



*Photo: J. Alley*

# **MULDREW LAKES COTTAGERS' ASSOCIATION**

## **LAKE PLAN VISION, VALUES AND ACTIONS**

**SEPTEMBER 15, 2009**

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- John Alley
- Peter Alley
- David Beecroft
- Robin Boys
- Lola Bratty
- Jeff Brill
- Bruce Carnegie
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- Cynthia Walker

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# STRUCTURE OF THE LAKE PLAN

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The Lake Plan has been divided into two parts.

This document ***Lake Plan – Vision Values and Actions*** starts with a description of the purpose of the Lake Plan, the lake planning process and its scope. It then describes a vision for the lake and the values of the Muldrew Lakes cottagers as defined by their responses to two surveys and three Town Hall meetings. This first part concluded with a list of action plans that will be adopted by the MLCA Board to guide its activities over the next few years.

There are companion documents including the ***BACKGROUND INFORMATION*** which provides a summary of the context for the Lake Plan and a discussion of the issues that were raised and discussed during the planning processes. The action plans described in this document are intended to address the issues discussed in Background Information. For some of the issues, the action plans have been developed in more detail as working papers.

# Section 1: INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 What is the Lake Plan for?

The Lake Plan is important to everyone with property on Muldrew Lakes, not just members of the Muldrew Lakes Cottagers Association (MLCA).

***The Lake Plan is the strategic plan that guides the Board of the MLCA.***

The Lake Plan describes the nature of the lake and its surrounding lands, the community, the regulatory framework, the current issues and a collective vision for the future. It defines specific actions that the Board contemplates to address the issues raised during the consultation process. And, it gives a structure on which the Board can report its progress.

***The Lake Plan will be reviewed and updated as needed.*** A formal review every five years will allow coordination with the review of the Town Official Plan. More frequent informal reviews will assess the effectiveness of planned actions and set priorities to ensure that actions are still relevant. The Board will determine the priorities for action items and will undertake the highest priority actions that it can with its limited volunteer resources. Given these factors, the Lake Plan does not bind the Board, but instead gives very strong direction to the Board because of the extensive input given by cottagers into the plan.

Everyone associated with the lake benefits from having the information and direction clearly documented in the Lake Plan.

## 1.2 Lake Planning Process

The Lake Plan is the result of a planning process that was started in 2002 because a number of people had concerns about changes that were happening to the lake, to lake use, to water quality, to the lands around the lake and to the community. At the same time the Town of Gravenhurst was reviewing its Official Plan and seeking input from cottagers' associations.

The first step was to form a Lake Plan Task Group to research and develop a Lake Plan. Under early guidance from French Planning Services Inc., the Task Group developed an approach based on the guiding principle that the planning process should be consultative and inclusive. Input was invited from all cottagers through surveys, town hall meetings, MLCA annual general meetings and direct personal contacts. Every effort was made to state issues in a fact-based manner. And an iterative approach was adopted to gather input, describe the results of the input, and gather more feedback in a step-wise move towards a consensus.



Mapping from Microsoft, Navteq and DigitalGlobe

### 1.3 Scope

The area covered by the plan includes the area from which the MLCA draws its membership. This includes lake-front lots and properties that are not lake-front in nature that were included in the cottage numbering system prior to December 31, 1994. The plan deals with any matters consistent with the charter of the MLCA. The focus was initially on land-use planning to ensure that the Town of Gravenhurst had input from the MLCA for the development of the Official Plan. Later, the Lake Plan focused on other issues that cottagers have identified as important in surveys, including use of the lake, the environment and the community. The plan is not a regulatory document and is not enforceable.

### 1.4 Information Sources and Support

Surveys were conducted in 2004 (158 responses) and 2007 (160 responses) to collect information from residents of Muldrewe Lakes and then to dig more deeply for a better understanding of that feedback.

Two workshops were conducted in 2004. Town Hall meetings were held yearly between 2005 and 2008 to review aspects of the Lake Plan and receive resident feedback

A boat traffic count was conducted on two days in 2004.

Water quality surveys have been conducted for many years.

