Flowing into Lake Muskoka

Stream Information Source

1:50,000 Topography maps are available at the local map store or the Ontario Base Maps available from MNR. Other sources of information include the Area Biologist/Ecologist from the local MNR District Office, as well as both the MNR and NHIC web sites:

www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR
www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/nhic.cfm

- √ **Wildlife Sightings** – collect local sightings (mammals, snakes, turtles, amphibians, birds, and insects) and nest sites from residents (current and historical) include hunting and angling sightings and stories. Talk to birders and other naturalists for other sightings. Contact local biologists to verify all the information collected. Identify the location of *Deer wintering yards on the Crown Land use Atlas website* <http://crownlanduseatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca/>.

Wildlife Inventory Projects

Conduct several boat tours over seasons and years to see what habitat is being used along the shoreline and GPS the location.

Habitat sites include: large raptor nests on the crowns of trees; heronry colonies, often near wetlands in trees; loon nest sites, often on small floating islands in quiet bays; turtles often lay their eggs along sandy or gravel shorelines or road shoulders; snakes often nest in down-woody debris, wood piles, and other moist/warm areas; and beaver lodges and muskrat dens along shorelines.



Bobcat Sighting in Hudson Township

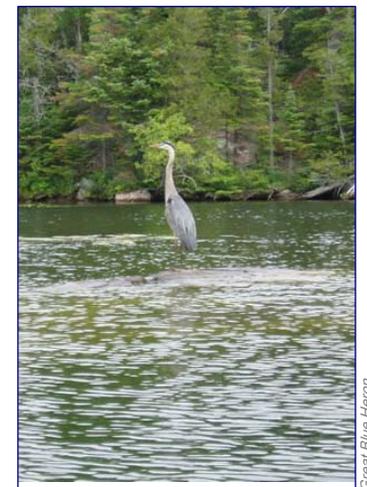
Bird Information Sources

Bird Studies Canada www.birdstudiescanada/bsc-esc.org
Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas www.birdsontario.org/atlas/
Long Point Bird Observatory www.bsc-esc.org/
Natural Heritage Information Centre
www.mnr.gov.on.ca/MNR/nhic/nhic.cfm

Future Bird Inventory Projects

With the help of a local bird club or birder, volunteers could implement a year-long study of bird activity in the watershed; watch for migrating and resident birds. Birds are most active in spring/early summer. See Canadian Wildlife Federation.

www.cwf-fcf.org/



Great Blue Heron

Shoreline Vegetation – if a shoreline vegetation inventory has not been done by the MNR, the association volunteers could initiate their own by conducting a boat tour along the perimeter of your water-body to identify the following:

- Areas with aquatic vegetation (wetlands)
- Shoreline vegetation structure (trees, shrubs, lawn, concrete) (and if you can list species names, this would be an added value)
- Lake bottom substrate (sand, gravel, cobble, rock, boulder, logs)
- The presence of shoreline infrastructure; and land use.

Shoreline Vegetation Assistance

Some heritage foundations, local municipalities, conservation authorities or other agencies or NGOs either conduct these assessments or may provide assistance. For example the District of Muskoka have completed these shoreline vegetation assessments on many lakes such as – Peninsula, Bella Rebecca and others.

- √ **Data Analyses** – is required in order to make the content of lake plan accurate. Data interpretation should be done once all the relevant information has been collected. However, water quality and natural heritage interpretation will require support and confirmation by a biologist.

Benthic Monitoring Projects

Benthos are small aquatic animals living along the shoreline (e.g. crayfish, snails, damsel flies, etc.). Join the MOE program for Benthic Inventories of streams (contact the Dorset Environmental Science Centre for more information). MOE teaches you how to perform a rapid “kick and sweep” inventory method of your local streams to identify the type and abundances of benthic invertebrate/bug species in your streams (these are indicators of thermal regime and ecological health).

Another great site to check is Environment Canada’s Ecological Monitoring and Assessment Network.

www.eman-rese.ca/

Section 3 – Engaging Your Community

The lake planning process is designed to collect the views of all stakeholders and to reflect a consensus view that will carry weight with those who are in a position to make decisions affecting the lake, such as your municipal council or Ministry of Natural Resources, especially when there are Crown owned shorelines and land.

The steering committee will develop draft recommendations (see **Resource Kit** for examples) based on the collection of background information, the input received from all stakeholders (municipal, provincial, residential and commercial property owners and visitors), and will seek approval of these from the lake community. The municipal government plays an integral role in the development and implementation of the plan and it is essential that they are involved throughout the entire process.

There has to be opportunities to include every person on the lake, including residential, commercial and other lake users.

This must not be a process that addresses the needs of one interest group.

What is community consensus?

According to Wikipedia 'consensus' has two common definitions. The first one is a general agreement among the members of a given group or community, each of which exercises some discretion in decision-making and follow-up action. The second is a theory and practice of getting such agreements. The lake planning process applies both definitions.

Achieving consensus requires serious treatment of every group member's considered opinion. This requires consideration of opinions in support and in opposition to the lake plan or to any specific recommendation or action. When great attention is given to points of disagreement, it is important to review points where consensus is achieved and this ensuing discussion will often improve consensus. In cases where ongoing opposition is unavoidable any subsequent decisions must be done with great attention to minimize damage to relationships.

Therefore, the principles of consensus are:

- All people will strive to work together to reach majority agreement in the process and in the approval of the plan
- Throughout the lake planning process the association agrees to exhaust all efforts to reach consensus on any particular issue throughout the process by working with opposing opinions to find a common position

How do we provide opportunities for consensus building?

The following activities and lake planning stages provide many opportunities throughout the process to build and confirm consensus for actions and recommendations.

- Getting Organized
- Collecting Background Information
- Workshops
- Surveys
- Meetings



Dot Demographics – Resident Workshop – Jacks Lake

What are the ingredients for a successful process?

The following are essential ingredients for you to consider:

Include everyone in and around the lake. It is essential that this is a lake wide project and not the pet project of one individual.

- The process must be open and transparent – this means that all relevant information is provided in a timely manner and is accessible to all people at all times throughout the process. Summaries of meetings and especially workshops should be provided so that people can confirm what was discussed and what was agreed to.
- A communication plan – notify as many people as possible about the lake planning process through mailings, open houses, displays, demonstration projects, road associations, libraries, websites, bulletin boards, newspapers, municipal publications, and handouts
- Have one central communicator for everyone on the lake
- Provide opportunities to involve all people in the community; this includes members and non-members of the association, seasonal/permanent residents shoreline, urban and rural residents, business and interest groups

Who is in your community?

Your community is made up of many different people that must be considered in the process:

- Individuals – residents (seasonal, permanent, shoreline, urban and rural, association and non-association members)
- Business Operators – resorts, marinas, cottage service industry, restaurants, real estate, contractors, building supply, farmers and developers
- Local Government – municipalities, cities, towns regions and counties
- Federal and Provincial Government – Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of the Environment, Environment Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Canadian Coast Guard, Parks Canada, Trent Severn Waterway
- Conservation Authorities
- Power Generation Operators
- Non-Government Organizations
- Stewardship Councils (see FOCA list of contacts in **Resource Kit**)
- Recreationalists
- Aboriginals – First Nation and Metis
- Local Committees and Ratepayer Groups
- Researchers and Academics

Find Ontario Government staff and offices at:

www.infogo.gov.on.ca/infogo/mainPage.do

Prepare an up to date list of all property owners, interested people and municipal and provincial agencies. Obtain mailing lists of property owners from the municipal office and review yellow pages and local business directories for business operators. Due to the Freedom of Information Act, some municipalities may not provide this information, but require a representative of the lake plan steering committee or association to compile their own. Local offices of Ontario Ministries of Natural Resources and the Environment are also available on the Internet or the government listings in the telephone book.

Most of Ontario is organized in municipalities such as Regions, Counties, Districts and Townships. Further north, there are still many areas in Ontario that are

unorganized districts. In these areas there are no local municipalities with official plans and zoning by-laws and many of the local powers are vested in the Ontario Ministries of Natural Resources, Municipal Affairs, and the Environment. Contact with these agencies will be important to gather information and garner rapport.

What are some approaches to communicate with our community?

