

Pike Lake Stewardship Handbook 2026



A PRACTICAL
GUIDE FOR
RESIDENTS,
COTTAGERS
AND VISITORS



Appreciation



Land Acknowledgement

Pike Lake sits on the traditional, unceded territory of the Omàmiwinini (Algonquin) Peoples. The area is recognised as part of the Algonquin Anishinaabe People ancestral legacy within the Tay River watershed and Lanark County. As a lake community, we recognise our shared responsibility to respect the land, protect water quality, and steward the lake and its ecosystems for future generations. We are committed to fostering the conservation and careful stewardship of these lakes and their immediate surroundings.

Recognition

The report credits Pike Lake volunteers, and public information gathered from organizations and government agencies including the Ontario Ministries of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and Natural Resources, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, Watersheds Canada, Ontario Association of Hunters and Anglers, Ducks Unlimited, Ontario Invasive Species Centre, Ottawa Riverkeepers, Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association and the Tay Valley Township. Any errors or misapplication of information is the sole responsibility of the authors.

Executive Summary

PIKE LAKE STEWARDSHIP HANDBOOK 2026



Pike Lake is worth protecting and this handbook shows you how. Developed by the Pike Lake Community Association and grounded in science from conservation authorities, provincial agencies, and lake-stewardship organisations, it's a practical guide with clear, actionable steps. Whether you're a longtime resident or seasonal cottager, you'll find proven actions to keep our lake and shoreline healthy, thriving, and enjoyable for generations to come.

This handbook aligns with provincial, conservation-authority, and municipal requirements and reflects priorities identified in the 2025 community survey, concerns that were also highlighted in 2011 and 2016. These issues are interconnected: when water quality declines, fish and wildlife suffer; when invasive species arrive, recreation and property enjoyment are affected. Addressing one issue, such as water quality, helps protect the others.

What Matters Most to Residents and Cottage Owners

Seventy (70) community association members responded, representing a great mix of long-time and newer cottage residents. Based on how participants ranked the issues, here are the top five priorities respondents identified:

- Maintaining good water quality (79%)
- Protecting loons, waterfowl, and wildlife (89%)
- Preventing invasive species such as Eurasian Milfoil, Zebra Mussels and algal blooms (84%)
- Supporting healthy fisheries (73%)
- Coping with changing water levels (67%)

QUICK START : 5 ACTIONS YOU CAN DO THIS SEASON

Don't wait. Here's what to prioritise
right now to protect Pike Lake:

1. Pump Your Septic System

Every 3–5 years prevents phosphorus from entering the lake and reduces algae risk.
Impact: Water Quality, Fisheries, Wildlife

3. Clean–Drain–Dry Your Boat

After every use, before entering another waterbody. Prevents spread of invasive species. Impact: Invasive Species, Fisheries

5. Monitor and Report Changes

Watch for algae blooms, invasive plants, or unusual wildlife behaviour. Early reporting helps protect the lake. Impact: Water Quality, Invasive Species

2. Create a Natural Shoreline Buffer

Keep at least 75% of your shoreline a natural vegetation buffer. Allow native plants to grow, retain trees, rocks and natural drainage. Impact: cleaner water, shoreline stability, fisheries and biodiversity

4. Slow Down Near Shore

Stay under 10 km/h within 30 m of shore. Prevents erosion and protects fish habitat. Impact: Shoreline Stability, Wildlife, Fisheries

One action, multiple benefits.

Small actions taken by many residents create large cumulative impact on lake health. For full details on each action and more, see the complete guide below!

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WHY STEWARDSHIP MATTERS?

A Shared Responsibility for a Healthy Pike Lake

Pike Lake is more than just a place for relaxation and recreation—it's a wonderful living ecosystem that supports people, plants, and wildlife. The lake water, quiet bays, and healthy fish populations we enjoy depend on a delicate balance between natural processes and human activity.

Everything that happens on the land around Pike Lake eventually affects the lake itself. Rain and snowmelt move across forests, wetlands, roads, and shorelines, carrying water, and anything dissolved or suspended in it, into streams and wetlands that flow into Pike Lake. Understanding the watershed helps us make everyday choices that protect water quality, fish habitat, and the long-term health of the lake.



When nutrients, pollutants, or invasive species enter the water, that balance can quickly tip, often with negative consequences for the natural environment. Invasive species, shoreline erosion, and changes in wildlife are signs that a lake can be under stress. The good news is that these negative consequences are preventable. What each of us does on our property, with our boats, and in our daily routines has a direct impact on the lake's health.

What Is A Lake Plan?

A Lake Plan

A lake plan is a community-made action document that helps residents and cottage owners understand and protect everything they value about their lake: clean water, peaceful surroundings, safe swimming, good fishing, and beautiful views. It brings together local knowledge and experience, scientific data, and shared priorities to guide how to care for the lake now and in the future.

By identifying goals and outlining clear actions, a lake plan helps prevent common problems like water pollution, invasive species, and developmental pressures, while maintaining the natural and social qualities that make cottage life so special.

A healthy Pike lake means:



Clean water for swimming, boating, and wildlife.



Strong and healthy fish populations and safe, natural habitats.



Resilient shorelines that can tolerate drought and flooding.



Thriving loons, ducks, turtles, fisheries and other wildlife.

The Pike Lake Watershed

Introducing Pike Lake

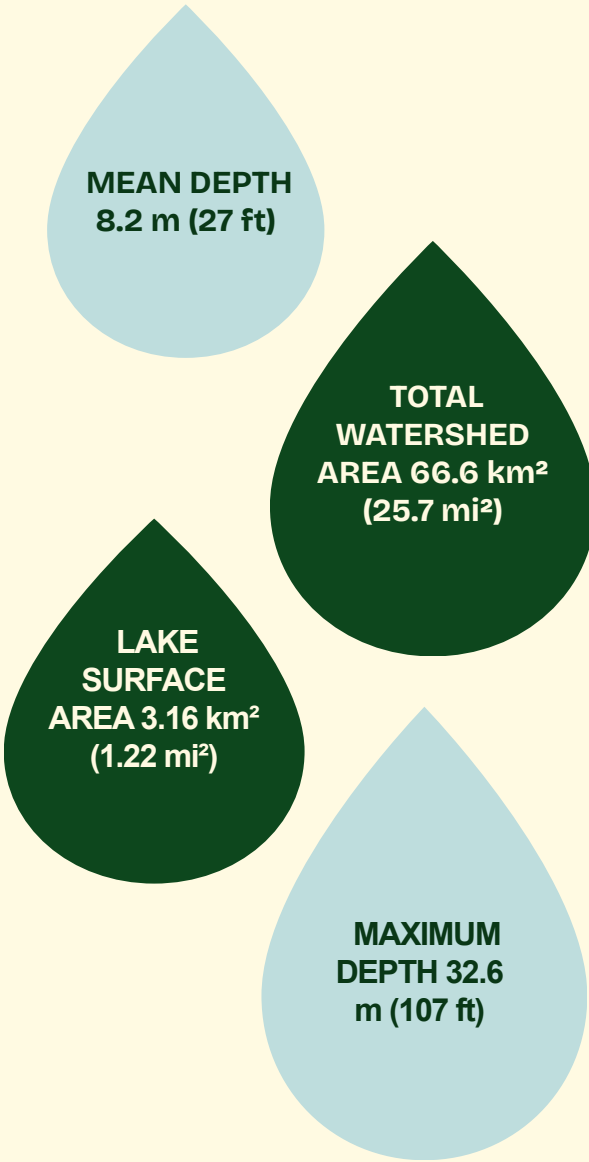
Pike Lake is part of the Tay River Watershed which ultimately connects with the Rideau River basin, which in turn is integrated with the Rideau Canal waterway.

