

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021





A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Fall 2021

This year was a year of both change and opportunity for Watersheds Canada. As with many other organizations, staff continued to work from home, and the Board of Directors got comfortable with Zoom.

The COVID-19 pandemic gave us the opportunity and the challenge to look at how we deliver some of our programs, and where our staff were located. For example, the Freshwater Stewardship Community was launched in January 2021 and already has over 1,000 Canadians who attend monthly webinars, use free education resources, and network with other stewards across Canada.

The Board was also challenged with looking ahead to the next several fiscal years and our changing, and in some cases dwindling, sources of funding. We decided to pursue a path to hire a Director of Development and Fundraising. This will give Watersheds Canada a chance to pursue new horizons and expand our influence. We have heard from property owners that they want more of our programs and in new places across the country.

Through all of this, the teamwork amongst the staff, between the Executive Director and the Board, and among the Board members has been critically important. All of us believe strongly in the mission of this organization and can only see how — in the years ahead — our work across Canada will be more and more needed.

- Mary Ellen Stoll

ABOUT WATERSHEDS CANADA

Watersheds Canada is a federally incorporated non-profit organization and registered Canadian charity. We are committed to providing programs to communities across the country to help enhance and protect the health of lakes and rivers. Our vision is for communities to come together to care for their waters, resulting in clean, healthy lakes and rivers that will support humans and wildlife for years to come.



CORE STAFF

KAREN BALLENTINE, Administrative Assistant

MELISSA DAKERS, Habitat and Stewardship Program Manager

CHRISTOPHER DENNISON, Municipal Policy Intern

BARBARA KING, Executive Director

CHLOE LAJOIE, Natural Edge Program Manager

HEATHER MURPHY, Love Your Lake Program Manager

MONICA SEIDEL, Communications and Fundraising Coordinator

MAGGIE STEVENSON, Restoration Technician

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BRIDGET ANDREWS, Executive Director, Saskatchewan Association of Watersheds

STEPHEN BLIGHT, Retired Vice President, Capital Lands and Parks, National Capital Commission

MARIEKA CHAPLIN, Executive Director, Nashwaak Watershed Association Inc.

KAT KAVANAGH, Executive Director, Water Rangers



JÉRÔME MARTY, Project Director, Council of Canadian Academies/Directeur de projet, Conseil des académies canadiennes; Chair of the Partnership for Science and Engineering (PAGSE)

BRETT PAINTER, Physical Science Specialist, Environment and Climate Change Canada

MARY C. RAE, Retired Municipal Lawyer

MARY ELLEN STOLL, Retired Manager for Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

TOM WHILLANS, Professor, Environmental and Resource Science/Studies at Trent University



LOVE YOUR LAKE

HEALTHY SHORELINES FOR HEALTHY LAKES

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, Love Your Lake was delivered in a reduced capacity in 2020. Four regional organizations, including City of Greater Sudbury, North Saskatchewan River Basin Council, Southern Interior Land Trust, and Watersheds Canada, delivered the program to shoreline property owners on eleven lakes across Canada.

As more people looked to nature during the pandemic, the year provided an incredible opportunity for regional delivery partners to show how important resilient ecosystems are and to give lakefront property owners the tools they need to take local action.

This year, Love Your Lake was delivered in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia on 11 waterbodies: Kashwakamak Lake, Lake Nepahwin, Horn Lake, Meeting Lake, Turtle Pond, Skaha Lake, Wollaston Lake, Trout Lake, Twin Lakes, Shell Lake – Big Shell, and Shell Lake – Echo Bay.

In total, the Love Your Lake Program has assessed over 41,354 properties on 173 waterbodies from 2013-2021!



Through the Love Your Lake program, trained surveyors work with local organizations to assess individual properties along a lake. Shoreline property owners then receive individualized property reports filled with voluntary recommendations they can take to improve and protect their lake's water quality and wildlife habitat availability.

In addition to the individual property reports, lake associations also receive a lake summary report. These reports review the observations recorded around the lake including the degree of erosion, the types of development, the presence of invasive species, and voluntary community level stewardship opportunities. Both property reports and lake summary reports can be used as an environmental stewardship guide. These reports are key to improving watershed health and maintaining lakes for the benefit of humans and wildlife.



