

Lake Management Plan for Cordova Lake

(Adapted from other Lake Associations & FOCA)

Lake Plan Introduction

There is a need to recognize waterfront areas as strong shoreline communities that are separate and distinct from Settlement and Rural areas. The quality of life in these waterfront areas is directly dependent upon protecting natural and social values that are unique to these communities.

Goals of the Lake Management Plan

1. Maintain the natural shorelines and manage the ecosystem while enjoying the use of the Lake.
2. Take a proactive approach with local governments, communicating our concerns about the risks of overdevelopment. Work together to achieve these goals.
3. Discourage future overdevelopment of the Cordova Lake waterfront. Cordova Lake is relatively healthy. In order to preserve this ecosystem, we should:
 - Consider size and depth of the Lake and length of the shoreline.
 - Consider the area of natural vegetation on the shoreline that is protecting the Lake.
 - Consider the number of cottages/residences.

This document is not intended to advance the special interests of those fortunate enough to already cottage/reside on Cordova Lake. We want our lake to continue to be a place where water quality, wildlife habitat, and recreational opportunities are maintained for present and future generations.

The archive history of Cordova Lake outlines how Cordova Lake cottagers/residents have been supporting healthy lake initiatives since 1998. There are three classes of lakes, based on their aging process (1) Oligotrophic Lakes, (2) Mesotrophic Lakes, (3) Eutrophic Lakes. Cordova Lake would be considered a Mesotrophic Lake:

- Medium depth.
- Usually good for fishing; support a wide variety of fish such as walleye and bass.
- More nutrients than oligotrophic lakes, but not nearly as much as eutrophic lakes.
- Occasional algae bloom at the surface.

We vow to continue to advance plans to support healthy lake initiatives while promoting activities that support the interests of the cottagers/residents and land owners adjoining Cordova Lake.

We will continue to study and report on government plans affecting the cottagers/residents of the uses of land in the vicinity of Cordova Lake and to make representations with respect to all such matters.

We have tried to build upon these objectives and rise above our own special interests and consider the broader issues that impact the natural environment and the overall health of the local ecosystem.

The Plan includes continued Lake Stewardship providing water quality monitoring and encourages healthy lake initiatives.

Lake Planning is a process and so the production of a Lake Management Plan is only the first step in an on-going community effort to maintain and enhance the natural, social and physical environment that is the Cordova Lake experience.

The Lake Plan

This Lake Management Plan is being created to provide a legacy for future generations and enhance the spirit and quality of life for lake users. We will work to protect the Cordova Lake ecosystem and preserve its health and natural beauty and be aware of the dangers that threaten the wellbeing of the lake. Our **“Guidelines for a Healthy Lake”** demonstrates our commitment to the Plan to earn the respect and cooperation of all Cordova Lake cottagers/residents and Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments.

The Plan includes a commitment by the Cordova Lake cottagers/residents to:

- Adhere to this Lake Management Plan.
- Provide ongoing Lake Stewardship.
- Encourage cooperative protection of the lake to stop the pollution and deterioration of the natural environment in and around Cordova Lake and its vulnerable shoreline by making every effort to adhere to the following guidelines.

Guidelines for a Healthy Lake

Topic	Guidelines
<p>Maintain Your Holding Tanks/Septic System Leaking and overloaded holding tanks/septic systems are a major source of phosphorus in the lake, fuelling algae growth and causing water quality to decline (may cause Dense Blue-Green Algae Blooms).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pump your tank regularly (holding tank systems annually, septic systems every 2 to 3 years) to reduce nutrient flows into the lake. • Inspect your septic bed and surrounding area periodically for odours or puddling and, if you detect trouble, have it inspected by a professional. • Note, Dense Blue-Green Algae Blooms in the lake (water looks like green pea soup or turquoise paint) can release toxins that can be harmful to the health of both humans and animals. DO NOT swim, drink or eat fish from an area with suspected dense blue-green algal bloom. Note, boiling water will NOT remove these toxins. Report to CLCA including location (use [Contact Us] on CLCA website), so the Spills Action Centre can be notified immediately (1-800-268-6060).
<p>Be Careful with Soap/Cleaners To prevent harming wildlife and creating nutrient-induced algae blooms. Remember, what goes down the drain and into the holding tank systems or septic systems can still make its way to the lake.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the lake, soaps/cleaners should always be phosphate-free and biodegradable. • Avoid antibacterial soaps/cleaners. • There are much less harmful alternatives now, with the proliferation of products with green certifications, and the comeback of DIY cleaners, like baking soda, vinegar, and lemon juice. • We never wash/bathe in the lake. • Soapy wastewater from dishwashing and bathing should be disposed of in soil at least 60 meters from the water’s edge.
<p>Reduce or Eliminate Fertilizer Use Remember that what goes on your property goes into the lake!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About 50 per cent of rainfall rolls right over short manicured grass to the water, carrying with it harmful fertilizers (many are loaded with phosphorus) or pesticides (poisonous to aquatic life). • Don’t use chemical pesticides, herbicides or fertilizers.

