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## **Feasibility Study**

for an update of the MLCA Lake Plan


**Muldrew Lakes, Town of Gravenhurst, District of Muskoka**

Prepared for: The Muldrew Lakes Cottagers Association (MLCA)

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## **1.0 Background**

EcoVue Consulting Services was retained by the Muldrewe Lakes Cottagers Association (MLCA) to undertake a study to determine a recommended scope and outline of costs associated with completing an update of lake specific policies in the Gravenhurst Official Plan (GOP) and Gravenhurst Zoning Bylaw (GZBL). A MLCA Lake Plan was previously completed in 2010, which was comprehensive in nature, and resulted in several policies being implemented in the GOP and GZBL. The plan was meant to be reviewed and updated every five years.

To help determine the scope and costs associated with this potential update, EcoVue completed a community survey and Town Hall event during the summer and fall of 2020, respectively. This report presents the results of these community engagements, a summary of our research, and a set of recommendations to proceed with updating the Muldrewe-specific policies in the GOP and GZBL, within the context of Provincial and local land use policies. Finally, this report also presents some supplementary information regarding Crown Land on the Muldrewe Lakes, as well as some additional tools for addressing the priority issues land use issues identified by the community.

### **1.1. Description of the Muldrewe Lakes**

The Muldrewe Lakes are located within the municipality of the Town of Gravenhurst, in the District of Muskoka. North Muldrewe, Middle Muldrewe and South Muldrewe comprise the Muldrewe Lakes, which are long and narrow water bodies with a total surface area of 420 hectares. The Muldrewe Lakes are part of the Black-Severn River Watershed, and more specifically, the Severn River Subwatershed. Owing to their location on the Precambrian Canadian Shield, the shorelines of the lakes are predominantly naturalized and include steep rocky cliffs and mature forests dominated by coniferous trees. There are currently 395 dwellings on the lakes, one commercial trailer park and approximately 18,000 feet of Crown Land frontage. A Muskoka Heritage Site is located on South Muldrewe adjacent to Muldrewe Creek. There is one public boat launch accessed from North Muldrewe Lake Road.

### **1.2. Policy Context**

Land use on the Muldrewe Lakes is governed by a provincially-led land use planning system. Land use planning policies affecting the Muldrewe Lakes include, at the Provincial level, the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), and at the local level, the Official Plan of the Muskoka District Area (MDOP) and Town of Gravenhurst Official Plan (GOP) and Zoning Bylaw (GZBL). While Provincial policies provide



overarching requirements, the District and Municipal land use policies provide more specific policies which are appropriate in the local planning context. Individual lake management plans and strategies are supported and encouraged by both the District and Municipal Official Plans.

### **1.2.1 The Provincial Policy Statement, 2020**

The shoreline properties surrounding the Muldrew Lakes are not located within an “Urban Centre” or a “Rural Settlement Area” according to the MDOP and GOP. Therefore, for the purposes of interpreting the PPS, the Muldrew Lakes are considered “Rural Lands”. The policies affecting Rural Lands in the PPS encourage sustainable tourism and recreation while also emphasizing the importance of conserving biodiversity and the ecological benefits provided by nature. The PPS also looks to protect the quantity and quality of water by requiring planning authorities to plan at a watershed scale, consider cumulative impacts and environmental lake capacity (where applicable), and ensure that stormwater volumes and contaminants are minimized (s. 2.2.1, PPS).

### **1.2.2 The Official Plan of the Muskoka District Area**

The MDOP establishes a broad, upper tier (district) policy framework and all development and Municipal land use policies must conform to the policies of the MDOP. The shorelines of the Muldrew Lakes are designated as Waterfront Area on Schedule A to the MDOP. While the MDOP must be read in its entirety and all relevant policies must be applied, Section J4 contains policies which are specific to lands designated as Waterfront Area.

Among the policies that apply to the Muldrew Lakes, the MDOP encourages individual lake plans and lake stewardship programs as a method “to identify important values, features and individual lake character”. Additionally, these programs “can be used to monitor water quality, social carrying capacity and general lake management and lake plans may be incorporated into Area Municipal Official Plans” (s. J4.3[k], MDOP).

### **1.2.3 The Town of Gravenhurst Official Plan, 2016**

The GOP is the lower tier (local) policy framework. The privately owned lands surrounding the Muldrew Lakes are designated as Waterfront Area and the Crown Lands located are designated as Open Space.



As with the MDOP, the GOP must be read in its entirety when interpreting and implementing policy. However, Section D contains policies specific to the Waterfront Area designation. Among them, Section D15 contains guiding policy pertaining to individual lake management plans and lake stewardship. Lake management plans are “*encouraged as a tool to establish and improve good land stewardship practices amongst those who live in lake communities and to articulate lake specific principles and goals outlined in this Plan*”.

According to Section D15.2 and D15.3:

*“Lake Management Plans and Strategies may assess issues such as:*

- a) shoreline development;*
- b) lake level management;*
- c) fisheries;*
- d) vegetation retention and health;*
- e) shoreline erosion; and,*
- f) septic system maintenance and inspection and other issues important to lake communities.*

*Lake Management Plans and Strategies should define specific characteristics of the lake and shoreline areas, including:*

- a) natural features;*
- b) landscape character sites;*
- c) cultural and historic features;*
- d) detailed environmental features such as nesting sites and other habitat areas;*  
*and,*
- e) density of development in relation to lake surface area, and shoreline”.*

Section D17.3 of the GOP contains the lake specific policies that were implemented as a result of the MLCA Lake Plan (2010).



### **1.2.4 The Town of Gravenhurst Zoning By-law**

Each property located on the Muldreu Lakes is located within a specific land use zone. The Town of Gravenhurst Zoning By-law (GZBL) provides a set of general provisions, as well as a specific set of provisions for each land use zone category. An easy way to determine the zoning of a property is to refer to the [Muskoka GeoHub](#) (an online interactive mapping database). It should be noted that some of the information on the GeoHub is currently not up to date.

The privately owned properties on the Muldreu Lakes are zoned either Residential Waterfront – 6B, Residential Waterfront – 6C or Residential Waterfront – 6D. The main distinction between Residential Waterfront 6B, 6C and 6D is the required minimum lot frontage (lot width at the waterfront). Some properties also have a “Special Provision” attached to their specific zone, which means that those particular properties have site-specific provisions (e.g. reduced setbacks, lot areas) that were likely implemented through Zoning By-law Amendments.

In addition to the zone provisions, Section 5.2.4.4 of the GZBL contains Muldreu-specific provisions pertaining to shoreline storage buildings (boathouses). A more detailed review and analysis of the GZBL in the context of the potential lake plan update is presented in Section 3.0.

## **2.0 Review of Background Materials**

This section includes a review of pertinent background materials including the MLCA Lake Plan (2010), the Community Survey conducted in the summer/fall of 2020, as well as the Community Workshop (Town Hall) conducted in the fall/winter of 2020.

