

The background of the entire page is a photograph of autumn leaves floating on the surface of a body of water. The leaves are in various stages of decay, showing colors like bright yellow, orange, and deep red. The water is dark and reflects the surrounding environment, creating a textured, wavy pattern. The overall mood is serene and seasonal.

Lake Huron - Georgian Bay Watershed

A Canadian Framework for Community Action

Summit Tool Box

Turning Community Interest into Environmental Action

Lake Huron Georgian Bay Canadian Framework for Community Action
Summit

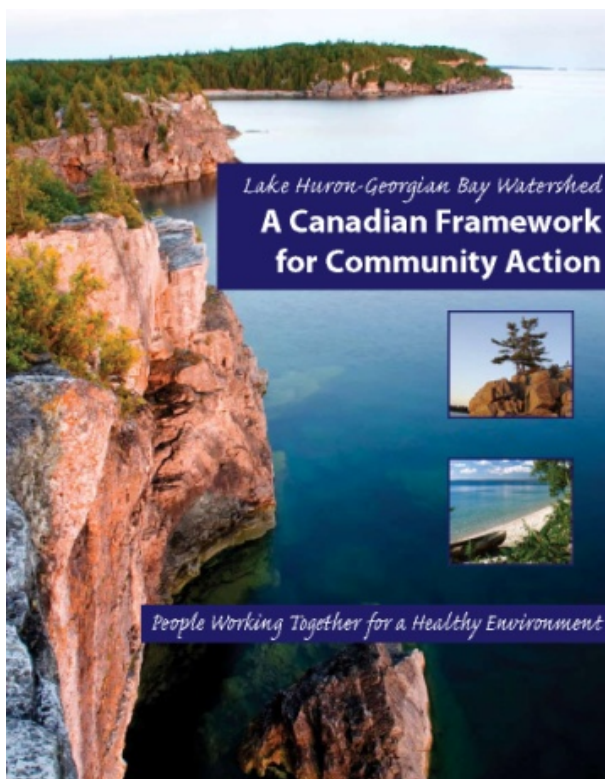
Cranberry Golf Resort, Collingwood
October 29/30, 2014

At the 2014 Lake Huron Georgian Bay Framework Summit, over 70 enthusiastic people representing government and non-government organizations from across the Lake Huron watershed shared ideas about turning community interest into environmental action.

We participated in First Nation ceremonies, talked with our peers in small group discussions, attended field demonstrations and listened to experts about engaging people and funding.

We learned about action being taken and how that action connects with the Lake Huron Georgian Bay Watershed Canadian Framework for Community Action.

This Tool Box is a collection of the ideas generated at the Summit.



"It is about how we can build our capacity to more effectively engage people, and take action to address a wide range of environmental issues"

First, we opened our minds and hearts in an Ojibway Ceremony

*To honour and respect
our place on mother
earth, an Ojibway
ceremony was held.*

*We brought water and
earth from our
homes and they
were joined as one.*

*We stood in a circle
holding hands, while
feeling the warmth
and energy radiating
from the eastern
door.*

*Cedar boughs were
placed on our
working tables and
about the room.*

*A drum, the sound of
our heartbeat,
awakened our
voices.*

*This was about respect,
giving thanks, and
harmonizing our
hearts and minds.*

Aaniin... (hello)

Many people gathered in Collingwood, Ontario to share their knowledge and work honouring Mother Earth and her gifts.

With this in mind during the opening Ceremonies the gift of life, water was blessed; the earth upon which we live was blessed. We acknowledged the Eastern direction from which Grandfather Sun brings new life each and every day.

In preparation for the gathering, the spirit of the Cedar trees came forward to bring goodness to the people.

Along time ago, the family of trees gathered and acknowledged one another.

At this great celebration each tree family spoke about how they would help each other, the plants, the animals and all living things.

Each tree family decided to not ask our great Mother Earth for too much space, therefore all are surrounded in their bark which is their house.

They decided to take only enough space as they require to give life and purpose to all other relatives.

Some said they would come to life only during the sun months. The hard woods give thanks in the beauty of their dresses as they prepare for the winter rest.

Others said they would work all seasons and offer refuge, food to all other living things, plants, animals, winged ones.

The Cedar said it would be an honour for their family to make provisions through all seasons. Their coats are life giving as the beautiful green becomes shelter and food during the harsh winter months.

During the recent gathering of the people, the drum sounded to honour and give thanks to all beings through its heart beat and songs.

We are all caretakers of the water and land.

...Chi Miigwi'ch (big thank you)

Table of Contents

Learn about the Framework and community action around the watershed. Hear about the Ontario Trillium Foundation Redesign and some perspectives on funding.

Find ideas on how to overcome social barriers and engage people, how to work with others and market your message.

Discover how two local groups engaged the community to take action in restoring and protecting the environment.

Find lots of information on how to measure success, and hear the advice given to the Steering Committee about future activities in the watershed.

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1 About the Summit

The Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Watershed Canadian Framework for Community Action (Framework) is a people oriented approach to promote community action and respond to environmental issues across the watershed. The Framework is based on the belief that each individual, community and organization in the watershed operates independently, yet are united by the common cause of improving environmental health. The Framework is a watershed wide approach intended to connect the actions of government and non-government organizations, raise awareness about common environmental issues and actions, and build upon existing strengths and opportunities.

The 2014 Summit was designed for government and non-government organizations dedicated to taking environmental action in the Lake Huron-Georgian Bay watershed. A survey was conducted prior to the Summit to better understand what would assist community-based groups build their capacity and support local environmental action to ensure a healthy and sustainable Lake Huron watershed. Over 40 people responded to the survey and the theme that emerged was 'turning community interest into environmental action'. Specific areas of interest included sustainable funding, marketing your message, collaborating and networking, involving and engaging community members, and measuring and celebrating success. These topics fall within the four principles of the Framework.

The Summit provided an opportunity to showcase the talents and achievements of some of the community-based organizations within our watershed and provide practical ideas and approaches to help turn community interest into environmental action. It also provided an opportunity to network with colleagues and share experiences.



Through plenary, panel and small group discussions, local knowledge and experience was shared with Summit participants. A field excursion to local demonstration sites provided the opportunity to discuss how community interest was turned into environmental action while demonstrating approaches for shoreline naturalization, water quality, benthic monitoring, fish habitat, and flood plain protection.

A coffee club was held for networking and sharing examples of environmental action on Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. Information and products were displayed at regional tables spread out around the room.

The Participants

A list of the participants names is provided in Appendix 1. The following governments, agencies and non-government agencies attended the Summit.

Framework Steering Committee

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority | • Nature Conservancy of Canada |
| • Environment Canada | • Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs |
| • Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve | • Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry |
| • Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry | • Community Volunteer |
| • Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change | • French Planning Services (facilitator) |

Government Organizations (not on Steering Committee)

- | | |
|---|---|
| • Magnetawan First Nation | • Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority |
| • Shawanaga First Nation | • Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority |
| • St. Clair Region Conservation Authority | • St. Clair Region Conservation Authority |
| • Grey Sauble Conservation Authority | • Town of Blue Mountains |
| • Maitland Valley Conservation Authority | • Town of Collingwood |

Non-Government Organizations

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Beaver River Watershed Initiative | • Lake Huron Coastal Centre |
| • Blue Mountain Watershed Trust | • Lambton Shores Phragmites Community Group |
| • Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association | • Manitoulin Area Stewardship Council |
| • Bruce Peninsula Six Streams Restoration Initiative | • Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association |
| • Canadian Freshwater Alliance | • Muskoka Watershed Council |
| • Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition | • Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program |
| • Ducks Unlimited | • Ontario Trillium Foundation |
| • Dufferin Simcoe Land Stewardship Network | • Pine River Watershed Initiative Network |
| • East Georgian Bay Stewardship Council | • Rewilding Lake Simcoe / Ontario Water Centre |
| • Federation of Ontario Cottagers | • Severn Sound Environmental Association |
| • Freshwater Future Canada | • South Simcoe Streams Network |
| • Frontenac Stewardship Foundation | • Stop the Drop |
| • Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve | • The Kensington Conservancy |
| • Georgian Bay Forever | |

2 Building Awareness and Capacity

About the Framework

Greg Mayne, Environment Canada

Ted Briggs, Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change

Plenary Session - Day 1

Managing Lake Huron

Planning initiatives on the Great Lakes, such as the development of Biodiversity Conservation Strategies and Lakewide Action and Management Plans (LAMPS) are driven by commitments made under the amended Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). The Lake Huron Binational Partnership formed to meet the commitments of the GLWQA and to set priorities and coordinate binational environmental protection and restoration activities. The Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Watershed Canadian Framework for Community Action is a Canadian effort to support the Lake Huron Binational Partnership.

The binational partnership coordinates lake wide activities through its federal, state and provincial members and engages organizations, academia, scientists, and water quality experts to focus on priority lake wide issues such as contaminants, loss of fish and wildlife habitat and biodiversity and ecosystem change.

Some anticipated short term binational activities on Lake Huron include:

- A Lakewide Action and Management Plan for Lake Huron - otherwise known as a LAMP document will be completed in 2016 for Lake Huron.
- Lake Ecosystem Objectives for Lake Huron - these lake ecosystem objectives will act as a benchmark against which to assess status and trends in water quality and ecosystem health – and hopefully inspire more action and give further guidance and justification to community-based programs when you set your priorities and submit funding applications.
- An Integrated Nearshore Framework for the Great Lakes - a response to the growing concern over nearshore water quality and degradation of the general environmental health of the nearshore to be implemented through the Lakewide Management process for each lake.

The Canada-Ontario Agreement with its various Annexes is a key management tool and means to implement projects to address lakewide management, nutrients, habitats and species. The agreement also promotes community engagement such as this Summit.

Apart from these binational priority issues, there are many local issues that pose threats to water quality and biodiversity on Lake Huron. Some examples of agency-led programs that address these issues are:

- Healthy Lake Huron: Clean Water, Clean Beaches Initiative
- Southern Georgian Bay Shoreline Initiative
- Lake Huron Biodiversity Conservation Strategy
- Working with groups around the watershed through the Framework for Community Action

Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Watershed Canadian Framework for Community Action

Lake Huron is unique and diverse in its land forms, geology, land uses, biodiversity and ecology. While the north is fairly intact, and we would like to see it remain that way, forestry, mining, commercial fishing, shipping, and various forms of recreation all have their associated impacts. In the south, we have intense agricultural development and urbanization with resulting water quality challenges. These broad-based ecosystem stressors and the need to protect intact landscapes and restore damaged areas pose complicated management challenges. In response, a tailor-made approach for Lake Huron that would support the Lake Huron Binational Partnership was implemented.

The Framework promotes a community-based approach that works from the ground up along every shoreline and in every community.

Developing the Framework

In 2005, representatives from Canadian environmental non-governmental organizations, municipal, provincial, federal, and First Nation representatives came together to discuss a way to jointly address environmental issues around Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. A Think Tank helped determine that no one agency could address these challenges alone and that an approach was needed to:

- create a unifying vision for a Canadian approach under which governments, organizations and the public work together to address key environmental issues and priorities.
- work together to solve the larger environmental challenges and to harness watershed-wide expertise.
- further promote community involvement through engagement and action.
- pool resources and make decisions together.

The general concept was that individuals, communities and organizations are effective champions, and that while they operate independently, they are united by the common cause of improving the environmental health of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay. The approach builds on the thought that if government agencies were to work collaboratively and cooperatively with key watershed groups, then they in turn could act as conduits to their local communities and landowner and a more action-oriented approach to getting work done would be accomplished. By involving local stakeholders, place-specific social, economic, and environmental needs could be identified so that restoration and protection efforts could contribute into long-term ecosystem health.

"Broad-based action is needed because government alone cannot accomplish long-term solutions to community environmental concerns"

...The Framework

There were many watershed and community groups addressing local environmental issues across the watershed. Many of these community-based groups and environmental organizations had been active for some time and were willing to offer their expertise to agencies in various science, monitoring, and restoration programs.

By 2007, the Framework for Community Action was drafted, revised through a second Think Tank and released. Since then, the adaptive management process identified in the Framework has been encouraged across the lake. The process involves 4 principles that can be used within any area of the lake, and for any environmental issue. This process guides partnerships and aligns individuals, communities and government agencies that are taking action to assess, conserve, protect and restore Lake Huron waters and biodiversity. These principles include:

- **Build Awareness and Capacity** by providing opportunities to increase knowledge, integrate scientific based, traditional and local knowledge, and by providing tools to improve skills and capacity.
- **Support Community Involvement** by engaging the community in a collaborative process so that networks are formed and strengthened over time. Similar to other emerging philosophies and charters, we encourage people and groups to sign the Framework Charter.
- **Taking Action to Restore and Protect** by using scientific research and information, local and traditional knowledge to better understand local issues and to take action to protect unique and vulnerable ecosystems and restore degraded areas around Lake Huron.
- **Measure Success and Adapt** by identifying performance indicators, measuring the success of projects and programs, and reporting the results and achievements in a public friendly manner to learn and improve future approaches.

The Framework is an over-arching structure for realizing integrated, collaborative, community-based action-oriented approaches to address environmental restoration and protection needs around the watershed. It compliments and supports existing programs and direction. It also supports broader resource management needs of Lake Huron as defined by various resource management agencies. Where possible, it incorporates local concerns and restoration and protection interests.



Charting the Progress of the Framework

The Framework Steering Committee has been meeting and forging partnerships with watershed groups and organizations to implement the Framework principles. These relationships continue to grow and produce positive results. Some of the events and achievements over the years include:

- Two Think Tanks to develop the Framework (2005, 2007).
- A website early in the process that is continually updated (2007).
- Three Pilot Projects around Lake Huron to test run the Framework and its principles. These were reviewed after 3 years.
- Four youth summits plus a teacher's summit (2007, 2008, 2009, 2012).
- Collaboration with the French River Aboriginal Advisory Committee and supported a First Nation Youth Summit.
- A third Think Tank at the Town of Blue Mountains to define watershed wide priorities and approaches that resulted in a Framework Strategic Plan (2012).

- Workshops to review key environmental threats, identified opportunities and to align conservation groups.
- Expanded partnerships involving community-based groups operating from Sarnia to Manitoulin Island involving multiple agencies that align larger environmental issues and management programs.

This past spring a brochure was developed along with a bibliography of our collaborative achievements. Over 300 copies were distributed to all of our partners, municipalities, and to managers within each supporting agency. This was our way of showcasing the Framework, the community-based achievements and efforts in engaging and working with the public.