A variety of governmental and non-governmental agencies were consulted including Muskoka Heritage, Couchiching Conservancy, Ministry of Natural Resources, The Land Between Collaborative.

Base mapping and analysis was provided by French Planning Services. Mapping data is from public sources.

## Section 2: VISION, PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

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### 2.1 Vision

This Lake Plan describes the collective vision for the future of Muldrew Lakes as gathered from the cottagers through surveys, town hall meetings, annual general meetings and direct input to the Lake Plan Task Group.

We all enjoy Muldrew Lakes for many reasons - some of those reasons are shared by many residents, other reasons are personal. Whether it involves taking a peaceful paddle in the canoe, enjoying water sports with friends and family or simply sitting on the dock listening to the sounds of nature, these pastimes are **what we have come to really look forward to** when coming up to the lake.

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 years to come.

The actions described in this plan will achieve this vision of Muldrew Lakes as a place where:

- everyone can enjoy themselves without reducing the enjoyment of others – we have a shared understanding of the impacts of our activities and we follow practices that will minimize those impacts;
- the natural environment is protected and enjoyed;
- the water quality is among the best in Muskoka;
- there is a close-knit, caring, inter-generational community that delights in each others' company;
- many people volunteer to make the Muldrew Lakes a better place;
- activities are organized to introduce new participants, allow experienced participants to develop their skills and to allow all participants to make new friends.

### 2.2 Values

The collective values of the Muldrew Lakes community were determined through two surveys conducted in 2005 and 2007. A request to complete both surveys was sent through the MLCA winter mailing and received 158 and 160 responses respectively out of 400 properties that would have been eligible to complete the surveys<sup>1</sup>. Based on both surveys the following emerged as important values:

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<sup>1</sup> The survey is not considered a vote – but returns a large enough sample to have statistical relevance.

**Clean water is essential.** Our surveys did not ask this question directly but the indirect evidence is irrefutable – 95% of survey respondents said that swimming is important; we think that means swimming in clean water. Many cottagers take domestic water from the lake and would not do so if it weren't clean. And, on other lakes, property values plummeted when water quality was degraded.

**The look of the natural environment is important** – people prefer not to see lawns but a significant number of people like to have ornamental flowers:

<b>Table 1 - Responses on Environment Statements<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
I like the look of a well-maintained lawn at the cottage	12%	82%
Lawns and landscaping should be discouraged	60%	29%
I enjoy having an ornamental flower bed	31%	53%
Fertilizers and cosmetic pesticides should not be used on properties on the lake	86%	8%
Natural forest cover should be retained	88%	7%
Natural shorelines and forest cover are important to my enjoyment of Muldrew Lakes	91%	5%

**Natural shorelines** are important for a healthy ecosystem and good water quality, and are an important part of **preserving natural habitat** for fish and wildlife. All natural wetlands should also be protected, and people worry about the loss of natural shorelines. People see big wakes as having a significant effect of natural shorelines and on loon nesting.

<b>Table 2 - Responses on Natural Shoreline Statements</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
It is important to protect natural wetlands (shallow areas of the lake with lily pads and water plants)	88%	5%
Natural shorelines are important for keeping good water quality	90%	4%
Natural shorelines encourage wildlife and a healthy ecosystem	90%	6%
There is no need to worry about loss of natural shorelines	9%	84%
Big wakes have no significant effect on natural shorelines	16%	76%
I am concerned about the effect of boat wakes on loon nesting	78%	12%

**We like to be able to see the stars.** Among respondents to the 2007 survey 73% agreed at least somewhat that there should be controls on night time lighting to allow others to enjoy the stars – only 18% disagreed.

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<sup>2</sup> The 2007 survey asked respondents to show their agreement with statements on a seven point scale where 1 was disagree and 7 was agree. These results are summarized with responses of 1-3 grouped as disagree and 5-7 grouped as agree. The survey also asked respondents to rate the importance of activities on a seven point scale where 1 was not important and 7 was very important. These results are summarized with values of 1-3 being grouped as unimportant and 5-7 grouped as important.