The method of communication depends on the number of volunteers available, financing and the messages that you would like to convey. Simple communication products (pamphlets and other written material) are easy ways of getting a message out and making people aware of upcoming events or issues. The following is a list of approaches that lake associations have used. A combination of these options including face-to-face contact will increase the chances of people receiving your message:

- **Newsletters** – the newsletter is used by almost every association as the main vehicle for communicating with members. These are mailed out once a year, or several times throughout the year (seasonally) and the primary costs involved are printing and mailing. Some associations are also sending these products electronically by email. Whenever possible, newsletters should be sent to everyone in the community and not just the members of the association.
- **Social Gatherings** – social gatherings provide an informal face-to-face opportunity for people to talk and socialize, which often builds better relationships. These functions can also provide a means to connect with new volunteers, get messages out, obtain feedback and raise money. Common social gatherings include luncheons, spring pancake breakfasts, corn roasts, summer barbeques, dock-to-dock progressive dinners, silent auctions, golf tournaments, fishing tournaments, and summer and winter regattas.
- **Dock-to-Dock Drops** – while many associations have used this method, FOCA has recently initiated a ‘docktalk’ service as a landowner contact program to pass on information about sustainable shoreline living. Some associations prepare information in a plastic bag loaded with a stone and dropped at every dock by young people on the lake.
- **Website** – there are many great examples of lake association websites (see **Resource Kit**). Websites can be as simple as providing contact numbers and postings on new information about the lake, to providing an easy means for people to download reports and other important information. Some associations have hired a web master to prepare the website, and many others rely on the talents of volunteers and their children to help out.
- **Committees** – committee members are responsible to continually contact others to seek input into association business and initiatives.
- **Bulletin Boards** – a ‘Community Welcome Sign’ at the main entrances to the community (in the vicinity of the Cottage Watch signs) can contain a “Welcome” brochure box attached to the sign to hold generic information about the cottage association and other information about the cottage community (meetings, items for sale, hunting and burning regulations, and a listing of local contractors or other operators). Someone should, however, take responsibility for managing and updating the information to ensure quality control.

*“Signs posted a month in advance seem to draw more response than mailings which so often seem to get misplaced especially for seasonal folks who come up on weekends only.
...Paint Lake*

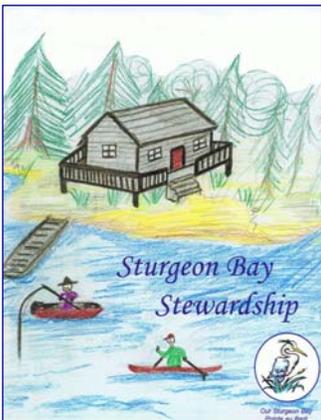


Association Road Sign - Big Bald Lake

"the manual delivery of information can be time consuming but it provides a good opportunity for personal dialogue with members and opportunity to collect membership fees"

...Paint Lake

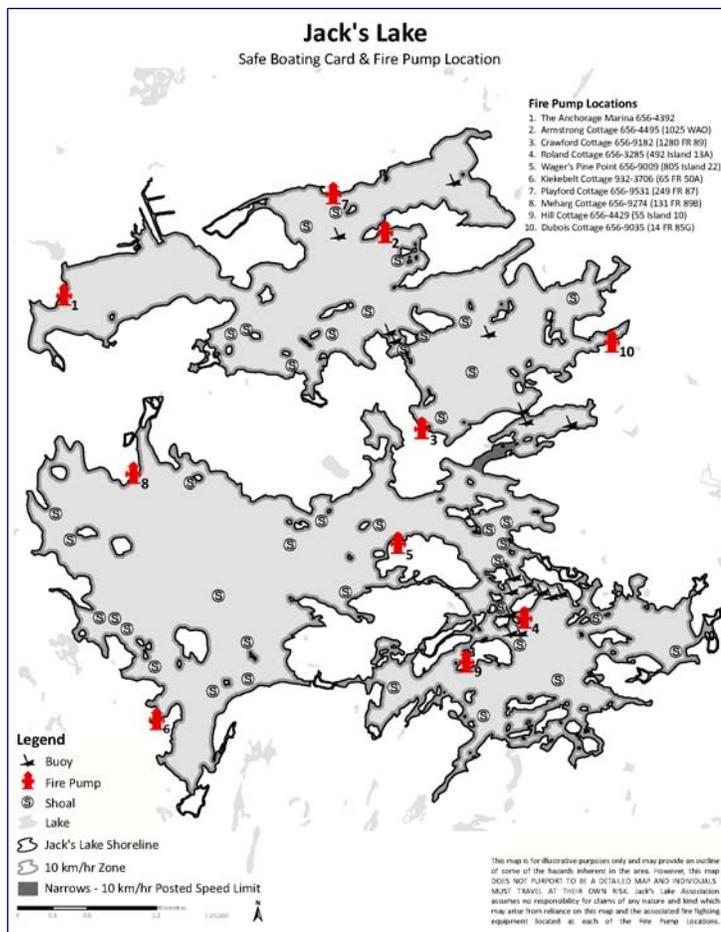
- **Newspaper Releases and Articles** – the cost of this approach often deters its use; however, many local newspapers will receive and publish free 'news releases' or other articles of importance to the community. One approach is to have volunteers prepare articles to be released several times throughout the year.
- **Radio Announcements** – Radio announcements of upcoming community events are often free and can be used as last minute reminders of an upcoming workshop or social event.
- **Telephone** – when face-to-face contact cannot be done, the next best approach is by telephone. A phone tree can be helpful in this situation... a member calls 2 other members who in turn call 2 other members, etc. The disadvantage of this approach is that the message can sometimes get distorted, so this method should only be used for straightforward messages (e.g., meeting dates and times etc.).
- **Mail outs** – mailing out a specific notice can be costly and timely but can be used to get additional messages out in between newsletters, such as important reminders of upcoming events.
- **Email** – the least time-consuming and expensive approach is using email, but this requires obtaining and updating email addresses as they change. If this approach is selected, it is also important to realize that some people will not have access to email and additional effort must be made to ensure that everyone is contacted (perhaps with a shorter mailing list).
- **Door-to-Door Contact** – face-to-face contact is the best approach for delivering and collecting information. Some associations have divided their communities by roads or shoreline features (bays, islands) and assigned one person as a road or area captain. Road captains would be responsible for speaking directly with people, and gathering survey information, among other things. Personal contact has worked well on Bobs and Crow Lake and Paint Lake.
- **Welcome Kits** – similar to the welcome wagon idea, these kits can be provided to new property owners through real estate agents or to existing residents by a member of the association. The kit could include a welcome letter with key information for new residents, along with a copy of the local landfill schedule, the association's most recent newsletter, a membership application form and a fresh baked pie of the season. It can also contain a copy of the lake plan, when completed. The pie idea is from Paint Lake ... a great idea! (see **Resource Kit**).
- **Business Partners** – communication material regarding upcoming events, lake plan reports, workshops, surveys and meetings can be distributed through local marinas and stores. Bulletin boards can be constructed by volunteers to keep this information neat and tidy.
- **Specific Purpose Pamphlet** – these pamphlets should be prepared for specific purposes such as promoting stewardship, good lakeside development practices and safe boating practices.
- **Workshops** – formal or informal workshops are organized to promote an exchange of information on specific issues, or can be educational and family oriented, such as building bat boxes, conducting shoreline surveys, or photography lessons.
- **Lake Map** – everyone wants a good map of the lake for the boat, or posted in their home. Some basic lake maps simply display the shoreline



Vertical text: Welcome Wagon Kit - Sturgeon Bay

perimeter, roads, property lines and 911 addresses. Other maps can provide more detailed information such as water depths, environmentally sensitive areas, slow wake zones or the location of fire pumps and buoys.

- **Membership Directory** – contains a listing and map of all property owners on a lake, and emergency and agency contact information. Some associations periodically update this information on a 1 to 3 year cycle and use it for mail outs and notices. If the information is to be available for public use, consider obtaining a release from property owners.
- **Yearbook** – a yearbook can take a significant amount of work, but is a great way to collect and display all the relevant information in one spot for easy reference (e.g. 'Reflections' - The Kawagama Lake Association).
- **Tax Bill Notice Inserts** – if your municipality provides this service it is particularly effective in reaching the 'out-of-area' landowners.
- **Boating Card** – similar to the lake map, the boating card is a small laminated map of the lake with key information on speed limit and low wake zones, preferred direction of skiing (on small lakes), location of fire pumps, as well as statutory boating regulations and volunteer best practices for boating. The card should be kept in the boat.



Stony Lake



Moon River

Resource Link for
more information
on Community
Based Marketing

www.cbsm.com

How do we create effective communications?

Effective communications is an essential component of organizational success because it will produce better results (i.e., clearly understood messages that will encourage participation and buy-in). The following is a checklist of matters to consider when producing communication products:

- √ Identify possible barriers – explore your audience’s attitudes and behaviour before developing and sending messages
- √ Use a credible messenger and, where possible, use personal contact
- √ Ensure message is clear, specific, vivid, personal and concrete
- √ Frame message to indicate what the individual may lose by not acting, rather than what she/he is saving by acting
- √ If the message is threatening, ensure that realistic solutions are included
- √ Consider the use of one-sided vs. two-sided messages
- √ Make it easy for folks to remember what to do and how and when to do it
- √ Integrate personal or community goals into program delivery
- √ Model the behaviour and provide examples of desired conduct or behaviour
- √ Ensure that folks will share the message with others
- √ Provide feedback to individuals and community regarding positive impact of sustainable behaviours

Source – Fostering Sustainable Behaviour – An Introduction to Community Based Marketing (Doug McKenzie-Mohr, William Smith, 1999)

How do we take the pulse of our community?