We continue to face environmental challenges across the watershed and we need to work together to address such issues as urban and agricultural runoff, shoreline development and alterations, habitat degradation and loss, declining biodiversity, and climate change.

Communities in Action Across the Watershed

Plenary Discussion - Day 1

There are many organizations taking action across the watershed that address key environmental issues and management challenges. Ten examples of watershed groups and their programs were highlighted to showcase how they have turned community interest into environmental action. Website addresses are provided for more information about each organization and their projects.



Lambton Shores

Jessica Van Zwol - St. Clair Region Conservation Authority (SCRCA)

www.scrca.on.ca



The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority builds awareness and supports community involvement through mailouts and community events. This summer, postcards were sent to shoreline and rural residents with properties greater than 2 hectares, announcing that stewardship grants are available. Seven potential landowner projects are being pursued.

Volunteer events are held to promote community action and partnerships with local stakeholders. This past summer, the SCRCA partnered with the local CIB group, the Municipality of Lambton Shores, the Lambton Shores Nature Trail committee and the local waste water treatment company to do naturalization and cleanup work. This was a good way to connect the urban residents with their local beaches and with the wetlands along their walking paths.



Some lessons learned:

- **Use many methods of communication** - Some people will read the postcard, or they may recognize your face from being in the newspaper or at community outreach event. Others will hear about a community event through a municipality's weekly e-newsletter.
- **Farmers want local information** on farming practices– they aren't sold on practices that have been tested in the US. They also want to see how stewardship practices or soil conservation techniques are going to be an economic benefit to their farm.
- **Have patience** – The number of stewardship project inquiries is growing each year because people are now associating us with stewardship funding.

Ausable Bayfield Watershed Plans

Mari Veliz - Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (ABCA)

www.abca.on.ca



A Watershed Plan was developed based on the four principles of the Framework to address repeated beach notices. An Advisory Committee was established with representation from upstream and downstream landowners, ABCA, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, municipalities and community groups. Through the preparation and implementation of the Plan, ABCA was able to:

Build Awareness and Community Involvement

- | | |
|---|---|
| • develop a vision and goal | • hold numerous community outreach events |
| • request 3 actions from local groups | • promote citizen science |
| • complete 87 landowner surveys | • hold a community water quality review meeting |
| • meet with community groups and municipalities | • stormwater management plan for Bayfield. |
| | • host tours and demonstration sites |

Take Action

- 22 projects were completed (16 BMPs, 6 wetland projects) / 30 projects are ongoing including manure storage decommissioning, non-riparian erosion control, fragile land retirement
- Watershed Plan was launched, posted on the website and over 100 copies was distributed to landowners, municipalities and project partners
- A Wise Drain Walk looked at land/water interactions
- Outreach by newsletter, rain garden workshop, rain barrel sale and planting events



Garvey Glen Watershed Remedial Action Plan

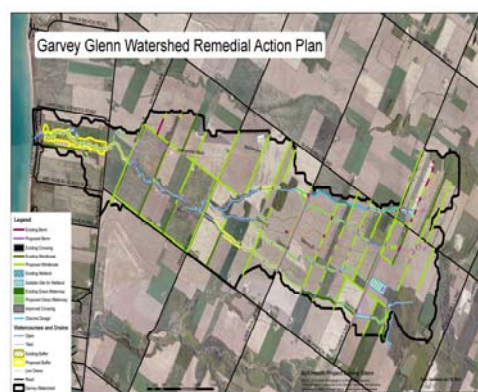
Melissa Luymes - Maitland Valley Conservation Authority

www.mvca.on.ca

Farmers in the watershed were contacted by the Maitland Valley Conservation Authority to identify what their main concerns were and discuss issues. The result was the development of a Remedial Action Plan for the watershed.

The overall plan was to slow down overland water movement (runoff) in the headwaters by constructing berms and wetlands. In the midwaters, the focus was to safely convey water with buffers and grassed waterways. The intent was to minimize velocity and volume of water so that the gully erosion could be slowed. In the gullies, the strategy is to work with the cottagers to deal with seepage from the bank. Since the development of the Remedial Action Plan, a lot of effort has focused on reaching out to farmers through newsletters and personal contact. Since 2011, MVCA has accomplished:

- 60+ km walked through fields
- 10 member landowner committee
- quarterly newsletter mailed to 50
- ISCO station installed - 11 sites monitored regularly since 2011
- 5 berms constructed
- 16 designed + 2 km grass waterway
- 4 acres of trees planted as buffers and windbreaks
- Soil Health Project



Pine River Watershed Initiative Network

Murray Jamieson/Rob Thompson

www.pineriverwatershed.ca



The Pine River Watershed Initiative Network has a vision of clean water and a healthy ecosystem within the Pine River and the Clark Creek watershed. They contacted landowners and have collaborated with partners and organizations to achieve this vision. Partnerships with the municipality of Huron Kinloss and Bruce Botanical Food Gardens, among many others, have been established to undertake local projects. They have attended events such as community fairs and parades. In order to reach the youth, they conducted outdoor classrooms with area schools. Their 'on the ground' accomplishments include:

- 219,550 trees planted
- 18 wind breaks constructed
- 7 berms constructed
- 5 cattle crossings
- 3 wetlands created
- 1 bank restoration
- 1 alternative solar powered water supply
- Over 7 kilometers of exclusion fencing



Lake Huron Coastal Centre

Karen Alexander

www.lakehuron.ca



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation was founded in 1998 with the goals of protecting and restoring Lake Huron's coastal environment and promoting a healthy coastal ecosystem. While many environmental advocacy groups address local issues within the region, the Coastal Centre is the only grassroots organization focused on protecting the coastal environment lake-wide.

The Centre conducts research, builds literacy with schools, communities, professionals and local leaders and offers programs and opportunities for local residents and communities to become involved in wise stewardship activities that protect coastal environments.



Coast Watchers act as the eyes and ears of the coast. Coast Watchers have an interest in monitoring the natural environment and commit time and effort to the program.



The Green Ribbon Champion is a symbol of environmental excellence that acknowledges property owners who are undertaking stewardship actions that protect the environment along the shores of Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association - Six Streams Restoration Project

Elizabeth Thorn - Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association

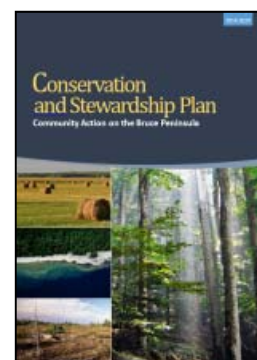
www.bpba.ca



The Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association initiated the first regional Conservation Plan for the Bruce Peninsula which is a non-regulatory blueprint for voluntary community action. The process was guided by a 23-person Steering Committee used the Nature Conservancy's Conservation Action Planning process and engaged over 700 people.

The Six Streams Restoration Initiative addresses the land use activities that have the most potential to impact water quality on the Peninsula including, stream bank damage from cattle access, agricultural drainage and residential sewage systems. The project component that has been the focus of the work so far is the development of alternate water supply systems for cattle on remote pastures using a solar power source. Ultimately a watershed strategic plan will be prepared to provide information and guidance to land owners, planners and managers. The Six Streams Project is a five year, multi-pronged initiative addressing cattle in the streams, field run off, septic contamination from permanent residences and seasonal cottages and the need for sub-watershed plans. This project has resulted in the following:

- Over 2200 cattle excluded from 3 streams resulting in a reduction of 475.2kg of phosphorus/yr
- Alternate drainage systems installed at 3 farms
- Septic survey and 2 workshops
- Water quality monitoring conducted by certified volunteers for two years
- Subwatershed plan in development
- Strong engagement of farming community through pasture dinners and tours



The Beaver River Watershed Initiative

Jesse Gibson - Beaver River Group

www.whatwaterwants.org



The Beaver River Watershed Initiative coordinates the actions of environmentally concerned community members and is aimed at improving and conserving the overall water quality of the Beaver River Watershed. Community members have been engaged by hosting clean-up days and conducting educational tours and tree planting events. Landowners have been encouraged to get involved in restoration activities.



On the ground actions include stream work, spawning beds, removal of parts or all existing beaver dams, tree planting for shade, improvement of existing ponds, promotion, education and volunteer development. Over the past 3 summers, they have consistently worked on three stream rehabilitation sites and will continue to monitor these sites to help prove the benefits of rehabilitation.

The Beaver River Watershed Initiative recently received an award from the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects for service to the environment which helps to enhance their credibility.

Building Awareness

Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program

Sarah Campbell/Fred Dobbs - Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

www.nvca.on.ca/nwip



The Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program is a pilot project of the Lake Huron-Georgian Bay Watershed Canadian Framework for Community Action. Their goal is to improve the health of Georgian Bay by undertaking water quality improvement projects on local tributary streams. Success is attributed to the wide range of strategic partners in the Program, including:

- Blue Mountain Watershed Trust
- Collingwood Collegiate Institute
- Elmvale District High School
- Environment Canada
- Georgian Triangle Anglers Association
- Jean Vanier High School
- North Simcoe Land Stewardship Network
- Nottawasaga Steelheaders
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- Simcoe County Christian Farmers Association
- Simcoe County Federation of Agriculture
- South Simcoe Streams Network
- Stayner Collegiate Institute
- Towns of Collingwood, Blue Mountains, and Wasaga Beach
- Townships of Clearview, Essa, Springwater, and Tiny
- Wasaga Beach Fish and Game Club
- Wasaga Beach Provincial Park
- Wasaga Beach River Resources Committee
- Wild Canada

Some of their accomplishments include

- Volunteer streamside tree planting
- Strategic professional streamside tree planting
- Negotiation of buffer strips along waterways
- Working in partnership with farmers to fence livestock out of streams
- Stream bank stabilization and stream habitat improvement
- Natural channel restoration
- Experiential learning opportunities - citizen science

Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve

Greg Mason - Eastern Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve

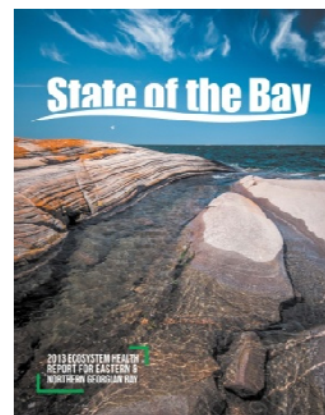
www.gbbr.ca



The Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve (GBBR) was designated in 2004 and extends from Port Severn to the French River. It is managed by a non-profit organization with a mandate to protect the environment, create vibrant communities and build a healthy economy. The GBBR has a long history with Framework and has participated in stakeholder workshops and been a member of the Steering Committee since its inception. In 2008, the GBBR hosted the Lake Huron Youth Summit and conducted Life on the Bay workshops.

The State of the Bay report card took 2 years to complete, released in 2013 and was followed with workshops to promote awareness and action.. Since its release there have been many accomplishments and positive outcomes:

- Partnership and expertise
- 15,000 copies distributed to 200 locations
- 6,000+ online reads and 1,200 downloads
- 13 workshops delivered to a total of 455 participants
- 1,200 contacts through social media weekly



Building Awareness

Manitoulin Streams

Seija Deschenes - Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association

www.manitoulinstreams.com



Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association is focused on large-scale, community-based efforts to rehabilitate aquatic ecosystems on Manitoulin Island. The entire community is brought together to do this through joint private and public driven initiatives. Their efforts are directed at rehabilitating and enhancing water quality and the fisheries resource on Manitoulin Island streams.

Manitoulin Streams has leveraged over \$3 million in funding and completed 34 major projects on the Manitou River, Blue Jay Creek, Norton's Creek, Grimesthorpe Creek Mindemoya River, Mill Creek and Bass Lake Creek. A Class Environmental Assessment covering 184 water courses on Manitoulin Island was conducted and provincial and federal approvals are in place to rehabilitate these water courses. An enhancement strategy was created for 5 of the top 10 streams in need of rehabilitation. The strategy identified areas of concern with a high, medium or low priority and delineates the problems, solutions and estimated costs for rehabilitation.



Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition

Edith Orr

www.centralalgomafreshwatercoalition.ca



The Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition (CAFC) is dedicated to the protection, improvement, and restoration of watersheds throughout the Central Algoma Region. CAFC was formed in 2007 to unite the voices of property owners, residents, business owners and non-government organizations concerned about cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) blooms on several lakes in the Region. The organization has since expanded its focus to include all aspects and activities related to healthy watersheds. CAFC's focus is to conduct scientific research, hold stakeholders consultations and promote public awareness through education. Current projects include:

- Development of Watershed Management Plans for Central Algoma (Stobie Creek, Bright Lake and Desbarats Lake Watersheds)
- Stobie Creek Restoration Project to prevent erosion and nutrient loading
- Healthy Habits for Healthy Habitats - redeveloping educational videos, brochures, and other public outreach documents to raise awareness
- Watershed Unification Project - Working towards a regional vision for sustainability, and a strategic plan



Magnetawan First Nation

Ryan Monig/Terry Jones - Magnetawan First Nation

<http://www.magnetawanfirstnation.com/>

Magnetawan First Nation is implementing 2 projects focussed on species at risk and one project on water quality of Bying Inlet with funding received from the Lake Simcoe South-eastern Georgian Bay Clean-up Fund. The Magnetawan Territory and the Georgian Bay shoreline is a hot spot for species at risk and they are studying the interaction of Highway #169 on reptiles. So far, their findings are that the impact is catastrophic. This work will provide critical information when the highway is being improved and will assist in ensuring mitigation measures are implemented. There is also work being undertaken about sturgeon populations in the Magnetawan River.

Trillium Foundation ReDesign

Thea Silver, Strategy Lead, Ontario Trillium Foundation - Day 2

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is Canada's largest granting foundation awarding around \$110 million to approximately 1,300 organizations every year. Over the next decade, the Trillium Foundation will invest \$1 billion in Ontario's public benefit sector. Thea Silver explained the Foundation's first major change in 15 years - ReDesign 2015. The Redesign is intended to ensure positive community impact and to provide a simpler process for grantees.

The goal for ReDesign2015 is to:

- Make smarter, more focused and evidenced-based decisions about Trillium investments.
- To be able to clearly demonstrate those results.
- To raise awareness of this large scale organizational change so that organizations can plan for 2015.

To succeed the OTF needs to make focused decisions. Decision, which are based on data and evidence, and use the time and expertise of applicants, grant recipients and volunteers more wisely. Applications and the evaluation of those applications should depend on the nature, size and duration of the request. Trillium processes should be simple and streamlined for everyone involved. It is recognized that one application approach does not work for all types of projects and that the current process is too difficult and long.