<p>Maintain or rebuild the buffer zone A naturalized shoreline is generally considered the best multi-purpose approach to protecting the lake’s edge (as little as 3m wide, or as large as you would like).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mow lawns no shorter than eight centimetres high. • Maintaining or planting a buffer zone of native vegetation along your shoreline will provide biodiversity, slow erosion, provide food and shelter for fish and wildlife species and protect your property and investment. • Don’t mow right to the waterfront, a pathway can be maintained for access down to the water. • Choose native or non-invasive species for any plantings. • Minimize native tree removal, especially around the shoreline. • Best of all naturalized shorelines mean less work and more time to enjoy the lake!
<p>Aquatic Plants – Too much of a good thing? Aquatic plants play a key role in maintaining our lake’s biodiversity, preventing erosion and providing oxygen in the water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always remember to follow the guidelines for removal of aquatic native plants. • Always remember to follow the guidelines for removal of invasive aquatic plants, if it is confirmed we have some on Cordova Lake. • If you are allowed to remove aquatic native or invasive aquatic plants, always remember to remove them from the lake. • Toxic herbicides should be avoided and always require a permit.
<p>Animal-proof your home or cottage – Voracious Visitors In Ontario, numbers of Canada geese continue to increase due to suitable habitat and low predator numbers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geese prefer to eat short tender lawn grasses, and they feed where they have an open view of the water. • To discourage geese from visiting your property, allow naturally occurring vegetation along the shoreline to grow. • To be effective, a vegetative barrier needs to be 60 cm (24 inches) or more in height and dense enough to keep geese from seeing through.
<p>Animal-proof your home or cottage – Be Bear Aware Sometimes, wildlife creates a challenge when some species occur where you might not want them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To discourage bear visits, store your garbage and recycling in bear-proof dumpsters, and avoid storing garbage outside. • Garbage and recycling are to be dropped off at one of the 4 landfills (Closest = 6th Line Transfer Station. The locations and hours of operation are here: Garbage, Recycling and Waste - Havelock-Belmont-Methuen (hbmtwp.ca). • Always check with owner about composting. • Burn barbeques clean after cooking, wash and store them covered and out of the wind to minimize attracting bears. • Don’t leave pet food outside and keep meat, fish and sweet foods (including fruit) out of your household composter. • If you feed birds, be aware that hummingbird nectar, seeds and suet can attract bears.
<p>Responsible Boating (including Personal Watercraft) Many animals respond to human disruptions by altering their behaviour and location. Prevent wave damage to shorelines from boats/personal watercraft and wakes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate your boat below 10km/h whenever you are within 30 meters of the shore – it’s the law! • Obey posted speed limits and “No Wake” zones and know your boat’s wake-free speed. • Remember that operating your boat on plane creates a smaller wake than when “plowing” through the water at lower speeds.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit your speed around swimmers, wildlife (e.g., loons) and non-powered watercraft like canoes, kayaks or paddleboards. • Always follow safe refueling guidelines to avoid polluting water. • Don't throw garbage overboard. • If you're in the market for a new engine, four-strokes and direct-injection two-strokes are much cleaner than old-style two-strokes.
<p>Visiting Boaters / Before transporting your boat to another water body Zebra mussels/invasive weeds can wreck havoc when they arrive in a new lake environment, often hitchhiking on boat hulls and in bait buckets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When removing your boat from a lake, inspect the boat, trailer and all accessory equipment that has been in the water. • Remove all plant and animal material before leaving the launch. • Drain water from motor, live wells, bilge and transom wells immediately, before leaving water access area. • Before transporting your boat to another water body, wash your boat, tackle, downrigger cables, trailer, and other equipment with hot water, or spray with high-pressure water; or, let your boat dry out in the sun for at least five days.
<p>Responsible Fishing Help maintain the fish stock in the lake. by practicing catch and release.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid fishing in spawning and feeding areas near shoreline and docks. • Avoid using threatened species, such as frogs as bait. • It's illegal to release your bait or dump the contents of your bait bucket in or near the water. • Dispose of your bait at least 30 meters sway from the shore. • Where possible buy locally sourced bait. • Only use non-lead fishing tackle; and fishing line should be retrieved whenever possible.
<p>Hikers, bikers, ATV riders and other recreational users Mud on ATV's and trail equipment can harbor invasive plant seeds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observe and comply with "No Trespassing" signage. • Before you leave home: make sure your belongings are free of mud and plant debris; pack cleaning tools and supplies for your trip (brush or broom etc.). • Before you leave the trail or site: inspect your pets, belongings, boots, clothing and equipment; remove any mud or plant debris/weed seeds and dispose of them in the trash.
<p>Campers / Campfires Campfires are enjoyed safely.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the status of Forest Fire danger signs posted on area roads. • Refrain from moving any firewood to prevent the spread of pests. • Daytime burning is banned in the summer, and fires should never be set when windy. • Don't leave your fire unattended. • Keep a water source handy. • Douse your fire thoroughly when finished. • Inspect clothing and equipment for seeds, insects, etc. before leaving your camping area.
<p>Light Pollution Light pollution can negatively affect foraging, hunting and</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep light impacts to a minimum at night, using illumination where and when you really need it. • Consider motion detectors instead of dusk-to-dawn fixtures.

<p>reproductive behaviours of birds and animals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Take Back the Night” and install lights directed downwards and deflected away from adjacent properties and from the lake itself. • Use amber “bug lights” – not white light. Amber will reduce the impact of glare and will also attract fewer mosquitoes. • Use lower wattage lamps. • Turn off your outdoor lights when you don’t want to have any visitors, when you go to bed and certainly when you are away.
<p>Noise Pollution We have all chosen to cottage or live at the lake because of the natural beauty and tranquility. Be discreet – noise carries over water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaf blowers, power mowers, power washers, loud music, fireworks, and even motorized water craft all add to noise pollution at the lake. • We all enjoy relaxing and entertaining outdoors during the nice weather. • Consider your fellow cottagers and limit the use of “noise polluters”.
<p>Protecting Water Sources Even healthy lakes and groundwater sources can harbour harmful bacteria (e.g., E. Coli) and parasites that can make you sick or worse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test treated drinking water for bacteria at least three times a year, and after any major plumbing work. • Practice water conservation inside and outside your cottage. • CLCA tests water quality of the lake in the Spring/Fall through the Ontario Lake Partnering Program.