The Pike Lake watershed is one of 14 sub-watersheds within the Tay River system and includes all land and waterbodies that drain into Pike Lake, including Crosby Lake, Little Crosby Lake, plus permanent and intermittent streams, and numerous wetlands. A significant portion of the Crosby Lake Creek Wetland Complex, which is provincially significant, lies within the watershed; what happens in this wetland directly influences the clarity and health of Pike Lake.

The watershed includes the Stanleyville Waste Disposal Site (currently operating as a waste transfer station), located near a wetland and small tributary system that eventually reaches Pike Lake at Donnelly Bay.

Land cover is dominated by mixed forest, with smaller areas of agriculture, wetlands, exposed bedrock, and low-density rural development.

Pike Lake Stats



MEAN DEPTH
8.2 m (27 ft)

TOTAL WATERSHED AREA 66.6 km²
(25.7 mi²)

LAKE SURFACE AREA 3.16 km²
(1.22 mi²)

MAXIMUM DEPTH 32.6 m (107 ft)

The Pike Lake Watershed

Why Wetlands Matter

The Crosby Lake Creek Wetland Complex is designated a provincially significant wetland by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), and plays a key role in protecting Pike Lake's water quality.

The wetland includes Crosby Lake, Little Crosby Lake, and is an interconnected system of marshes and swamps and adjacent wetland areas that feed into the creek system draining toward Pike Lake's basin. It acts as a natural filter, slowing runoff, trapping sediment, and absorbing nutrients like phosphorus before water moves downstream toward Pike Lake. This helps reduce algae growth, stabilise water levels, and support healthy fish and wildlife habitat for our lake.

Pike Lake Stats

Islands 25
Crown land; 1
Privately
owned

Spans Lanark
County & Leeds
and Grenville
County, Tay
Valley Township
& Rideau Lakes
Township

Shoreline
Typical Canadian
Shield lake:
Steep, rocky
shores, thin soils,
localised wetland
bays

Water outlet:
Stop-log
control, Ontario
Ministry of
Natural
Resources and
Forestry

Stewardship Implications

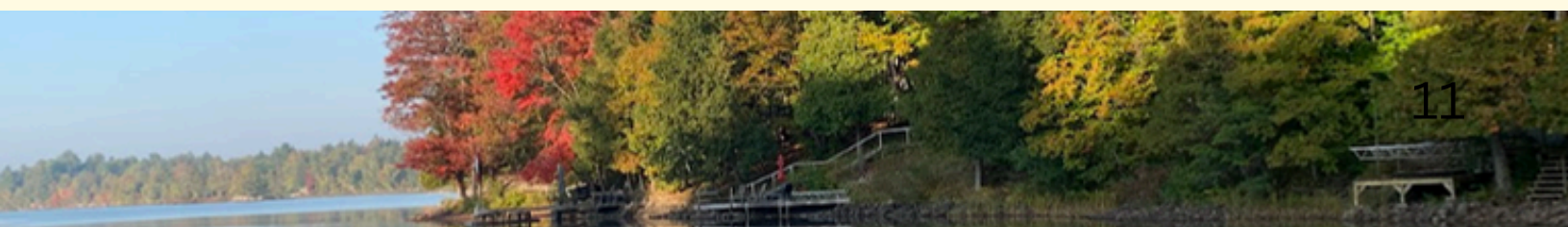
Did You Know?

The land around Pike Lake sits on very old rock that formed deep underground billions of years ago. This hard bedrock is part of what's known as the Canadian Shield and is common across much of eastern Ontario. Most of the lake is underlain by Precambrian bedrock such as granite and gneiss. A small portion of the lake watershed's southeastern tip is composed of younger sedimentary rocks such as limestone, shale and sandstone. These layers were created approximately 450 to 470 millions of years ago when the area was covered by warm, shallow seas.

About 25,000 years ago during the last Ice Age, huge glaciers covered the Perth region. As the ice slowly moved across the land, it scraped and shaped the ground beneath it. When the glaciers melted about 10,000 years ago, water filled the low areas they left behind, forming lakes like Pike Lake.

What Does This Mean For Us As Stewards?

Because of this long history, Pike Lake has gently rolling topography, rocky and uneven shorelines in some areas, shallow bays and wetlands, and fairly thin soils close to the water. As the lake sits directly on hard bedrock with limited soil, it is more sensitive to disturbance, hence natural shoreline vegetation plays an important role in protecting water quality and preventing erosion. As a result, the lake is naturally low in nutrients, and responds quickly to environmental changes on the land and shorelines. Nearshore areas can be especially vulnerable to disturbance and erosion.



ONE ACTION, MULTIPLE BENEFITS

The power of lake stewardship: one action solves multiple problems simultaneously.

Many of your actions protect water quality, wildlife, fish habitat, and shoreline stability at the same time. Understanding these connections helps you prioritise what matters most and see the real impact of your choices.