There are many approaches to understanding the values and issues that face your community. The best approaches include conducting a survey, facilitating a workshop, and providing comment sheets and suggestion boxes. Everybody reacts and responds to different approaches, some need to be engaged, while others prefer to remain at a distance.

Applying a combination of approaches and verifying the results will increase your success. However, there will always be a number of people who do not want to get involved and are happy to let others lead and participate in the process.

The lake plan will gain validity and standing as more and more members of the community buy into it and provide their approval and support. Every effort should be made to have at least the simple majority of the community approve the final version of the plan.

When should we use surveys?

Surveys provide a great way to obtain a response from your community; however, they can be time consuming to create, answer, and to collate the results. Surveys can be used at various stages of your process, such as:

- √ Start-up
- √ Gathering information
- √ Confirming consensus

There are several software packages (Microsoft ACCESS, EXCEL) that may assist with compiling the results; however we have found that a web-based product such as www.surveymonkey.com does a great job in gathering and compiling the results for about \$25.00/month.

Key tips when completing a survey:

1. Only ask what you need to know and not what you would like to know.
2. Keep the survey short. People do not respond well to lengthy surveys, and long surveys are difficult to compile and can often have useless information.
3. Use postage paid envelopes.
4. Always test your survey several times with different people (before distributing it) to make sure the language is clearly understood, non-confrontational and non-suggestive and that the questions are easy to answer.

Why are workshops effective?

Workshops provide an opportunity for face-to-face contact and for people to discuss and be aware of the concerns of others. However, workshops require participation and a specific time and place, so do not expect to have all your invitees attend. In order to attract participants, workshops should be short, engaging and respond to needs. All workshop discussions should be summarized into a workshop summary and made available in a timely manner, so that people have an opportunity to comment on what was discussed. The **Resource Kit** provides sample workshop agendas, worksheets and summaries.

How do we recruit and work with volunteers?

Volunteers are the heart of our waterfront communities and bring to the table enthusiasm, dedication and often, specialized knowledge and expertise. The key to success with your volunteer workforce lies in the recruitment of the right person with the right skills for the right job at the right time. The following are some key ingredients to working successfully with volunteers:

1. Project Plan

- √ Prepare a written project plan that clearly outlines goals and objectives before initiating the project. It should include a prioritized task list and fundraising.
- √ Identify the required skills and resources (skills are related to editing, typing, publishing, biology, history, planning, communication, and volunteer coordination, and a service could be photocopying, printing, photo and map production) (see **Resource Kit**).
- √ Identify key target dates for events and deliverables, including the completion and approval of the lake plan.
- √ Identify key contacts and organizations (e.g., Municipalities, MNR, MOE and other stakeholders or experts) that may be willing to assist with the development and acceptance of the lake plan.

The key to success with your volunteer workforce lies in the recruitment of the right person with the right skills for the right job at the right time.

*More information
about volunteers*

www.evergreen.ca
www.volunteers.ca

2. **Set up a system for working with volunteers**
 - √ Have at least one person focused on managing your project and consider this a necessity and not a luxury.
 - √ Ensure that there is one person responsible for the development of each component of the plan and that each component is clearly defined and does not overlap with other components. Several volunteers can work on one component; however, one person should be the leader and main contact for that component.
 - √ Consider assigning a contact person to manage volunteers.
3. **Understand and Communicate Your Needs**
 - √ Provide each volunteer with the project plan (or a simple communication package).
 - √ Clearly express your needs and task objectives that will address the project plan goals.
 - √ Assign volunteers specific tasks and encourage the feeling that each individual is truly contributing to the project.
4. **Recruiting**
 - √ Use flyers, newsletters, a web site, notices or verbal requests at the AGM to solicit support.
 - √ Word of mouth is typically the most effective vehicle (network, network, network).
 - √ Request help by advertising for specific jobs on committees.
5. **Prevent Volunteer Burnout**
 - √ Ensure project goals are realistic, relevant and achievable.
 - √ Keep the workload manageable.
 - √ Give volunteers an opportunity to say no or to take breaks.
 - √ Recognize and reward your volunteers
 - √ Celebrate when the job is done.

What are some simple volunteer jobs?

There is a wide range of tasks at each planning step to engage people. While volunteers need rewarding and fulfilling jobs, there also has to be a mixture of simple tasks that people can easily do (e.g., bring the coffee and donuts for a meeting). Here is a list of volunteer jobs for the lake planning process:

1. **Compile a List of all Shoreline Property Owners**
 - √ Contact your municipal office and review the property assessment information to compile an address list, in particular if your lake association does not have such a list or if the list is incomplete.
2. **Research Municipal Planning Policies**
 - √ Contact County and Township staff to obtain a copy of the Official Plan and Zoning By-law, Tree Cutting By-law, Site Plan Control By-law, Pit and Quarry By-law, Storm Water Management Guidelines, and others.
 - √ Review documents and prepare a summary for the Land Use Section in the lake plan.

3. Research Crown Land Use Policies

- √ Contact the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and obtain information on applicable policies (Ontario Living Legacy, Conservation Reserves, Enhanced Management Areas, Forest Resource Management Centre, Public Lands Act, Forest Management Plans).
- √ Contact the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM), which is the provincial body responsible for land use management and mineral resource development, for information regarding aggregate extraction, mineral formations and any claims in the area.
- √ Contact the Ministry of the Environment to obtain information on the samples taken from your lake (under the Lake Partnership Program).
- √ Review documents and prepare summary for Land Use Section in the lake plan.

4. Conduct Inventory of Shoreline Infrastructure and Vegetation

- √ Conduct an inventory of shoreline infrastructure such as docks, boathouses, shore walls, and all other human-made structures.
- √ Conduct an inventory of shoreline vegetation, including terrestrial and aquatic plants.
- √ Contact MNR and non-government organizations to obtain information on vegetation that is native to the region and those plant species that are potentially invasive.

5. Assemble Association's Records on Water Quality (if applicable)

- √ Obtain all information collected by your association on water quality monitoring (many lake associations have relied on the MOE Lake Partner Program to maintain records on water quality readings).
- √ Prepare a summary for the Natural Section in the lake plan.

6. Canadian Loon Lakes Survey

- √ Contact with Canadian Loon Lakes Survey (Environment Canada) for information to initiate a loon nesting site survey.
- √ Monitor hatching success by counting the number of hatchlings.

7. Compile History of Area

- √ Research the human history of the watershed and prepare a report for the Social Section in the lake plan.
- √ Collect post cards and old pictures.
- √ Prepare a draft map of significant historical sites



8. Conduct Boat Survey

- √ Conduct boating capacity assessment.
- √ Contact OPP for accident reports.
- √ Inventory navigational constraints and assess current warning systems.
- √ Inventory mooring areas for transient boaters, if necessary.

9. Photograph Shorelines and Landscapes

- √ Using a digital camera, take pictures of every property, distant shoreline and significant landscape or feature to document what the lake currently looks like.

10. Inventory Architectural Styles

- √ Assess architectural styles on the lake to determine and describe common characteristics (colour, height, bulk, scale, design).

11. Night Light Survey

- √ Conduct night photography session (by boat) and identify 'hot spots' approaches for lessening the impact of lights.

12. Prepare Summary of Residential and Stakeholder Workshop

- √ Attend residential and stakeholder workshop and prepare a summary of discussions (templates are available).

13. Memories

- √ Request short essays on Memories (on the history of cottagers and residents or major events, such as tornadoes or floods)

14. Birding Inventory

- √ Local birders can assemble a list of species found in the area
- √ Contact the [Boreal Songbird Initiative](#) and other organizations to obtain information on birds that may be seen around your lake

15. Wildlife Inventory

- √ Contact MNR and non-government organizations to obtain more information on all wildlife that is native to your region (including fish and aquatic species).
- √ Find out about invasive species that may be present or able to survive in your lake.

16. Geology Report

- √ Gather information type of mineral deposits and identify areas where mineral claims have been established

How do we motivate people?

The key to motivating people is to fulfill an interest. Here are some suggestions from Mountain Lake:

- Catch people's interest at the AGM by having a fabulous speaker
- Run a workshop or discussion "Why you came to the lake" and "What is special to you about it?"
- Provide specific jobs for volunteers (collecting information on fisheries or water quality) to tap into the specific interests/talents of people
- Increase personal contact through road or neighbourhood representatives
- Recognize special efforts through annual awards such as "Volunteer of the Year"
- Identify a cause: improve the fishery, monitor loon nesting, dark sky night, shorelines, appropriate development
- The best volunteers do so because they are interested or committed to the project
- Engage all members who show an interest, especially new members to the association or lake community
- Remember that no task is too small, and that there are many small tasks that can make a new member feel welcome

*The best volunteers are those that are interested and committed to the project.
...Mountain Lake*

How do we approve our plan?

