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# PUBLIC BEACH – SHORELINE NATURALIZATION



The Haliburton Lake Cottagers' Association is initiating a Shoreline Naturalization Project for the Public Beach, with funding support from the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners' Association's (CHA) Shoreline Improvement Project

## Goal

The goal of the Haliburton Lake Cottagers' Association's (HLCA) shoreline naturalization plan is to protect the shoreline of our Public Beach and improve the water quality of Haliburton Lake.

## How

The shoreline naturalization plan involves planting a ribbon of native vegetation along the shoreline of the Public Beach. In addition, the naturally growing grasses and plants surrounding the shoreline will not be mowed, to encourage further growth.

The initial phase of planting of this vegetation is scheduled for the Fall 2015. We envision this to be a two to three year project.

## Benefits

Restoring the natural vegetation along the shoreline will benefit the Public Beach and beach goers in the following ways:

- Protect water quality by reducing the contaminants that reach the lake
- Provide food and wildlife habitats for native species
- Deter Canada Geese from landing, feeding and defecating on the grass
- Reduce soil erosion
- Provide flood control and storm water management<sup>1</sup>



## How It Works

### Water Quality

A dense strip of native vegetation along the shoreline will provide an essential buffer to filter out the sediment, bacteria and pollutants often found in snow and rain runoff, before it reaches the water.<sup>2</sup>

### Wildlife Habitats and Food

The plants that will make up the shoreline buffer will provide habitats for many species of birds. Furthermore the berries and flowers on these plants will provide an excellent food source for these birds as well as butterflies and dragon flies.<sup>2</sup>

### Canada Geese

Canada geese prefer wide-open grassy areas with high visibility to keep a lookout for predators. For this reason, planting a line of vegetation along the shoreline will interrupt the geese's line of sight, access to grass and escape route to water, making the beach less appealing to them.<sup>3</sup>

### Erosion

The roots of the planted vegetation will hold the shoreline soil together and protect it against waves, boat wakes and stormwater.<sup>2</sup>

### Flood Control

The plants will slow the velocity of runoff water, allowing for more water uptake by the soil. This will help prevent flooding and will refill the groundwater supply at the beach.<sup>2</sup>

## Beach Access and Visibility

The shoreline design will incorporate access points to the beach. These access points will have to be carefully designed to ensure Canada Geese do not see it as an access point to the grass. The ribbon of native vegetation will ultimately be up to 6 feet deep to function properly, the height of this vegetation will purposely be kept as low as possible to permit line of sight to the lake.

## Park Trees

As a part of the shoreline work, additional young trees will be added to the park area. These trees are replacements for the mature trees on the property, but also create a visible barrier against the potential of Canada Geese landing in open grass areas.

## For Your Own Cottage

If you are interested in naturalizing the shoreline at your own cottage, please read these tips below.

### Native Planting

When selecting vegetation to plant along your shoreline, it is important to choose native species, such as these listed below:

- Bayberry
- Dogwood
- Highbush Cranberry
- Ninebark
- Pussy Willow
- Speckled Alder
- Sumac
- Sweet Gale<sup>4,5</sup>

### Less Frequent Lawn Mowing

By allowing your grass to grow long, natural occurring native plant species will also begin to grow. You can supplement this growth by spreading native wildflower seeds, available at garden stores.<sup>6</sup>

### Reduce Shoreline Slope

Soften any hard, sloping surfaces on your shoreline to prevent soil erosion and slow runoff.<sup>7</sup>

## Future Funding

Initial funding for this shoreline naturalization project has been given to the HLCA by CHA and must be spent by November 2015. The CHA provides grants, as part of their Shoreline Improvement Project, to a number of demonstration sites to showcase shoreline naturalization to improve lake water quality.<sup>8</sup> The Public Beach was chosen as one of these demonstration sites for the 2015 year. The HLCA will continue to look for funding sources to complete the work which will also include Dysart plus augmented funding from the HLCA.

## How To Get Involved

The HLCA will be organizing a volunteer planting day in the Fall 2015, a call will be put out for volunteers, stay tuned!

1. Kawartha Conservation. On the Shoreline. Retrieved from: <http://kawarthaconservation.com/stewardship/on-the-shore>

2. The District of Muskoka Planning and Economic Development Department (2003). Shoreline Vegetative Buffers. Retrieved from: <http://www.cohpoa.org/Muskoka%20Shoreline%20Vegetation%20Buffers.pdf>

3. Environment Canada (2010). Canada and Cackling Geese: Management and Population Control in Southern Canada. Retrieved from: [http://www.ec.gc.ca/mbc-com/6D2B893B-C671-41AF-8439-713305DB384C/Handbook\\_Canada\\_Cackling\\_Geese\\_e11.pdf](http://www.ec.gc.ca/mbc-com/6D2B893B-C671-41AF-8439-713305DB384C/Handbook_Canada_Cackling_Geese_e11.pdf)

4. Ontario Invasive Plant Council (2011). Grow Me Instead: Beautiful Non-Invasive Plants for your Garden. Retrieved from: <http://cohpoa.org/Non-Invasive%20Plant%20Alternatives.pdf>

5. Haliburton County Master Gardeners. Shoreline Restoration: Using Native Plants. Retrieved from: <http://cohpoa.org/Native%20Trees,%20Shrubs%20and%20Plants%20for%20Shoreline.pdf>

6. Muskoka Watershed Council (2013). Shoreline Vegetative Buffers. Retrieved from: <http://www.muskokawatershed.org/wp-content/uploads/ShorelineVegetativeBuffers-Jan2013.pdf>

7. Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners' Associations. Shoreline Resources. Retrieved from: <http://cohpoa.org/Slope%20-%20how%20to%20amend.pdf>

8. Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners' Associations. The Shoreline Improvement Project. Retrieved from: <http://cohpoa.org/CHA%20Shoreline%20Project.htm>