Natural Shoreline Buffer (75% of shoreline)

✓ Filters 90% of nutrients from runoff (Water Quality) ✓ Provides nesting and feeding habitat (Wildlife) ✓ Creates fish spawning areas (Fisheries) ✓ Stabilises banks against erosion (Shoreline Stability)

Impact Score: 4 priorities protected

Slow Down Near Shore (under 10 km/h within 30 m)

✓ Prevents wave erosion (Shoreline Stability) ✓ Reduces disturbance to nesting birds and turtles (Wildlife) ✓ Protects fish spawning habitat (Fisheries)

Impact Score: 3 priorities protected

Pump Septic System Every 3–5 Years

✓ Prevents phosphorus and e-coli entering lake (Water Quality) ✓ Reduces algae blooms that harm fish (Fisheries) ✓ Maintains habitat for wildlife (Wildlife)

Impact Score: 3 priorities protected

Clean–Drain–Dry Boats & Equipment

✓ Prevents invasive species spread (Invasive Species Prevention) ✓ Protects native fish populations (Fisheries) ✓ Maintains water quality and clarity (Water Quality)

Impact Score: 3 priorities protected

Pro Tip! Focus on the highest-impact actions first. A natural shoreline buffer is one of the most powerful things you can do, it's like giving your lake four different kinds of medicine at once.

KEEPING OUR LAKE CLEAN

A DETAILED GUIDE.

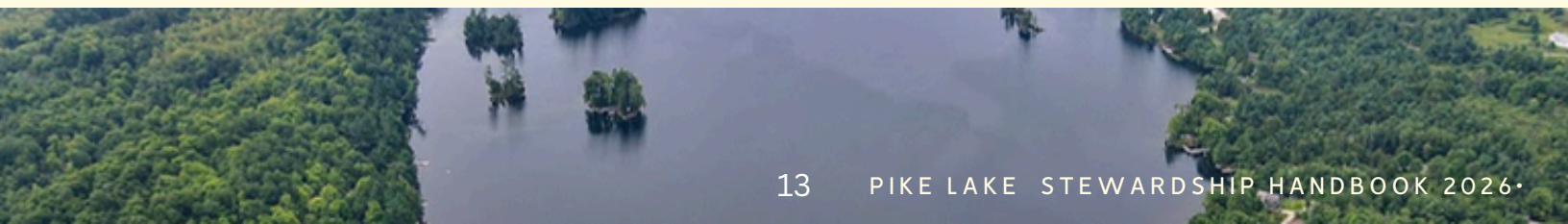
Why It Matters

Clean water supports swimming, fishing, boating, and wildlife. Excess nutrients, sediment, and pollutants contribute to algae blooms, reduced water clarity, and loss of fish habitat. Shoreline buffers, septic care, and responsible use are the most effective first-line defences.

Good water quality isn't just about the environment, it also directly affects cottage property values. Research highlighted by the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) through Ontario's Lake Partner Program shows that clearer water is linked to higher shoreline property values.

Pike Lake Water Quality

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) monitors Pike Lake every year. Over the past 20 years, the lake has remained fairly stable, with some natural ups and downs such as increased algae growth, higher phosphorus levels and reduced water quality. These occurrences were usually related to wet springs, when more nutrients wash into the lake from surrounding land or to hotter summers concentrating nutrient levels. Importantly, these higher readings have been temporary spikes and are not part of a steady decline. However, it shows how sensitive our lake is and how quickly it responds to runoff and shoreline disturbance. Because the lake already has moderate nutrient levels, additional inputs from septic systems, lawn fertilisers, soil erosion, or shoreline clearing can quickly affect water quality.



Protecting Pike Lake: Maintaining Good Water Quality

A DETAILED GUIDE

Property Value Impact

In one widely cited study, each one-foot increase in water clarity was associated with roughly a 2% increase in property value.

So ensuring good water quality can protect both your enjoyment and your investment.

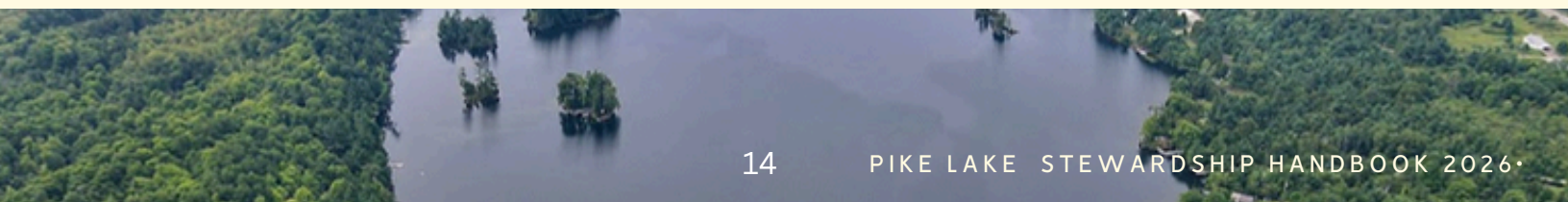
The Long-Term Water Quality Trend Shows:

- ✓ Continued sensitivity to runoff and shoreline disturbance
- ✓ Natural year-to-year variation
- ✓ No clear overall deterioration

Summer 2025 Water Quality Results

Results from summer 2025 water quality testing show that the lake continues to meet Ontario guidelines for recreational use and supports a healthy aquatic ecosystem. Bacteria levels were very low, well within provincial limits, meaning the lake remains safe for swimming, paddling, and other water activities.

Nutrient levels, including phosphorus, were within the range expected for a healthy lake. One sample showed a slightly higher phosphorus reading, but this appears to be occasional rather than a long-term concern and reflects the level 3 low water advisory issued in August. Similar severe dry conditions and low-water periods last occurred in 2012 and 2016.



YOUR ACTION PLAN: REDUCE NUTRIENT POLLUTION

Why It Matters

Excess nutrients (especially phosphorus) fuel algae blooms, reduce water clarity, and harm fish and other aquatic life. Sediment runoff clouds the water, smothers spawning areas and aquatic habitat, and carries additional nutrients into the lake. The good news is that many sources of pollution originate right on our properties—from septic systems, fertilizers, shoreline alterations and stormwater runoff—which means we have the power to make a difference.

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Pump and Inspect Septic Systems Every 3–5 Years

Why: Septic systems are the largest human-caused source of phosphorus in inland lakes. Poorly maintained systems degrade quickly, leaching nutrients into groundwater and eventually the lake.

How: Contact a licensed septic service. Request a full inspection and pumping. Keep records.

Benefit: Reduces algae, protects fish, prevents erosion.



Use Phosphate-Free Soaps and Detergents

Why: Phosphates act as fertiliser in water. Even small amounts accumulate over time. Standard cleaning products often contain them.

How: Look for "phosphate-free" on labels. Many are readily available and cost the same as standard products.

Benefit: Protects water quality and aquatic life.

YOUR ACTION PLAN: REDUCE NUTRIENT POLLUTION

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Use Permeable Surfaces and Redirect Runoff

Why: Hard surfaces (concrete, asphalt) rush water downhill, eroding banks and carrying sediment/pollution into the lake. Permeable surfaces and rain gardens slow infiltration.