The ReDesign process will include 4 granting streams:

1. Seed Grants:

- Starting projects at the idea or conceptual stage
- To conduct new research or feasibility studies
- To host discussions about emerging issues or new opportunities
- To develop a new idea or launching a new event
- To convene people to test feasibility
- Grants for less than 1 year
- \$5,000 to \$75,000
- 2 intakes per year

2. Grow Grants:

- Projects that build on the success of a proven model or program
- Bigger and deeper projects
- A seed grant is not a prerequisite
- Flexible to adjust to changes that occur in a longer term project so a budget and work plan is initially required only for the first year
- Grants for 2 to 3 years
- \$50,000 to \$250,000 per year
- 2 intakes per year

3. Collective Impact Grants:

- To bring about fundamental change with collective action
- Collective impact, collaboration and proactive engagement around an issue
- Co-creation or co-design of solutions
- The development of evaluation strategies and shared measurement
- May also included professional facilitation, convening and research

- 3 to 5 years
- Up to \$500,000 per year
- 2 stages to submitting a request
- Continual intake and no deadlines

4. Capital Grants:

- To broaden access to and improve community spaces
- To buy and install equipment
- Renovations, installations and repairs
- Building structures or spaces
- Making better use of technological resource
- Simple and straight forward application
- Grants for 1 year
- \$5,000 to \$150,000

An Ontario-wide mandate or a project which serves several regions will continue to fit within these ReDesigned granting streams. However, capacity building funding for organizations will no longer be available and individual organizations will not be able to hold multiple grants. The focus will be on projects rather than organizations. In addition, Foundation representatives will be more engaged with grantees and will spend less time with applicants.

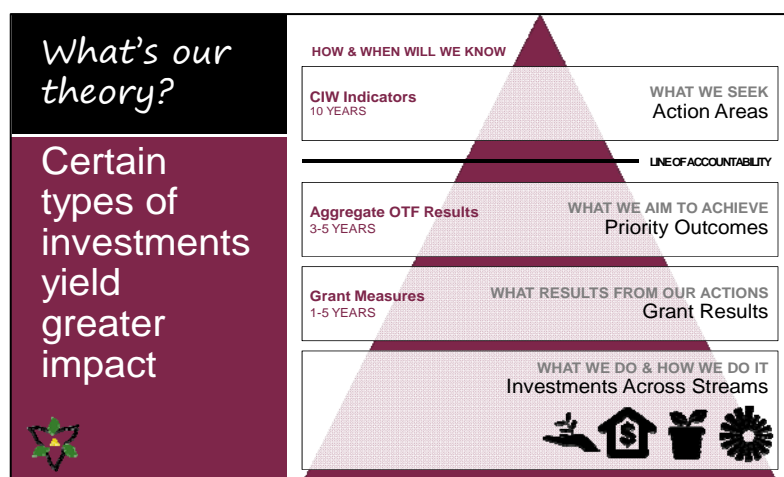


Based on research, evidence and experience of 30 years of grant making, Trillium defines healthy and vibrant communities as those with:

- Active people
- Inspired people
- Connected people
- Prosperous people
- Promising young people
- Green people (supporting a healthy environment)

OTF's theory of change defines what impact the Foundation aims to achieve, how it will be achieved, and how success will be demonstrated. Starting in the top of the diagram to the right, the Action Areas explain OTF's definition of healthy and vibrant communities. These have been derived from the Canadian Index of Wellbeing (CIW).

For each Action Area, there will be priority outcomes that the Foundation will be accountable to achieve through its investments. Priority outcomes will be reviewed every 3 years and revised as necessary. If progress is made on the priority outcomes, the Foundation will know it has done



its part to positively influence the evidence-based indicators of wellbeing in Ontario as selected from the (CIW). CIW indicators will provide a signal of Trillium's long-term progress over the next 10 years.

Priority Outcomes are what OTF is aiming to achieve as a result of its investments. Each priority outcome will be defined by 2-5 grant results. Grant Results are components, that when combined together achieve the priority outcome. Grant results are measurable and specific and all investment will need to align with at least one grant result. Each grant result will have an indicator associated with it that measures the change. The OTF will not be directive, but will develop a knowledge base that identifies initiatives that achieve the change sought after in our grant results. This knowledge-base could include strategies, approaches or models, as well as local solutions. Throughout the process, progress will be tracked and monitored using appropriate, relevant measures.

The Priority Outcomes that are most strongly aligned with the Green People action area (shown above), but may drive change in other action areas. The target in this area is to focus on protecting biodiversity and reducing our ecological footprint.

Priority Outcomes

These priority outcomes align most closely with the **Green People** action area:



More ecosystems are protected and restored

Healthy ecosystems – forests, wetlands, grasslands and waters – provide habitat for species, clean our air and water, stabilize our soil and absorb greenhouse gases. By protecting and restoring them, we ensure that current and future generations benefit.

People reduce their impact on the environment

When people connect with and understand their environment, they are motivated to reduce their impact on it.

Approaches that involve stakeholders such as industry, business and other resources users are also essential to the responsible stewardship of our environment.

Priority Outcomes

These priority outcomes align most closely with the **Active People** action area:



Higher quality sports programming & infrastructure to support physical activity

Quality sports programs build participation for life. They rely on trained coaches and officials, safe spaces and positive approaches to play.

More people become physically active

More people incorporate regular physical activity into their daily lives and have access to the right spaces and facilities.

Priority Outcomes

These priority outcomes align most closely with the **Inspired People** action area:




Better quality programming and infrastructure to experience culture, heritage and the arts

More people find enrichment through quality artistic, cultural and heritage works and programs. These are supported by the right services and spaces, which deepen people's experiences.


More people connect with culture, heritage and the arts

When access is increased, more people can experience culture, heritage and the arts in ways that help them reflect, find meaning and connect with their community.

| | |
|--|---|
| Priority Outcomes | |
| <p>These priority outcomes align most closely with the Prosperous People action area:</p>  | <p>Increased Economic Stability By increasing access to essential community services, people who are vulnerable to poverty are better positioned to meet their basic needs.</p> <p>Increased Economic Opportunity To prosper, people need access to skills and knowledge and the right supports to achieve financial independence, become and stay employed, and secure meaningful livelihoods.</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| Priority Outcomes | |
| <p>These priority outcomes align most closely with the Connected People action area:</p>  | <p>Diverse groups work better together to shape community Communities create more opportunities to bring together and engage people of various backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. When people have a say in decisions that affect them, they experience a sense of shared purpose and deeper feelings of belonging.</p> <p>Reduced social isolation Communities strive to include members who are socially isolated or are vulnerable to isolation. As people build positive social ties, form healthy relationships, volunteer, and access community supports, they are healthier, happier and more connected.</p> |

Priority Outcomes and funding streams are to be finalized and announced in October and November. There will be no application intake in March and new applications will be available in the early spring of 2015 with an intake early in the summer.

| | |
|---|--|
| Priority Outcomes | |
| <p>These priority outcomes align most closely with the Promising Young People action area:</p>  | <p>More children and youth have emotional and social strengths Children and youth need life skills, positive values, self-esteem and the ability to make decisions to succeed. They also need supportive families and role models equipped to help build these skills.</p> <p>More youth are meaningfully engaged in the community Youth are successful and engaged when they have the skills to lead, adapt, create and learn throughout their lives.</p> |

Perspectives on Fundraising and Sustainable Funding

Jason Ritchie – Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (COA)

John Grant – Nature Conservancy of Canada

Lindsay Telfer – Canadian Freshwater Alliance

April Weppeler – Freshwater Future Canada

Thea Silver – Ontario Trillium Foundation

A panel of experts were assembled to provide their thoughts on how to deal with the challenges of finding organizational and program funding. The key advice provided by the panel covered general fundraising, the elements of a successful funding application, and their perspective about developing sustainable funding.

Overcoming Key Challenges

- **Start Small and Grow** - It is best to start small with an easy to understand proposal and begin to develop a relationship with the funder. Break the project into smaller pieces and tackle them over time or with applications to a couple different funds. This will provide the groundwork for a larger project. Once the ability to deliver a project has been demonstrated and the funder knows the track record of the organization, it will be easier for them to justify a greater amount of funding for a larger project.
- **A Coherent and Connected Proposal** - A good application will connect all of the components. For instance, habitat, tree planting and fencing are all components linked to stream rehabilitation. Two proposals are more likely to be successful than one proposal with 2 unrelated parts. Applications with unrelated components are more difficult for reviewers to justify than a coherent proposal. In addition, a weakness in one component of an application can negatively affect the rest of the proposal. Break the project into logical pieces, determine the priority component and base a first application on that part of the project. Follow the successful completion of that part with subsequent applications.
- **A Compelling Case** - Frame and communicate the proposal in a manner that is consistent with the funding guideline and provide clear objectives and outcomes. Demonstrate how the project will fit into the larger environmental goals of the funder. Use an inspirational approach for individual donors. Write in a way that means something to your audience and don't be afraid to put a little emotion and impact into the request. Let them know that they will make a difference to your work. Ask a colleague or another person for a critical evaluation of your project, fundraising case or material and whether you communicate it effectively.
- **Ask Others for Help** - A lack of experience or credibility can hold back new groups or people new to fundraising. If you have a compelling need and a good prospect, ask for support and start with people you know. Their reaction may help you refine your approach. If your organization does not have an established credibility, align yourself with a partner with experience and a proven record. There is a need to shift mindsets to focus on the goals rather than on organizations and truly work together.
- **Use a Various Funding Approaches** - Be sure to have a variety of funding relationships and strategies. Go beyond relying on funding from foundations and other significant funding organizations and cultivate individual donors. Building funding and cultivating donors takes time and effort, but the income generated is far more transferable and stable over time. Cultivate donors who will make non-specific contributions because they have come to trust your organization to be cost-effective in its use of resources. In order to ensure that a funded program can be undertaken,

basic organizational needs such as salaries and administration must also be covered. Allocate a realistic portion of these costs to each project.

- **Develop and Implement a Donor Strategy** - Develop a donor strategy for your projects and campaigns and connect this to your engagement activities. Make sure you ask for donations since giving is one way for people to support work they are passionate about. Connect donors with your issues.
- **Identify Your Own Priorities** - Establish organizational and operational goals before seeking funding. Clearly identify your goals and how to achieve them. It is important for groups to be clear about what they need to fundraise for and not to follow project dollars or funding criteria.
- **Demystify Fundraising** - Many people are intimidated by fundraising. Some of the best fundraisers are passionate project people, rather than a professional fundraiser or the executive director. Everyone in an organization including the Board has a role in raising funds. There is a need to demystify fundraising and think of it different approaches for target audiences. For individual philanthropic support, people often view it as 'asking for money' and that thinking should be shifted to think about it as providing an opportunity for donors to be engaged in something they care about. Engage a champion in your efforts. For corporations or governments, think about how your proposal will advance their objectives and benefit both organizations.

Elements of a Successful Funding Application

- **Be clear and organized** – A concise case, clearly articulating how a project will successfully address a compelling need that aligns with the funder is more likely to be successful. Identify what your project will do, explain why the project should be pursued, how it will be accomplished, the expected outcomes and measures for success and how it will be sustained. Follow a logical progression in your application and make it easy for the reviewer to understand. When applications have maximum word requirements, comply with that limit. Assume that reviewers have some knowledge on general issues and focus on the specifics of the purpose of the funding and the project proposed.
- **Include a Thorough and Realistic Budget** – Thoroughly identify what the project will actually cost.
- **Understand the Funding Agency and its Objectives** - To be successful applications must show an understanding of the objectives of the fund and demonstrate how the project will addresses those objectives. Read everything you can find online to ensure you know what matters to the funder and make sure your proposal aligns well with one or more of their funding priorities and guidelines. Also, make sure that the proposal isn't asking for too much or too little. Try to see the application from the perspective of the reviewer and determine if the proposal is convincing them to invest in a project that is tangible, measurable and will make a difference.

Attempt to have at least one phone conversation with a representative of that organization and overtime develop a relationship. If you make contact, ask informed questions. If the agency offers a review period take advantage of it. Implement any advice about the nature of the application that is received from the funding contact.

- **Define Success and Show Impact** - Indicate what defines a successful outcome, and without being too negative, identify the consequences if the issue is not addressed. Identify how success will be demonstrated. Use quantitative and qualitative measures. When a reviewer is comparing two similar applications, identifying specific results will play a role in approval of an application. If you haven't quantified your outcome, the application that does is more likely to be successful. A smaller project with smaller deliverables can also be successful provide the cost is also smaller or can be justified. Funders recognize that costs may vary by location. Make sure that objectives are clear and

that you can deliver the outcomes predicted. Funders review many proposals and the identification of clear and attainable objectives are more likely to be successful.

- **Include Partners** – Ensure that you have involved any obvious partners. If your group lacks a long track record, a partner with experience and a record of performance will contribute to the success of the application.
- **Put the Project to the Test** – Develop a capacity checklist and put your project through this rigour. If the project requires partnerships, relationships, make sure they are developed and in place. For example, if you plan to work with a school, confirm the partnership with the school board. Carefully think about the ‘readiness’ of your initiative and demonstrate that readiness.

Fundraising Approaches

- **Prepare and Implement a Funding Strategy** - Find a diversity of ways to cover the cost of your operation. Continue to seek traditional approaches of applying for funding through foundations and government and also consider new sources of funding. Build operational costs into projects. New approaches may include:
 - Earned income through stores, merchandise or fee for service
 - Events and auctions (this may result in more friends than funds, but raises awareness)
 - On line Auctions
 - Member and donor cultivation programs
 - Matched funding challenges
 - Leverage your contacts and those in your network
 - Crowd funding
- **Begin Donor Cultivation Strategies** – Set priorities in a donor cultivation strategy since it will assist with public engagement, awareness and education activities and should also begin to pay for itself. Identify a fundraising approach for individuals or sponsors that involve the following steps:
 - Step 1 – Get over your fear of asking
 - Step 2 – Define your point of entry opportunities
 - Step 3 – Plan opportunities for connection and engagement
 - Step 4 – ASK
- **Show Value of Contributions** - Show a donation will make a difference, regardless of the amount. For example, identify that a donation of \$200 will trigger a matching contribution of \$400 and protect another acre of critical habitat at a site supporting for third largest population of globally rare Hill’s Thistle. Under promising and over delivering is always a benefit, but is particularly important for a first time applicant wanting to form a relationship with a funder. Search for a little more money to assist in ensuring the over delivery part.
- **Invest in Project Marketing** - Natural resource projects often cross a broad spectrum of sectors that may include human health, environment, agriculture, fish, wildlife, outdoor recreation, and perhaps development, academia or private industry. It is amazing who may be willing to invest in a well designed project. Once a program is well known, a positive reputation will carry weight with funders.
- **Make Personal Connections** - Provide opportunities for people to personally experience the work of your organization. For example, donor prospects who participate in a property tour may come away with a greater appreciation of the beauty and wonder of nature as well as an understanding of the scientific justification for protecting critical habitat. Also, be active in

making direct contact especially in this online age. Try to reach an actual person and make a personal connection.