### **2.1. MLCA Lake Plan, 2010**

The 2010 MLCA Lake Plan is a comprehensive document addressing both land use and stewardship issues and includes three main sections: vision, values and actions. The vision set for the Muldreu Lakes in 2010 was as follows:

*“The beauty of the natural surroundings, the view of the opposite shore not so far away, and the wildlife set our lake apart from many others, especially the larger lakes. To protect these features, we must keep in mind and respect both the delicate nature of our lake and the different wishes of others on the lake. We must understand how we can adjust our activities to minimize the harm to the*



*environment and annoyance to others. By learning and showing mutual respect we can all enjoy Muldrew Lakes now and in the years to come”.*

The outline of values included in the report further support the vision, and the action items support attaining this vision of the Muldrew Lakes. The values listed in the document include:

- Clean water
- Aesthetic of the natural environment & preserving natural habitat and shorelines
- The night sky
- Peacefulness
- Water-based activities
- Community activities and events

The action items included in the 2010 MLCA Lake Plan include:

- Encourage leadership
- Share information
- Monitor sensitive issues
- Host Community Events
- Advocate for legal/regulatory action

The most relevant action item to EcoVue’s work is the advocacy for legal/regulatory action. The report further outlines that the community/MLCA should advocate for an updated zoning by-law, since *“the existing bylaws do not reflect the Official Plan standards – neither the general provisions nor the Muldrew Lakes specific sections...In particular, there is a perceived need to regulate boathouses, a need for a tree-cutting bylaw that would protect the area within 30 m from the shoreline”*. Additionally, the 2010 MLCA Lake Plan states that a guide should be developed for additions/renovations of non-





complying buildings. EcoVue will discuss our recommendations for the above work in the context of our research and recent community consultation in Section 3.0 (Analysis) of this report.

## **2.2. Community Engagement**

### **2.2.1 Lake Plan Community Survey, 2020**

A Community Survey was distributed to the lake community using the MLCA contact list (lake association members and non-members) in early summer 2020. The deadline to complete the survey was September 15, 2020 and 188 responses to the survey were collected (94% were property owners or partial owners, and 6% were family members of property owners). The survey was available online or in paper format to anyone who preferred to complete a hard copy.

The survey focused on understanding the key issues and concerns with regards to land use on the Muldrewh Lakes. A detailed summary of the survey has been uploaded to the [MLCA Lake Plan webpage](#). The following is a summary of key points relevant to EcoVue's feasibility study.

#### *2.2.1.1 LAKE PLANNING PROCESS*

97% of respondents believe that residents and stakeholders should take an active role in protecting and identifying future directions for the lakes in the form of a lake management plan.

#### *2.2.1.2 VALUES AND VISION*

Survey respondents were asked to contribute ideas regarding their values related to spending time on the lakes in an open-ended question. Most participants discussed valuing the beauty of the natural environment, the modest nature of development on the lake, as well as its privacy, peacefulness and tranquility.

When asked what activities are valued on the lake, swimming, hiking/walking, canoeing, kayaking, socializing, stargazing and reading ranked as the most popular.

A subsequent question asked respondents to describe the visual character of the Muldrewh Lakes. The majority of respondents contributed their thoughts and the trends that emerged included:

- A description of the natural beauty of the area (classic Muskoka – large rocks and trees)



- A description of the historic character of the lake as well as more recent changes driven by new development.

The following comments provide examples of these trends in the survey data:

*“Muldrew Lake is a classic example of a small Precambrian shield lake with a mixed white pine and oak foliage. Excessive development along the peninsula road area of the lake has declined the natural beauty of that region but significant portions of the shoreline in the more eastern and far western portions of the lake have maintained a natural element. Traditionally cottages minimized light pollution over the lake but in the high-density areas, light pollution can blind boaters. Traditional cottages were small in nature and attempted to use natural foliage to camouflage the cottage whereas development in the last 20 years tends to remove more of the natural vegetation leaving the larger structure exposed”.*

*“Beautiful. The modification of the shoreline and increasing size of docks, dock furniture, and numbers of boats disturbs the natural beauty of the shoreline”.*

*“Rugged granite outcrops, classic south Muskoka vegetation, lots of plastic gear around docks, rapidly increasing density with a few areas of natural forest remaining”.*

*“Natural shoreline when looking down the lake with few boathouses or shoreline structures”.*

*“It is a beautiful lake, but has been over developed in some areas”.*

*“Evolving. We need to maintain natural shorelines and buffers”.*

Survey respondents were also asked to suggest special places on the lake that should be protected. The majority of people listed natural areas (wetlands, undeveloped areas, Crown Lands, loon nesting habitat, forested areas, etc.) as well as Memorial Pines, Dew Drop Island, and the landings on North and South Muldrew Lakes.

### 2.2.1.3 PRIORITY ISSUES

#### 1. Land Use Pressures

Survey respondents were presented with a list of 9 land use pressures common to lake communities. The three top ranking land use pressures included:

##### a) Lot Development (setback, scale and massing)

- When asked specifically whether the current required setback (from the water) of 30 metres is “just right”, “too little” or “too much”, 71% of respondents agreed that it is “just right”, while 25% felt that it is “too little”.
- Common themes in the open-ended questions on the survey:
  - A concern that too many variances (or amendments) are granted to the 30-metre setback.
  - Very large builds that are “*out of character*”, “*city-like*”, or “*suburban-like*.”
  - New cottages are too visible from the lake or too close to the lake (out of character). Structures should be hidden or blend-in with the natural environment.
  - Concerns regarding the impact of very large builds on the natural environment including water quality.

##### b) Development Density (lot frontage and area)

- When asked specifically whether the current minimum lot size of 0.8 hectares (1.97 acres) is “just right,” “too little,” or “too much,” 68% of respondents agreed that it is “just right”, while 25% felt that it is “too little.”
- When asked specifically whether the current required shoreline frontage of 120 metres (or 150 metres in narrow channels) is “just right”, “too little”, or “too much”, 68% agreed that it is “just right”, while 18% felt that it is “too little” and 14% felt that it is “too much”.

- Common themes in the open-ended questions on the survey were concerns that certain areas of the lake are becoming “over developed”, and that the lake has reached its capacity.

### **c) Recreational Boating**

- With regards to recreational boating, 72% of respondents report that boat traffic is increasing
- Respondents’ top three concerns with regards to recreational boating include:
  - i. Boat speeds
  - ii. Boat wash/wake (related to shoreline damage to both private property and wildlife habitat)
  - iii. Overall boating safety

Therefore, in terms of land use pressures on the lakes, survey respondents are primarily concerned with lot development (variances to required setbacks as well as new builds which are often very large, visible, and “out of character”), as well as the existing number of cottages on the lake. Following these two issues is a shared concern for increasing boat traffic, the speed boats travel, and the resulting safety concerns and damage to the natural shorelines and private property from boat wash/wake.