How: Replace hard surfaces with permeable alternatives (gravel, wood chips). Install rain barrels or gardens to capture runoff. Extend downspouts 1–2 metres away and slope ground toward water.

Benefit: Prevents erosion and nutrient loading.



Avoid Chemicals That Harm Aquatic Life

Why: Pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals persist in water and bioaccumulate in fish and wildlife. Some are toxic at very low concentrations.

How: Replace chemical weed/pest control with manual removal, netting, or native planting. If chemicals are necessary, apply carefully away from water and never before rain.

Benefit: Protects fish and wildlife.



Avoid Fertilisers Near the Lake

Why: Nitrogen and phosphorus in fertilisers wash into the lake with rain and snowmelt. This is especially problematic on sloped properties.

How: Use no-fertiliser approaches: plant native species (they need less feeding), mulch grass clippings, compost yard waste. If you must fertilise, do it far from the water and never before rain.

Benefit: Lowers nutrient runoff, supports clear water, reduces invasive species risk.



Here's What Science Says!

- Stormwater solutions (rain gardens, rain barrels, permeable surfaces) slow and filter runoff, reducing nutrient loads by up to 70%.
- A single malfunctioning septic system can contribute as much phosphorus to a lake as 100 homes with functioning systems.
- Runoff from just 1 hectare of developed land can supply enough phosphorus to feed algae blooms affecting 100 hectares of lake.

YOUR ACTION PLAN - KEEP SHORELINES NATURAL

Why It Matters

Your shoreline is your lake's first line of defence. Natural shorelines filter runoff, stabilise banks, prevent erosion, and provide critical habitat for fish, birds, turtles, and insects. Hard structures (seawalls, docks) often do the opposite—they shift erosion to neighbours and damage habitat.

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Maintain a 75% Natural Vegetation Buffer

Why: Acts like a kidney, filtering nutrients and sediment before they reach the water. It provides shade (keeping water cool) and food for aquatic life.

How: Keep trees, shrubs, and grasses along the shoreline naturally. Don't mow to the water's edge. Plant native species to fill gaps.

Benefit: Filters nutrients, stabilises soil, supports fish and wildlife, moderates water temperature.



Reduce Lawn Area Near the Water

Why: Lawns require fertiliser, are mowed to the shoreline (destabilising banks), and provide no habitat. Mowing to water is highly erosion-prone.

How: Stop mowing within 5 metres of water. Let native grasses and wildflowers grow. Mow once yearly (late summer) for a neater look.

Benefit: Prevents erosion, protects nesting areas for birds and turtles, reduces fertiliser runoff.

YOUR ACTION PLAN - KEEP SHORELINES NATURAL

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Plant Native Shrubs, Grasses, and Trees

Why: Native plants are adapted to local soil and water conditions, need less maintenance and fertiliser, and provide the best habitat. Non-natives often don't support local wildlife.

How: Consult a native plant guide. Plant in groups (shrubs near ground, small trees behind). RVCA's Shoreline Naturalization program offers subsidised advice, planting assistance (up to 90% cost coverage)

Benefit: Improves habitat, buffers runoff, increases biodiversity.



Retain Mature Trees, Logs, Rocks, and Natural Features

Why: Mature trees stabilise banks with deep roots. Fallen logs provide habitat for fish, turtles, and insects. Rocks slow water and prevent erosion. These "messy" natural features are more valuable than you think.

How: Leave fallen logs in place. Don't remove rocks or create hard surfaces. Protect mature trees during shoreline work.

Benefit: Stabilises shoreline, provides fish and wildlife habitat, absorbs wave energy.



Leave Non-Invasive Aquatic Plants in Place

Why: Native aquatic plants (water lilies, pondweeds, rushes) filter water, provide spawning habitat, and slow waves. Many mistakenly remove all as "weeds," worsening quality.

How: Leave native plants; only remove invasive species (Eurasian water milfoil, curly-leaf pondweed). Refer to invasive species guide, page 27).

Benefit: Supports fish habitat, filters nutrients, improves water clarity.



Here's What Science Says!

- Naturalized shoreline buffers filter up to 90% of nutrients and sediments from runoff before they reach the lake.
- Native vegetation improves bank stability, reduces erosion, and moderates water temperatures—all critical for fish and aquatic life.
- Hard shoreline structures often shift erosion to neighbouring properties or worsen it over time; natural solutions adapt as conditions change.

YOUR ACTION PLAN - RESPONSIBLE BOATING

Why It Matters

Boats and personal watercraft can erode shorelines, disturb nesting waterfowl, resuspend sediments (clouding water), and harm fish. Speed restrictions and awareness of sensitive areas are simple ways to protect the lake while still enjoying it. For more information check out FOCA's Be #WakeAware campaign.

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Stay Under 10 km/h Within 30 m of Shore

Why: Boat wakes at higher speeds cause significant erosion, especially on banks that lack vegetation. Slow speeds dramatically reduce wave energy.

How: Throttle down as you approach shore. Most cottagers notice no real difference in travel time but significant reduction in wake damage.

Benefit: Prevents erosion, protects fish habitat, protects shoreline vegetation.



Respect No-Wake Zones

Why: These are designated areas where wildlife nesting or fish spawning is critical. Waves disturb nesting birds and can destroy eggs or newly hatched chicks.

How: Follow posted signs. If you're unsure whether an area has a no-wake designation, assume it does and slow down.

Benefit: Reduces shoreline damage and wildlife disturbance.

YOUR ACTION PLAN - RESPONSIBLE BOATING

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Avoid Shallow Bays and Weed Beds

Why: Shallow, vegetated areas are critical spawning and nursery habitat for fish. Boat propellers destroy aquatic plants that fish depend on for food and shelter. Shallow bays also erode easily.

How: Route around shallow areas when possible. If you must navigate shallow areas, do so at idle speed.

Benefit: Protects fish spawning areas and aquatic plants.



Slow Down Near Loon Nests and Wildlife

Why: Loons and other waterfowl are federally protected. Boat disturbance during breeding season (May–July) can cause nest abandonment. Noise and fast boats stress even non-breeding birds.

How: Keep 150–300 m distance from loon nests. If you see a loon, eagle, or waterfowl, slow to idle speed and give it space.

Benefit: Minimises disturbance, protects breeding habitat, complies with federal law.



Clean–Drain–Dry Boats and Equipment

Why: Invasive species (zebra mussels, Eurasian water milfoil) survive in bilge water, livewells, and wet equipment. Small fragments between lakes cause infestations.

How: Drain all water from boat (bilge, livewell, ballast) after every trip. Wipe dry. Leave all equipment to dry completely before using on another waterbody.

Benefit: Prevents invasive species spread, protects fisheries and recreation.