Love Your Lake is a partnership program between Watersheds Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Federation. The program is delivered by local conservation groups and lake organizations. It connects shoreline property owners with the information they need to make smart land management choices that improve wildlife habitat, water quality, and the overall health of a lake. Join us at www.loveyourlake.ca to learn about what you can do on your shoreline property to help you Love Your Lake!



THE NATURAL EDGE

USING TECHNOLOGY & NATIVE PLANTS TO RESTORE SHORELINES

To make shoreline naturalizations easier, the Natural Edge Program guides landowners through every step of a shoreline restoration process, from planning to planting. It empowers property owners to restore their shoreline, protect their water quality, and create habitat for wildlife and pollinators using native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers. The Natural Edge program had five major focuses this fiscal year:

1. Implementation of year one of the "Pugnose Shiner Landowner Engagement and Shoreline Habitat Restoration Project"

Through generous funding from the Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Aquatic Species at Risk, three waterfront properties in the Quinte watershed were re-naturalized with 700 native plants, restoring vital habitat for the Pugnose Shiner, a Species at Risk. This project is being delivered over two years in partnership with Quinte Conservation, West Lake Community Association, Friends of Wellers Bay, Watersheds Canada, East Lake volunteers, and County Sustainability Group.

2. Wrapped up a three-year project in the Muskrat watershed where we planted 45,000 native trees and shrubs on agricultural sites

During this project's third year, 15,000 more native trees and shrubs were planted to improve water quality, reduce run-off and bank erosion, and create habitat along 4,400-metres of shoreline. This was all possible thanks to Muskrat Watershed Council and Algonquin College's Office of Applied Research at the Waterfront Campus, and funding from Ontario Trillium Foundation, LUSH Canada, M&R Feeds and Farm Supply, Whitewater Brewing Company, Whitewater Township, Corteva Agriscience, and Cabela's Canada Outdoor Fund.



Photo: Algonquin College



3. Restored shorelines across the Quinte watershed

Thanks to a partnership with Quinte Conservation, 2,320 metres of shoreline were re-naturalized with 7,780 native plants. This work was supported by Quinte landowners, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, and Ontario Trillium Foundation.

Five demonstration sites were naturalized. These sites allowed local volunteers to naturalize a site that was important to their community. These plantings were delivered in partnership with Quinte Conservation, Rotary Club of Belleville, City of Belleville, Madoc Lions Club, Town of Madoc, Town of Greater Napanee, O'Hara Volunteer Association, and Cherry Valley Park Association.

4. First year of delivering the Natural Edge Shoreline Re-Naturalization Starter Kit in Ontario

Waterfront property owners in Eastern Ontario were able to take action when they received their starter kit! Each kit included a site visit, customized planting plan, 50 native plants including bare root and potted stock, 45 coconut fibre mats, mulch and tree guards, and 3 care guides. Starter kits were available for pick up during fall 2020, and funding was generously provided by the Love Your Lake Program in partnership with Canadian Wildlife Federation and the Rogers Foundation, and the Daniel and Susan Gottlieb Foundation.



An angel foundation provided critical funds to provide five partner organizations with the support they needed to establish the Natural Edge Program in key regions experiencing problems with water quality. These partners were Quinte Conservation, Watersheds Canada, The Land Between, Kawartha Lakes Stewards Association, and Muskoka Watershed Council. Thanks to support from the angel foundation, 500 native plants were planted and will help protect lakes in Ontario that are dominated with high levels of shoreline development and nutrient loading. This project will continue next year.

5. Acceptance into the Earth Tech accelerator program

Watersheds Canada's Natural Edge Program was selected to join CSI Climate Ventures' 2021 Earth Tech accelerator! We were excited to meet the 17 other Canadian clean tech ventures in the cohort and we spent the six months advancing our Natural Edge Program, growing as leaders, and connecting with the entrepreneurs, advisors, funders, and investors in the CSI community.



Since 2013, 76,789 native trees, shrubs, and wildflowers have been planted on 321 sites on over 85 water bodies. Because of the Natural Edge Program, 162,623.17 square metres of shoreline has been restored!