## *2. Environmental Stewardship*

Respondents were asked to indicate which of 10 conservation initiatives they would support which included the protection of: the natural shoreline, the natural beauty of the area, privacy and the wilderness character, wetlands, the watershed, wildlife/waterfowl, species at risk, water quality, quietness, dark skies or other. All the suggested initiatives were relatively equally supported by between approximately 128 and 173 of the respondents. The top three issues for respondents included:

1. **Water quality** (173 would support)
2. **The natural beauty of the area** (166 would support)
3. **The natural shoreline** (162 would support)



Stewardship issues contributed under “other” by survey respondents included:

1. Fire prevention education
2. Native species protection
3. Reducing impacts of Canada Geese and Cormorants

### **2.2.2 Community Workshop (Town Hall), 2020**

A Town Hall session was designed to further engage with residents and cottagers of the Muldrewh Lakes. This session was offered twice: once during the day and once during the evening in order to increase accessibility. The Town Hall sessions were delivered over Zoom due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic. Fifty-three (53) people participated in the virtual Town Hall sessions. A presentation was delivered using PowerPoint to provide a high-level summary of the Community Survey to attendants and allow opportunities for suggestions and discussion. The presentation went into detail regarding possible policy solutions for the main issues which arose on the survey which can be addressed through land use policy in the GOP and GZBL. During the Town Hall, participants were also polled as to whether they felt in support of the suggested policy solutions. A copy of the presentation with the poll results (an average of the two sessions) has been uploaded to the [MLCA Lake Plan webpage](#). The results of the polls will be discussed in the context of our analysis below.

## **3.0 Analysis**

The following section of the report will evaluate the efficacy of the MDOP, GOP and GZBL at regulating land use pressures on the Muldrewh Lakes in the context of the vision, values and priority concerns of residents and cottagers. Policy gaps will be identified and options to address these gaps will be presented.

### **3.1. Vision and Values**

Overall, the values and vision (clean water, the natural environment, peacefulness) of lake residents do not appear to have changed significantly since 2010 when the previous version of the MLCA Lake Plan was published. However, there does seem to be a greater emphasis of concern from the community regarding development pressures on the lake, and in particular, concerns regarding the negative



impacts of development on the natural environment, a change in the visual character of the lake, and the negative impacts of increasing recreational boat traffic.

The Objectives of the Waterfront Area policy in the MDOP strive to protect the ecological functions and features of lakes, including tree cover and overall natural appearance. The objectives also state that a high standard of water quality should be maintained, and that the character of any new development should be reflective of, or be compatible with, existing development in the Waterfront Area. More specifically, the MDOP stipulates that “*new development should generally have a physical character similar to or compatible with existing development in terms of density, lot sizes, maximum building heights, and minimum setbacks*” (MDOP, J4.3[i]).

The overall goal of the Waterfront Area policy in the GOP is as follows:

*“To ensure sustainable development practices and maintain and enhance where possible water quality, protect the ecological, natural, visual and aesthetic character of the lake and shoreline and protect the recreational, social, accessible and environmental qualities of the lakes and rivers”* (GOP, D2.1).

Specific objectives to obtain this goal include (among others):

*“[t]o maintain or improve the ecological, scenic or recreational character of the Town’s lakes and rivers and those lands that are visually connected to the shoreline...[and] [t]o ensure that shoreline development does not have an adverse impact on the quality of lake water and, wherever possible, to rehabilitate and naturalize shoreline areas that are currently developed”.*

Thus, the guiding policies of the MDOP and GOP are supportive of the vision and values of the Muldrew Lakes community with respect to protecting the ecological, visual, and recreational values and character of the lakes in very general terms.

### **3.1.1 Lake-Specific Policy Option**

Though the MDOP and GOP are supportive of the overall vision of the Muldrew Lakes residents and cottagers, it would be advisable to include an updated and detailed vision statement for the lake in the Muldrew-specific policy section of the GOP.

## **3.2. Land Use Pressures – Lot Development (setback, scale and massing)**

### **3.2.1 Required Setback**

In terms of regulating shoreline development with regards to setback from the water, Section D11.2 of the GOP requires that primary development be set back a minimum of 30 metres from the high-water mark and that site alteration and disturbance of vegetation within 20 metres of the shoreline be limited.

There are instances where a reduction to the 30 metre setback from the high-water mark may be necessary. In instances where old cottages were built prior to the current zoning requirements (existing non-complying buildings and structures), the GOP and GZBL allow these buildings to be replaced if the setback is not further reduced. Section D11.2 of the GOP provides some additional examples of where an amendment or variance might be granted to the required setback, such as where site characteristics do not allow, where sufficient lot depth on existing lots is not available, or where there are terrain or site constraints.

#### *3.2.1.1 LAKE-SPECIFIC POLICY OPTIONS*

The results of the community survey and Town Hall indicate that a majority desire strict adherence to the required 30-metre setback. While existing non-complying rights cannot be taken away, one option could be to restrict a re-build to the same location to prevent large areas within the 30-metre setback from being cleared for a larger replacement building. Some additional restrictions could be introduced for these structures in terms of scale and massing and will be discussed in section 3.2.3 of this report.

Additionally, an individual cannot be prevented from submitting an application to amend the required 30 metre setback (strict adherence to this standard cannot be enforced). However, a more specific set of Muldrewh-specific objectives and criteria could be introduced to the GOP to specify where an amendment or variance to the required 30 metre setback might be considered, which conform to the values of the Muldrewh Lakes community. Some examples include:

- Where the environmental impact on the site and lake would be lessened (e.g., where blasting or clear-cutting of trees could be avoided or lessened).
- Where the visual impact on the lake would be lessened

The idea of introducing a specific set of guiding policies was discussed at the Community Town Hall. When polled, 69% of participants said that they would be in support of introducing such policies, while 6% said they would not be in support. An additional 25% said they would like to learn more or have more time to consider.

### **3.2.2 Scale and Massing of New Builds**

Scale and massing of development play a key role in determining the visual character of the shoreline. Building footprints also influence the degree of impact on the shoreline environment. The guiding policy in terms of preserving character in the GOP is as follows: “*Buildings in the Waterfront Area will be designed and constructed to blend into the natural environment and preserve the historic architectural characteristics of the area*” (s. D12.1, GOP). The Muldrew-specific section of the GOP further attempts to describe the character of the area:

*“The special character of the Muldrew Lakes (North, South and Middle) as a series of long, relatively narrow channels are recognized. This contributes to a natural visual appearance when looking down the lakes, with a shoreline predominated by trees and natural vegetation and modest sized cottages with very few boathouses. The unique qualities of the Muldrew Lakes, environmental health, and water quality of the lakes is to be maintained and enhanced, while allowing for modest development and reasonable redevelopment, in keeping with the character of the lake” (s. D17.3.1, GOP).*

While this is a good description of the visual character of the lakes and is similar to the description provided by survey respondents in 2020, the terms “modest” and “reasonable” are subjective and may be difficult for the Town to interpret and enforce without corresponding provisions in the GZBL. Currently, the GZBL allows for the lot coverage of principal and accessory buildings within 60 metres of the shoreline to be 13% of the total area of the property within 60 metres of the high-water mark. Assuming a minimum lot frontage of 120 metres, 13% of the area within 60 metres of the shoreline would be approximately 10,000 square feet.