Most associations have approved their plans through their Annual General Meeting (AGM) by asking for a resolution to accept the plan and then a show of hands to indicate approval. A resolution is a simple approach and is most appropriate for smaller lakes where there is a single interest group. However, when past attendance at the AGM is marginal, it is necessary to notify the lake community that the lake plan approval will be determined at that meeting. Their absence at that AGM will be interpreted as agreement with the plan.

When your community involves a lot of people who are not members of the association it is extremely important to provide a process that allows them to participate in the approval of the plan and this may require an additional opportunity outside of your AGM. Non-member participation at the design and approval stage will help to increase buy-in from other watershed residents to the actions and build awareness about the process.

When the draft plan has been approved by the steering committee and is ready for final release, consider undertaking the final steps:

1. Provide notice to everyone in the community that the lake plan is prepared and ready for final review and comment. Notice can be provided by newsletter, email, letter, signs on bulletin boards, and in the local newspapers.
2. Consider providing copies of the draft plan or an executive summary to everyone in the lake community. For most associations the cost has been an issue and instead they have provided copies to key agencies only, and then provided access to copies at the library, local general store, key people around the lake and the website.
3. Send copies to key agencies (municipalities, regional offices, MNR, MOE) and provide at least 60 days for them to provide their comments. If the time frame is too tight, they may not be able to comment.
4. Once all comments have been considered by the whole steering committee, effort should be made to list the comments and post a response for each of them indicating why the comment has been accepted or rejected. The list can then be communicated either to the entire lake community or just those who provided comments.
5. AGM Approval – If communication and openness with all stakeholders has not been practiced during the development of the lake plan, then requesting approval at the AGM could become a very heated event. If this is the case, it would be wise to schedule a lake plan workshop immediately before the AGM so that contentious issues can be resolved prior to asking for final approval.
6. Community approval involves multi-parties:
 - A final vote will be taken on the approval of the lake plan, and this will be based on a conservative majority of 60%.
 - Should there be substantial opposition to plan approval (e.g. > 30% of vote) the plan may be deferred until the association gives serious effort and time to address the concerns of those not

consenting. If concerns cannot be overcome, the association will make the decision on the approval of the plan, and if approved provide a “description of the outstanding matters” in the lake plan. The lake plan may contain pro and con positions with appropriate descriptions of rationales and possible outcomes.

- All people will strive to work together to reach a consensus in the process and in the approval of the plan.

How to gain buy-in from our local government?

Gaining buy-in from your local municipality is an important ingredient to a successful plan and process. While it is important to contact both upper tier (Regional, County, and District) and lower tier (Towns, Townships) municipalities, it is usually the lower tier where most of your effort will be focussed.

Throughout the planning process it is important to continually update and engage planning staff and municipal Councillors to maintain their support and keep them interested in the process. Here are some suggested points of contact:

- An initial meeting with planning staff or municipal councillors should include a review of all relevant municipal policies and by-laws, so that the lake plan can incorporate applicable planning and administrative tools
- Seek membership on steering committee
- Request delegation to Council to present lake plan concept and the planning process
- Invite municipal staff and Councillors to workshops
- Provide a copy of the survey and the survey results
- Provide copies of any background reports
- Present draft plan to Council
- Seek comments on the draft plan within 60 day period, if possible
- Present final copy to Council

The degree of buy-in depends on the focus of the lake plan and whether your recommendations involve amending the local official plan and/or zoning by-law or whether they are focused on stewardship actions. It is important to remember that a lake plan is not a legal document and any recommendations on land use regulations must proceed through a separate municipal planning review process which includes either the required five year review or through a specific amendment request. The five year review is the most appropriate municipal process to address any policy revisions; however, some associations have submitted specific applications to immediately amend the official plan and had to pay application fees. If possible, consider inputting new policy during the 5 year review as it provides Council an opportunity to consider the amendment in light of other changes and an application fee is likely not required. See text box on page 58 for comments from Mountain Lake on communicating with your Council.

Chapter 3 – Lake Plan Content, Actions and Recommendations

Section 1 – Lake Plan Content

What could a lake plan include?

The lake planning framework provides an approach that can be adapted and personalized according to any local circumstance. While there may be many different approaches to lake plans, there is, however, a similar framework and content between them all. The following points identify the general themes and information collection guidelines consistent between many lake plans. It is, however, very important that you understand why and how you are collecting the information and who will use it, otherwise data collection can simply become a labour intensive activity without any significant payback.

While it is not necessary to address every matter provided in this framework, it is important to consider the wide range of factors that affect the quality of life on your lake and to prioritize those matters that need to be researched and addressed. See the completed lake plans in the **Resource Kit** or sample table of contents and other content ideas.

The following sections can be found in many lake plans:

Preface

The preface should be a brief summary to engage the interests of the reader and encourage them to read and utilize the lake plan by including an enticing description of your lake and the purpose of the lake plan

Acknowledgement Page

Express gratitude to the people and agencies that have helped you and your association by providing material, advice, assistance, funding and encouragement throughout the process.

Section 1 Introduction

- Purpose and Scope of the Lake Plan – define the scope of the lake plan (i.e. where and what does it apply to). Provide a map of the geographic area.
- Planning Approach – provide details on how the lake plan was prepared and identify the steps that were undertaken by the steering committee and volunteers.
- Information Sources and Support – identify the major information sources relied on and additional support received from your partners. As well, a detailed list of all information sources should be listed in the reference section. Some examples may include previous consultant reports; MOE water quality reports; septic system reports; wetland classifications; history books; stakeholder's and resident's workshop summaries; residential and commercial surveys; and other prepared reports such as boating and night light surveys.

Section 2 Vision, Principles and Targets

- Vision and Mandate – identify the future vision of the lake and explain the mandate of your lake association.
- Principles and Targets – defining your principles and targets are an essential part of the exercise because it helps to further define your Vision Statement. Developing and confirming a set of principles and targets will help you to identify important features on your lake and provide a method for measuring your efforts in the preparation and implementation of the plan.

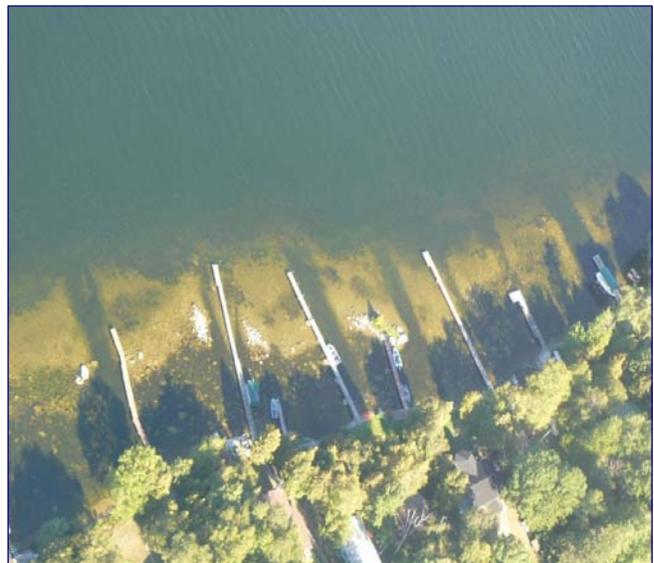
Section 3 Lake Description

The lake description should contain general information of the physical characteristics of the lake and its watershed such as information about your lake's history, location, volume, flushing rate, watershed size and location, bathymetry (i.e. lake bottom contours), water level management, land access and ownership, as well as considering the following:

- Pre-History Development – how was the lake originally formed and what forces or events contributed to its morphology (i.e., the form and structure of animals and plants) and landscape features?
- Historical Development – highlight the cultural and economic history of your lake's community through interesting stories, notes and memories about the people and the events that helped to shape your lake's community today.
- Population – a brief review of the areas demographics including seasonal and permanent information and an economic profile to provide an understanding of the past and current development pressures. Population information is available at Census Canada website. If possible, find out about the native population that may have originally populated the lake region.
- General Location and Lake Characteristics – Provide an overview of the general location and characteristics of your lake, including:
 - County, Township and nearest urban centre– a map is often very useful to illustrate your location.
 - Number of basins and lake morphology (shape).
 - The number of stream/river inflows and outflows. If your lake is spring-fed, then try to obtain data on that source location.
 - Height above sea level and drainage area provide information on watershed delineation and the movement of water.
 - Mean depth, volume and flushing rates of your lake.
 - Include a bathymetry map (depth) to indicate your lake's depths, if available. Many MNR offices still have the original bathymetry maps that were produced in the 1970's, or they may have digitized mapping data available for distribution.
 - Perimeter and shoreline length are important for determining the percentage of shoreline development, as well as identifying areas of important fish and wildlife habitat.
- Watershed Characteristics – describe and identify the characteristics of the watershed. Maps of Ontario's watersheds are often already available from local MNR or Conservation Authority offices or municipal offices (e.g. District of

Muskoka www.muskoka.on.ca). You should review all available maps and update them with new information collected by local people. Identify not only the creeks and rivers that feed into your lake, but also the creeks and rivers that flow out of your lake and the next major body of water that accepts that water flow. As well if your lake is spring-fed, then try to obtain data on that source.