PLANNING FOR OUR SHORELANDS

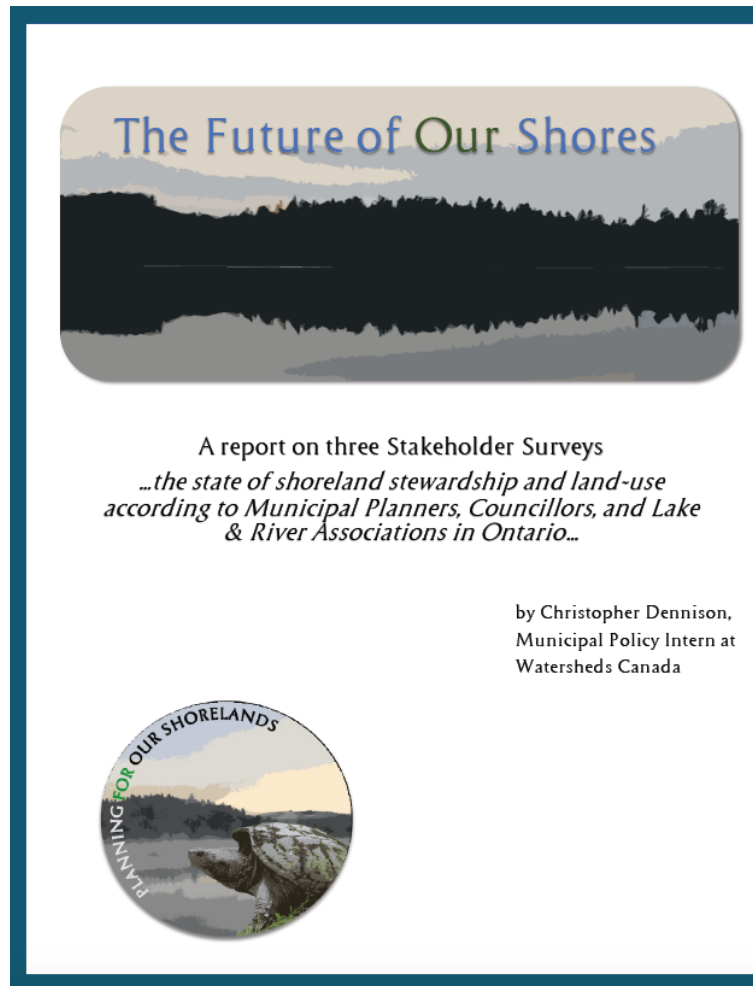
SHORELAND DEVELOPMENT WITH NATURE IN MIND

Responsibility for conserving shorelands in Ontario is shared across a diversity of stakeholders, including municipal councillors, planners, and lake-river associations. It is the goal of Planning for our Shorelands to provide these municipal stewards and professionals with resources as they wade through the difficult waters of shoreland management and land-use on their lakes and rivers.

To achieve this goal, Watersheds Canada and its project steering committee are striving to produce a Best-Management Practices (BMP) resource and forum related to shoreland policy and land-use which inform and unify municipalities in their efforts to conserve critical shoreland habitats. By doing so, we will be working towards collaborative, science-based solutions to the most persistent barriers to preserving ecosystems upon which both wildlife and people rely.

This project is supported by LUSH Charity Pot, Daniel and Susan Gottlieb Foundation, and ImpAct Internship Program.

To begin this project, it was important to gather feedback from our target audience. As such, stakeholder surveys were sent to lake and river associations, municipal planners, and councillors to help us better understand the needs, challenges, and successes of those who influence shoreland management. The feedback we collected will ensure the relevance and utility of the online BMP resource, which will greatly benefit those who put it to use.



These survey results will be compiled in a document in the coming weeks and released on the Planning for our Shorelands webpage: watersheds.ca/planning-for-our-shorelands

Planning for our Shorelands is possible because of the guidance from a project steering committee which includes experienced planners, lake stewards, and conservation authorities. The committee includes Barbara King (Watersheds Canada), Janet Taylor (White Lake resident), Mark Snider, Glenn Tunnock, Terry Rees (Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations), Mary Rae (Watersheds Canada Board Member and Retired Municipal Lawyer), Leora Berman (The Land Between), and Katrina Furlanetto (Cataraqui Conservation).



