

**Sturgeon Lake Management Planning within the City of Kawartha Lakes:
Developing the partnership and project plan**

Meeting Minutes

*March 26, 2010, 1000-1400
Hosted by Kawartha Conservation*

List of Attendees:

Pat Thurston (Kawartha Protect Our Water - KPOW)
Sharon King (Kawartha Protect Our Water - KPOW)
Monica Birden (Kawartha Protect Our Water - KPOW)
Chris Appleton (Sturgeon Point Association - SPA)
Victor Isbrucker (Sturgeon Point Association - SPA)
Steve Thompson (Sir Sandford Fleming College - SSFC)
Paul Frost (Trent University - Trent)
Shaun Watmough (Trent University - Trent)
Mike Stedman (Kawartha Lake Stewards Association - KLSA)
Kathleen MacKenzie (Kawartha Lake Stewards Association - KLSA)
Douglas Erlandson (Balsam Lake Association - BLA)
Dave Conroy (Gamiing Nature Centre)
Erin Edwards (Gamiing Nature Centre)
Dave Kerr (City of Kawartha Lakes - CKL)
Don Barkey (City of Kawartha Lakes - CKL)
Kelly Maloney (City of Kawartha Lakes - CKL)
Dave Copplestone (Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters - OFAH)
Rob Messervey (Kawartha Conservation - KRCA)
Dave Pridham (Kawartha Conservation - KRCA) - Chair
Rob Stavinga (Kawartha Conservation - KRCA)
Alex Shulyarenko (Kawartha Conservation - KRCA)
Brett Tregunno (Kawartha Conservation - KRCA)

Regrets:

Barb Elliot (Sir Sanford Fleming College)
Mary Lou MacLean (Sir Sanford Fleming College)
Rod Martin (Kawartha Lake Stewards Association)
Beth Cockburn (Trent-Severn Waterway)
Michael Gibbs (Lakeland Alliance)
Doug van Hemessen (Victoria Land and Water Stewardship Council)
Jennifer Winters (Ontario Ministry of the Environment)
Paul Reeds (City of Kawartha Lakes, Agricultural Advisory Committee, Chair)

Opening Remarks - Rob Messervey

- Welcomed attendees and provided context for meeting.

Roundtable Introductions - All Attendees

Overview of Lake Scugog Environmental Management Plan (LSEMP) - Dave Pridham

- Concept of multi-stakeholder approach is relatively new; wouldn't have occurred 30 years ago.
- Lake Scugog brings in an estimated \$10-15 million of economic benefits within a regional context. Difficult to obtain any official estimate of the socio-economic value of the lake.
- Provided a summary of issues affecting water quality.
- Confirmed scope of study is largely based on identifying quantities and sources of nutrient inputs into the lake.
- Presented results of phosphorous loading sources.
- Outlined the six strategies of LSEMP.
- Plan/science/funding connection was emphasized.
- Questions from the presentation were addressed. Alex Shulyarenko explained, in particular, how we calculated atmospheric deposition and how we distinguished sources of phosphorous loading.

Introduction to the Sturgeon Lake Management Plan and Identification of Key Issues - roundtable

Gamiing:

- Concerned about the long-term viability of the Kawartha Lakes.
- Community involvement is important. Individuals tend to be focused on specific issues only (e.g., aquatic plants).

KPOW:

- Sturgeon Lake is a unique lake in the Kawarthas because of historic land uses (e.g., PCB's, septic systems, Lindsay Ops landfill testing in River, sewage treatment plants, heavy metal contamination).
- More testing would certainly be beneficial.
- Public education around lake issues is important.

KLSA:

- Stormwater and treatment management is also a concern.
- Linking decision-making to policy is important (i.e., through councils, official plans, by-laws, etc.).
- High *E. coli* counts on the lake are also an issue (e.g., unusual counts for 3 years in some sites).

CKL:

- Current landfills are an improvement; past practices are a significant issue.
- Municipalities need facts in order to prioritize actions.

- Would support sampling to reduce uncertainty to support and initiate decisions.
- CKL can provide technical information where appropriate.
- Participation is needed from the Victoria Stewardship Council, Federation of Agriculture, Agriculture Advisory Committee.
- The need to clarify results in simple language (e.g., nutrients and loading) is important.

Trent:

- Assessment report is likely needed (i.e., to assess the current state of the lake).
- The notion of harmful algal blooms might not be an issue in Sturgeon Lake. To our knowledge, the lake is not in a terrible state, as there are only a few places with excessive algae and low dissolved oxygen.
- We can look to Europe to provide examples (e.g., studying nutrients in shallow lakes in Denmark, found that there is no clear, linear cause-and-effect between nutrient reduction and immediate reduction in plant growth).
- Need to understand internal dynamics to provide insight into 'where Kawartha Lakes are going'.
- Management issues need to be based on sound science to reduce uncertainty and target easy options.
- Modeling would be helpful to extrapolate from existing known sources to a meaningful endpoint.

SPA:

- Algae was a prominent issue in 1960's.
- Brought attention to a study completed in 1971 on water quality in Sturgeon Lake.
- From a citizens point of view, management actions need to be specific (i.e., what can I as a cottager do?).
- Communication with other lake groups (ie., sharing experiences, upstream connection, etc.) is extremely important.