- Water Levels – the following information represents some key points about water levels you should consider incorporating into the lake plan:
 - Water management plans (if available) may provide a significant amount of information about your lake
 - The location and ownership of all dams controlling water flow to and from your lake
 - Summer and winter operational levels and the Rule Curve used to manage the levels of the lake: current and historical data may be available from Parks Canada, if the lake is controlled by that organization. A Rule Curve is a guideline that is used to operate dams in order to manage water levels within an approved range of highs and lows throughout the year.
 - The objectives of water level management on your lake.
- Location and Access – prepare a textual summary and a map indicating the location of your lake relative to roads and access points including water access properties (islands and mainland properties), private access points, parks, government docks, commercial marinas and camps and public recreational boat access points
- Land Ownership – identify private land, Crown land, Provincial Parks, Conservation Reserves, First Nation Reserves and Land Trust properties. Mapped information can be obtained from your municipality or from the Ministry of Natural Resources



Shoreline Impacts – Stony Lake

Section 4 Social Elements

The purpose of this section is to identify and describe the social elements that contribute to the quality of life on your lake. Usually there is very little existing information that is readily available on social elements other than historic and cultural sites. Therefore, you may have to rely on information gathered from the Resident and Stakeholder Workshops and Surveys. The following should also be considered during your inventory:

- Recreational Boating – identify issues related to recreational boating. Some of this information will come from the surveys and workshops, and research on the internet with respect to boat pollution and safe boating conduct. Some lakes have conducted their own surveys to determine the local boat population by boat type and size, the amount and type of recreational boating traffic, and the incidences that occur on the lake.

- Social Cultural and Historic Sites – identify, describe and map the social, cultural and historic sites that contribute to the social fabric of your lake. Cultural and historic sites are essential elements that maintain and improve the quality of the social and living environment and, where appropriate, these sites should be protected and enhanced.
- Landscapes and Aesthetics – identify significant landscapes and aesthetic characteristics that contribute to the natural beauty of your lake including the ‘viewscape’ that surrounds your lake on a map. The “viewscape” is the horizon that you can see from any point on your lake. The residential and commercial surveys will often indicate that the natural landscapes and aesthetics are important values that contribute to the natural health and beauty of the lake.
- Noise and Lighting – highlight responses from the residential survey regarding negative impacts from excessive noise and light pollution. Avoid getting too specific on the sources of the noise and lighting problems because it may upset some members of the lake community.

Trophic status refers to the overall level of biological production in a lake. It is usually based on the total mass of algae. This mass is represented by the concentration of the plant pigment ‘chlorophyll a’ in water samples.

Section 5 Natural Heritage

The natural heritage section should contain a general description of the natural heritage characteristics of your lake, such as the following:

- Water Quality - the purpose of this section is to determine your lake’s trophic status, including the general water chemistry, based upon available water quality information. Some of the information that you may want to consider when determining your lake’s trophic status are:
 - Clarity (Secchi Disc Depth)
 - Dissolved Oxygen (DO) and Temperature Profile (the end of summer DO levels are critical to the health of fish habitat and the survival of cold water fish species)
 - Total Phosphorus
 - pH
 - Alkalinity Conductivity*
 - Nitrogen (Ammonium, Nitrite, Nitrite + Nitrate, Total Kjeldahl (TKN))*
 - Total Nitrogen: Total Phosphorus (TN to TP ratio)*
 - Carbon (Total Dissolved and Inorganic)*

* The last four parameters require advanced analysis and information is often unavailable.

- Vegetation - provide an inventory of your lake’s vegetative community, including the identification of shoreline, riparian and upland plants. Plant communities, such as plant type and community assemblage, provide an insight into an area’s climate conditions, geology, soil type and structure, moisture regime, wildlife community, and potential land use designations,



Bryozoans – The Brain. Found in Stony Lake

which are all important for appropriate planning and natural resource management strategies and conservation.

- Wetlands – identify all wetlands within your lake’s watershed, including marshes, swamps, bogs, fens and/or peatlands, as well as identifying areas of standing water. Review the wetland maps, if available from the Ministry of Natural Resources or your local municipality, and identify wetlands that were not included. A field inventory of your watershed and lake shoreline may identify more wetlands not previously reported.
- Streams – identify all the sources of your lake’s inflow and outflow (e.g., streams, rivers and their tributaries) in the watershed. Confirm location of streams on topographical maps (available at most book stores) and identify any streams that are missing. Consider digitizing their location with a GPS unit. Usually, very little information is available on streams and the focus of this section will be to report on the information that is available and to identify the need to conduct future stream assessments.
- Fish Community - investigate the current MNR fisheries management regime of your lake and compare it to the historical fishery documentation. Many Shield lakes will be managed as a cold water fishery because they support several cold water fish species including lake trout, lake whitefish and lake herring. However, due to increasing human activity, development pressures, environmental pollution, competition among fish species, invasive species and climate change impacting our lakes, fish species composition and competition as well as habitat quality have changed dramatically, which ultimately affects the management strategies initiated by the MNR to enhance and protect these natural resources.

The following list is the type of information that you should be extracting from the MNR files at the local district office that is responsible for the management of your lake. If at anytime you should have questions regarding the content of the files in regards to what is significant or important, please consult with this list and the local MNR biologist.

- Historically, what fish community did your lake support? Examples include: cold water fishery dominated by lake trout, lake whitefish and/or lake herring, or a cool to warm water fishery including walleye, muskellunge, northern pike, largemouth and smallmouth bass, yellow perch and/or rock bass populations.
 - Currently, what fish community does your lake support? Many fish communities have changed within the past few decades due to stocking efforts by the province, introductions, disease, over-harvest and climate change.
 - Consider listing all the documented fish in your lake in a table, including those fish species found in your lake’s streams, where applicable.
 - Fish stocking records and introductions.
 - Location of significant fish habitat.
 - Known fish contaminants (MOE Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish).
- Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat – this section focuses on specific wildlife species that use habitat and resources within your lake’s watershed. You may want to

consider a brief introduction about the importance of inventorying wildlife in your watershed, as well as considering their local importance to lake residents. Some species of specific interest may include:

- Mammal habitat – identify white-tailed deer wintering yards and moose feeding grounds (wetlands) and salt licks on a map. Report Elk sightings and clarify hunting regulations.
- Bird Habitat – prepare a list of known bird occurrences and current bird observations for your lake and watershed. Important habitats include loon nest locations, heronries (rookeries), colonial bird nesting location, and raptor nest sites.
- Reptile and Amphibian Habitat – prepare a list of reptiles and amphibians and include a brief life-history (habitat, breeding, nesting site, etc.) description. This summary could provide general information on each of the species, as well as provide a list of potential impacts to their survival. Species to consider include: turtles and snakes — including nests and hibernacula locations and amphibians (frogs and salamanders). Many of these species may be listed as species at risk.
- Invasive Species – identify invasive species that have been recorded as having “established populations” within your lake’s water body and/or watershed, or in nearby lakes. List those species that have successfully invaded your lake, briefly describe their potential impacts on the system, as well as providing advice of how to ethically eradicate their presence and/or prevent new invasions into your watershed. See the Ontario Fishers, Anglers and Hunters website for more information regarding their invasive species program at www.invadingspecies.com/
- Species at Risk – identify species at risk within your lake’s vicinity and provide information to create awareness about their habitat and life requirements and how to avoid further impact on these species. The location of rare and species at risk, especially nesting, basking, hibernating or other habitats, should not be publicized to avoid direct persecution.
- Ecological Threats/changes – biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, development and resource extraction (i.e., forestry and mining).

Section 6 Physical Elements

Examining the physical aspects of the area surrounding your lake identifies potential constraints to current and new land development and resource management. The following information lists some physical parameters to consider during your research:

- Soils – identify the type and location of soils and bedrock in your watershed from soil and surficial geology maps (contact MNR and MNDM).
- Minerals and Aggregates – aggregate and mineral extraction can have impacts on ground water levels, sedimentation of lakes and streams, and result in noise pollution from increased truck traffic, blasting, and machinery operation.

Mining Claim Information

Visit the MNDM website to obtain maps.

www.mndm.gov.on.ca/mndm/mines/lands/claimap3/disclaimer_e.asp

- Interactive mapping from the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (MNDM), or digitized maps on aggregate pits and quarries from the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) or the local municipality will identify areas that are currently used or have the potential to be used in the future.
- Narrow Waterbodies – development on narrow water bodies can create problems for navigation and decrease the aesthetic beauty of the immediate area. Identify and map the narrow waterbodies that exist on your lake.
- Steep Slopes – development on steep slopes can result in substantial alteration of the natural landscape and visual impact due to the prominence and location of development, and the resulting intrusion of the skyline. Indirect impacts include increased erosion, slope instability, a significant increase in storm water run-off and the potential damage to fish and wildlife habitat.