- **Work With Partners and Key Individuals** - Donors in any area tend to see it as a benefit when similar community groups collaborate especially if a larger charity that has a long track record and professional staff is involved. Engage board members or other key volunteers since they often know and can connect you to new prospects.
- **Manage Expectations and Practice Patience** - Manage expectations about potential fund raising. Think of your work as value added. Some things take a long time to come to fruition so continue to build relationships and practice patience. If you fail, speak to your contacts and try again.

Advice for Seeking Sustainable Funding

- **Understand Sustainable Funding** – Sustainable funding means different things to different people. There is no easy answer to core funding. Too often, organizations think only of the hard costs and identify the rest as an ‘in-kind’ contribution. Do not undervalue costs like staff time and identify how to cover those costs. Think of it as your ‘break even’.
- **Clearly Define Your Organization** - Start by being clear about your organization and identify the vision, mission and programs and organizational goals. Fundraising should be driven by the commitment to your goals and the belief in your mission. Rely on the inspiration of your work and use that passion when you connect with people.
- **Consider Renewal** – Revise approaches to refresh your projects. Initiate new projects or new approaches to old projects and invite new people or partners with fresh ideas. Donors fatigue will set in if you keep doing the same thing. Be constantly seeking new relationships and funding approaches; lay the groundwork early so you aren’t scrambling in the last year of a multi-year grant.
- **Promote Planned Giving** - Ask donors who clearly support your organization to make multi-year commitments that can be used to support the organization. Hold special events or other means to engage them and to recognize their contributions
- **Establish Endowment Funds** - Encourage donations to a special endowment fund that is invested to generate ongoing annual income to cover core operating costs. In order to attract this type of support, there must be trust that the organization will continue into the future.
- **Seek Other Funding Opportunities** - Look at all aspects of project and tap into peripheral granting opportunities that meet other criteria.

3 Supporting Community Involvement

Engaging Landowners – Understanding Social Barriers to Environmental Action in a Changing Agricultural Landscape

Jacqui Empson Laporte - Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food And Rural Affairs - Day 1

Messages encouraging environmental action are most effective when delivered in a manner that will convince others to take that action. Typical program design would identify the issue, interested groups or individuals would participate and monetary or technical assistance would be offered. However, it is important to recognize that some people have priorities different from agency-related environmental issues, or they may be motivated by something other than the offer of monetary or technical assistance.

Jacqui Empson Laporte, Environmental Specialist with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) used six examples of changing agricultural landscapes to suggest the effectiveness of environmental programs can be affected by characteristics, trends and associated social barriers to environmental action.

Changing Agricultural Landscape #1: Research on Land Conservation and Farmers

Jeff Brick, a researcher from the Upper Thames River Conservation Authority asked the question: "Are there factors that explain why some farmers convert conservation lands to agricultural production while others establish conservation lands on their property?"

The study found that:

- Farmers with larger properties tend to exhibit more conservation oriented behaviour;
- Farmers that have owned their land for a longer period of time tend to be more conservation oriented;
- Older farmers exhibit more conservation behaviour than younger farmers;
- Farmers with higher debt loads tend to be less conservation oriented than farmers with lower debt load; and
- No relationship between reliance on farm income and conservation behaviour or attitude.

Changing Agricultural Landscape #2: A Case Study of Large Farm Operators

A project involving large farm operators was undertaken in the Lake Huron watershed and the target audience were landowners with greater than 10,000 acres of cropland owned, rented or share cropped and with greater than 500 nutrient units of livestock. They have a significantly different farming operation than others, and are not usually participants in funding programs or workshops.

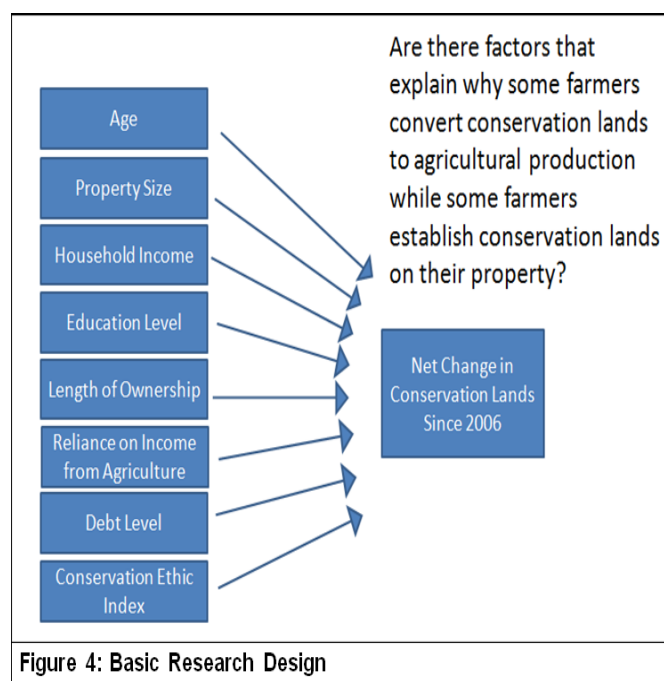


Figure 4: Basic Research Design

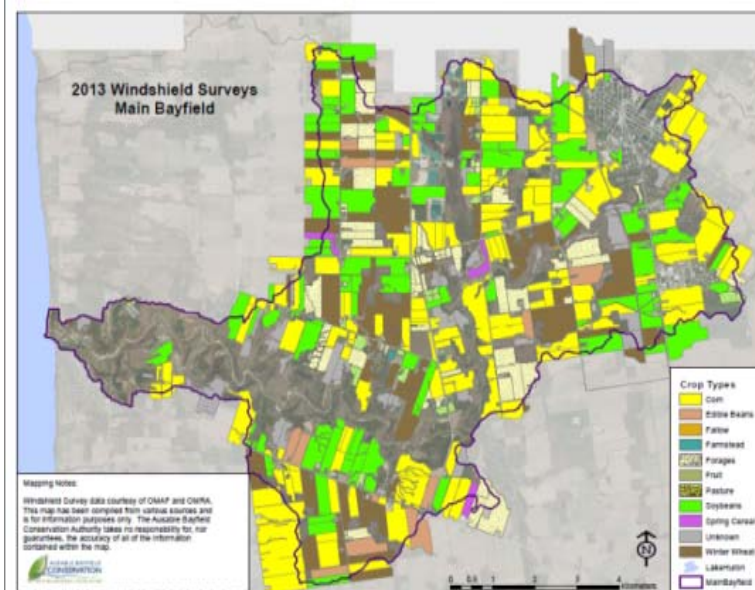
In order to gain access to speak to these landowners, it was important to identify partners with an existing relationship to 'open the door'. The approach was an informal 'chat' designed to understand more about their business, priorities, level of influence in the community. Business confidentiality was key, and they tend not to take part in demonstration sites or tours.

Four initial conversations were held in February and March of 2014 with some subsequent discussions. The conversations represented farm businesses with:

- 35,000 acres of land (a significant portion of the Lake Huron Southeast Shore watershed);
- 2,000 plus nutrient units worth of livestock;
- A gross revenue of over \$100 million per year;
- Associated businesses including an abattoir, a mill, and trucking.

The results of the discussions included:

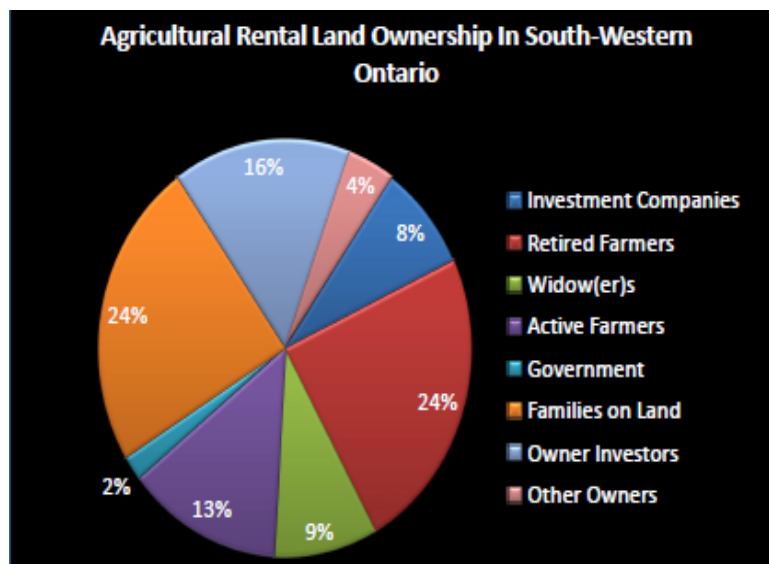
- While large farms may be owned by a corporation, it is often a family that runs that operation;
- Farmers view their operation as a whole whether the land is owned or rented;
- Industry challenges are seen as competitive opportunities and these operators quickly address challenges (such as porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDv), humane euthanasia, gestational crates);
- Government is not seen as a reliable, timely or professional resource;
- Large operators need specific advice tailored to their situation and business confidentiality and paid professionals are preferred to government advice or assistance;
- Large operators view government assistance programs as being too slow and as market interference that changes the timing for decision making;
- The next generation's role in farming is dependent on special skills or aptitude which may focus on livestock, crops, business, IT support, human resources management or public relations.



Changing Agricultural Landscape #3: Who Owns the Farmland?

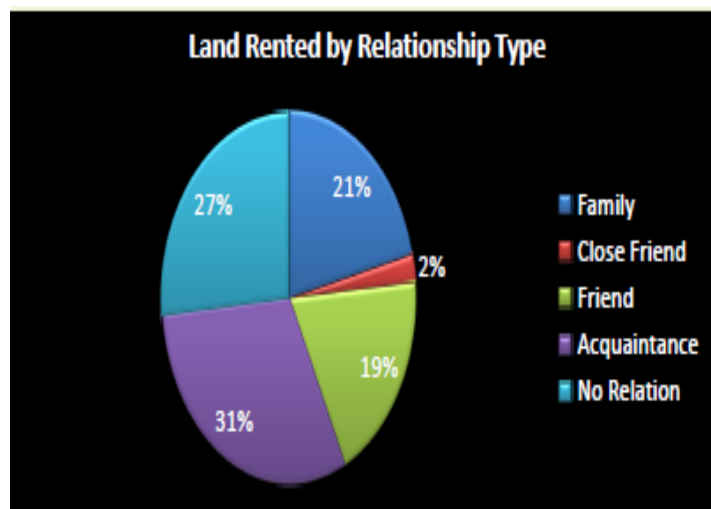
A study at the University of Guelph FARE Institute examined farmland ownership patterns in South-Western Ontario and considered the following questions:

- Why are people renting out their land?
- Who are they renting their land to?
- What influence do the owners have over the cropping practices or BMPs used on the farm?
- What influence does the cropping practices or BMPs have on who rents the land?



A large percentage of land is rented out by retired farmers, families on land or widows or widowers. This reflects the older average age of farmers and the land rental offers the highest dollar retirement income.

Very few land rental agreements contain provisions for environmental measures or protection. The relationship type can have an effect on the ability of the landowner to dictate the farming practices they want for the farm. For instance, rental agreements between family members or friends may result from the trust in the relationship, not necessarily the cropping practices.



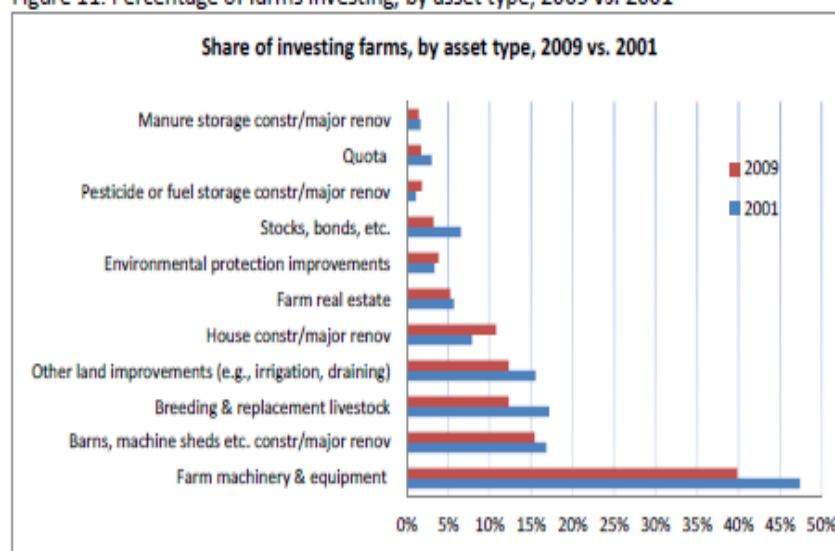
Changing Agricultural Landscape #4: Investment and Growth on Canadian Farms

Economic research undertaken at the Richard Ivy School of Business by Nicoletta Uzea and David Sparling on investment in farms in Canada showed that:

- Farmers invest in machinery and equipment
- Environmental investments remain relatively low and unchanging
- Large farms invested more in farm machinery and equipment, farm real estate, and stocks, bonds and other financial assets, which will mean more incentives and resources to invest in the farm
- Small and medium farms invested proportionately more in house construction and environmental protection
- Large farms will likely enjoy increased productivity and competitiveness because of investments in equipment and efficiency
- The productivity and competitiveness of small farms will likely continue to erode

This study highlights that not every farm is motivated to take action for the same reasons. The competition for attention for environmental initiatives is competing with other priorities.