Survey respondents were asked to define “modest” and “reasonable” in quantifiable terms. Most respondents suggested a maximum square footage of living space as well as a particular number of bedrooms, bathrooms, or building storeys. Most of the survey respondents who provided a suggestion



thought that the principle living space should be limited to approximately 3,000 square feet, be a maximum of 2 to 2 ½ storeys, and four bedrooms. Nearby Kahshe Lake has successfully implemented a maximum dwelling size of 375 square metres (4,036 square feet) and maximum height of 2 ½ storeys. Many respondents also discussed the importance of limiting the height of development, and specifically that all development should blend into the natural environment and that no development should be permitted above the height of the trees.

Several responses were also received that suggested planning documents ensure the flexibility to build modest main buildings with several sleeping cabins instead of the current regulations which allow for one larger main building and only one sleeping cabin. In terms of seasonal residential development, building a small main cottage and two or three sleeping cabins is thought to be more traditional and in keeping with the historical character of the lake.

#### *3.2.2.1 LAKE-SPECIFIC POLICY OPTIONS*

The results of the Community Survey and Town Hall clearly indicate that a majority wish to limit the size of shoreline dwellings, to preserve the visual character of the lakes, and to limit the environmental impact of buildings on shoreline habitat and water quality. Seventy-three percent (73%) of survey respondents were in support of limiting the size of all new builds (as well as enlargements/extensions). When discussed in greater detail at the Town Hall, 54% of participants felt that they were in support of implementing a maximum dwelling size of 3,000 square feet, 33% were in support of a maximum dwelling size of 4,000 square feet (after hearing about the Kahshe Lake example), 10% of participants felt they needed more time to consider, and 3% were not in support of implementing a maximum dwelling size.

A Muldrewe-specific policy could be introduced to the GOP and GZBL to limit the gross floor area and height of the principal dwelling, and to allow up to a certain number of sleeping cabins or a total gross floor area permitted for sleeping cabins. A more detailed Muldrewe-specific policy could also be added to the GOP to describe the importance of maintaining the natural environment as the dominant landscape, and require restrictions on site clearing, excavation, compaction or grade/slope alterations. Additionally, a policy could also be introduced to ensure buildings and structures do not exceed the height of the surrounding trees.

An alternative policy route (to implementing maximum gross floor areas) could be to introduce total lot coverage allowances based on a sliding scale, such that lots with a lesser frontage are permitted a greater lot coverage percentage, and lots with larger frontages a lesser lot coverage percentage. The Township of Seguin uses a sliding scale for permitted lot coverage and maximum dwelling gross floor area based on lot frontage (see Table below). A Muldrew-specific policy could specify that one principal dwelling and up to X number of accessory buildings (e.g., sheds, sleeping cabins) are permitted under the applicable lot coverage percentage. The percentages could be derived to reflect lot coverage and dwelling sizes based on what is modest and reasonable to the community.

**Table 1. Excerpt from Township of Seguin Zoning By-law, Section 6, Table 6.3**

<b>Column 1</b>	<b>Column 2</b>	<b>Column 3</b>
<i>Lot Frontage</i>	<i>Maximum Lot Coverage (%)</i>	<i>Maximum Dwelling Gross Floor Area</i>
Less than or equal to 30 m	10	1.25 times Column 2
30 m to < 60 m	8	1.25 times Column 2
61 m to 70 m	7.5	1.25 times Column 2
71 m to 80 m	7.25	1.25 times Column 2
81 m to 90 m	7	1.25 times Column 2
91 m to 100 m	6.75	1.25 times Column 2
101 m to 110 m	6.5	1.25 times Column 2
111 m to 120 m	6.25	1.25 times Column 2
121 m to 130 m	6	1.25 times Column 2
131 m to 140 m	5.75	1.25 times Column 2
141 m to 150 m	5.5	1.25 times Column 2
151 m to 160 m	5.25	1.25 times Column 2
>160 m	5	1.25 times Column 2



Finally, Section D12.2 of the GOP permits Council to adopt design guidelines within the Waterfront Area designation that include architectural details and landscape elements to implement policies to conserve the character of the shoreline environment. When asked on the survey, 54% of respondents said they would be in support of Muldrew-specific design guidelines, while 18% said they would not be in support of creating Muldrew-specific design guidelines, and 27% said that they might be in support after learning more about it.

If implemented, the design guidelines would become a requirement as part of the Muldrew-specific section of the GOP to be used in the review of all applications for amendments to the Official Plan, Zoning By-law, as well as all applications for Site Plan Approval and building permits. The guidelines could include illustrated examples of the Muldrew-specific GOP and Zoning By-law requirements suggested above (natural environment the dominant landscape, all development below the treeline, etc.). The Township of Seguin provides a good example of [Site Design Guidelines](#), which help to preserve the character and health of the shoreline environment. The guidelines include an overview of the benefits of a healthy naturalized shoreline, the existing policy in place to protect shorelines, as well as a series of best management practices to be used during development planning. Implementing a set of guidelines such as these would help to address the community's main concerns with regards to the visual impacts of shoreline development as well as the ecological impacts to shoreline health and water quality. It would also serve to address some of the other concerns listed by survey respondents such as conserving native species, discouraging geese and cormorants, and fire prevention education.

### **3.2.3 Scale and Massing of Non-Complying Structures (re-builds)**

The current GOP policy and GZBL allow for non-complying structures to be replaced (or enlarged or extended) within the 30-metre setback if the setback is not further reduced. These re-builds would be subject to the same restrictions in terms of lot coverage as detailed above (13% of the land area within 60 metres of the highwater mark). When asked on the survey if respondents were in favour of introducing Muldrew-specific policy to limit the size of rebuilds/enlargements/extensions within the 30-metre setback, 70% were in favour. One survey respondent suggested that if tearing down or adding to an existing non-complying structure, that the original footprint and character be maintained, with any additional development going towards the back of the property.



### 3.2.3.1 LAKE-SPECIFIC POLICY OPTIONS

A provision currently exists in the GZBL that limits the width of structures within 30 metres of the high-water mark (to minimize environmental and visual impacts). According to our understanding and correspondence with municipal staff, it is currently not applied unless the rebuild is located within the same footprint as the old building. A Muldrew-specific policy could be introduced to require this limitation on width no matter where the re-build is located within the 30-metre setback. This requirement to limit the width of a building could be applied in addition to limiting maximum gross floor area (as discussed in Section 3.2.2 above).