FISH HABITAT PROGRAMS

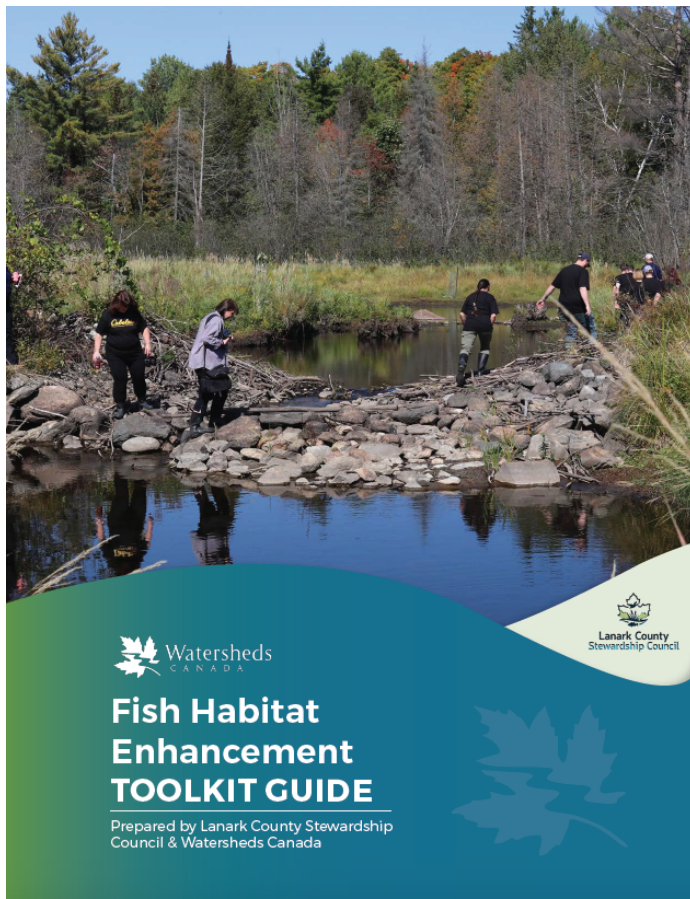
RESTORING CRITICAL IN-WATER HABITAT

In partnership with the Lanark County Stewardship Council, Watersheds Canada created and distributed a free Fish Habitat Enhancement Toolkit.

Generously funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and LUSH Charity Pot, the Fish Habitat Enhancement Toolkit provides grassroots organizations and community groups with project guides, updated protocols, and accompanying videos to identify suitable sites and successfully enhance various types of fish habitat projects, including:

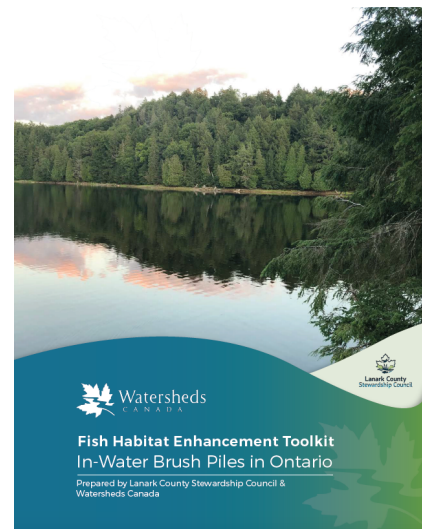
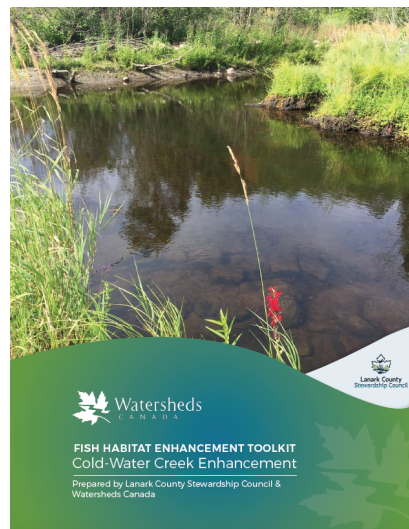
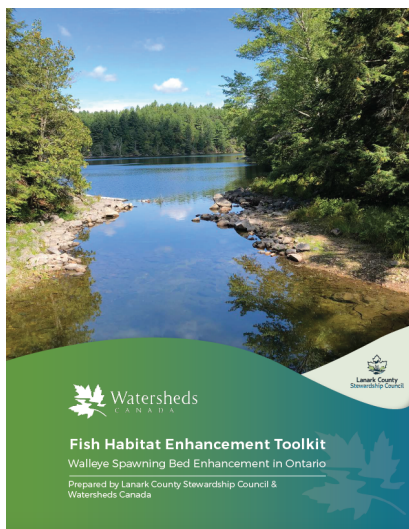
- walleye spawning bed enhancements;
- in-water fish habitat enhancement with woody debris; and
- cold-water creek enhancement projects.

The videos for this Toolkit were created in partnership with Pinegrove Productions.