Figure 11. Percentage of farms investing, by asset type, 2009 vs. 2001

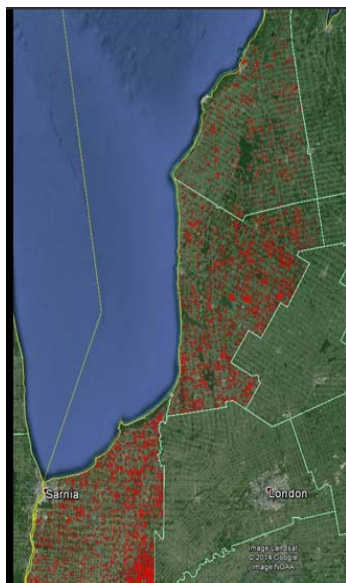


Source: Statistics Canada, Farm Financial Survey 2001 and 2009

Changing Agricultural Landscape #5: Trend Analysis

Remote sensing and GIS can be used to tell stories about the landscape, which we can use to engage with landowners. The maps show fields with corn or soybeans in the past three years – commodity prices were high, and encouraged this practice.

- From an environmental perspective, corn and soybean fields are often bare throughout November – May, leading to erosion or water quality issues.
- These maps or pictures may help us “sell” BMPs such as cover crops or reduced tillage, by showing people the cumulative effect of cropping practices on a broader issue of water quality.



Changing Agricultural Landscape #6: Tools and Techniques

- The person shown in the circle in the picture below shows the scale of this project using big berms to manage water and control erosion.
- We can use maps, pictures, research results or aerial views to tell a story. Using the drone, we can show water movement throughout a watershed



Advice on Overcoming Social Barriers to Environmental Action in a Changing Agricultural Landscape

- Conservation programs should specifically target their audiences
- Socio-economic factors should be considered in program design and messaging
- Understand that key spending areas such as equipment will compete for investment dollars and edge out investment in environmental protection
- Services and programs should be varied to appeal to different priorities
- Marketing and promotion efforts should respond to different conservation ethics
- Innovative program designs that pay for alternative types of projects or services are needed
- Be aware of new technologies or practices that can influence programs either positively or negatively
- Be aware of old technologies or practices that can influence our programs either positively or negatively

Involving and Engaging Community Members

Discussions from Lake Huron Cafe Discussions - Day 2

People become engaged for various reasons and in a variety of ways, so our methods of engagement must be both targeted yet diverse to attract the greatest number of community members.

1. Understand the Audience to be Engaged

- Understand the composition of the community so you can capture attention and interest.
 - What is the target audience and what is their demographic?
 - What are the characteristics and motivations for that audience?
 - What are the priorities of the target audience and the community?
- Determine what levels of knowledge and understanding exist in the community and don't assume that you know why (or why not) a project is interesting or a community group will participate.
- What barriers are there to understanding and taking action?
- What is the impact of culture in a community and how can that be used to develop effective messages and programs?
- Using the audience research, create messages and approaches that will be understood and gain acceptance. For example, human health or environmental interpretation may both present motivation for volunteers to act to create a walking trail.

2. Create and Deliver Engaging Messages

- Use a variety of methods of communication to avoid audience fatigue.
- Design messages that are simple and clear and deliver them in graphic and visual ways to promote understanding. Complex language, concepts or terminology can intimidate and stifle action.
- Images resonate with people so use the power of images to tell your story.
- Messages should build a sense of urgency and draw attention.
- Follow up on the message and be ready to respond to the question "What can I do?"

- Brand project signage and over time it will be recognized and understood. Signage can be vandalized so place it in active locations and monitor its condition.
- Email notice of events so your issue remains current.
- Watershed report cards portray information that resonates with land owners because they see how they may be affected.
- Make learning or engagement fun and fulfilling as no one wants to work during their leisure time. It can assist in measuring impact such as using word puzzle with an online answer to measure interest.
- Seek participation in the newsletters of the municipality or other organizations. For example, work with a bank to promote the mortgage benefits of septic monitoring and upgrading.
- Actively engage a member of the media in your program or organization.
- Social media communications can have negative or positive impact and it can be difficult to evaluate how your message is being perceived. Social media communication requires monitoring and attention.
- Consider who will have the most impact with the audience when making presentations (i.e. a taxpayer of influence or a business owner speaking to a municipal council).
- Weed out what is clearly not having the desired results or the cost outweighs the benefit.

3. Create Diverse Engagement Opportunities

- Create a range of opportunities to participate to attract the greatest number and diversity of people. This may include passive donations or individual stewardship, governance involvement such as sitting on the Board of Directors or active participation such as planting trees.
- Provide technical advice to a landowner interested in a stewardship project.
- Practice patience since providing a “Picture of the Day” on social media every day for one year raised awareness and build interest and a connection that attracted donors.
- Use personal contact to reach rural and seasonal residents. Go door to door or dock to dock.
- Work with faith groups.
- Community dinners attract First Nation communities to meetings.
- Use technology such as QR tags to deliver information in the field, apps (i.e., Ontario Nature Reptile and Amphibian app, Invasive Species Reporting app) or GIS to map an issue in a community.
- Link observations or actions to a prize.
- Promote visual learning and interest through live streaming of environmental concerns such as eagles nests, beaches, and storm events).
- Webinars can be a cost effective way to deliver information or training. Consult someone who has had success and evaluate whether this will offer an effective tool for communication as technical problems can arise.

4. Use Experiential Learning

- Experiential learning is personal and provides an opportunity for community members to get actively involved. It also creates a higher level of understanding. Engaging someone in one type of monitoring may lead them to take action in another area.

- Combine recreational activities with environmental education or technical work such as a canoe day with an interpretative guide and sampling for turbidity, benthic demonstrations or fly fishing events.
- Use activities such as hikes, geo-caching, fish nets, electro-fishing or exploring to explain complex issues and to engage youth and potential volunteers such as teachers, parents and grandparents.
- Provide tours of project sites before and after allow people to see the impact of their involvement (this could include either passive donors or active participants).
- Offer ecotourism and biodiversity tours.
- Provide tools for individuals to evaluate and steward their own property such as downspout disconnections, rain barrels, and rain gauges.
- Take municipal councils and senior municipal staff to demonstration sites or on tours.

5. Engage in Citizen Science

- Using data collected by volunteers often engages community members. However, it is sometimes considered “soft data” because there may not be a mechanism to ensure that it has collected consistently and according to protocol. In order to be effective a clear and concise training plan is needed to ensure all volunteers understand the protocol. Examples of this include Environment Canada’s Canadian Aquatic Biomonitoring Network (CABIN) or the Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network (OBBN) for assessing the health of freshwater ecosystems.
- Manage the expectations of volunteers about the use and meaning of the data because although participation may be short term, results may only be available in the long term. Be prepared to answer the question “What is the value of my participation?”
- Develop a safety plan so that any concerns are identified, understood and mitigated. (ie. Traffic vests, life jackets, boat operation).

6. Use Champions

- Use landowner champions to broadcast the message and engage their peers since this is more personal and trusted. Start by finding someone linked to that community to gain access to landowners.
- Identifying land owners and obtaining permission to enter a property may be difficult. Some of the barriers that must be overcome to find and engage owners include: the Freedom of Information and the Protection of Privacy Act constraints, changes in land ownership, position in the community, cultural barriers, and identifying landowners under numbered companies, absentee landlords and rental agreements.
- Use other groups with ‘like minds’ to spread your message or to undertake collaborative or complimentary efforts.

7. Collaborate and Join

- Partnerships can be found in amazing places, if you are open to the opportunity. Go boldly and go where you have never gone before instead of talking to community members that already believe in the issue. Seek out the ones that are unaware or reluctant to get involved or take action.

- Community engagement can be planned and greater awareness built with less effort by partnering with events being held by other organizations. Take a booth at a community fair or event to raise interest in an environmental program (i.e., tree planting) because a wide audience is drawn initially to the fair and may not be aware of the environmental program.
- Attend or speak at events that involve your target audience such as cottage association meetings to talk about a water quality monitoring initiative.
- Participate in a speakers' series or panel with a variety of perspectives.
- Use a visual issue such as phragmites to identify other issues such as species at risk (turtles) in the same wetland.
- Seek testimonials from others.
- Join community organizations such as a Chamber of Commerce.

8. Overcome Perceptions

- Be aware of coffee shop talk and misinformation that will defeat the efforts of even the best technical workshop. Identify how that can be mitigated by understanding who the "influencers" are in the community, or the places where information is obtained and trusted. Then work with it rather than against it.
- When community members may have a fear or mistrust of a "government or agency", seek a not-for-profit organization to partner with or a local champion from that community.
- Acknowledge that past involvement with an agency or department can influence the engagement on a current project and consider how to address it in the design of the program.
- Realize that issues linked to organizations can affect participation, such as regulatory initiatives for Conservation Areas can discourage volunteer stewardship activities. Consider the timing and approach of the program.
- Identify organizational links to issues that may be negatively perceived, even if they are unrelated (i.e., wind turbines) and understand that issue.

9. Resources and Volunteers

- Show patience and persevere. It may take a project or initiative a long time to find the traction to get started due to a shortage of resources.
- Identify barriers, such as lack of human resources, seasonality, time, weather or conflicting events, when developing a program design.
- Identify times when there is a high demand on the time of volunteers, such as PA days, March Break, and planting or harvesting season, and target the engagement or program outside of those time constraints.
- Volunteer or donor fatigue is a reality so understanding motivation and celebrating success is important. The organization should understand the competing demands on volunteers' time. Work at finding a core group that is dedicated and supplement by continually engaging new volunteers.
- Create a ladder of progression to keep volunteers interested. Draw them into the program and then identify different levels and types of involvement.

- Moving volunteers past the easy actions and moving to the next level requires a lot more initiative and dedication. Often volunteers are focussed on one issue. Consider the encouragement or tools that would motivate those people.
- When personalities, skills, or passions don't mesh, use resources where there is a better fit.
- Communication can be frustrated by not maintaining email lists and spam legislation. It is critical to find resources to devote to keeping data bases current.
- Funding for basic requirements such as insurance premiums for volunteers can make moving an engagement project forward more difficult to determine whether you can work through a municipality or another organization.

10. Express Gratitude and Build Relationships

- Ensure that community members know that their involvement had an impact on the issue or project. This retains their interest and validates their motives for participating in the first place.
- Appreciation can be expressed informally, by personal contact, or by formal awards.
- Make sure good food is involved.
- Community hours can be the first motivation for high school students but make sure that their contribution is also recognized.
- Present property plaques or provide maps or photos of a land owner's property.
- Acknowledge partner organizations and reciprocate the assistance provided by them.

Networking and Collaborating

Discussions from Lake Huron Cafe Discussions - Day 2

A Stepped Approach to Networking and Collaborating

The process of developing and maintaining a positive relationship, that starts with a network and leads to collaboration, is a key to success.

The following is a series of steps to consider when attempting to network or collaborate with other groups is identified below and provides a checklist that can lead to developing successful relationships.

- 1 Develop your vision to get to your end goal (exploratory)
- 2 Know your prospective partner (research phase)
- 3 Develop your strategy
- 4 Understand resources and capacities
- 5 Communication
- 6 Partnership launch
- 7 Implementation
- 8 Maintaining and retaining partnerships
- 9 Celebrate!

Step 1 - Vision and Goal Establishment:

- Define a clear vision and end goal(s) and outcome(s) of your organization's work.
- Research and match your goals and with other organization.

- Make sure that there is a common objective between you and your potential partner(s); however, recognize and accept unrelated objectives.

Step 2 - Know Your Prospective Partner (research phase):

- Develop a list of stakeholders and potential partners.
- Do your homework when selecting a potential partner e.g., know legal issues and be aware of soured relationships with other potential partners, funders, and municipal representatives.
- Determine key contacts, players, and people of influence within other groups.
- Be strategic (cost of your time investment versus the benefits). Determine if you will achieve more working together or alone.
- Match strengths of your people with a specific need or issue (e.g., if the issue is farm related, select a representative with this background and knowledge).
- Accept that no one relationship is the same as the other.
- Consider partnerships with disparate or peripheral goals. You might learn something new and you extend outside your normal reach.

Step 3 - Strategy Development:

- Develop a strategic plan and business plan.
- Be strategic when selecting a partner or establishing collaborative partnerships.
- Identify common interests and synergies amongst prospective partners.
- Identify personal and organizational turf issues.
- Don't rely solely on organizational hierarchy. Instead, find people of most influence and are thought leaders.
- Match interests and needs. If the issue is farm related - Farmers talking to farmers Match people with specific need.
- Be open to a wide range of partners (gov't, academia) even if all your goals don't match.
- Examine project-based partnerships around common needs and issues and funding.
- Also establish multiple contacts and working relationships within an organization to avoid losing a contact due to staff turnover. Match people with specific interests and needs e.g., if the issue is farm related, select a farmer within your organization when engaging other farmers.
- Be strategic on who provides information to whom
- Organizational structure should consist of multiple stakeholders (business, farmers, agencies, ENGOs)
- Have a solid strategy that includes budget and funding partners and grant opportunities.

Step 4 - Resource and Capacity Identification:

- Understand your skills, resource capacity and that of your potential partner.
- Know your funding limits. Identifying funding organizations and contributors and securing and funds
- Develop a level of political experience so that you can deal with bureaucracy
- Youth engagement, recruitment and sustainability

Step 5 - Communications:

- Pick up the phone...don't be afraid to make the first call. Put yourself out there and invest in personal relationships.
- Show interest in other group's work.
- Be innovative and use existing technology.
- Maintain good communication between partners over time. Be available and responsive and timely.

- Offer an open ended invitation to groups that don't respond to your initial contact attempt. Accept that the timing just isn't right for the moment.
- Consider the use of social media and newsletters as a means of advertising your group.
- Take advantage of local knowledge and capacity. Local educational groups might be an effective means to help spread your message e.g., local example of Elephant Thoughts working with the Blue Mountain Watershed Trust.
- Find a local municipal contact at a staff level to find an avenue to a councillor and mayor.
- Use creative outreach (e.g., film nights).
- Follow up on successful workshops and gatherings.
- Join larger coalitions to meet other organizations.
- Report needs, issues, and successes to municipal councils.
- Host workshops to showcase your work and invite others to do the same.
- Establish consistent times for events so that the public can anticipate event dates.
- Take accurate minutes and share them widely to maintain transparency.
- Take advantage of community events to share information.
- Listen, listen, listen.

Step 6 - Partnership Launch and Formalization:

- Leadership is key: establish a champion or lead for partnership development
- Establish common ground. Identify differences and agree to disagree.
- Identify priority issue to work on.
- Make a commitment.
- Clarifying expectations immediately.
- Formalize relationships e.g., MOU. Clarify expectations immediately. Recognize personal sensitivities and turf issues and ways to address them.
- Consider sitting in on other meetings or joining a task team to better integrate your groups.