Inspect Boats Before Launching

Why: Even after cleaning, small organisms or plant fragments can hide in crevices. A thorough visual inspection catches problems before they enter the lake.

How: Before launching, visually inspect the boat's hull, motor, trailer, and all equipment. Remove any visible plants, animals, or mud. If you see anything suspicious, don't launch and report it.

Benefit: Prevents invasives, protects water quality.

YOUR ACTION PLAN - MONITOR & REPORT

Why It Matters

Early detection of problems—algae blooms, invasive species, water quality changes—allows the Pike Lake Community Association and regulatory agencies to respond promptly. By the time a problem is obvious, it's often harder and more expensive to fix. Your eyes are essential.

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Watch for Algae Blooms and Report Concerns

Why: Algae blooms indicate high nutrient levels and can produce toxins harmful to pets and people. Early notification to authorities enables rapid response.

How: Watch for green, blue-green, or brown scum on the water surface. Report sightings to the Lake Steward and the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks Spills Action Centre 1-800-268-6060.

Benefit: Early response to water quality issues, faster management action.



Report Suspicious Plants or Animals

Why: Early detection is critical. A single plant fragment or mussel starts infestations. Some organisms are visible and distinctive.

How: Familiarise yourself with common invasive species (see page 26). If you spot something unusual, photograph and report to Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (1-800-563-7711) or Pike Lake Community Association.

Benefit: Early detection protects wildlife and ecosystem.

YOUR ACTION PLAN - MONITOR & REPORT

Explore Some Easy Actions You Can Take Today!



Share Water-Level and Ice Observations

Why: Long-term residents observations help the Pike Lake Community Association and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry understand trends and make better management decisions.

How: Note seasonal water levels, ice dates, unusual weather, or erosion changes. Share observations with the PLCA or the RVCA. This citizen science data is valuable.

Benefit: Informs lake management and community stewardship.



PROTECTING Pike Lake: LOONS, WATERFOWL & WILDLIFE

A DETAILED GUIDE



Why It Matters

Loons, eagles, ducks, herons, songbirds, turtles, amphibians, and mammals such as beavers and muskrats are indicators of a healthy lake. They rely on clean water, natural shorelines, and safe nesting or denning habitat, and are vulnerable to disturbance from boats, night lighting, pets, and human-made shoreline hardening. Our lake is home to several species at risk including the Black Rat Snake, Blandings Turtles, the Bald Eagle and the Least Bittern bird. Supporting these diverse species helps maintain our lake's biodiversity, shoreline resilience, and overall lake ecosystem health.

Healthy Shorelines Are the Backbone of Lake Biodiversity

The first 10–15 metres away from the water's edge—the "ribbon of life"—supports fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, insects and mammals at different life stages. Protecting and enhancing that zone helps turtles nest, fish spawn, birds forage, and beavers/muskrats find material and food, and it also protects your shoreline from erosion.

PROTECTING LOONS, WATERFOWL & WILDLIFE

A DETAILED GUIDE

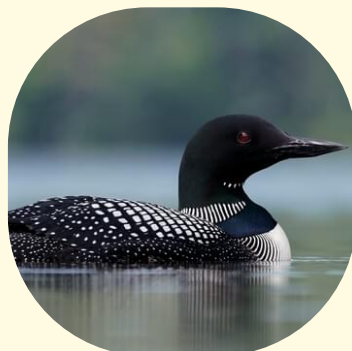
Pike Lake Wildlife

A variety of Pike Lake wildlife depends on different parts of the shoreline and shallow water areas. Loons and eagles need quiet nesting sites on islands or secluded coves; turtles use sandy or gravel patches for nesting and logs for basking; amphibians rely on wetland vegetation for breeding; beavers and muskrats create wetlands that increase habitat diversity; herons and songbirds use shrubs, emergent vegetation, and forested edges. Protecting these habitats supports ecosystem function and biodiversity, not just individual species.

Protected Wildlife Under Canadian Law

In Ontario, loons, herons, and ospreys are protected under the federal Migratory Birds Convention Act (1994), which makes it illegal to harm migratory birds or disturb their active nests and eggs. Bald eagles and ospreys are also protected provincially as specially protected raptors under Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (1997), which prohibits harming the birds or interfering with their nests without authorisation of the Canadian Wildlife Services.

We are fortunate to have a nesting pair of bald eagles and several loon families on our lake!