**People value quiet.** Respondents to the 2007 survey rated the importance of the following quiet activities.

<b>Table 3 - Importance of Quiet Activities</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Quiet contemplation or listening to the sounds of nature	88%	7%
Reading	87%	5%
Nature observation	76%	15%
Hiking/Walking	74%	15%

Respondents also indicated concerns about issues that might disrupt those quiet activities. A significant number (35%) think that people water ski and wakeboard earlier or later than recommended by the courtesy code (see back cover) and this may reflect the disruption effect of this activity.

<b>Table 4 - Disruption of Quiet Activities</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
I am concerned about the size of some power boats on the lake	76%	16%
The noise of power boats bothers me more than their size or power	67%	21%
I would like to explore a way to limit boat size or power	66%	26%
People respect the Courtesy Code times for water skiing and wakeboarding (not before 8:00 am or after dusk)	51%	35%

**We like to play in the water.**

<b>Table 5 - Importance of Water Based Activities</b>	<b>Important</b>	<b>Not Important</b>
Swimming	95%	3%
Canoeing	77%	5%
Power boating	58%	26%
Water skiing	36%	50%
Tubing	36%	55%
Sailing	33%	56%
Fishing	32%	56%

**Community activities** are part of our life at Muldrew. In the 2007 survey 47% of respondents agreed with the statement that their families participate in the regatta, the worship services or sing-songs with others. And, 60% of respondents were interested in other suggested community activities.



## Section 3: ACTION PLANS

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This set of action plans is loosely grouped into those relating to leadership, information sharing, monitoring, community-building and promoting regulatory change. However, there is overlap and, over time, following actions in one area may lead to revised actions in another. For example, a monitoring program will give more information which may affect the information sharing actions. The principle is adaptive management so that the Lake Plan is a living document that evolves to address emerging issues and priorities.

### 3.1 Encourage Leadership

#### 3.1.1 *MLCA Participation*

People are willing to participate in activities that have value to them. The MLCA is successful because of the work done by volunteers. Greater success will come from MLCA initiatives that are meaningful to the community and from actively seeking the participation of volunteers. This will take a concerted effort to define areas of interest (such as through the development of this lake plan) and then organizing the work of those activities in a way that allows people to participate. There should be tasks that require small commitments in a diverse range of topics to allow everyone to find a volunteer opportunity that suits their interests and capability. Strong management is essential to ensure that every volunteer gets something back for their volunteer efforts.

#### 3.1.2 *Recognition*

People volunteer and make personal contributions for many different reasons and expect different levels of recognition for their work. It is important to be sensitive to individual wishes because some people would find public recognition embarrassing. But, where volunteers would not be embarrassed, it is important to recognize individual efforts – this motivates the volunteers and shows everyone the kinds of activities we value as a community.

#### a) **Leadership**

A leadership recognition programme could influence younger generations, showing them the value of community leadership. Leadership in this context should not be limited to the Board or Executive of the MLCA. It is important to give due recognition to leaders of all ages and endeavours, whether volunteering for MLCA activities or undertaking important initiatives on their own.

#### b) **Landowner**

While the MLCA can promote certain types of activities, ***almost all actions that make a positive difference to our community will be taken by individuals on their own properties***. A program that recognizes the efforts of landowners can promote the activities that are valued by our community. An awards program will be proposed to recognize specific actions to benefit the environment such as shoreline re-habilitation or leadership in environmental practices.

## 3.2 Share Information

The health of the Muldrew Lakes community is affected by the actions of all residents of the lake. The better we all understand the environment in which we live, and the wishes of others in our community, the easier it is to ensure that our actions allow us to live in harmony with our environment and our neighbours. The MLCA can play a leadership role but requires the assistance of all to achieve results. As such, **sharing information is one of the key roles the MLCA plays in preserving the environment.**

### 3.2.1 The Lake Plan

This lake plan is a key element in sharing information. It documents the diverse desires of residents as discovered through a number of surveys. It also describes the actions the MLCA intends to take to develop a caring and tolerant community and provides an opportunity for residents to provide further feedback.