BLA:

- BLA is very interested in a Balsam Lake Environmental Management Plan but fully understands why the focus is on Sturgeon Lake.
- In the interim, the BLA would like to ensure that volunteer work (water testing etc.) is collecting data that will be of use when the focus switches to Balsam Lake. This approach could shorten the planning cycle for future Lake Environmental Management Plans.
- Need to establish sampling protocols to ensure data is useable.
- Need to ensure that sampling locations are appropriate
- There are lots of volunteers available but their efforts need to be appropriately focused.
- Volunteer work on other lakes could take the lead from more formal activities undertaken on Sturgeon Lake.
- Monitoring leading to feedback is important for landowners.

OFAH:

- What specific landowners can do to 'make a difference' is important.

SSFC:

- College has been active in and around the lakes since the 1970's.

- Identifying hotspots for management is critical.
- Can bring wastewater treatment options to the 'table'.
- SSFC has a captive labour force, but must keep in mind that data is generally collected as an educational exercise / under 'training' conditions.
- There are many ways in which the college can contribute.

General remarks:

- Considerable data has been collected on Sturgeon Lake with respect to water quality.
- It is prudent to collate this data and pinpoint hotspots.
- Who can do what? In what timeframe?
- We need to figure out what has been done on the lake in terms of data collection.

Project Oversight and Partnership Development - Rob Messervey

- Presented DRAFT Terms of Reference for Sturgeon Lake Management Plan.
- Support and approval has been endorsed, in principle, by KRCA Board of Directors.
- Project scope will be broader focus than LSEMP (i.e. examining watershed health, biotic parameters, natural heritage, sustainability, etc.).
- The Terms of Reference outlines a series of very preliminary objectives (i.e., who could lead certain aspects or be involved, proposed governance model, etc.).
- The document needs further review and stakeholder input.

General Remarks with respect to Terms of Reference:

- What is the role of each committee (i.e., does one report to the other?). Why 2 committees? Fuzzy lines and gaps will result?
- It was expressed that the upper committee should not be the 'steering committee'; that should be the role of the lake based group; to be in charge of the project.
- It might be necessary for a 'higher level group', to ensure accountability at a more political level.
- The proposed two committee structure should not be hierarchical but more parallel.
- Many attendees expressed the need to have specific responsibilities outlined for each organization.
- This meeting is missing other volunteer organizations that are present and/or active in or around the lake.
- The steering committee can't possibly have representation from all groups. The steering committee can quickly become too large, making decision-making difficult.
- Concern expressed with having too many government or agency representatives on the Steering Committee.
- Committee can't be biased by one "driver" that is always brought up time-and-time again.
- Perhaps separate "subcommittees" are needed (e.g., water quality/monitoring subgroup).
- There is an expectation that KRCA will lead the entire project. Rob Messervey expressed that KRCA is ultimately accountable for the project, but we need peer review, and have the responsibility to work with partners and key stakeholders.
- An approach is needed to "approach individual organizations" to obtain support and participation in the planning process.

What other key groups are missing? - Rob Messervey

- Source Water Protection committee? (e.g., Tier 2 on Scugog River) – perhaps, but there are liaisons within KRCA and KPOW, so likely not necessary.
- Other lake-based associations.
- “Commercial” user groups (tourism, agriculture, businesses, etc.) need to be at the table.
- Trent-Severn Waterway

Coordinating Water Quality Sampling and Bio-Monitoring - Alex Shulyarenko and Brett Tregunno

Alex Shulyarenko

- A map was prepared for the meeting that illustrates the current sampling points of KRCA (e.g., the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network, Kawartha Water Watch, etc.), proposed monitoring sites for the Sturgeon Lake planning process, as well as the existing Lake Partner Program sites.
- To move ahead with a coordinated sampling program, must have details pertaining to other sampling programs.

Who is sampling what on the lake?

- KLSA – sampling for the LPP for phosphorous (3 sites), Ecoli as well (approx 8 sites).
- SSFC – 1 site on the Scugog River.
- CKL – reports and data do exist on areas such as: municipal intakes, water treatment plants, landfills, etc.

Brett Tregunno

- Many biological protocols are available for volunteers, ranging from expensive to inexpensive, from higher expertise to low expertise including Benthic macroinvertebrate sampling, Marsh Monitoring, and Check Your Watershed Day.
- The KLSA indicated that they may have several cottage / shoreline residents who would be interested in volunteering for one of these activities.

General comments with respect to sampling:

- What should we be most concerned with? We need to define.
- Laboratory analysis for heavy metals, PCB's, etc is very expensive – funding will be an issue.
- We must define what our objectives are for management.
- Many variable are uncontrollable, but we need to decide specific objectives.
- We need to develop baseline data (i.e., where are we going? where have we been? etc.).
- Many organization expressed that KRCA “needs to tell us” what they want us to do so organizations can find support to conduct the work.
- Standardized protocols are essential to make decisions.

Summary and wrap-up - Rob Messervey

Next Steps:

1. Each organization to provide Dave Pridham with comments with respect to the draft Terms of Reference (please send comments via email: dpriham@kawarthaconservation.com).

2. KRCA to present revised Terms of Reference to the KRCA Board of Directors, and City of Kawartha Lakes Environmental Advisory Committee and Agricultural Advisory Board for review and adoption.
3. Subsequent meetings will be identified and organized by KRCA upon the completion of item (2).