Section 7 Land Use

The land use section describes the current land uses around the lake and in the watershed, and provides a review of the Ministry of Natural Resources policies for Crown land and the municipal official plan policies and zoning by-law provisions for private land.

- Summary of Land Use – provide a summary of current and past land uses within your area, such as:
 - Percentage of shoreline that is currently Crown or privately owned
 - The nature and location of Crown land (Provincial Parks, Conservation Reserves, etc.)
 - Past development on the lake and where available, provide reference to the amount of and type of development (seasonal and permanent residential and commercial properties in previous years)
 - Number of current shoreline residential properties (indicate number seasonal and permanent residential lots and water access)
 - Number of tourist commercial uses (number of resorts and accommodation units, restaurants and pubs)
 - Identify the number of vacant lots and assess their development status (i.e., can they be built and can they be subdivided)
 - Determine maximum number of lots that can be created according to current regulations
 - If the status of your lake is ‘at capacity’ then state that fact and provide an explanation as to what the term means and how it impacts further development
 - Prepare a map to show the current land uses within the watershed
- Residential Occupancy - current information on residential occupancy will help to provide more accurate predictions of future water quality based on known information (e.g., the amount of time people stay on the lake and what this means to human phosphorus contributions). The sample Residential Survey (see **Resource Kit**) provides a question pertaining to whether the residence is occupied seasonally or permanently as well as the number of days that the residence is occupied.
- Septic System – report on the status of septic systems on the lake. In many cases, municipalities have recently undertaken the responsibility of approving

septic systems and may provide updated information. Some municipalities have initiated a Septic Re-Inspection Program to assess the status of septic systems throughout their jurisdiction. Where this information is not currently available, consider a lake plan action to obtain it.

- **Crown Land Use Regulation** – the purpose of this section is to identify the public policy that applies to the Crown land on shorelines, under the lake, and in the watershed or surrounding areas. Where there are no terrestrial Crown lands, the application of Crown Policy is limited to the lakebed. Other important information to review includes the MNR District Land Use Guidelines, Forest Management Plans and other plans that are available (Provincial Park Plans, Fish and Wildlife Management Plans). See <http://crownlanduseatlas.mnr.gov.on.ca/clupa.html>
- **Municipal Planning Regulations** – identify and describe the municipal planning body(ies) and the land use planning regulations (official plan, zoning by-law and site plan control) that apply to your lake.

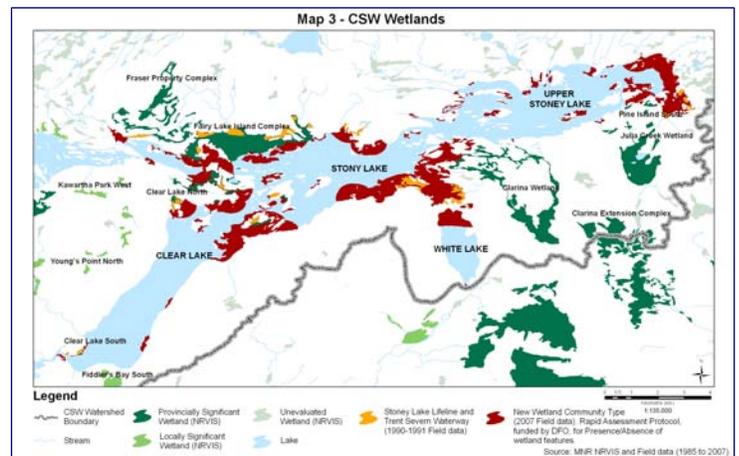
Section 8 Lake Values

Lake values are those features and elements of the lake that are most valued by the residents, commercial operators and recreationalists. Information collected during the workshop (see workshop proceedings) and the residential and commercial survey will be analyzed and presented in this section.

What maps could we include?

The sample lake plans in the **Resource Kit** provide lots of examples. The following is a brief list of sample maps to consider:

1. Location within the watershed and subwatershed, including features such as highways and towns
2. Immediate or subwatershed boundaries
3. The 'study area' which may extend beyond the immediate lake area
4. Bathymetry (water depths)
5. Points of Interest (historical, cultural, view, landscape, and recreation features such as portages, canoe routes, trails, public access points, public space, parks)
6. Natural areas and features (fish and wildlife habitat, nesting areas, wetlands, streams, forests and other environmentally sensitive areas)
7. Land Use (land use type, ownership, zoning)
8. Physical (steep slopes, topography, narrow water bodies, shallow areas, aggregate and mining operations and future extraction areas, soil type)
9. Viewscape, which includes all lands that can be seen from the lake



Section 2 – Generic Actions and Recommendations

Many lake and river associations have already gone through a lake planning process and they provide great examples of recommendations/actions for you to consider. The following is a summary of these recommendations and actions from some of the plans listed. Take a look at the completed plans in the **Resource Kit** for other ideas.-

What are some common actions recommended by most lake plans?

The following list of actions were extracted are from the Clear/Stony/White Lake executive summary to provide you with an example of a simplified Action Plan, the association had over 40 recommendations and decided to synthesize their recommendations into six key actions.

Action 1 – Engage the Community – develop a network of volunteers to implement the lake plan recommendations and maintain consensus on the lakes.

Action 2 – Create an Official Plan Task Force – form a group committed to proactive support of the Provincial, County and Townships Official Plan and Zoning By-law amendment process with an emphasis on harmonization of watershed related issues.

Action 3 – Provide Information to Property Owners and other Lake Users – engage them to care for shorelines, surrounding fish and wildlife habitats, and promote safe use of all recreational vehicles through: shoreline naturalization programs, wetland and woodlands, septic re-inspection programs, streams and rivers, invasive species, and safe boating program.

Action 4 – Continue to Partner with Agencies and Groups – build on our relationships to update information on natural heritage features and areas such as: water quality, stream inventories, fish and wildlife, species at risk, and wetlands.

Action 5 – Continue to Work with the County and Townships – Ensure that land use policy and regulations (e.g. official plan, zoning by-law) are consistent with watershed sustainability and provide a guide for future development and re-development, especially with respect to: water quality, natural shorelines, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, species at risk habitat, resource extraction, viewsapes, cultural sites, and setting appropriate lake capacity limits for future residential and commercial development and re-development.

Action 6 – Continue to Promote Communication and Social Interaction Among Stakeholders

Advice...

Don't reinvent the wheel... Make use of the ideas and resources that are in this handbook and on other association websites.

Advice...

Do not try to provide a recommendation or action for every matter to be considered. It is OK to state that there is no information and to delay this action until later. For example: most lakes do not have detailed information on streams. If you are unable to collect this information now, identify this as a future action.



What are the comprehensive recommendations that many lake plans include?

Before preparing the short list of actions, many lake associations created a comprehensive list of recommendations based on the background information that was collected. The list and length of recommendations will vary according to the identified issues and the background information.

A summary document of all recommendations can be prepared to promote discussion with government agencies, commercial operators and residents about the possible actions to be included in the lake plan.

The **Resource Kit** provides a comprehensive list of recommendations taken from the draft Baptiste Lake Plan. These recommendations are based on four background studies: Land Use, Natural Heritage, Physical, and Architectural. You can use this list to generate your own ideas.

Communication with Council

Contact the Clerk at the Municipal office one to two weeks prior to the meeting, to request being added to the Agenda. Copies of your presentation and the survey might be provided to each member of Council. Indicate that you are speaking for the majority of the lakeshore property owners – maybe a percentage, based on your survey results. Be organized, not extremely lengthy, and prepared to answer questions.

These elected people want what is best for the municipality and may feel that development (assessment tax base) and jobs are what is most needed. Your task will be to convince them that it is to everyone's advantage to preserve the things that have drawn people to the area. Sustainable development is what is in the best interest of the whole county. The current by-laws in all likelihood reflect similar values to what lakeshore residents are striving for. Highlighting these by-laws will encourage Councillors at both the County and Township levels to make decisions based on sound planning. We cannot stop development, but with a spirit of co-operation, commitment, and reality, you can expect some good reception, and more appropriate and agreeable types of development. We found that Council was impressed by the efforts of Stewardship which owners showed and agreed to as recommendations outlined in the Lake Plan.

As with any personal contacts, 'preaching' or aggression will not succeed. Councils do not have to adopt each plan, but may well do so when the Official Plan is reviewed next.