The Fish Habitat Enhancement Toolkit would not have been possible without the support of: Anne Bendig, Lanark County Stewardship Council; Arnold Gibson Tree Farm; Arnott Bros. Construction Ltd.; Cabela's Canada Outdoor Fund; Dalhousie Lake Association; Ferguson Forest Tree Centre; Government of Canada; Hans von Rosen, Pinegrove Biotechnical; Home Hardware; Hydro One; Jennifer Lamoureux, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority; Jeff Cote, Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry –

Kemptville District; Kelly Stiles, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority; Lanark and District Fish & Game Conservation Club; Lanark County Stewardship Council; Lanark Highlands Township; LUSH Charity Pot; Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters – Zone F; Ontario Trillium Foundation; Pinegrove Productions; and Watersheds Canada.



PUGNOSE SHINER LANDOWNER ENGAGEMENT AND SHORELINE HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

Through this two-year project, Watersheds Canada and Quinte Conservation will focus on landowner engagement and action to help enhance and restore local Pugnose Shiner populations and habitat quality on West Lake, East Lake, and Wellers Bay in the Quinte watershed. The Pugnose Shiner is a small fish found in a few areas in southwestern Ontario and the St. Lawrence River and is extremely vulnerable to declining habitat quality.



The Pugnose Shiner fish. Photo: Konrad Schmidt

This voluntary education and action project will help shoreline property owners in the Quinte watershed protect the last remaining habitats of the Pugnose Shiner, a Species at Risk. Shoreline property owners in the Quinte watershed will be provided with education and stewardship materials, shoreline restorations using native plants through the Natural Edge program, property-specific and lake-level stewardship reports through the Love Your Lake program, and invasive aquatic vegetation surveys conducted by Quinte Conservation. This project is being delivered in partnership with Quinte Conservation, Friends of Wellers Bay, West Lake Community Association, East Lake volunteers, County Sustainability Group, and Watersheds Canada. Funding for this project is generously provided by the Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Habitat Stewardship Program for Aquatic Species at Risk.

FRESHWATER COMMUNITY

EMPOWERING CANADA'S FRESHWATER STEWARDS

This new virtual community is a centralized place for lake and river associations, individuals, and other organizations to connect and work together to protect local freshwater and shoreline areas.

Launched in January 2021, the Freshwater Stewardship Community (FSC) is a space for concerned community groups and individuals to attend monthly webinars, use free education resources, and network with other stewards across Canada.

So far we have collaboratively hosted four webinars with guest speakers from Birds Canada, Watersheds Canada, and Water Rangers, and created three education resources. These resources are all available for free on our website: watersheds.ca/freshwater-stewardship

Generous funding for the FSC was provided by the S.M. Blair Family Foundation.