### 3.2.2 Promote the Courtesy Code

As part of the Lake Plan process, building on survey results and very constructive dialog at the 2007 Town Hall meeting the courtesy code was revised and expanded and adopted at the 2007 Annual General Meeting.

The courtesy code identifies a number of behaviours that will **increase harmony** on the lake and address the concerns of those who seek quiet and tranquility. The courtesy code and the principles behind it will be promoted through all MLCA activities. This includes developing educational programs to ensure a shared understanding of the diverse interests of all cottagers.

While it is not possible to manage day use boating, the Courtesy Code will be promoted to day use boaters including visitors to the Inn on the Lake Trailer Park.

### 3.2.3 Boating Education

The survey results indicate that almost all respondents have boats and see boating activities as important. For the greatest enjoyment of everyone, it is important that people understand how to operate boats safely and respectfully.

#### a) Power boating clinics

Power boating is an important recreational activity for many on the lake, but it is also a source of conflict. Programs will be developed to promote safe operation of power boats, and environmentally sensitive and courteous boating practices consistent with the Courtesy Code.

#### b) Water ski clinics

The survey and Town Hall meetings identified that some water skiing and wakeboarding practices fall short of best practices and thus create needless nuisance, danger and environmental damage. The Board will continue to promote water ski/boarder clinics and use these as opportunities to promote the courtesy code, best water skiing practices and practices that minimize environmental damage. Efforts will also be made to extend the water ski clinics to also include educational programs for ski boat operators.

### c) Safe Towing Clinics

Many people enjoy tubing, knee boarding and other towing activities that might not attend a water ski clinic. Additional clinics or communication options will be explored to ensure that boat operators know the rules and best practices for safe and courteous towing activities.

### d) Programs for Non-power boats

Survey results indicate that most cottagers have non-powered boats. Programs promoting non-powered boating as an alternative to power boating can: increase sensitivity to the needs of non-power boaters; reduce environmental impact; and reduce nuisance for those cottagers seeking quiet. Existing programs for non-power boats will be expanded and new programs will be developed such as a sailing clinic and paddling tours of parts of the lake.

#### 3.2.4 Nature Walks

There has been interest in nature walks and participation in water quality testing. The surveys indicated interest in other educational workshops or resource days. The MLCA will support existing programs and develop new programs for education about our natural environment such as “the natural shoreline”, “native plants”, and eco-friendly design for cottages and buildings. Similarly themed paddling excursions could also be arranged.

#### 3.2.5 Promoting Reduced Nutrient Supply from the Watershed

The MLCA has promoted the importance of reducing the addition of nutrients to the lake. The efforts will continue and the MLCA will promote:

- **Using phosphate-free detergents, soaps and shampoos** – thereby reducing the phosphate load on septic systems which also reduces the risk of phosphate leaching into the lake.
- **Regular maintenance and inspection of septic systems** – to ensure that they are functioning properly and achieve the maximum phosphate reduction
- **Keeping natural vegetation** between septic beds and the lake to maximize the uptake of phosphates on land thus reducing the phosphates added to the lake.
- **Avoiding the use of plant fertilizers** – both for lawns and ornamental plants. Almost all fertilizers include phosphorus-based chemicals, and it is likely that some of this will end up in the lake.
- **Adapting our life to the Lake** – even with proper maintenance of a septic system and the use of phosphate free cleaners, it is important to minimize the septic load – use low flow fixtures, and avoiding water-gobbling appliances.