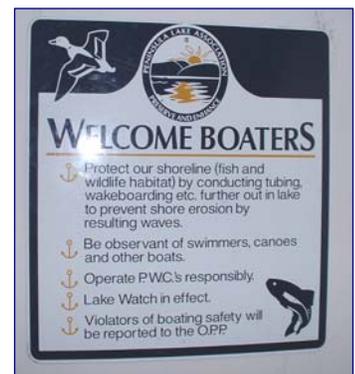
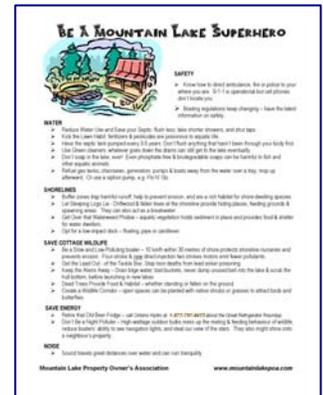
...from Mountain Lake

Section 3 – Implementation Approaches

What are some proven methods of implementing recommendations?

Taking action is the focus of the plan and for many people the fun part. The following are a number of actions and ideas that are already in place from many lake associations. Some of these actions are simple and could be undertaken before the lake plan is approved in order to create interest and to satisfy the immediate urgency to do something.

1. Welcome Wagon to New Community Members – this is a booklet, brochure or a folder that contains information about the community including: maps, lake plan, septic maintenance tips, and maintaining natural shorelines. The 'welcome wagon' could be distributed to everyone on the lake, and made available through resorts and campgrounds or to new property owners through their real estate agents.
2. Healthy Lake List – a list of activities people can do on their own properties to improve the health of the lake.
3. Fridge Magnet – Mountain Lake (Haliburton) Association prepared the "Be a Mountain Lake Super Hero" fridge magnet and distributed to everyone in their community. The magnet contains messages about safety, water use, shorelines, wildlife and energy use (see **Resource Kit**).
4. Emergency Contacts – Bobs and Crow Lake Association prepared an emergency contact list with municipal, MNR, OPP, Report-a-Poacher, and other immediate contact needs.
5. Boating Card – several lakes have prepared a hand sized, laminated boating card to be distributed and stored in all motorized water craft. One side includes a map of the lake including areas where speed limits are reduced (i.e. 10 km/hr 30 metres from the shore) and courtesy zones (i.e., narrow water channels or bays), navigational hazards and fire pumps. On the backside there are the speed regulations that are enforced by the OPP and a courtesy code including low wake near wetlands and wildlife habitat (i.e. loons) (see **Resource Kit**).
6. Boating Safety Signs – Peninsula Lake Association produced a very attractive metal 'welcome to our lake' signs that was posted at every water access point on to the lake. In 2003 the signs cost about \$100.00 each.
7. Invasive species Prevention Signs – install signs at boat launches that include recommendations on preventing invasive species from spreading into your watershed and lakes. FOCA has a 'Stop the Spread of Invasive Species' sign that is available to its members.
8. Prepare a State of the Lake Report – the state of the lake report is like a report card that monitors annually the changes in health of certain elements of the lake (e.g., water quality, air quality, forested area and fish health).
9. Meeting with municipalities and agencies – to let them know that a lake plan is being developed and to obtain background information and support.



10. Join forces with other lakes – in order to reduce the amount of work, time and costs associated with preparing the lake plan, lots of information and volunteer resources can be shared among neighbouring communities (e.g., native wildlife, septic system maintenance, etc).
11. Communication – Many organizations (e.g., FOCA, MNR, MOE) already have helpful reference material that can be used to assist in communicating and educating the stakeholders. Much of this is free and readily available (e.g. signage, brochures, workshops, Docktalk, newsletters).
12. Lake Etiquette or Good Neighbours Code of Conduct – a guide which indicates the 'Do's and Don'ts' that everyone should be aware of when dealing with stakeholders and other volunteers and when preparing the actual lake plan.
13. Other Actions – participate in existing programs such as:
 - MOE Lake Partner Program
 - Ontario Turtle Tally
 - Invading Species Watch
 - Marsh Monitoring Program
 - Creel Surveys
 - Benthic Monitoring
 - Canadian Lakes Loon Survey
 - Naturewatch
 - Frogwatch
 - Project Feeder Watch
 - EMAN (monitoring programs)
 - OMOA's Clean Marine Program
14. Monitor the Plan – a lake plan is a living document, rather than a historical record that is developed and then shelved. It is important that the lake plan does not sit idle. Information gaps need to be addressed and action items need to be managed and completed to validate its findings and update actions to address current issues and needs.



Living by Water Workshop, hosted by Muskoka Heritage Foundation and Clive Callaway

Chapter 4 – Resource Kit

This chapter provides links and templates to information as well as examples of approaches used by many lake and river communities. The following Table of Contents provides a list of WORD and PDF documents found in the attached CD.

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Samples and Templates

1. Lake Planning Manual (PDF)

2. Lake Plans

- | | |
|---|---|
| a) Clear, Ston(e)y and White Lake Plan | i) About Paint Lake - A Community Plan |
| b) Bobs and Crow Lakes Stewardship Plan | j) Paudash Lake Management Plan |
| c) Bobs and Crow Lakes Stewardship Plan Summary | k) Paudash Lake Management Plan Executive Summary |
| d) Dark and Grace Lake Plan | l) Sturgeon Bay Water Quality Plan |
| e) Halls and Hawks Lake Executive Summary | m) Mountain Lake Stewardship Plan |
| f) Kennisis Watershed and Lakes Management Plan | n) Otty Lake Executive Summary |
| g) Summary of Kennisis Lake Management Plan | o) Eagle Lake Community Plan |
| h) Peninsula Lake Plan | p) Kahshe Lake Plan |
| | q) Fairy Lake Plan |
| | r) Champlain Management Plan |
| | s) Charleston Lake Plan |

3. Data Collection and Background Studies

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) Sample Background Information Collection Sheet (FPSI) | g) Terms of Reference for Steering Committee, Clear/Stony/White Lakes |
| b) Land Use Study, Baptiste Lake | h) Terms of Reference for Working Group, Musselman's Lake |
| c) Natural Heritage Inventory, Baptiste Lake | i) Volunteer Jobs (FPSI) |
| d) Physical Elements Study, Baptiste Lake | j) Worksheet, Municipal Policy Review (FPSI) |
| e) Architectural Study, Historical, Baptiste Lake | k) Worksheet, Vision Quest (FPSI) |
| f) Summary of Observations and Recommendations Baptiste Lake | l) Map List, Bobs and Crow Lakes |

4. Presentations

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Intro to lake planning prepared for Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, French Planning Services Inc (FPSI) | c) Background Information, Baptiste Lake |
| b) Protecting Paradise prepared for Cottage Life Show 2006 (FPSI) | d) Survey Summary, Mary Lake |
| | e) Presentation to Municipality, Fourteen Island and Mink Lake |

5. Surveys

- | | |
|--|--|
| a) Survey, Halls and Hawks | g) Survey Report, Bobs and Crow Lakes |
| b) Survey Results, Halls and Hawks | h) Survey Presentation, Kennisis Lake |
| c) Draft Survey, Musselman's Lake Survey | i) Follow-up Survey, Peninsula Lake |
| d) Friends Survey, Sturgeon Bay | j) Survey Covering Letter, Mountain Lake |
| e) Survey Flyer, Musselman's Lake | k) Commercial Camp Survey, Bobs and Crow Lakes |
| f) Survey Summary, Baptiste Lake | |

6. Communications

- a) Motivation Poster, Why a Lake Plan and Why Get Involved? (Paul MacInnis)
- b) Interim Report, Clear/Stony/White Lakes
- c) FAQs, Lake Plan, Kennisis Lake
- d) FAQs, Muldrew and Kennisis Lake
- e) Press Release, Kennisis Lake
- f) Press Release, Moon River
- g) Lake Plan Poster, Raven Lake
- h) Interim Report, Baptiste Lake
- i) Home Owners Guide, Preston Lake
- j) Fridge Magnet – Be a Mountain Lake Superhero, Mountain Lake
- k) Invitation to Lake Plan Launch, Clear/Stoney/White Lake
- l) Request to Council to Present Lake Plan, Bobs and Crow
- m) Welcome Wagon Kit, Sturgeon Bay
- n) Glossary, Kennisis (also see lake plans)
- o) Contacts for Waterfront Landowners, FOCA
- p) Volunteer Sign-up Sheet, Fourteen Island and Mink Lakes

7. Workshops

- a) Residents Workshop Agenda, Moon River
- b) Workshop Worksheet 1 and 2, Moon River
- c) Press Release, Moon River
- d) Residents Workshop Agenda, Paint Lake
- e) Workshop Sign in Sheet (FPSI)
- f) Workshop Poster, Kennisis Lake
- g) Publicity Plan for the Stakeholder Meeting, Baptiste Lake
- h) Invite to Workshop, Paudash Lake
- i) Invite to Workshop, Bobs and Crow Lakes
- j) Thank-you letter Workshop, Bobs and Crow Lakes
- k) Invite Workshop 2, Paudash Lake
- l) Workshop Summary, Bella and Rebecca Lakes
- m) Workshop Summary, Belmont Lake