Step 7 - Implementation

- Focus on the solution and not the problem.
- Work on concrete problems and solutions to strengthen relationships.
- Mobilize around an opportunity.
- Provide technical support if possible.
- Establish strategic work plans and agreements, and establish roles and responsibilities.
- Use the history of an organization to your benefit but don't use it as an excuse not to do something (e.g., dismissing an idea because it was tried a decade ago).
- Consider economic valuation of the outcome of actions
- Consider joint fundraising and public outreach (avoid duplication and strengthens a proposal)
- Select projects suitable for joint implementation.
- Joint events (ag suppliers, gov't agencies), lunch events e.g., pasture tours, crop analysis.
- Avoid overloading key players and helpers with too much work.
- Be flexible

Step 8 - Maintenance and Retention of Partnerships:

- Nurture the relationship once established.
- Establish personal contact and follow up answering questions...be available and responsive.
- Give as much as you receive e.g., provide support to other organizations and don't expect them to attend your meetings without your own investment in time.
- Establish multiple contacts within an organization to avoid losing a contact due to staff turnover.
- Celebrate each other's achievements.

- Ensure that you give as much as you take.
- Socialize, have fun and a sense of humour, don't be a heavy all the time.
- Be authentic.
- Keep up to date on other organizations goals and work.
- Show appreciation frequently.
- Be solution focused and don't dwell on the problem.
- Keep up your end of the bargain.
- Be open to discussion.
- Recognize that people have feelings, sensitivities and pride, recognize this in yourself as well.

Step 9 - Celebrate Partnership and Achievements

- Extend invitation to AGMs.
- Host dinners.
- Host outdoor events to engage partners.
- Celebrate each other's victories.

Challenges and Overcoming Barriers to Success

The significant challenge to networking and collaboration is moving beyond existing models and jurisdictions, finding common ground and overcoming mistrust or perceptions.

1. Understanding the benefit

- A barrier to collaboration is often moving beyond the existing model. Be open to new types of engagement and relationship building. Use an organic approach at relationship building and eventually formalize the relationship in a collaborative agreement.
- Organizations are often too busy with workload to see the benefit so build in an evaluation of the benefits of partnership for both parties.
- Relationships with large corporate businesses can assist with funding but can raise ethical issues (e.g., working with developers or a corporation that is not considered green). Evaluate carefully the positive and negative aspects of a relationship and decide whether it will benefit the organization in the long term. Choose a partner carefully since it could have an impact on your reputation and standing in the community.

2. Approach

- Maintaining interest and making your work relevant to other groups is an ongoing concern. Consider an endeavor with an unlikely partner. For example, consider groups with a different area of expertise. Also, examine opportunities in working with groups that may have different social, economic, environmental goals. Find a common interest or cause.
- Breaking down jurisdictional boundaries and finding common ground can present a barrier to collaboration. Meet to share information and seek common interests and opportunities. Ad
- Balancing relationships and multiple needs present ongoing concerns. Coordination and communication is a key element in building and continuing a positive relationship Share knowledge and experience. Clearly communicate the capacity of the organization. Determine a lead on the project in a formal manner so misunderstandings will not arise. It may take a variety of approaches to seek the opinions of less vocal individuals or groups so find out how they feel comfortable participating.

3. Sufficient Resources

- Finding sufficient funds for collaborative efforts is a challenge. Working with other groups on funding proposals brings more resources and skills to the project, is attractive to funding organizations, and assists you in understanding the goals of each organization and common interests.
- Overcoming technology barriers and cost needed to engage other groups can be a significant barrier particularly in northern areas. Identify a group that could assist in overcoming these barriers and build a relationship.
- Lack of time and energy can be a barrier to both networking and developing collaborative projects. Consider the benefit and cost of the initiative and how it could be integrated with existing programs. It also may be a timing issue so consider deferring the project until the time is right.

4. Attitude

- Negativity can prevent or destroy collaborative efforts. Find common ground and politely identify differences. Attempt to common ground and priority issue to work on. It may be necessary to 'agree to disagree'. Also, don't assume that there are negative feelings simply because there is no response.
- Trust issues are difficult to overcome, particularly around issues such as data sharing or where there are misperceptions about an organization's long term goals. Be open and patient. Work on building a relationship if the collaboration will benefit the work of both organizations. Alternatively, work with the groups who are interested in the same goals and with whom there is trust.
- Dealing with your own and other people's defensiveness and turf protection are important barriers to overcome. Identify the benefits of collaboration and areas of concern and slowly build a relationship through working on a priority issue that affects both groups.
- Finding the acceptance of individuals in an organization for innovative collaboration can be difficult, especially if it is a staff member making a proposal to someone in control. Identify and communicate the benefits and costs and how it could find success beyond existing programs. Position the proposal as a pilot project and build on the success of a smaller initiative.

Advice for Successful Networking and Collaboration

Successful networking and collaboration is built upon communication, relationships, common interests and positive energy.

1. Approach

- Create a clear and ongoing understanding of the relationship, identify how each group involved will benefit and formalize the arrangement.
- Use a grass roots and local ground level approach to address local issues.
- Identify what organizational assets that may be of interest to other groups and communicate your capacity and willingness to collaborate.
- Identify the actual capacity of the organizations involved and match the tasks to individual abilities and strengths.
- Undertake joint fundraising and public outreach to gain more resources and a wider reach.
- Foster the involvement of youth and consider developing a curriculum based approach.

- Acknowledge and recognize the contributions of the partner organizations.
- Host social events or organize work days with a variety of groups to build personal connection.
- Recognize links between issues (e.g., water quality and fish) as opportunities for both organizations, connect and identify an approach together.

2. Attitude

- Seek enthusiasm, positive attitudes and willingness to collaborate.
- Immediately correct misunderstandings or address concerns. Don't let issues and resentment simmer as it will damage a relationship.
- Demonstrate persistence and patience in building positive relationships and working toward a common objective.
- Have fun and don't take everything too seriously.

3. Trouble shooting

- Ensure on-going communication and sharing ideas with partners to continually build a relationship.
- Build in contingencies to address potential issues and use a third party facilitator in difficult situations.
- Transparency and truthfulness will avoid misperceptions.
- Find an issue or program to collaborate on that is outside each group's mandate, but would be beneficial to all concerned and use that to build a relationship.

Marketing Your Message

Ideas and suggestions from the Lake Huron Cafe - Day 2

In order to successfully communicate your message, reach the target audience and encourage environmental action, a strategic approach must be planned and a compelling message must be sent in a way that will resonate with that audience. Communication and key messages should be integrated into the everyday work and 'culture' of an organization.

1. Market Strategically:

- Weave marketing into the fabric of the entire project. Communicating key messages should be a part of everything you do rather than a separate exercise.
- Be clear about organizational goals and develop a compelling story about the organization or project.
- Consider unusual partnerships or approaches that can help spread the message such as strategic advertising for farmers on a local weather network or an environmental message delivered at a theatre production.

2. Create a Plan

- Create a plan with clear intentions that has realistic goals and objectives.
- Identify and understand the target audience and the priorities of that audience.
- Consider the following basic questions:
 - Who is the intended audience, what are their priorities and how can best reach them?
 - What messages will be delivered both intentionally and unintentionally?

- What are the best approaches to deliver those messages?
- Consider a variety of approaches to communicate the message that might include: email, report cards, websites, media, social media, site demonstrations, fact sheets, public forums or presentations.
- Incorporate a method to measure effectiveness of the communication approach and the key messages.

3. Use Effective Messages:

- Target your message to the intended audience rather than issuing a broad communication.
- Understand your audience and their priorities, listen to their views, and approach that audience with a message and in a language that will gain acceptance.
- Develop appropriate messages that cater to a specific audience and speak to their values, needs, interests. For example, framing a message in terms of economics, health or recreation has been successful with municipal councils.
- Test an initial message and approach with someone in the intended audience and adjust it to be more compelling
- Ensure that the messages are:
 - Clear, simple, and positive
 - Consistent and persistent
 - Balanced and defensible
- Messages should be in plain language that is immediately understood and avoids jargon.
- Share stories using positive experiences rather than just facts or technical data.
- Connect with shared values when communicating messages.
- Seek training or expertise in communication and media relations.

4. Deliver the Message for Impact:

- Any marketing approach should be passionate, from the heart and compelling.
- Find the medium that best fits the message.
- Connect marketing with programming. Integrate key messages in various events, programs and activities.
- Spread the message to individuals 'one on one' and in small groups.
- Engage and build a relationship with the media and prepare information that will make it easy for them to convey the story.
- Have key messages ready in a form that can be quickly conveyed during an interview or incorporated in a news release or fact sheet.
- Explore partnerships to gain broader outreach such as including a message or article in a municipal newsletter.
- Collaborate with another group to deliver joint or similar messages respecting policy changes.
- Use existing informal networks to convey information as word of mouth can be a powerful tool.
- Build awareness through project signage.
- Evaluate marketing success and failures and adapt the approach if necessary.

5. Reach Beyond the Existing Audience

- Be strategic and target those that are undecided rather than those that already support the action being promoted.
- Target audiences that maybe receptive and don't waste time attempting to convert those who clearly have a different opinion.
- Identify champions or organizations to deliver the message through in order to reach a particular audience. For example, use a lake association or associated event to reach seasonal residents.
- Approach the audience with encouragement and without judgement.
- Reframe the issue into a language and an approach that will encourage the audience to listen and accept that there is a concern and action is needed.

6. Maximize Funding and Human Resources

- Make communication and outreach a component any grant proposal.
- Identify the reason for a marketing effort and the expected results as this will assist with a more targeted and cost effective approach.
- Consider the options and carefully identify the marketing approach that will offer the best value both financial and use of volunteers' time.
- Measure results to know what is working so you can adapt in the future and ensure limited resources are used effectively.

4 Taking Action to Restore and Protect

Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program

Fred Dobbs, Manager of Stewardship Services

Sarah Campbell, Aquatic Biologist

Robert Waind, N-WIP Steering Committee Chair

Scott Martin, N-WIP Steering Committee Member

Fred Dobbs (Manager of Stewardship Services for the Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program (N-WIPP)) and Sara Campbell (Aquatic Biologist) explained that the Lake Huron Georgian Bay Framework for Community Action strives to empower people to take action to protect and enhance the health of the Lake Huron- Georgian Bay Watershed. This community-based approach empowers individuals, communities and organizations to operate independently and through their own actions to protect and enhance Lake Huron Georgian Bay.

Under this Framework, the Lower Nottawasaga River Basin was selected as one of the 3 'pilot project' areas by the Lake Huron Steering Committee. The surface water quality information (D) presented in the NVCA's 2007 Watershed Report Card was a key factor in the committee's selection of the Lower Nottawasaga basin. To initiate the pilot project, the NVCA submitted a proposal for a water quality improvement program. The purpose of the N-WIP is to improve the health of Georgian Bay (Lake Huron) and the Nottawasaga River by partnering with local communities to complete water quality improvement projects on tributary streams.

The N-WIP Steering Committee membership is comprised of strategic partner representation ranging from educational institutions, agricultural organizations, angling groups, commercial enterprises and municipalities.

Since 2007 the N-WIP has received project funding from:

- Environment Canada (e.g. Great Lakes Issues Management and Reporting Section and Eco Action Program (2011-14))
- The Province of Ontario (e.g. Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change - Southwestern Region, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry)
- Corporate sponsorship (e.g. Somerville Nurseries, R.J Burnside, Canadian Mist and Ainley Group)
- Most recently the NVCA and N-WIP were successful in accessing additional funding support for 2014-2016 through the Federal Lake Simcoe/South-eastern Georgian Bay Clean Up Fund
- NVCA Municipal Levy.

N-WIP has engaged the community through bank stabilization with an aquatic habitat focus, flood plain creation and livestock exclusion fencing. The top ten tips that N-WIP would offer after undertaking these community engagement projects include:

The types of projects that have been completed include:

- Volunteer streamside tree planting
- Strategic professional streamside tree planting
- Negotiation of buffer strips along waterways
- Stream bank stabilization and stream habitat improvement
- Natural channel restoration
- Experiential learning opportunities
- Working in partnership with farmers to fence livestock out of streams



TIP #1 - Emphasize Hands-on Activities

Experiential learning is a key driver in engaging the community. Each year in collaboration with the Wasaga Beach Healthy Communities Network and other community partners, a free interpretive canoe trip is held. Participants actually get to see the natural aspects of the river. They learn the value of a riffle and take water samples. This program has been so successful additional trips have been planned during the year.



TIP #2 - Know Your Audience

Understanding the social demographic characteristics of the audience is critical to ensuring successful engagement. Farmers are more likely to respond to individual contact while others may enjoy a public workshop.

TIP #3 - Engage School Programs

Environmentally focused programs with secondary schools are very popular. Students love to get into the water and to get their hands dirty. Target a teacher who is a specialist at the school and wants to be engaged. Once they have been trained, they can deliver the program themselves the next year. Sometimes teachers are so interested they begin to participate beyond the class setting. N-WIP now has a teacher that volunteers to write grant applications.



TIP #4 - Incorporate Water Based Recreation Themes

Work with recreationally focused groups who already value the natural environment. N-WIP joined a fly fish workshop and was able to provide a presentation to build awareness of their program. Canoe and Kayak clubs are also good partners and contributed to the interpretive canoe trips identified in Tip #1.

TIP #5 - Focus on Multi-Year Projects/Partnerships

Every year N-WIP engages community members and students to plant trees on Black Ash Creek. A contractor could do it faster, but each year those who participate can see the results of their hard work.



TIP #6 - Be Creative With Partnership Development

Seek out creative partnerships within the community. N-WIP was able to develop a relationship with a local nursery retailer who supplied new innovative anchors for plantings.



Tip #7 - Don't Underestimate the Lure Of Fish

Working with fish and anglers can result in tremendous engagement and action on the ground. An interest in fish leads to an interest in the watercourse and in taking action to improve it. An electro-fishing demonstration shows the fish that are in the river and kids (and adults) love it.

TIP #8 - Market Your Brand

Identify projects consistently for recognition. Be humble and make sure partners are also recognized because everyone in the group benefits and it demonstrates collaboration



TIP #9 - Celebrate Accomplishments

Recognize the work of volunteers and be sure to take your funders and municipal representatives out to see the work the community has accomplished.

TIP#10 - Support Steering Committee

Be sure to support the group of volunteers and partner representatives that are the backbone of your program. Make sure that they also receive recognition for their contribution.