#### 3.2.6 Promote Shoreline Protection

The MLCA will develop an education program focused on protecting and restoring natural shorelines (including the land just above the water and lake bed just below it) based on the shoreline inventory. This will include promoting the courtesy code and best boating practices to minimize wake (travel on plane or dead slow, empty ballast unless required). It may also include a communications plan that demonstrates the

long-term effects of wake on shorelines and nesting of waterfowl and recommendations for best practices in restoring damaged shorelines. Other potential actions could include:

- Establish voluntary standards designed to maximize the natural aspect of the the area within 30 metres or the shoreline, to promote retention of tree cover and natural vegetation and encourage limiting artificial hard surfaces.
- Promote minimal boat wakes in sensitive areas or at sensitive times of the year (such as May and June for loon nesting). Boat wake is not directly related to concerns of boat speed or distance from shore – boat wake can be minimized by traveling dead slow or fast enough to stay on plane. Boat wake changes little regardless of distance from shore, but every bit helps so boats should keep to the centre of the lake.
- Protect areas of the shoreline that are particularly sensitive or important to wildlife. These areas include shoreline wetlands, loon and other waterfowl nesting areas, fish spawning areas and mouths of creeks.
- Encourage voluntary rehabilitation of retaining walls, breakwaters, lawns and other similar alterations to the shoreline.
- Ensure that people know how to develop their properties in a way that is sensitive to the natural environment.
- Discourage the use of lawn fertilizers (chemicals are banned).

### 3.2.7 Promote Wildlife and Species-at-risk Habitat Sustainability

New programs will be developed to educate cottagers about the plant, reptile and bird species at risk that are found in the Muldrew Lakes area (See the list of plants, reptiles and birds at right). These programs could include guides to identify these species, and information about the species and the habitat that they require. The key risks for these species are development, including roads, and the loss of habitat, in particular wetlands and shoreline areas. ***It is important to have education programs that help cottagers understand what they can do to protect or restore critical habitat.***

#### Rare Plants

- Virginia Chain Fern (*Woodwardia virginica*)
- Floating Hearts (*Nymphoides cordata*)
- Yellow-eyed Grass (*Xyris difformis*)
- Virginia Meadow Beauty (*Rhexia virginica*)
- White Fringed Orchid (*Habenaria blephariglottis*).

#### Reptiles at Risk

- Snapping Turtle (*Chelydra serpentine*)
- Blanding's Turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*)
- Northern Ribbon Snake (*Thamnophis sauritus*)
- Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (*Sistrurus catenatus*)
- Eastern Milk Snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum*)
- Eastern Hognose Snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*)
- Five-lined Skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*)

#### Birds at Risk

- Golden-winged Warbler (*Vermivora chrysoptera*)
- Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*)
- Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferous*),
- Least Bittern (*Ixobrychus exilis*)

In addition to programs directed at species at risk, the education programs should also address the protection of loons. These programs could include information about the mating, nesting and rearing of chicks. They should also include actions that cottagers can take and promote that will enhance the breeding/rearing success of our loons. Such actions could include preserving or restoring natural shorelines,

advocating for stable water levels during nesting season (May through late June), advocating for wake-free zones around loon nesting areas and developing artificial loon nesting sites.

### **3.2.8 *Promote Awareness of Invasive Species***

At present there is no evidence that invasive species such as purple loosestrife and zebra mussels have become established in and around Muldrew Lakes. The focus of education on invasive species will be to emphasize the cost and impacts of such invasions and the importance of taking preventative action.

### **3.2.9 *Provide Information on Living with Wildlife***

Since the time of the earliest cottagers, it was recognized that we are occupying the natural habitat of many species of wildlife. At times, it seems we try to beat Mother Nature but this is seldom successful. New programs will educate cottagers about how to live with wildlife such as bears, beavers and geese.

## **3.3 Monitor Sensitive Issues**

Respondents to the surveys identified a number of concerns that were not shared by all. It is important to establish monitoring programs to obtain facts on these issues so that the MLCA can assess what actions might be appropriate.

### **3.3.1 *Shoreline Review Program Evaluation***

Water quality and the natural appearance of the lake are important to survey respondents. These in turn depend on the health of natural shorelines yet some responses to the surveys do not accept the connection or the impact that large boat wakes have on our shores. This may be in part because of a perception that the shoreline is not vulnerable because so much of it is rock. The MLCA will undertake a new program to review the state of the shorelines. As this is a new program, the exact nature has yet to be determined, but it may include development of an inventory of vulnerable shores (soft shores, low vegetated islands and loon nesting sites) and shores in need of re-habilitation. An inventory of sensitive shorelines may lead to new programs to educate cottagers, protect shorelines where necessary and encourage restoration efforts.