8. Funding Opportunities

- a) List of Funding Opportunities
- b) Environment Canada Administered Funding Programs
- c) EcoACTION Applicant Guide
- d) EcoACTION Application Form
- e) 8 Ways to Raise \$2500 in 10 days
- f) Mountain Lake Plan Budget
- g) Ontario Trillium Foundation

9. Boating

- a) Boat Rental Checklist, Bobs and Crow Lakes
- b) PWC Code of Conduct, draft, Kennisis Lake
- c) Boating Card, Jack's Lake
- d) Boating Card, Bobs and Crow Lakes
- e) Courtesy Code, Muldrew Lake

10. Municipal Land Use Policy

- a) General OP Policy on lake plans, Lake of Bays Township
- b) Official Plan Amendment, Peninsula Lake
- c) Municipal Policy Review for PPS 1997, Bobs and Crow
- d) Zoning By-law example of buffer zone provisions, Municipality Highlands East Zoning By-Law – June 8, 2005

11. Other Lake Planning Initiatives

- a) Guidelines for Compiling a Lake Plan, J Strickland
- b) A Shoreline Owners Guide to Lakeland Living
- c) Community Action for the Environment
- d) A Stewardship Guide for the Lake Huron Coastline
- e) A Model Lake Plan for Your Community, Wisconsin
- f) Sustainable Lakes Planning Workbook, Minnesota

Links to Resources

Enter the following key words into your favourite search engine and follow the links:

Federal Agencies

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada – Soil Surveys of Ontario
- Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation – Septic System
- Canadian Environmental Quality Guidelines
- COSEWIC – Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans: Working Around Water – Operational Statements
- Environment Canada
- Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario Region)
- Hinterland's Who's Who
- Climate Change Action Fund
- Natural Resources Canada
- Maps and Data
- Enhancing Resilience in a Changing Climate
- Species at Risk Public Registry

Provincial Agencies

- Environmental Registry – Bill of Rights (EBR) Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ministry of the Environment
- Lake Partner Program
- Water Quality Objectives
- MOE publications and guidelines
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care – Public Health Units
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- COSSARO – Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario
- Natural Heritage Information Centre
- Ontario's Biodiversity Strategy
- Ministry of Northern Development and Mines (Maps Claims)
- Province of Ontario Agency Directory
- The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO)

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

- Bait Association of Ontario
- Bird Studies Canada
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society
- Canadian Shield Environmental Research Network
- Centre for Sustainable Watersheds
- Conservation Ontario
- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Environmental Bureau of Investigation
- Field Botanist of Ontario
- Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association
- French Planning Services Inc,
- Great Lakes Information Network
- Green Communities Canada
- Invading Species Program
- Land Owner Resource Centre
- Living Lake Plans
- Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Watershed: A Canadian Framework for Community Action
- Minnesota Waters Program
- Muskoka Heritage Foundation
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory
- Nature Canada
- Nature Conservancy Canada (Species and Spaces at Risk)
- NatureServe (Species and Spaces at Risk)
- Naturewatch (Ontario)
- Ontario Environment Network
- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters
- Ontario Field Ornithologists
- Ontario Forestry Association

- Ontario Land Trust Alliance
- Ontario Marine Operators Association
- Operation Migration
- Ontario Nature
- Ontario Stewardship Councils
- Ontario Rural Wastewater Centre
- Practical Guide to Lake Management in Massachusetts
- Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources
- Recreational Carrying Capacity Study
- Rideau Valley Conservation Authority – Lake Management Planning Program
- Stewardship Canada
- Sustainable Lakes Planning Workbook: A Lake Management Model, Minnesota Lakes Association
- Sustainability Network
- The Natural Step Canada
- Tool kits
- Trent-Severn Waterway
- U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research in Haliburton County
- Union of Concerned Scientists (Ecological Threats)
- Well Aware
- Wildlife Habitat (Connectivity between Algonquin Park, Ontario and the Adirondack Park, New York)

Funding

- Canadian Environmental Grantmaker's Network
- Canadian Wildlife Service – Habitat Stewardship Program for Species at Risk
- Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program MNR
- Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program
- EcoAction
- Endangered Species Recovery Fund
- Evergreen Foundation
- Wetland Habitat Fund
- Wildlife Habitat Canada

Federal Legislation:

For information on the Federal Acts, please visit

- Beds of Navigable Waters Act
- Canada Wildlife Act
- Canadian Environmental Protection Act
- <http://laws.justice.gc.ca>
- Fisheries Act, including Ontario Fisheries Regulations
- Migratory Birds Convention Act
- Species at Risk Act

Provincial Legislation:

For information on the following Provincial Acts, please visit www.e-laws.gov.on.ca

- Aggregate Resources Act
- Building Code Act
- Clean Water Act
- Conservation Authorities Act
- Conservation Land Act
- Crown Forest Sustainability Act
- Drainage Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Environmental Assessment Act
- Environmental Bill of Rights Act
- Environmental Protection Act
- Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act
- Forestry Act
- Heritage Hunting and Fishing Act
- Historical Parks Act
- Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act
- Mining Act
- Municipal Act
- Nutrient Management Act
- Off-Road Vehicles Act
- Planning Act
- Planning and Development Act
- Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act
- Public Lands Act
- Safe Drinking Water Act
- Tourism Act (P)
- Wilderness Area Act
- Wild Rice Harvesting Act

Acronyms

DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans
FOCA	Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations
FPSI	French Planning Services Inc.
HHSC	Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council
NHIC	Natural Heritage Information Centre
MNR	Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
MNDM	Ontario Ministry of Northern Development and Mines
MOE	Ontario Ministry of the Environment
NGO	Non-Government Organization
OP	Official Plan
PSW	Provincially Significant Wetland
SAR	Species at Risk
ZB	Zoning By-law

Contributing Associations

The following lake and river associations have contributed material and documents to the production of this Lake Planning Handbook. We are extremely grateful for their efforts and encourage everyone to share new material.

- Baptiste Lake
- Bella Rebecca Lakes
- Belmont Lake
- Big Bald Lake
- Bobs and Crow Lakes
- Charleston Lake
- Clear/Stony/White Lakes
- Dark and Grace Lakes
- Deep Bay
- Eagle Lake
- Fairy Lake
- Fourteen Island Lake
- Halls and Hawk Lakes
- Kahshe Lake
- Jack's Lake
- Kennisis Lake
- Lake Vernon
- Mary Lake
- Mink Lake
- Moon River
- Mountain Lake
- Muldrew Lake
- Musselman's Lake
- Otty Lake
- Paint Lake
- Paudash Lake
- Peninsula Lake
- Preston Lake
- Raven Lake

About **FOCA**

The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA), over the last 40 years, has recognized the key role of lake and cottage associations and the need to promote and assist these volunteer groups in implementing community-based stewardship programs. FOCA supports stewardship through:

- **Lake Partner Program**, a partnership with the Ministry of the Environment. Volunteers collect total phosphorus samples and make monthly water clarity observations on their lakes to help understand the changes in the nutrient status and/or the water clarity of the lake due to the impacts of shoreline development, climate change, and other stresses.
- **Docktalk** is a targeted education and action program to lakeside residents to protect shorelines and water quality.
- **Lake Stewardship Network**, facilitating stewardship activities in member associations by providing an annual workshop for over 250 lake stewards, and providing resources such as the Keeping Your Lake Great, Lake Steward Newsletter and guidelines for compiling a lake plan.
- **Community involvement** takes many forms. FOCA contributes a voice to the work of local and provincial stewardship organizations and government departments, and provides input into the development and review of stewardship-related legislation such as the Clean Water Act.
- **Jerry Strickland Award** is presented each year to an association or group that has made a significant effort to promote and perform good stewardship in their community by initiating programs, projects, holding events, etc. See website for a list of past recipients.

www.foca.on.ca

About **THE HALIBURTON HIGHLANDS STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL**

The Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council is a group of community leaders who have come together to promote the wise stewardship of natural resources in the County of Haliburton. The Council is made up of a cross section of landowners and stakeholders who, through volunteering their time to projects, facilitation, and education, aim to provide energy and a voice to the responsible stewardship of private lands in Haliburton. Partnering with FOCA to produce the Lake Planning Handbook will benefit not only Haliburton, but areas across the province.

www.ontariostewardship.org/councils/haliburton

About **FRENCH PLANNING SERVICES**

French Planning Services Inc., provides a full range of planning services, including private and Crown land use planning, resource management, environmental impact assessments, fish and wildlife inventories, as well as group facilitation. Our goal is to provide clients with competent, professional, environmentally sound advice and options, based on comprehensive field research and an extensive knowledge of current government policy and regulations. We strive to provide clients with solutions that balance the issues of appropriate development and resource use within the sustainable limits of our natural, social and physical environments.

www.frenchplanning.com

www.lakeplan.com