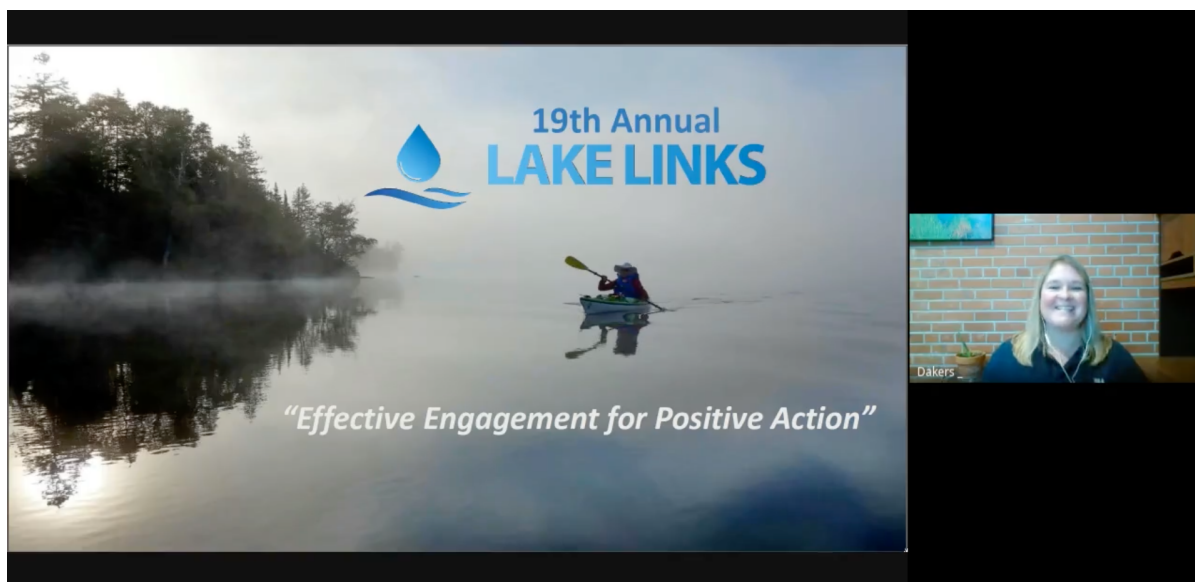
LAKE LINKS

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT FOR POSITIVE ACTION

On October 24, 2020, over 150 lake stewards from five provinces and three countries participated in the first ever online Lake Links workshop. The theme of the 19th Annual Lake Links was “Effective Engagement for Positive Action” and featured presentations from the University of Ottawa, Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations, and Rideau Valley Conservation Authority.

Each year, financial support for Lake Links is received from various partners across the environmental sector. This year funding was provided by S.M. Blair Family Foundation, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Cataraqui Conservation, and Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations.

The 2020 Lake Links Planning Committee had representatives from Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Friends Of The Tay Watershed Association, Watersheds Canada, Lake Networking Group, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, and Cataraqui Conservation. The committee is integral to the success of Lake Links each year.



Karen and Murray Hunt were the third recipients of the Gord Rodgers Memorial Award. They have been long-time advocates and volunteers on Otty Lake and continue to help with initiatives such as Lake Links. Karen is also the founder and chair of the Lake Networking Group. The Gord Rodgers Memorial Award is given to someone who engages their community, promotes stewardship by example, and goes above and beyond for their lake community.

The "Community Initiatives Handout" was created after the event. This resource showcases recent projects and successes from lake associations and waterfront groups. This handout (see right) can help other groups as they plan their projects and events for 2021 and beyond.

The 20th Annual Lake Links will take place online on October 23, 2021. For more details, please visit watersheds.ca/lake-links



**COMMUNITY
INITIATIVES
HANDOUT**
Lake Links 2020



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

REVENUE:

NGO CONTRIBUTIONS	\$77,250
FOUNDATIONS	\$221,678
GOVERNMENT GRANTS	\$249,381
PROGRAM INCOME & OTHER DONATIONS	\$58,330

TOTAL : \$606,639

EXPENSES:

PROGRAM EXPENSES	\$543,587
OPERATING COSTS	\$40,601

RESERVE FUND	\$14,815
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TOTAL : \$599,003

PARTNERS

Algonquin College's Office of Applied Research and Innovation;
 Algonquin College's Waterfront Campus;
 Birds Canada;
 Biodiversity Education and Awareness Network;
 Blue Fish Canada;
 Canadian Wildlife Federation;
 Cataraqui Conservation;
 Cherry Valley Park Association;
 City of Belleville;
 City of Greater Sudbury;
 Centre for Social Innovation;
 County Sustainability Group;
 Ecology Ottawa;
 Environment Council for Clear, Stony, and White Lakes;
 Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations;
 Forests Ontario;
 Friends of the Salmon River;
 Friends of the Napanee River Watershed;
 Friends of the Tay Watershed Association;
 Friends of Wellers Bay;
 Kashwakamak Lake Association;
 Kawartha Lake Stewards Association;
 Lake Networking Group;
 Lanark County Stewardship Council;

Love Your Lake Program;
 Madoc Lions Club;
 Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority;
 Mohawk Council of Akwesasne;
 Muskrat Watershed Council;
 North Saskatchewan River Basin Council;
 O'Hara Volunteer Association;
 Pinegrove Productions;
 Quinte Conservation;
 Quinte Field Naturalists;
 Rideau Valley Conservation Authority;
 Rotary Club of Belleville;
 Southern Interior Land Trust;
 St. Lawrence River Institute;
 Stillpoint House of Prayer;
 The Land Between;
 Town of Greater Napanee;
 Town of Madoc;
 Volunteers on East Lake;
 Water Rangers;
 West Lake Community Association;
 White Lake Preservation Project;
 White Lake Property Owners Association;
 Wollaston Lake Home and Cottage Association.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS

A special thanks to these generous supporters for taking a step to protect Canada's freshwater!