### **3.3.2 *Monitor Water Quality***

The MLCA has sponsored water quality monitoring since the early 1980s. The monitoring has given us some base-line measurements to ensure we understand the current state of water quality. It has also been a valuable opportunity to educate the many volunteers on what good water quality means and how it is affected by our recreational activities. The MLCA will continue to support and recruit volunteers for water quality monitoring, and will track key measures over time. As water quality data is accumulated, the water quality on Muldrew Lakes will be compared to the water quality in other comparable Muskoka lakes.

### **3.3.3 *Youth boating patrol***

Other cottagers' associations have found that youth boat patrols have been effective in promoting safe and considerate boat use. The feasibility of implementing similar programs will be evaluated.

### **3.3.4 Monitor boat speed and wake**

Perceptions about boat speed and wake without factual data can vary significantly. Established measurement methods and reliable sample data can allow objective comparison of changes from year to year.

### **3.3.5 Monitor water levels**

The Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) sets the water levels on the lake for recreation purposes and inspects weekly during the summer. For the past few years, the water level has been unusually high, possibly because MNR's reference point was altered. Higher water levels allow waves to erode a different band of shoreline and change the usual relationship between docks and the water – allowing large wakes to create more damage than they have in the past. The MLCA will monitor water levels and request the MNR to adjust them when they exceed normal limits.

## **3.4 Host Community Events**

### **3.4.1 MLCA Hosted Events**

The MLCA has always promoted the development of a sense of community on the lake through a variety of community events. These events have included worship services and a canoe/swim regatta since the earliest days on the lake. Other activities such as a sailing regatta, water ski clinic, Canada Day canoe and picnic, nature hikes, canoe lessons, fireworks displays and others have been added. The MLCA will continue to support the existing events and explore new events that would appeal to cottagers. These could include MLCA hosted potlucks to bring the various areas of the lake together.

### **3.4.2 Cottager Hosted Events**

The community history of the lake also includes many stories of neighbours getting together for flotillas, picnics, hikes, sing-songs and many other activities. The Allen/Stinson sing-songs have been held continuously for more than 80 years and the Ewing Musicale has a history almost as long. Sharing stories and news of such events may encourage others to host similar gatherings of neighbours. Social networking sites like Facebook provide other ways for people of similar interests to connect with each other.

### **3.4.3 Emphasize the History**

Many families have enjoyed (or will enjoy) the lake for several generations. The history of the lake creates a strong bond, a sense of community and a respect for the environment. The MLCA should promote the sharing of the Lake History by making the previous history books available and by supporting the creation of a new history book and a map of the Lakes.

## **3.5 Advocate for Legal/Regulatory Action**

### **3.5.1 Support the Provincial Ban on Cosmetic Lawn Chemicals**

As of April, 2009 the provincial government has banned the use of cosmetic lawn chemicals, particularly herbicides and pesticides. This is an important change for Muldrew Lakes as the thin soils and exposed bedrock result in rapid leeching of

these chemicals into the water. The MLCA will offer its support to ensure that these regulations are honoured.

### **3.5.2 Advocate for an Updated Zoning Bylaw**

The initial focus of the Lake Plan was on land-use planning issues to provide input into the Town of Gravenhurst Official Plan. As a result of that input, a section was added to the Official Plan providing lake specific policies for Muldrew Lakes. The essence of these policies is to:

- establish larger minimum frontages than the general provisions;
- prevent back-lot development on the peninsula;
- identify that existing crown lands will remain in public ownership;
- define conditions for the development of the two commercial properties;
- restrict uses more narrowly than the general provisions; and
- permit boathouses subject to conditions.

The existing zoning bylaws do not reflect the Official Plan standards – neither the general provisions nor the Muldrew Lakes specific sections. The Board will encourage the Town to update the zoning bylaw to reflect the Official Plan standards. In particular, there is a perceived need to regulate boathouses a need for a tree-cutting bylaw that would protect the area within 30m from the shoreline.