Another option to restrict the scale and massing of replacements, enlargements or extensions of existing non-complying structures is provided by the Town of Huntsville. When an existing non-complying building or structure is damaged, destroyed or demolished, a replacement structure is restricted to the original footprint, building size, height and location. If a larger new building is desired, it must meet the 30 metre setback requirement. The Huntsville Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw also permit existing non-complying buildings to be expanded or added to as long as the height is not increased, and the building complies with all other provision of the zoning bylaw.

### 3.3. Land Use Pressures – Development Density (lot frontage and area)

The two primary factors which drive development density are minimum lot areas and lot frontages. According to survey respondents, the majority believe that the current minimum required lot frontage and area are “just right”. However, development density ranked second in terms of land use pressures of concern among survey respondents on the Muldrew Lakes. The open-ended questions revealed that residents and cottagers are concerned about the existing density of cottages in some areas of the lake, the lake feeling “at capacity”, concerns about “over development” and the resulting increasing recreational boat traffic.

The Provincial Policy Statement refers to protecting the environmental capacity of lakes. Traditionally in Ontario, this has been addressed through monitoring total phosphorous, since phosphorous was thought to be contributed by individual septic systems on lakes, resulting in algal growth (and blooms) and deteriorating ecosystems. However, a recent study at the University of Waterloo demonstrated that the majority (97%) of phosphorous stays within 5 metres of the septic bed and is not a primary source of phosphorous to nearby (20 m) waterbodies (Robertson et al. 2019). Additionally, septic systems



continue to improve, and total phosphorous is no longer thought to be a good indicator of lake capacity in terms of the number of dwelling units that can be sustained.

Despite the current uncertainty surrounding methods of modelling environmental lake capacity, Section D15.3 of the GOP encourages lake communities to complete lake plans to address the density of development on a lake with respect to lake surface area and shoreline (i.e., the recreational or social carrying capacity).

### *3.3.1 MULDREW-SPECIFIC POLICY OPTIONS*

Recreational carrying capacity is a residential unit to surface area criterion that estimates the number of users that can be accommodated on the surface area of a lake while maintaining the recreational amenity of the waterbody. If imposed as a hard cap (as opposed to a guideline), once the recreational capacity of a lake is reached, no new lots (e.g., severances) are permitted. Recreational carrying capacity has been implemented in various townships in the District of Parry Sound as well as the Township of Seguin. The current model of recreational carrying capacity in Central Ontario is a ratio of 1.6 hectares of lake surface area per dwelling (Meridian Planning, 2020 & Dymont, 2017). Lake surface area is calculated by removing a 30-metre shoreline area (since Federal law restricts boat speeds to 9 km/hr in this zone).

#### *3.3.1.1 Calculating Recreational Carrying Capacity on the Muldrew Lakes*

Current Number of Dwellings: 395

Surface Area of the Muldrew Lakes: 420 hectares

Surface Area less 30 metre shoreline area: 258.9 hectares

Based on a lake surface area of 1.6 ha per dwelling unit and considering the 30-metre buffer that is typically used in the model, the recreational carrying capacity for the Muldrew Lakes is **161** units. As noted above, at present there are 395 units, and this does not include potential units on vacant lots, potential severances or the potential (but unlikely) development of Crown Land. The calculation is conservative as it also does not include the recreational impact of the commercial trailer park (the Inn on the Lake), as well as day users putting boats in at the public launch.



The density of development on the Muldrewh Lakes is a lake surface area to dwelling ratio of 0.65 as opposed to the 1.6 that is typically used in the model. This indicates that development on the lake exceeds the capacity provided in the model by 146% (there is less than one-half the surface area/unit that what would be ideal).

As a basis of comparison, the District of Muskoka performed rough calculations of lake surface area to dwelling ratios on 484 lakes in Muskoka. Their calculations used total lake surface area (instead of removing the 30 metre buffer), and a total property count which included built properties and vacant properties. The value calculated for the Muldrewh Lakes was 0.85 hectares per dwelling. The average across all 484 lakes was 5 hectares per dwelling unit, and there were 58 lakes that had less lake surface area per dwelling unit than the Muldrewh Lakes.

An opportunity exists to introduce a Muldrewh-specific policy in the GOP to prohibit any further development on the lake using the above model of recreational carrying capacity. Prohibiting further development would indirectly reduce any further increases in boat traffic from additional cottages or residences. A boating impact study could be conducted to further support implementing this policy in the GOP for the Muldrewh Lakes.

A rough calculation was performed to approximate the number of lots that could be created based on minimum required lot frontage. Approximately 50 new lots could be created by current owners applying for severances. This calculation only takes minimum required frontage into consideration and did not take into account any additional factors (e.g., natural heritage features, minimum required lot area, etc.). Thus, introducing a recreational carrying capacity policy for the lake could prevent as many as 50 lots from being created through severances on privately owned lands, and even more should the Crown Lands on the lake ever be permitted for cottage lot development.

**Update:** Municipal staff at the Town of Gravenhurst have suggested the option of introducing a policy which simply states that no new lot creation shall be permitted on the Muldrewh Lakes if the majority of community members feel that the lake's capacity to sustain development has been met or exceeded. This would result in the same outcome as a recreational carrying capacity without relying on the model of 1.6 hectares per dwelling unit that was derived in Seguin Township (and *could* be less defensible at a planning tribunal in Muskoka).



### **3.4. Land Use Pressures – Recreational Boating**

The municipality has no legal ability to limit the use of the Muldrew Lakes by boats, which is strictly Federal legislation. The municipality can only control the density of use on the shoreline. Thus, the only land use tool available to indirectly influence the volume of recreational boats using the Muldrew Lakes is the recreational carrying capacity model or a policy prohibiting the creation of any additional lots, as detailed above in Section 3.3.1.

While 73% of survey respondents noted an increase in boating traffic in recent years, respondents also noted increasing boat size and increasing size/frequency of wash/wakes in the open-ended question related to increasing boat traffic. Although limiting further development on the lake will only have an impact on the number of boats, the MLCA could consider organizing educational materials and events focusing on safe boating practices and determining priority areas for low wake zones.

### **3.5. Environmental Stewardship**

Survey respondents highlighted water quality, natural beauty and shoreline health as priorities for environmental stewardship on the lake. The following sections will highlight aspects of environmental stewardship that can be addressed through lake-specific policies in the GOP. However, there are many additional voluntary-based initiatives that could benefit the lake environment that will not be discussed (e.g., participation in the Blue Lakes program, invasive species initiatives, continued participation in the Lake Partner Program, etc.).