PROTECTING LOONS, WATERFOWL & WILDLIFE

A DETAILED GUIDE

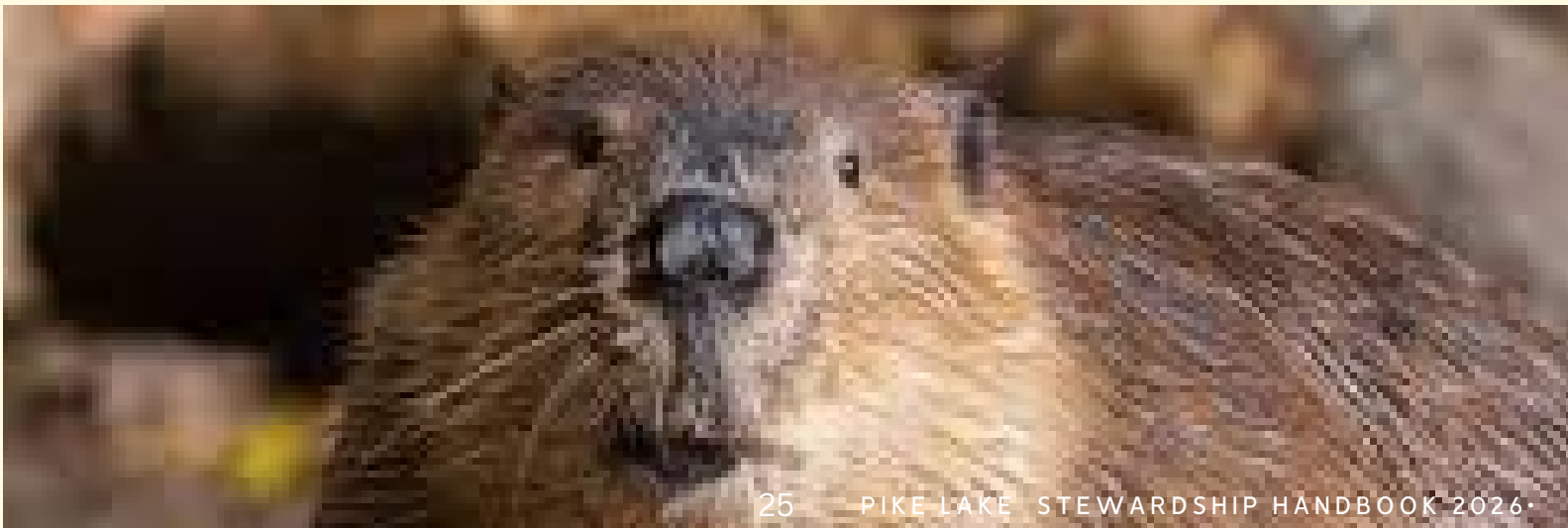
Beavers as Ecosystem Engineers

Beavers are an important part of Pike Lake and its watershed and are also protected under Ontario's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act (1997). For example, their dams maintain our wetlands at the south end of the lake where Little Crosby Lake flows into Pike Lake. Beavers improve water quality, reduce downstream flooding, increase biodiversity, and provide habitat for fish, birds, and amphibians. However, beaver activity can sometimes affect culverts, private roads, docks, septic systems, or water access points. While licensed trapping is permitted in regulated seasons, it is illegal to harm beavers, their lodges, or dams without authorisation of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. For more information visit <https://www.ontario.ca/page/preventing-conflicts-beaver>



Science Says!

- Natural shorelines and fallen logs provide critical habitat for nesting birds, turtles, amphibians, and small mammals.
- Reduced night lighting, lead-free tackle, and quiet boating lower stress and mortality for wildlife.



Protecting Pike Lake: Preventing and Managing Invasive Species

A DETAILED GUIDE

Why It Matters

Invasive species outcompete native plants, reduce habitat for fish and wildlife, impair water quality, and increase recreational costs. Prevention is far more effective than removal once an infestation is established.



Science Says!

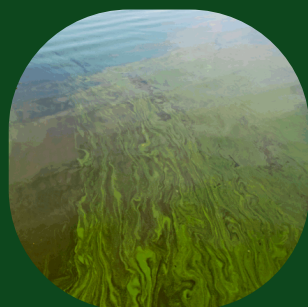
- Small fragments of Eurasian water milfoil can grow into new populations.
- Zebra mussels and other hitchhikers can survive days in bilge water, livewells, or wet gear.
- Prevention via pathway control (Clean–Drain–Dry, gear inspection) is far more effective than remediation.



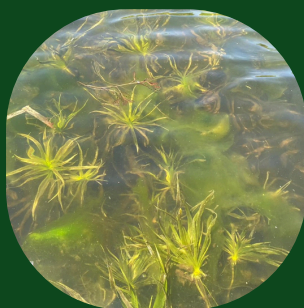
Eurasian Water-Milfoil



Zebra Mussels



Spiny Waterflea



Water Soldier



Water Chesnut

INVASIVE SPECIES - DETAILED GUIDE

The Invasive Species Watchlist.

Eurasian Water-Milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

How to Spot It: Feathery reddish-green underwater plant. 4–5 leaflets per whorl. Often forms dense mats at the water surface in summer that tangle boats and swimmers.

Why It Matters: Outcompetes native plants, reduces oxygen, and degrades fish and turtle habitat.

What Residents Should Do: Do not rake or cut plants (fragments spread it). Clean, Drain, Dry boats and gear. Report sightings.



Zebra Mussels (*Dreissena polymorpha*)

How to Spot It: Small (1–2 cm), D-shaped shells with dark and light stripes. Often attached to docks, rocks, anchors, and boat hulls.

Why It Matters: Alter lake ecosystems, clog water intakes, damage infrastructure, and harm native mussels.

What Residents Should Do: Inspect and rinse boats, trailers, anchors, and equipment. Wash with hot water (>50 °C) if possible. Never move water, plants, or bait between lakes.



INVASIVE SPECIES - DETAILED GUIDE

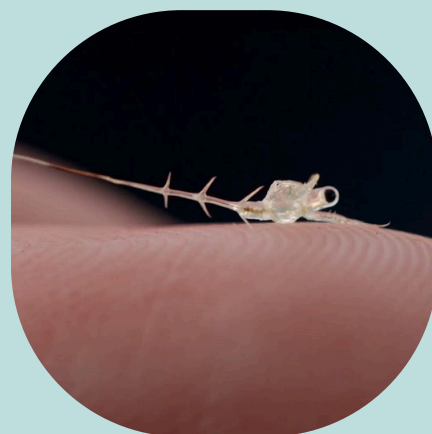
The Invasive Species Watchlist

Spiny Waterflea (Bythotrephes longimanus)

How to Spot It: Tiny shrimp-like organism with a long tail spine. Often seen in fishing lines or collected in water samples.

Why It Matters: Competes with native zooplankton and reduces food for fish.

What Residents Should Do: Drain water from all equipment and containers. Clean and dry fishing gear and lines. Report sightings.



European Water Chesnut (Trapa natans)

How to Spot It: Floating rosettes of glossy, triangular leaves with toothed edges and small white flower, forms dense mats.

Why It Matters: Crowds out native aquatic plants, reduces fish habitat and lowers oxygen levels, impedes boating and swimming. Not yet in our lake but spotted in local waterways.

What Residents Should Do: Scrub, rinse, and dry boots, gear, and boats. Learn to recognize.



INVASIVE SPECIES - DETAILED GUIDE

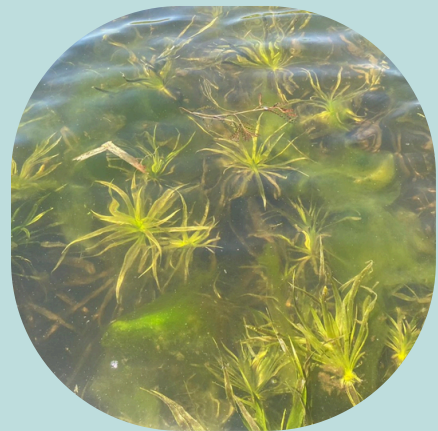
The Invasive Species Watchlist

Water Solider (Stratiotes aloides)

How to Spot It: Resembles a floating pineapple top or aloe plant with bright green leaves growing in rosettes, dense colonies can form thick mats

Why It Matters: Not yet in our lake but spotted in nearby waterways, restricts water flow and crowds out native plants, produces sharp leaves that can cut swimmers.

What Residents Should Do: Inspect and Clean • Drain • Dry boats, trailers, paddles and fishing gear. Learn to recognize; do not dump water garden plants into lake.



Prevention Is Key!

- ✓ **Clean – Drain – Dry.** Clean boats, motors, trailers, anchors, and fishing gear after every use.
- ✓ **Never Release Organisms.** Do not dump bait, aquarium water, or plants into the lake.
- ✓ **Inspect Equipment.** Remove all plants, animals, and mud before leaving the shoreline.
- ✓ **Dry Equipment Fully.** Let boats, trailers and gear dry completely before entering another waterbody.