Protecting the Silver Creek Wetland Complex through the Transfer of Land Ownership

Norm Wingrove, George Powell - The Blue Mountain Watershed Trust - Day 1

The Blue Mountain Watershed Trust Foundation (BMWTF) was founded in 1994 and was Ontario's first watershed trust. The impetus for the formation of BMWTF came from the Blue Mountain Watershed Conference held in May of 1993 in order to develop awareness and promote partnerships that are required in order to successfully implement watershed planning in the Blue Mountain watersheds.

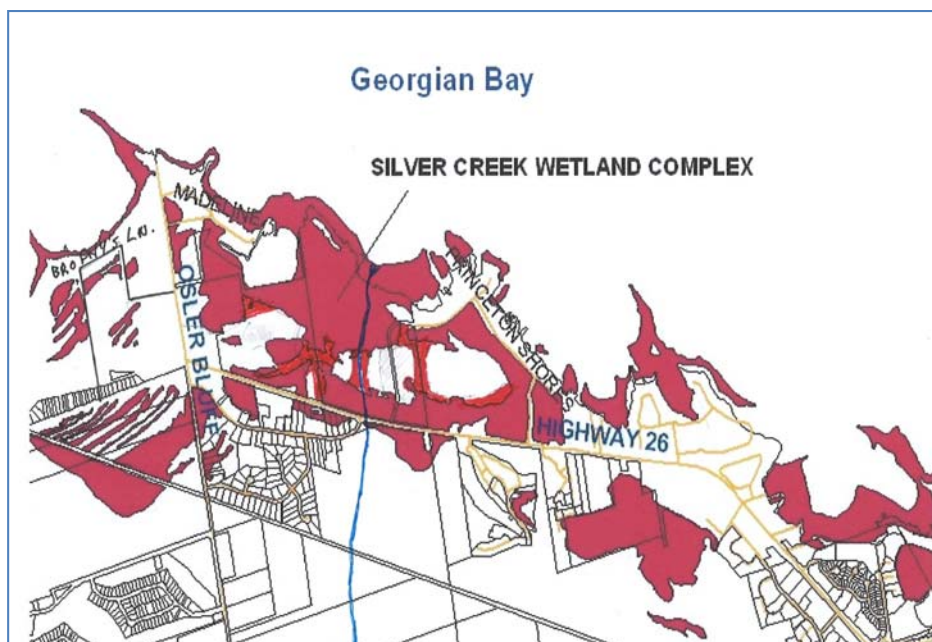
The Blue Mountain Watershed Trust Foundation is an independent grass-roots organization and a Registered Charity. With more than 148 members, who have a deep appreciation of and a passion for nature and are concerned about the future of this area, the BMWTF is a volunteer organization that is supported by donations and fundraising.

The Blue Mountain watershed boasts a unique and diverse natural environment. It supports a wide array of terrestrial and aquatic habitat. The region is much cherished for its natural beauty and this has attracted many visitors and permanent residents to the area. Nowhere does the Niagara Escarpment dominate the landscape as it does in the Blue Mountain watershed. The Niagara Escarpment was named a Biosphere Reserve in 1990 by the United Nations Bureau of Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This designation constitutes world recognition based on the Escarpment's unique natural features, ecological importance, and as land regulated and protected under the Niagara Escarpment Plan of 1985.

Because of this unique natural environment and geographic location, the watershed is under great pressure to support increased residential development, expansion of recreational areas, aggregate extraction and other urban and rural activities that could have serious environmental impacts (e.g., degraded water quality, loss of wetlands). Because of its ecological value, the Watershed Trust is committed to ensuring the continued environmental health and integrity of the watershed.

The Silver Creek Wetland complex is a provincially significant wetland and encompasses about 440 acres in total area. Most of it is located in the Town of Collingwood, within the jurisdiction of the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, and a smaller portion is in the Town of The Blue Mountains, within the jurisdiction of the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority.

This area is under significant development pressure in both municipalities. A unique five party agreement was struck between the Town of Collingwood, the Town of Blue Mountains, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (NVCA), Grey Sauble Conservation Authority and the Niagara Escarpment Commission to address the protection of the



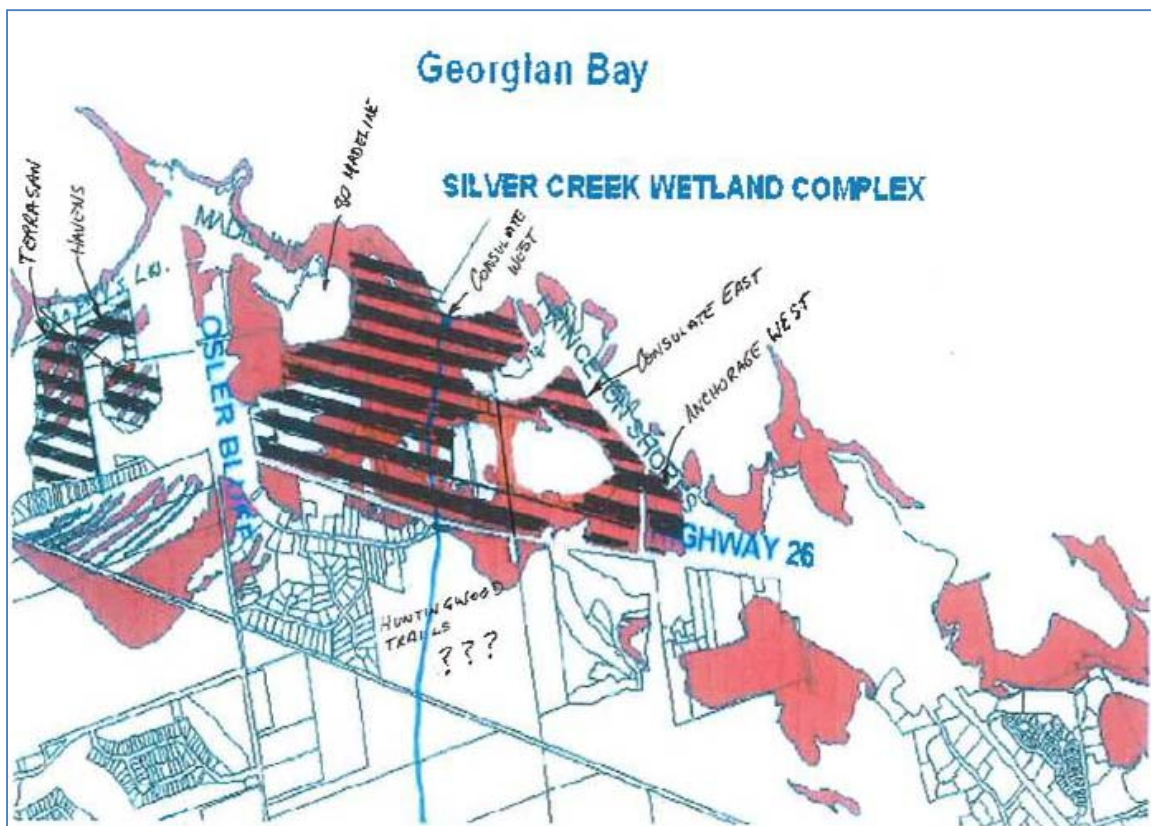
Silver Creek Wetland complex. The general concept of the agreement was that when development applications are being reviewed in the Silver Creek Wetland complex, that the parties would seek opportunities to transfer the ownership of wetlands out of private ownership. It was agreed that the Town will monitor the application process and the lands, and NVCA will look after its ecosystem values and do any enforcement. Some of the lands are within the Grey Sauble Conservation Authority jurisdiction, however, they have agreed to allow the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority to monitor and manage the process. The added value of this agreement was that a Management Plan would be created for the transferred lands.

Since the agreement has been put in place, it has been tested a number of times as development applications were processed. In the Town of Collingwood, four developments were subject to this process and 2 resulted in conditions that would protect about 120 acres of wetlands, collectively, by deeding them to the Town. Two other developments in Collingwood have stalled either due to suspension of OMB mediation or the developers reluctance to release title of the lands. In the Town of The Blue Mountains, 2 developments are expected to deed a total of 35 acres to the Town.

Looking at the entire Silver Creek Wetland complex, there is great potential to transfer ownership of other wetland areas to the local municipalities. The hatched areas is an estimate of the lands that could potentially be transferred out of private ownership through development applications - or donations. There is a total of about 280 acres plus an unknown amount in Huntingwood Trails.

This approach seeks maximum protection for the Silver Creek Wetland complex by gradually transferring the ownership of wetland areas out of private hands into public ownership at a minimal cost.

With five agencies working together to monitor development applications, manage the process, and develop a management plan, this approach protects and enhances the silver creek wetland for its many benefits for generations to come.



5 Measuring Success and Adapting

Measuring Environmental Action

Mari Veliz - Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority
Plenary Presentation - Day 1

Mari Veliz, Healthy Watersheds Supervisor at Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority referred to a model from the Lake Huron Georgian Bay Framework for

Community Action and explained that it identifies the various stages that are required to improve water quality in Lake Huron and Georgian Bay.

The approach of the Lake Huron Georgian Bay Framework can be adapted to various community scales. It can also be used by individuals. It is these individual efforts that come together to have a positive cumulative effect. Just as individual behaviours contributed to the degradation of watershed health in the first place. It is positive individual efforts that will improve and protect the environment in the future.



Community Action – Water Quality Monitoring Expectations and Limitations

Measuring or monitoring is an important component because the community interprets monitoring as taking environmental action. Monitoring is often what first engages a community member in environmental protection. Water quality monitoring provides important indicators that can be used to report on the state of a water body or watercourse. In the southern Lake Huron basin, watershed report cards use water quality indicators. The expectations and limitations around a water quality monitoring programs should be clear because the data collected produce immediate results, but must be used to determine long term trends.

Three Big Pollutants

For the waterbodies listed as IMPAIRED in the National Water Quality Inventory, top pollutants causing problems are dirt, bacteria, and nutrients.

1 Dirt

That's right, dirt. Dirt was listed as a leading cause of pollution in our rivers and streams. When rain washes dirt into streams and rivers, it smother the fish-critters in the stream and kills any fish eggs clinging to rocks. Dirt can also clog the gills of fish, suffocating them. Have you ever walked into a pond or lake and noticed large mounds of muck rising up and clogging your view of the bottom? Well, if the plants that use the sun to make food (yes, that's right, photosynthesis) can't get enough sunlight because the water is muddy, they die.

Where does all this dirt come from?

Much of the dirt washing into lakes and streams comes from activities that remove trees and shrubs and leave the earth exposed. This exposed earth includes fields that have just been plowed, construction sites that have been bulldozed, and areas that have been logged or mined. Bare patches in your lawn or ballfield can also contribute to the problem. Some of the dirt polluting streams comes from the stream banks. The problem is that fast-moving water erodes the banks of streams. The water moves faster because the vegetation that would slow it down has been replaced with pavement and buildings.

What's being done to control dirt?

The solution is to stop the dirt from getting into the stream in the first place by disturbing the land as little as possible. Farmers are using different methods to grow their crops so they leave less earth exposed, and they plant grasses in fields that aren't being used. Construction workers are putting up silt fences and hay bales to trap the dirt and contain it while they build. Developers can design new home sites that leave more natural areas and less pavement to reduce the amount of earth they disturb.

What's being done to control nutrients?

Farmers are learning new ways to apply fertilizers and manage livestock. Homeowners are being educated about maintaining their lawns and septic systems. Cities and towns are fixing their sewage treatment plants.

2 Bacteria

Bacteria are a big water quality problem in our nation's waters. Not all bacteria are harmful (yogurt contains live bacteria cultures!), but the presence of some indicator bacteria is a clue that other germs and viruses that can make you sick might be in the water too.

Where do the bacteria come from?

The major sources of bacteria are combined sewers (which can overflow in a rainstorm and dump untreated sewage directly into our waters) and runoff of animal waste (including wild animal droppings) from farmland and city streets.

What's being done to control bacteria?

Cities and towns are improving their sewage treatment to keep untreated sewage from overflowing. Farmers are developing better ways to manage livestock manure. Dog owners are picking up after their pets (yes, dog waste pollutes too).

3 Nutrients

Nutrients were listed as the number one cause of water quality pollution in our lakes, ponds, and reservoirs. They caused algae blooms in more than 3.6 million acres (that's more than 2.9 million football fields). The two most common nutrients are nitrogen and phosphorus, which cause algae to grow and can turn the water green.

Where do the nutrients come from?

The major sources of nutrients are runoff of fertilizers and animal waste from farms and cities (lawn fertilizers can wash away in heavy rain), sewage treatment plants, and failing septic systems.

Community Action - What are useful Water Quality Indicators?

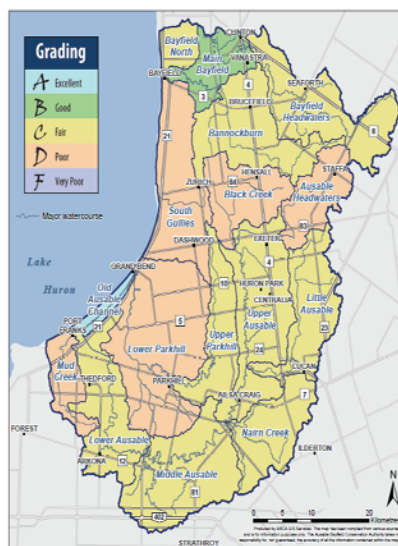
There are at least 150 water quality indicators that could be used to describe ecosystem health. However, dirt (total suspended solids), bacteria and nutrients are three indicators relevant in a broader context. The United States Environmental Protection Agency has documented that for the water bodies listed as 'impaired' in the *National Water Quality Inventory*, the three top pollutants causing problems are dirt, bacteria and nutrients. (http://iaspub.epa.gov/waters10/attains_nation_cy.control).

These pollutants can be related to total phosphorus and *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) concentrations. Indicators have established objectives or guidelines. Monitoring data can be compared to those objectives to determine if the measured values are exceeding the guideline. The standards used are Total Phosphorus (0.03 mg/L), *E. coli* (100 fecal colony forming units per 100 mL) and benthics (a number between 1 and 10 based on the abundance and distribution of the different species of benthic macroinvertebrates). Monitoring results should also be considered within their own context. For instance, while phosphorus may be measured above the objective, it may have improved over time and reflect a healthier water body.

Communicating Monitoring Results

When communicating monitoring results, it is effective for the communication tools to show variation across space and time. While community members may have expectations for the monitoring results, it may not be possible to explain changes in water quality using those results. In addition, monitoring data collected during base flow conditions have limited value in evaluating the effectiveness of projects or programs that address land use activities.