Big Gull Lake East End Cottage Association; Charleston Lake Environmental Association; Friends of the Tay Watershed Association; Kashwakamak Lake Association; Long Lake Property Owners Association; Sharbot Lake Property Owners Association; Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations; Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority; Rideau Valley Conservation Authority; Y Abou-Hamde; J Alexander; J & R Alexander; T Alps; J Anderson; T Anderson; J Arai; P Arney; P Au; M Beardsworth; G Beaton; D Beingessner; R & L Bell; A Best; The Land Between; A Blackburn; S Blight; H Bonnetta; E & R Bordeleau; M Bowles; M Brown; E Brown; P Burbidge; B Campbell; Fisheries and Oceans Canada; PayPal Giving Fund Canada; J Clarke; B Clarkson; M Colquhoun; Whitewater Brewing Company; C Conboy; Cataraqui Conservation; Muskrat Watershed Council; G Couillard; N Crockford; Finastra CSR; L Cuthbertson; M Dakers; H Daly; I Dardick; P Dawson; M-L Dejesus; M Dent;	S Dokken; T Eccles; B & W Engel; J Estrada; H Evans; Canadian Wildlife Federation; R Ferguson; R & E Flett; H Floysvik; Canadian Wildlife Foundation; Daniel and Susan Gottlieb Foundation; Ontario Trillium Foundation; Rogers Foundation; TD Friends of the Environment Foundation; S.M. Blair Family Foundation; Cabela's Canada Outdoor Fund; G Fowler; D C Fraser; K Arnold & K Galasso; B Garnier; R Garrett; B Gibson; D Goodfellow; C Goulding; Anne Gourlay-Langlois Gail Graser; Janet Green; Joseph Greenwood; Andress Your Independent Grocer; A Hall; J & J Hall; N Hammell; B Harrigan; K Hawley; V Heese; S Henderson; G Henniger; J Holloway; M Horst; F E Huff; R Hurlburt; K Hurley; Modern Niagara Group Inc.; K Inrig; A Jacobsen; Canada Summer Jobs; C Johnson; C Judson; K Kavanagh; T & J Kennedy; C Kilroy; B King;	L & J King; D Kirkland; M Koenderink; M Kopansky; G Kurz; W Lane; A Langlois; D Lanouette; L Livey; D & I Locke; L Logan; The Sharbot Group Limited; J Magill; S Mak; F Mallamo; G & I Manchester; N Mariotti; H & L Markle; J & P Martingale; J Marty; J Maxwell; J McAllister; J McCaffrey; B M Scanlan; F McConnell; N McCormick; N McCutcheon; J McDougall; S McGruer; G McLaughlin; B Meyers; K Millar; C Mobberley; T Morgan; F Murphy; M Navrot; A Nordin; K Norman; S Oldham; F Ord; D Overholt; B Painter; A Paquet; B Patrick; K Paul; A Payne; J Pope; S Popwicz; LUSH Charity Pot; CICAN Clean Tech Internship Program; ImpAct Internship Program; A Prokopiak;	G Pryce; D Pulham; J Quenneville; M & G Rae; G Read; B Robbins; C Robbins; S Rottenberg; F Roy; S Rozi; B Sabourin; A Sandler; D Saville; D Sceanovic; Selwyn House School; S Shaw; F Skupek; A Slaight; D Smith; J Smith; M Smith; M Stevens; K Stiles; M E Stoll; G Strange; M&R Feeds and Farm Supply; A Sweezey; A Switzer; B Taylor; J Taylor; D Vallee; M Wall; E Wallace; J Ward; G Watson; G Watson; K Watson; United Way; C West-Hicks; R Westland; M Whalen & T Sheffield; CSI Climate Ventures; M Whaley; J Wilker-Blakley; D Woodfine.
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IN MEMORY AND IN HONOUR DONATIONS

In honour and in memory donations are a meaningful way to recognize a co-worker, friend, or loved one. A donation honours them while restoring and enhancing critical shoreline habitat across Canada.



In Memory

Richard Johnson;
Ken Gibson;
Janet Taylor;
Don McCutcheon;
Julio de Jesus;
Gord Rodgers;
Thomas and Margaret Anderson;
Bob Blackburn;
William Stuart Kirkland;
Wendy Morgan.

In Honour

Selwyn House Sustainability Group;
Friends of the White Lake Preservation;
Gray and Aileen Merriam;
Monica Seidel;
Donna Wilke.



Watersheds

C A N A D A

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