Protecting Pike Lake: SUPPORTING HEALTHY FISHERIES

A DETAILED GUIDE

Why It Matters?

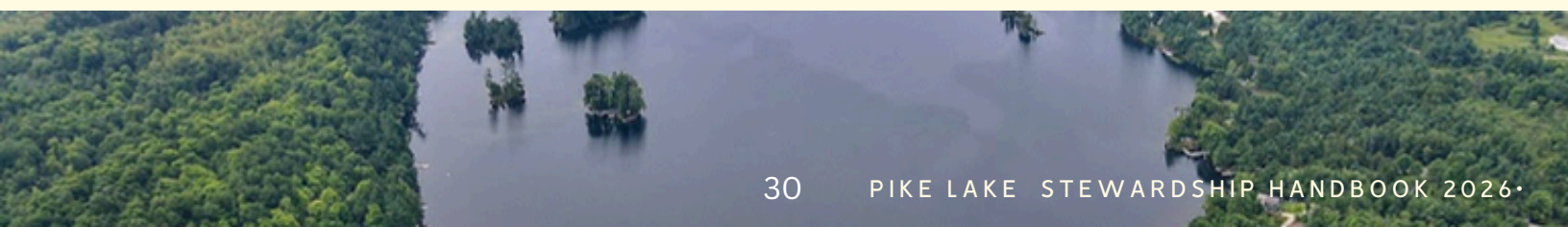
Fish populations are strong indicators of overall lake health. Pike Lake's bass, pike, and other fish depend on clean water, adequate oxygen, aquatic vegetation, and suitable spawning and nursery habitat. When these conditions are maintained, fish populations are more resilient to stresses such as changing water levels, warmer temperatures, and increased recreational use.

Healthy fisheries support recreational fishing, contribute to balanced food webs, and reflect good water quality that benefits all lake users. During summer of 2026, the PLCA will consider taking the first step towards planning and developing a nature-based fish habitat enhancement project with Watershed Canada and the RVCA.

Pike Lake Fisheries

Fish spend different stages of their lives in different parts of the lake and shoreline. Shallow, vegetated areas and wetlands are especially important for spawning, nursery habitat, and food supply. Many warmwater fish species rely on near-shore plants, submerged logs, and wetlands for protection from predators and access to insects and aquatic invertebrates.

Our provincial government, the RVCA, and local watershed organisations such as Watersheds Canada highlight the importance of wetlands and flooded shoreline vegetation for maintaining productive fisheries, as these areas support insects and small organisms that form the base of the food web. Research shows that lakes with natural buffers, intact shorelines and healthy wetlands tend to have more stable fish populations and better resilience to climate-related stresses.



Protecting Pike Lake: **SUPPORTING HEALTHY FISHERIES**

A DETAILED GUIDE

Quick Tip! Every foot of natural shoreline helps fish. A natural buffer protects the habitat, improves water quality and biodiversity.



Science Says!

- Vegetated shorelines, shallow bays, and wetlands are essential for fish spawning and feeding.
- Habitat loss, sediment runoff, invasive species, and warmer water reduce fish populations.

Fish Restoration Programs

- Watersheds Canada <https://watersheds.ca/our-work/habitat-programs/>
- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) Support for fish habitat projects, conservation events, and grants. Find your local zone: ofah.org/zones



Protecting Pike Lake: COPING WITH CHANGING WATER LEVELS

A DETAILED GUIDE

Why It Matters

Water levels in Pike Lake and connected waterways rise and fall naturally with the seasons, typically higher in spring and lower in late summer. However, droughts, heavier rainfall events, and/or changing weather patterns can make these swings more extreme, as experienced during the dry summer of 2025. Changes in water levels can affect:

- Boat access and docks
- Water intake systems
- Fish and aquatic habitat
- Shoreline stability and erosion

Changing Water Levels

Managing water levels is a balancing act. During dry periods, there may simply not be enough water to maintain preferred levels, and no dam can eliminate natural highs and lows. The province and its partners (MNRF, RVCA, Parks Canada, municipalities) rely on long-term data on precipitation, streamflow, lake and river levels, and weather forecasts to guide dam operations carefully and responsibly.



Who Is Responsible for Water Levels at Pike Lake and in the Tay Watershed?

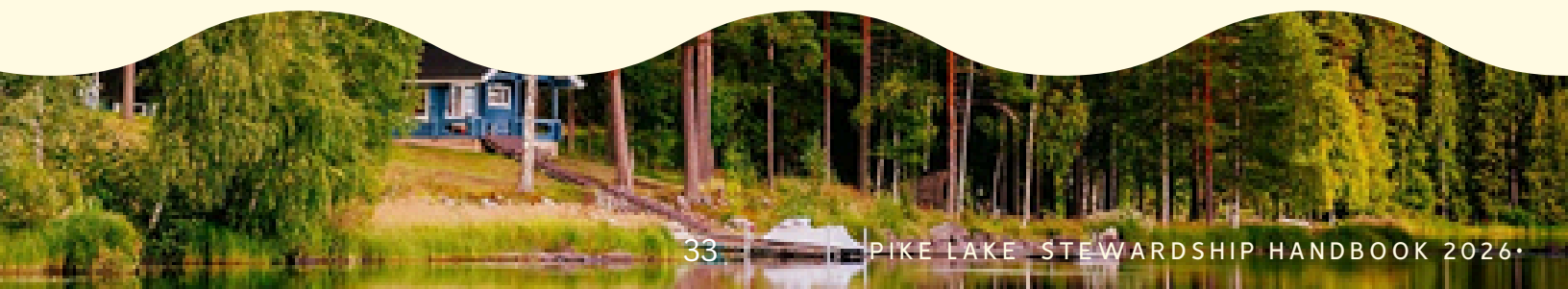
A DETAILED GUIDE

Pike Lake Water Levels (at the outlet): Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR)

- Owns and operates the Grants Creek dam at the outlet into Grants Creek.
- Is responsible for day-to-day operation of the stop-log control structure, including adjusting flows during high- and low-water conditions.
- Manages releases to balance recreational lake levels on Pike Lake with downstream needs in Grants Creek and the Tay River.
- Uses long-term data (precipitation, streamflows, lake levels, forecasts) to guide decisions.
- Cannot eliminate natural highs and lows, especially during droughts or extreme rainfall, but aims to reduce risk and downstream impacts where possible.

Key Point for Property Owners: RVCA Watches the Big Picture

The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) monitors what's happening across the entire watershed and provides early warning and science-based guidance.