Surface Water Quality - Ausable Bayfield



Watershed Report Card

A's – 1

B's – 1

C's – 9

D's – 5

F's – 0

Total Phosphorus

– typically above objective but has decreased from 2007 report card (0.07 mg/L from 0.08 mg/L)

E. coli

– typically above guideline but has decreased from 2007 report card (113 cfu/100 mL from 233 cfu/100mL)

Limitations

– evaluation tool??

Measuring Landscape Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Water quality issues are often related to storm water events. During these events, ephemeral channel flow in many locations across a watershed deliver nutrients and suspended sediment. Also, the increase in water from these ephemeral channels erodes the downstream channel contributing additional sediments and nutrients at the outlet to the Lake. To protect water quality, programs need to address this issue at the source through best management practices. Downstream monitoring at a stream outlet can be used to determine the effectiveness of those best management practices. However, a program of collecting storm event water samples may be difficult to implement using volunteers since the events are unpredictable and volunteer participation cannot be planned with much notice. At the downstream site, it will also be



difficult to directly link changes in concentrations to specific activities that have occurred on the landscape.

Field edge and within field BMPs can be monitored. Mari explained the improved water quality that occurred with the use of a grassy vegetation strip (i.e., a grassed ditch) that separated a cropped field from a downstream channel.

Landscape and land use whether in an agricultural or an urban subdivision context can have an important impact on water quality and quantity. Mari provided an example in the agricultural landscape. When a land owner extended his hay field, it was difficult to measure that change in land use as there was no concentrated flow path and water sampling was not possible. While it is positive that there was little evidence of sediment and nutrient delivery or downstream erosion, a method of monitoring the land use change was not available. There are some activities that can be measured at the site scale and some that cannot. Watershed models can be used to monitoring landscape-level BMPs, but these models can be expensive.

Considerations for Community Group Monitoring

1. Surface water quality monitoring can initially engage community members but expectations should be managed since the results must be evaluated as long term trends.
2. Monitoring results should be considered within their own context. While the results may not meet an established standard, they may show environmental improvement in a watershed.
3. Non-point source pollution is important and it may not be possible to address this issue with routine monitoring.
4. Tracking landscape and land use indicators such as landscape cover, weather and variables particular to a regional economy are important.
5. Collaboration is necessary.
6. Wet weather monitoring and collecting supporting information takes considerable time/resources.



Measuring and Celebrating Success

Discussions from Lake Huron Cafe Discussions - Day 2

Measuring Success

Measuring the success of a program, policy or organization begins with setting goals and identifying effective indicators to determine whether those goals are being achieved. The indicators selected will depend on the goals and timeframe of the initiative. Measuring success is critical to the improvement of programs, policies and organizations so funds should be specifically budgeted for this purpose.

1. Defining Program Goals:
 - The challenge in measuring success is to clearly identify the expected benefit of the initiative so the desired action from a program should be defined up front. For example, is the goal to build

awareness or is it to develop follow up tools to ensure behavioural change. Success can then be measured against the original goal and indicators can be selected based on that target.

- The goal may be to initiate an idea or concept as a stepping stone for the future, especially when the ultimate goal is to accomplish changes in major policies.

2. Identifying the Timeframe and Selecting Indicators

- In the short term, the indicators of success in influencing people might include measures such as the number of attendees, number of volunteers, or number of landowner contacts. Social media measures such as the number of 'tweets' or 'Facebook likes' can also provide an indication of awareness. These measures provide an indication of awareness and interest.
- A different and more in depth approach is necessary in the medium to longer term to determine if the desired behaviour change or action has occurred. This may require further contact with the individuals involved in a program. This might also include the use of surveys, an assessment of conservation techniques implemented, the number of conservation agreements, the number of referrals, or the ability to leverage funds.
- In one case, a stewardship manual (environmental practices and self-evaluation book) was developed and explained at a workshop. Participants were contacted after six months to see if they had followed and implemented their 'action plan'. Program success could be measured by the actual action taken. The contact also served as a reminder for those that had not implemented their plan.

3. Measuring Program and Project Success

- At a strategic level, it is important to identify goals and implement a program to achieve those goals. Program success can then be measured by whether the goals were actually achieved.
- Measures such as the number of projects or positive media coverage can provide a short term indication of project success.
- Medium term indicators could include measures such as the number of trees planted, kilometers of fence line installed, number of acres affected, land owner participation, funding amounts, partnerships and positive media coverage.
- Land owner participation can be a key measure of success for some projects where it is required to run the project.
- A proactive project is often more effective than trying to battle major policy.
- Consider social based and project based measures of success.
- Measuring success can take time, especially for long term projects, so patience is important. In a long term project, progress can be measured on an incremental basis as well as at the conclusion of the initiative.
- Learn from others with successful approaches and measure success as a network of smaller initiatives. Try to assist and share knowledge about measuring.

4. Measuring Environmental Conditions

- Environmental indicators can be important in measuring long-term success. Carefully identify the purpose for measuring and what question is to be answered.
- Before a project is implemented a pre-assessment should be undertaken. A post-assessment can be taken later to measure the results. Local college or high school students or other community groups can assist with these assessments.

- Use a limited number of environmental measures (three is suggested), rather than trying to use a wide range of indicators. This may be difficult when dealing in a dynamic ecosystem. The range of measures can make it difficult to select what indicators to use, so consult with others to identify what has been successful in other similar circumstances.
- Involving the community in choosing the indicators can engage them in the project and assist in identifying pertinent research questions.
- Use indicators or measures from 'State of Lake Reports', 'Watershed Report Cards' or 'Remedial Action Plans'. The indicators provide a measure; the reports explain the issues; and the release of the report provides an opportunity to celebrate success.
- Consider identifying the amount of land that is protected such as the number of acres covered by municipal environmental protection land use policies or zoning, designed for protection by Provincial or Federal governments or owned by conservation organization.

5. Indicators Should Influence the Audience

- Identify the measures of success that will influence the target audience. For example, Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association conducted a socio-economic survey on hunting. The findings demonstrated that the hunters invested millions of dollars per year in the local economy. This identified the value of the resource for the community and encouraged local agencies to invest in associated environmental protection.
- Have those with influence in the target audience communicate the measures of success.
- Measures could centre on people influenced or taking action, funding secured or conservation land committed.
- The metric selected should be solid and enduring and could be socially based, project based or environmentally based.

6. Determining Organizational Success

- Measuring stability or sustainability can provide an indication of the potential long term success of an organization. The following are some indicators that can be considered when measuring organizational success:
 - Broad membership
 - Ability to leverage resources
 - Ability to achieve goals and targets
 - Ability to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - Ability to collaborate with other groups and initiatives
 - Success in project implementation (what you put on the ground – stays on the ground).
 - Ability or capacity of the organization to learn.

7. Resources for Measuring Success

- Project resources are often stretched and do not provide for robust measuring of the outcome. Measuring success is important to ensure goals are being achieved and initiatives are effective.
- The costs of measuring and celebrating success should be included in a project plan and budget.

8. Evaluating the Measures of Success

- Understand whether the cost of gaining the success was worth the benefit. This can be accomplished by undertaking a cost benefit analysis.
- Consider employing an evaluation tool. For example: the four levels of Kirkpatrick's evaluation model, which is used in the training and development of people, measures:

- 1) Reaction of the trainee - what they thought and felt about the training
- 2) What they have learned - the resulting increase in knowledge or capability
- 3) Behaviour change - extent of behaviour and capability improvement and implementation or application (this might result in the project being undertaken)
- 4) Results - the effects on the business or environment resulting from the trainee's performance (this might be what are the consequences for the watershed).

Common Measurements and Data for Lake Huron

1. Establishing Common Lake Huron Basin Indicators

- There are a wide variety of approaches across the Lake Huron basin and data cannot always be aggregated or compared.
- The Framework should consider encouraging groups to use three measures basin wide. A public data base is needed to establish a baseline. The goals, including changes that are desirable, should be identified. The measures to be used could be developed through a public engagement exercise.

Approaches to Celebrate Success

Recognizing individuals and partner organizations through a celebration provides them with profile in the community and builds awareness of programs. This reenergizes volunteers and attracts community interest. Recognition from other local, regional, national or bi-national groups also improves organizational credibility. Some approaches to celebrate success include:

- Annual ceremonies or awards night with plaques for good land stewardship.
- Annual gatherings such as receptions with partners and patrons.
- Nominate partner groups for awards and support partner projects as awards to and from outside organizations (such as Minister Awards) give legitimacy to local groups.
- Dinners to thank landowners or stakeholders.
- Hold community events such as the launch of a Conservation Plan.
- Host sources of knowledge forums.
- Get people out on the ground through guided hikes/visits to demonstration sites and bus tours.
- First Nations celebrate earth and water all the time. Have opening and closing ceremonies to celebrate life and success. Ask for First Nations to provide teachings.
- Host a design party and ask the community to redesign a community park, beach or even individual property.
- Recognize contributions by sending ideas to a college or university and having the experts explore the idea.
- Newsletters and mini weekly celebrations or raffles.
- Gain recognition through media and social media.

Advancing Environmental Action under the Framework

Plenary Discussion - Day 2

A plenary discussion was held to identify the future needs of the organizations in the Lake Huron watershed to advance environmental action. The following was suggested to assist the Steering Committee to enhance the work within the Lake Huron Georgian Bay Framework:

- Continue to hold lake wide Framework meetings.
- In the interim, hold regional workshops to share information relevant to that area and continue to build the Lake Huron network. Regional workshops should fill local gaps in knowledge.
- Engage municipalities and better understand how to work with them.
- Promote communication between organizations and improve the ability to share information (e.g., email, electronic, in person).
- Develop a tool kit that identifies funding agencies, deadlines, objectives available to undertake environmental action on Lake Huron.
- Identify who the 'thought' leaders are and provide engagement or information opportunities to hear about topics such as watershed stressors.
- Discuss a more holistic approach. Identify the economic value and value to society of environmental action. Consider social and cultural dynamics and the relationship with the environment. Consider the use of cost benefit analysis. Balance between science & traditional knowledge.
- Discuss resilience for organizations and community members. Identify how to engage youth, address organization and volunteer fatigue, improve recruitment approaches and gain greater organizational sustainability
- Promote better cooperation between government bodies and identify how to better deal with government systems.
- Guidance for connecting with First Nations and building trust

Appendix 1 - List of Summit Participants

| Name | Organization |
|------------------------|---|
| Allen, Joanne | Environment Canada |
| Alexander, Karen | Lake Huron Coastal Centre |
| Anderson, Ellen | Mayor, Town of The Blue Mountains |
| Anderson, Janette | Environment Canada |
| Andreae, Muriel | Conservation Authorities |
| Avery, Donald | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Briggs, Ted | Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (Steering Committee) |
| Brock, Hope | Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority |
| Brouse, Judi | Muskoka Watershed |
| Bunn, Deborah | Stop the Drop |
| Burcher, Robert | Beaver River Watershed Initiative |
| Bywater, David | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve |
| Campbell, Sara | Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority |
| Capreol, Marilyn | Shawanaga First Nation |
| Chiandet, Aisha | Severn Sound Environmental Association |
| Cooper, Sandra | Mayor, Town of Collingwood |
| Cornelisse, Ken | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry |
| Cottrill, John | Grey Sauble Conservation Authority |
| Crosskill, Debbie | Beaver River Watershed Initiative |
| Deschenes, Seija | Manitoulin Streams Improvement Association |
| Dobbs, Fred | Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority |
| Duncanson, Bob | Georgian Bay Forever |
| Elliot, Tanna | The Kensington Conservancy |
| Empson Laporte, Jacqui | Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs |
| Floean, Bob | Manitoulin Area Stewardship Council |
| French, Randy | Facilitator, French Planning Services Inc. |
| French, Marg | Facilitator, French Planning Services Inc. |
| Gibbons, Jesse | Beaver River Watershed Initiative |
| Gill, Ray | Canadian Freshwater Alliance |
| Gosselin, Rosemary | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Guyatt, Blanka | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Haelzle, Jeff | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry |
| Harbinson, Jo-Ann | Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority |
| Jamieson, Murray | Pine River Watershed Initiative Network |
| Jones, Terry | Magnetawan First Nation |
| Juhasz, Stella | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Kerr, Don | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Kraus, Dan | Nature Conservancy Canada (Steering Committee) |
| Leppard, Sally | Citizen Volunteer (Steering Committee) |
| Liipere, Sean | Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association |
| Liskauskas, Arunas | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (Steering Committee) |
| Logan, Trac | Federation of Ontario Cottagers |
| Longlade, Donna | Shawanaga First Nation |
| Luymes, Melissa | Maitland Valley Conservation Authority |
| Mahnke, Brittany | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve |
| Martin, Scott | Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program |

| Name | Organization |
|----------------------|---|
| Mason, Greg | Georgian Bay Biosphere Reserve (Steering Committee Member) |
| Mayne, Greg | Environment Canada (Steering Committee Member) |
| McDonald, Peter | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Monig, Ryan | Magnetawan First Nation |
| Munck, Neils | Bruce Peninsula Six Streams Restoration Initiative |
| Orr, Edith | Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition |
| Osmok, John | Dufferin Simcoe Land Stewardship Network |
| Pedrazzi, Silvia | South Simcoe Streams Network |
| Philips, Kelly | Environment Canada |
| Powell, George | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Powell, Heather | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Ritchie, Jason | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (Steering Committee) |
| Rodgers, Gord | Frontenac Stewardship Foundation |
| Service, Alexandra | Ducks Unlimited |
| Silver, Thea M. | Ontario Trillium Foundation |
| Sutton, Julia | East Georgian Bay Stewardship Council |
| Sweetnam, David | Georgian Bay Forever |
| Telfer, Lindsay | Canadian Freshwater Alliance |
| Thomas, Victoria | Central Algoma Freshwater Coalition |
| Thompson, Rob | Pine River Watershed Initiative Network |
| Thorn, Elizabeth | Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association |
| Thorn, Jeremy | Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association |
| Todd, Craig | Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry |
| Van Zwol, Jessica | St. Clair Region Conservation Authority |
| Van Welter, Hilary | Rewilding Lake Simcoe / Ontario Water Centre |
| Vidler, Nancy | Lambton Shores Phragmites Community Group |
| Veliz, Mari | Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority (Steering Committee) |
| Waind, Robert B. | Nottawasaga Watershed Improvement Program |
| Weatherhead, Shelden | Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association |
| Wepler, April | Freshwater Future Canada |
| Williams, Mike | Ducks Unlimited |
| Wingrove, Norm | Blue Mountain Watershed Trust |
| Wood, Laurie | Environment Canada |