#### **3.5.1 Existing Policy**

Section B2.2 (policies pertaining to the Natural Environment) of the GOP includes the objective:

*“To protect and improve water quality and hydrological characteristics, functions and processes of watercourses, lakes, aquifers and wetlands that have been impacted by human activity” and “to encourage the protection of Gravenhurst’s natural attributes, such as its rural character, water quality of its lakes and rivers as well as other natural heritage features in order to ensure that the recreational and tourism uses that rely upon these attributes continue to thrive”.*





Additionally, development applications are required to comply with the applicable provisions of the Muskoka Official Plan (MDOP) as it relates to Lake System Health. The MDOP provides policy guidance for development based upon recreational water quality considerations, including long-term trends in phosphorous, long-term total phosphorous concentrations, as well as blue-green algal blooms (MDOP, C2.6.3.2). At the time of this report, phosphorous trends are stable in the Muldrewh Lakes; total phosphorous is not considered to be high, and there have been no confirmed blue-green algal blooms.

The MDOP also *encourages* the consideration of cumulative impacts on the District of Muskoka's environmental health and resiliency:

*“Multiple environmental stressors can impact environmental, social and economic systems (i.e., climate change, invasive species, habitat fragmentation, etc.) and are often dynamic and varying. Conversely, seemingly small, cumulative impacts of development can combine with other stressors to have significant negative consequences for ecosystems and environmental resilience over time. However, it is recognized that measuring and assessing cumulative impacts of development on Muskoka's watersheds, environment, and overall quality of life is challenging” (s. C1.6.3, MDOP).*

Section D2.1 of the GOP states that the overarching policy goal of the Waterfront Area designation is *“to ensure sustainable development practices and maintain and enhance where possible water quality, protect the ecological, natural, visual and aesthetic character of the lake and shoreline and protect the recreational, social, accessible and environmental qualities of the lakes and rivers”*.

In practice, the policies which directly or indirectly protect water quality, natural beauty, and shoreline health include:





## 1) Stormwater Management

Section I6.22.3 of the GOP states that development within the Waterfront Area may require a Stormwater Management Report prior to development proceeding. Section I6.2.4 requires a Stormwater Management Report for residential development *in excess of 5 lots* which shall be submitted prior to Site Plan Approval. Section I6.22.6 requires that where development occurs within 300 metres of a waterbody, that all stormwater shall be treated for quality to ensure contaminants and enriching compounds such as phosphorous and nitrates are not discharged into the lake through storm runoff. In addition, Section I6.22.7 states that no development will be approved that results in post-development run-off rates that are greater than pre-development run-off rates.

## 2) Shoreline Buffers

- Protection of trees and vegetation within the 30-metre shoreline buffer from primary development and minimal disturbance of first 20 metres through the development application process (GOP, s. D11.2).

## 3) Protection of Natural Heritage Features

- e.g., wetlands, significant wildlife habitat, deer wintering areas, significant woodlands, fish habitat, the habitat of endangered and threatened species through the development application process (GOP, s. I).

## 4) Town of Gravenhurst Septic Re-Inspection Program

- Visual inspection of grounds and piping to prevent pollution originating from septic systems
  - Letters issued to residents where maintenance is required

## 5) Town of Gravenhurst Tree-cutting By-law (By-law 2014-26)

- Requires a permit to injure or destroy a tree within 60 metres of the optimal summer water level or any tree within a shoreline buffer area.

### 3.5.1.1 LAKE-SPECIFIC POLICY OPTIONS

A number of policies are in place which directly or indirectly protect water quality, natural beauty and shoreline health through the development process. In addition, the Gravenhurst tree cutting by-law and septic re-inspection program are in place outside of the development application process.

Stormwater management is a particularly important component of shoreline development planning which can make a significant difference to preserving water quality. However, at present, it is not an absolute requirement for all development applications with the Town of Gravenhurst. When impervious surfaces are introduced on shorelines (such as new buildings), the local hydrology of the site is altered, and water that was previously filtered through the ground and taken up by local vegetation becomes runoff. Runoff can contribute contaminants to the lake including suspended solids, nutrients (phosphorous and nitrogen), oil and grease, bacteria, pesticides/herbicides and heat (MECP, 2019). The stormwater runoff from one site may be considered insignificant, but the cumulative impacts from many lots on one lake may have significant effects on water quality.

Currently, stormwater management is reviewed during the site plan approval phase of the development application process in the Town of Gravenhurst. That said, the site plan approval stage is not a public process and the lake community is prevented from being consulted on the stormwater management aspect of development plans. Site plans also typically include surfacing of driveways, design of walkways/ramps, the location, massing and conceptual design of buildings, the location and type of lighting, landscaping and preservation of natural vegetation, etc. (i.e., aspects of the design process that greatly affect the visual character of development as well as the ecological health of shorelines).

A few opportunities exist to strengthen the lake-specific policy affecting water quality, natural beauty and preservation of shoreline habitat:

- 1) **Requiring the incorporation of lake-specific Site Design Guidelines** in the Town of Gravenhurst development review process (as discussed in Section 3.2.2 of this report). Site Design Guidelines could include recommendations for natural landscaping, stormwater and grey water management,

information regarding different types of docks and their relative impact on the shoreline and nearshore habitat, etc. Overall, this document could be distributed to proponents to effectively and clearly communicate the lake community's values and goals with respect to shoreline development.

2) **Requiring a Site Evaluation Report for all development applications.** One of the limitations of the development application process is that it typically assesses applications on a site-by-site basis, and only in terms of the proposed development's impact on significant natural heritage features on, or adjacent to the site. The lake itself is not recognized as a significant natural feature, and additionally, the cumulative impacts of development on a waterbody are not considered (e.g., cumulative impacts of habitat fragmentation). Section 16.28 of the GOP details the elements required for Site Evaluation Reports (however they are currently not a requirement for all shoreline development). These include:

- Location of building envelopes which meet setback requirements defined in Zoning By-law.
- Adequate area, depth, and suitability of soils for supporting an appropriate on-site sewage system.
- The availability of potable water supply
- The provision of appropriate access to the site
- For waterfront properties, the location of water access and all shoreline structures and pathways which limit erosion and slope instability.
- Maintenance of vegetation on slope faces
- Construction mitigation measures and stormwater management techniques that address slope stability, soil erosion, surface drainage, groundwater infiltration and water quality.
- The protection of significant wildlife habitat, significant wetlands, fisheries and other environmentally sensitive areas on or adjacent to the site
- Generally, address all the components of the development proposal and its construction which have potential for on-site or off-site impacts.

Requiring a lake-specific version of something similar to the above for all development applications and building permits would serve to better protect water quality, natural beauty and the ecological health of shorelines by requiring an analysis of the potential impact of the development on the site as well as the lake, instead of focusing only on potential impacts to nearby wetlands or other significant natural heritage features (as defined in the PPS and GOP). Requiring an analysis of the suitability of a site for septic, having requirements related to maintaining vegetation, construction

mitigation measures, and stormwater management as part of the development process requiring statutory public consultation would serve to better protect water quality and natural shorelines.