### **3.5.3 Provide a guide to additions/renovations of non-conforming buildings**

Many of the buildings on Muldrew Lakes were developed under less restrictive zoning controls and do not conform to the current zoning bylaw – and fewer conform to the standards of the Official Plan. As people seek to improve their properties it will be necessary to address these non-conforming buildings. The Official Plan identifies a number of criteria that should be followed but these are of limited help to residents. A guide for designing additions will be developed that emphasize the objectives of the standards and illustrates approaches that minimize the incremental impact of additions to existing non-conforming buildings.

### **3.5.4 The Town typically invites the Board to comment on applications for variance or re-zoning. The Board will provide comments based on the guideline to ensure that each application is treated consistently and fairly. Advocate for Better Environmental Support from the Town**

One of the biggest threats to our water quality is inadequate or poorly performing septic systems. The Town is responsible for administering septic system standards. The Board should consider the potential to seek a more active approach from the Town to monitoring and enforcing septic system standards.

Another impact to water quality comes from the destruction of beaver dams which allow a rush of high nutrient water into the lake. The Board should seek better dam management practices from the Town.





# Muldrew Lakes Courtesy Code

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## BOATERS

### **Watch your wake**

- Shoreline erosion is a serious problem. Boats tied to docks can be damaged. Loon nests are close to shore and chicks can be drowned by big waves. Please keep your boat either on plane (riding quickly on the surface of the water) or slow to minimize wake.
- If your boat has ballast tanks for wakeboarding, please pump them out when not wakeboarding to minimize harmful wakes.
- If you are passing smaller boats such as canoes, minimize your wake by keeping your boat on plane or going slow.

### **Keep it quiet**

- If your boat has a muffler by-pass (for off-shore use) please ensure that the mufflers are active – by-passing the muffler creates excessive noise and is disturbing to most cottagers.
- Consider upgrading to a quieter motor (such as most new 4-stroke motors).

### **Keep it clean**

- To protect our lake, ensure your boat is washed thoroughly well away from the lake before launching. Better still; leave it in dry storage for 48 hours before you launch it.
- Boat motors can last forever – but should they? If your motor is more than 10 years old it creates a lot of pollution. Consider upgrading to a new 4-stroke motor to reduce pollution.
- Do not throw garbage over-board – it can harm wildlife, it could cut a bare-foot water-skier's feet and it will only wash up on a neighbour's shore.

### **Keep it safe**

- Please avoid high speeds – our lake is very narrow and there is little margin for error in passing other boats.

Stay as far from shore as possible when you are traveling quickly – give swimmers at the shore lots of room to have fun.

## WATER SKIERS AND WAKE BOARDERS

*... and any other towing activities like barefoot skiing, kneeboarding, tubing, parasailing etc.:*

- Plan your circuit to ensure you do not enter narrow channels and you have room to turn around safely. Keep your skier and everyone else safe.
- Stay in the middle of the channel. Stop if there is congestion. Muldrew is a narrow lake. If everyone is courteous, everyone can have fun!
- Please don't start before 8:00 in the morning and finish before dusk. Your neighbours will appreciate a good night's rest.

## SWIMMERS

- Make sure you have a boat beside you if you swim away from the shore or across the lake. Make safe swimming a priority!

**NOISE** - Noise travels over water. It can spoil your neighbour's enjoyment.

- Please avoid noisy activities in the early morning (before 8:00 am) or evening (after sunset), particularly where the noise can carry over the water and on boats: playing loud music; loud parties; using power tools, hammers and construction equipment.
- The sound of children playing at the lake is not noise and should be encouraged.

**LIGHTS** - Muldrew Lakes about a 'dark sky preserve' which is designated to allow people to see the stars better.

- Minimizing night lighting on the lake helps reduce light pollution.
- Avoid bright lights shining on the water. If an outdoor light can be seen from the lake, switch to a light fixture that shields the bulb or use low wattage and low intensity bulbs.
- Neighbours across the water will appreciate being able to see the stars better.

Boaters will be able to navigate better without being blinded by shore-side lights.

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