- 3) **Environmental mapping: Section D15.3 of the GOP encourages Lake Management Plans and Strategies** to define specific characteristics of the lake and shoreline areas including natural features, nesting sites and other habitat areas. While an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is normally required when development is proposed within 120 metres of a Provincially Significant Wetland, within 30 metres of any other wetland, or on lands adjacent to a Muskoka Heritage Area, an EIS prepared in support of a development application could be improved with the availability of detailed local environmental mapping depicting the results of long-term monitoring. Though it would take some time to develop, a citizen science program supported by a qualified professional could monitor sensitive habitat areas and serve to better protect significant shoreline areas from encroachment or other negative impacts. A lake-specific policy in the GOP could require this local environmental database to be considered by the Town during the development application process.

### 3.6. Other Recommended Updates

As highlighted in the 2010 Muldrew Lakes plan, several of the policies affecting the Muldrew Lakes (both general and lake-specific) are currently not reflected in the GZBL. Without implementation through the GZBL (e.g., the Muldrew-specific policy in the GOP limiting boathouse widths to 15% of the lot frontage or 10 metres, whichever the lesser), these policies cannot be enforced by the Town of Gravenhurst. It is recommended that any applications for lake-specific amendments to the GOP include a set of policies to enforce the existing lake-specific policies.

Additionally, the language pertaining to shoreline structures (e.g., boathouses and boat ports) is inconsistent in the Muldrew-specific section of the GZBL which is resulting in some confusion in interpretation. It is recommended that this section be amended for clarity and to ensure it reflects the intent of the community with respect to shoreline structures.

## 4.0 Supplementary Tools & Information

The following sections provide additional information and tools related to priority land use issues raised through the survey including architectural heritage, preservation of Crown Lands, and long-term protection of natural areas. Though these topics are related to the priority issues (addressed above) as

expressed by survey respondents, the following discusses additional methods of addressing these issues outside of Muldrew-specific policy in the GOP and GZBL.

#### **4.1. Architectural Heritage**

Preserving the character of the Muldrew Lakes was expressed as important by survey respondents. In addition to the suggestions made in the previous sections for lake-specific policy governing lot development and density, the community could consider designating heritage properties. A heritage designation on one or more properties would help to conserve important examples of early (settler) cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

Survey respondents were asked if they were aware of any properties on the Muldrew Lakes that might be considered historic. The list of suggestions received is included as Appendix A. The following is an excerpt from the regulations governing the designation of heritage properties (O. Reg 9/06):

*“A property may be designated under Section 29 of the Act if it meets one or more of the following criteria for determining whether it is of cultural heritage value or interest:*

*1. The property has design value or physical value because it, is a rare, unique, representative or early example of a style, type, expression, material or construction method, displays a high degree of craftsmanship or artistic merit, or demonstrates a high degree of technical or scientific achievement.*

*2. The property has historical value or associative value because it, has direct associations with a theme, event, belief, person, activity, organization or institution that is significant to a community, yields, or has the potential to yield, information that contributes to an understanding of a community or culture, or demonstrates or reflects the work or ideas of an architect, artist, builder, designer or theorist who is significant to a community.*

*3. The property has contextual value because it, is important in defining, maintaining or supporting the character of an area, is physically, functionally, visually or historically linked to its surroundings, or is a landmark”. O. Reg. 9/06, s. 1 (2).*



The Ontario *Heritage Act* requires Council to have a Heritage Committee that works to identify heritage resources in a municipality. The Gravenhurst Heritage Committee is tasked with designating individual heritage properties. The Gravenhurst Municipal Heritage Committee mandate is to:

- *identify heritage resources and evaluate their condition and community value, the MHC will make recommendations to Council for new designations and updates to the Town's Municipal Register.*
- *identifying heritage resources and evaluating their condition and community value;*
- *recommending by-laws to establish processes for the conservation of heritage resources...*

Through the lake planning process, the MLCA could consider working with residents and cottagers to determine if any of the owners of the suggested properties are interested in applying for a heritage designation status.

#### **4.2. Permanent Land Protection**

Opportunities to protect important ecological habitat on the Muldrew Lakes exist through conservation easements or donations of land to the Muskoka Land Conservancy. A conservation easement allows an individual to remain the property owner and sell their property at any time. However, a conservation easement is registered on title and protects the land in perpetuity (is passed on to the next owner). An individual can choose to place a conservation easement on a portion of their land (e.g., a wetland) without the conservation easement affecting the rest of their land (opportunities to develop other parts can be conserved). The Muskoka Conservancy surveys each of the properties under their protection at least once a year. As a registered charity, the Muskoka Conservancy offers numerous tax benefits to participants. A representative from the Muskoka Conservancy is available to provide a webinar to the lake community regarding the options for permanent protection of ecologically significant lands.

#### **4.3. Crown Lands**

A substantial portion of the shoreline of the Muldrew Lakes is Crown Land. The totality of all Crown Lands have approximately 18,458 feet of frontage on the Muldrew Lakes. The extent of these Crown Lands can be viewed in the [Crown Land Use Policy Atlas \(CLUPA\)](#) and discussed in the accompanying report [here](#). Participants in the workshop asked if these lands could be sold for cottage lot development

and were concerned about their conservation and protection. The short answer is 'no', since the land use report says that "*Authorization will not be granted, nor will disposition of Crown lands be considered for seasonal recreation, rural residential, or remote cottage development*". However, it should be noted that individuals may apply to amend the CLUPA to permit cottage lot development on these lands. Possession of the lands would also require the disposition of Crown Land through a Class Environmental Assessment – Resource and Stewardship and Facility Development Projects. While a CLUPA amendment and subsequent disposition is possible, the process would be extremely complex and lengthy, would require endorsement from the local municipal Council, and is unlikely to receive approval given current policy at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNFR) level. It should be noted however that a policy restriction placed on further lot creation, or the implementation of a recreational carrying capacity would provide an increased level of protection of these lands.

#### **4.4. Muldrewe-specific By-laws**

##### **4.4.1 *Blasting By-law***

The MLCA could advocate for a lake-specific by-law to prohibit or regulate blasting in shoreline areas (areas within 20-30 metres of high water mark) and areas zoned Environmental Protection (EP). The intent of the by-law would be to protect and preserve the visual and natural environment by prohibiting blasting of cliffs and areas of rock in shoreline and EP areas.

##### **4.4.2 *Fill By-law***

The MLCA could advocate for a lake-specific bylaw to prohibit or regulate the placing or dumping of fill in shoreline areas (20-30 metres of high water mark) and areas zoned Environmental Protection (EP). The intent of the by-law would be to protect and preserve water quality by prohibiting the placing or removal of fill in shoreline areas.

## **5.0 Summary**

Overall, the main vision and values of the lake community do not appear to have changed significantly since the lake planning effort in the early 2000s. However, there does appear to be greater concern regarding the impacts of shoreline development to the visual character and ecological health of the shoreline environment. The community's priority land use concerns include the setback, scale and



massing of lot development, the density of development on the lakes, and increasing recreational boat traffic. In terms of environmental stewardship, the priority concerns are water quality, shoreline health and the natural beauty of the area. Though the GOP and MDOP generally support the vision and values of the Muldrew Lakes community, specific and enforceable policies to protect the visual and ecological character of the Muldrew Lakes appear to be deficient. The GOP and MDOP both support and encourage the development of individual lake plans to address issues such as those outlined above, and, particularly, specific policies to address the preservation of shoreline character and the density of development with respect to lake surface area.

Judging from the response to the survey and attendance at the Town Hall event, the majority of the 188 survey respondents are in favour of introducing lake specific policies to preserve the visual and ecological character and health of the shoreline and overall lake environment. Table 2 summarizes the policy options and recommendations made throughout the report. It is important to emphasize that these are suggested options and any number of these policies could be introduced, or variations thereof. The details of any lake-specific policies will be determined during Phase 2 of the project.

**Table 2. Summary of Community Concerns and Recommended Policy Options**

Community Concern	Recommended Action/Policy Options
<b>Update Gravenhurst Zoning By-law</b>	As identified in the 2010 MLCA Lake Plan, GZBL does not reflect Muldrew Lakes-specific policies in GOP (e.g., lake specific regulations for boathouses). Applications for updates should include a thorough review of all lake-specific policy and complete housekeeping tasks such as cleaning up language pertaining to shoreline structures.
<b>Vision &amp; Values</b>	Updated and detailed statement regarding vision and values of community with description of lake character as well as community concerns regarding shoreline development and lake capacity.



<p><b>Lot Development (setback)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Specific policies regarding conditions for considering amendments or variances to the required setback for new builds.</li> <li>2. Policies and provisions to restrict the replacement of legal non-complying structures to original location.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lot Development (scale &amp; massing of new buildings)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set a maximum gross floor area</li> <li>2. Set maximum height of 2 ½ stories or below height of surrounding trees</li> <li>3. Sliding scale to determine maximum gross floor area and lot coverage based on lot frontage</li> <li>4. Site Design Guidelines</li> </ol>
<p><b>Lot Development (scale &amp; massing of redevelopment within 30 metre setback)</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Maximum Width Formula</li> <li>2. Maximum Gross Floor Area</li> <li>3. Restrict replacement of existing non-complying structures to original location/footprint/size/height of original building.</li> <li>4. Restrict additions to or enlargements of existing non-complying structures to height of original building.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Development Density</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recreational Carrying Capacity</li> <li>2. Policy prohibiting the creation of new lots (severances)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Recreational Boating</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recreational Carrying Capacity</li> <li>2. Policy prohibiting the creation of new lots (severances)</li> </ol>



<b>Environmental Stewardship          Priorities</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Required Site Evaluation Report</li> <li>2. Site Design Guidelines</li> <li>3. Develop detailed mapping/database and accompanying lake-specific policy for GOP</li> </ol>
<b>Cultural Heritage</b>	Designation of heritage properties.
<b>Permanent Land Protection</b>	Conservation easements and/or land donation to Muskoka Conservancy of high-quality habitat areas (e.g., wetlands or nesting areas)
<b>Protection of Crown Lands</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recreational Carrying Capacity</li> <li>2. Policy prohibiting the creation of new lots (severances)</li> </ol>



## 6.0 Next Steps

The lake community should proceed with reviewing and considering the recommendations made in the report in time for the 2021 MLCA Annual General Meeting. If the lake community wishes to proceed with the recommendations made by EcoVue (or some variation thereof), EcoVue is available to begin drafting the policy that would be required in the applications to the Town of Gravenhurst for inclusion in the lake-specific section of the GOP and GZBL. During this second phase of the project, additional community consultation would be conducted to determine which policy options are most desirable, and to determine the details of the policies to be submitted to the Town for inclusion in the GOP and GZBL.

A set of estimated costs is detailed below. The estimate of costs includes the application fees to the Town of Gravenhurst, as well as an estimate of fees for EcoVue to draft the policy for the GOP and GZBL, complete the applications, produce a justification report, conduct a community consultation session, and meet with the Town of Gravenhurst to discuss the proposal. A boating impact study may be recommended to support a proposal for recreational carrying capacity or any policy restricting or prohibiting the creation of new lots. Additionally, there are opportunities for volunteer efforts to reduce the costs of some of the work (e.g., helping with community engagement, and a boat survey).

### 6.1. Estimated Costs (updated November 8, 2021 to reflect recent discussions with the MLCA)

Application for an Official Plan Amendment (OPA) with the Town of Gravenhurst: \$1,915-\$4,245 (depending on whether considered a minor or major application by the Town).

Application for a Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA) with the Town of Gravenhurst: \$1,061-\$2,445 (depending on categorization by Town).

Estimated cost of consulting services to prepare the applications: \$8,250.00 (this includes a 25% discount for a non-profit organization).

Approximate total cost: \$11,226 – \$14,940, depending on how the Town of Gravenhurst categorizes the applications for an OPA and ZBA.

EcoVue would be pleased to support the MLCA in taking the next steps in the lake planning process and providing a detailed proposal for Phase 2 of the project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.



Respectfully Submitted,

**ECOVUE CONSULTING SERVICES INC.**

*Sarah Bale*

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Sarah Bale B.Sc. M.Sc., M.E.S. (Planning)  
Planner

*J. Kent Randall*

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Principal Planner





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## Appendix A – List of Suggested Properties with Cultural/Historical Significance

- 1000 South Muldrewh Lake Road
- Whippoorwill Cottage (1916)
- Unwin Cottage
- 3MM1 (1922)
- Boathouse on Hookery Island (1917)
- Pidgeon Cottage
- Levers Cottage
- McLaughlin Cottage
- McMillan Cottage (originally Hutt)
- Tuttle Cottage
- Muldrewh Cottage (aka “Sunset Cottage”)
- Beecroft Cottage
- Stinson Main Cottage (early 1900s)
- 2MM15 (Kincaid Cottage)
- Silver Island (logging foreman’s cabins)
- Smallfield/Boyer Cottage
- 3MM2
- Rosemary Bartlett’s Cottage
- Elizabeth Robinson’s Cottage
- Boathouse/Cottage - Lalla Rookh Island
- Cragg Cottage (originally Burwash)
- Hendershot Cottage
- Smythe Cottage
- 1185 Woodland Drive
- Sweetgale Cottage (1905)