Protecting Pike Lake: COPING WITH CHANGING WATER LEVELS

A DETAILED GUIDE

Broader Watershed and System Coordination

Parks Canada Manages water levels on the Rideau Canal system, downstream of parts of the Tay watershed. Coordinates with MNRF and conservation authorities where systems are hydraulically connected.

Municipalities (e.g., Tay Valley Township, Rideau Lakes Township)

Manage local infrastructure, land-use planning, and emergency response. Share information with residents and work with RVCA and MNRF during unusual conditions.

Quick Tip! Flexible docks and intact buffers reduce risk and protect habitat during extreme water events.



Science Says!

- Natural shoreline buffers reduce erosion and wave damage during high-water events, while wetlands act as natural sponges that store floodwater and release it slowly.
- Flexible infrastructure, such as floating docks and adjustable water intakes, is better suited to fluctuating water levels than fixed structures.
- Planning ahead, rather than reacting to extreme conditions, helps protect shorelines, fish habitat, and property, whilst reducing long-term maintenance costs.

Protecting Pike Lake: **SHORELINE NATURALIZATION**

A DETAILED GUIDE



Why It Matters

Natural shorelines are like the lake's kidneys and lungs—they filter runoff by trapping nutrients, sediment, and pollutants before they reach the water, stabilise banks to prevent erosion, and provide essential habitat for fish, birds, turtles, amphibians, and insects.

Healthy shorelines help keep water clearer and cooler, support fish spawning and feeding, and reduce shoreline damage during storms, fluctuating water levels, and ice movement. Conservation authorities and provincial agencies consistently identify shoreline naturalization as one of the most effective ways cottagers can protect lake health.

Healthy shorelines help keep water clearer and cooler, support fish spawning and feeding, and reduce shoreline damage during storms, fluctuating water levels, and ice movement.

Pike Lake Context & Programs

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) shoreline studies show that intact vegetation along lake edges improves slope stability, reduces erosion, and protects near-shore aquatic habitat. RVCA guidance emphasises working with natural lake processes rather than trying to control them with hard structures. Vegetated shorelines, wetlands, and shallow bays support insects and aquatic organisms that form the base of the food web for fish and wildlife. Natural shorelines also improve resilience to floods and droughts.

The RVCA offers a full-service, subsidised shoreline naturalization program for waterfront cottage owners. They cover up to 90% of costs for a custom planting plan, technical guidance, project management and, of course, planting assistance. Check out their *Landowner Guide* and *A Landowners Guide to Native Plants*.

Consider native species recommended by the Grow Me Instead (GMI) guide available on the Ontario Invasive Plant Council website. Native plants support pollinators, birds and wildlife while helping to maintain healthy shorelines. Remember: RVCA advice, site visits and planting plans are always free!

RVCA Shoreline Naturalization Program

Up to 90% cost coverage for:

- Custom planting plan
- Technical guidance
- Project management
- Planting assistance

Partnership with Watersheds Canada – Natural Edge

Pike Lake Context & Programs



Science Says!

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- Flexible infrastructure, such as floating docks and adjustable water intakes, is better suited to fluctuating water levels than fixed structures.
- Planning ahead, rather than reacting to extreme conditions, helps protect shorelines, fish habitat, and property, whilst reducing long-term maintenance costs.

Quick Tip! Maintain the Ribbon of Life. Start small, plant native shrubs, grasses and wildflowers. Naturalising one section of your shoreline per year improves water quality, habitat, and bank stability.



Protecting Pike Lake: **RESPONSIBLE RECREATION & BOATING**

A DETAILED GUIDE

Why It Matters

Boats and personal watercraft can contribute to shoreline erosion, disturb nesting waterfowl and other wildlife, and resuspend sediments that reduce water clarity. These impacts can harm fish, aquatic plants, and the overall health of the lake. Regulatory changes, such as federal vessel operation restrictions and local by-laws, may affect how watercraft can be used. Cottage owners should be aware of these rules to ensure safe and responsible use whilst protecting the lake ecosystem.

Quick Tip!

Slow down near shore—saves fuel, protects wildlife such as turtles, muskrats, loons and preserves fish spawning habitat.

Reach out!

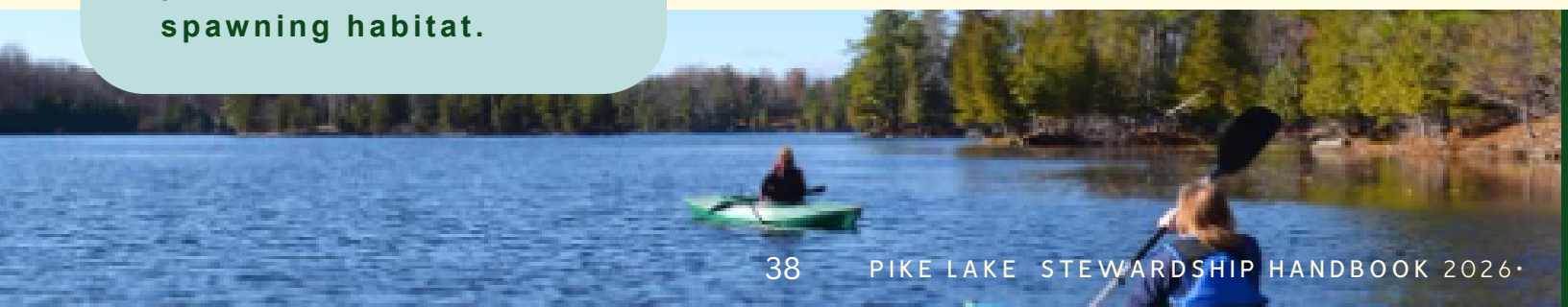
Transport Canada has issued new pleasure craft licence requirements. For more information:
<https://foca.on.ca/boating/>

Conservation authorities and stewardship organisations offer advice on minimising impacts from boating to shorelines, wetlands, and wildlife habitats.

Watersheds-focused programmes provide resources on how boat wakes affect water quality, fish, and waterfowl.

Law enforcement agencies, such as the Ontario Provincial Police, provide information on boating safety and compliance with local and federal regulations.

FOCA has posted recent studies at <https://foca.on.ca/boating/>



Protecting Pike Lake: MANAGING DEVELOPMENT & UPSTREAM IMPACTS

A DETAILED GUIDE

Why It Matters

Pike Lake is part of the Tay River watershed, meaning everything that happens upstream can affect water quality, habitat, and recreation downstream. This includes not only shoreline development but also farming, forestry, and other land use. Excess nutrients, sediments, or chemical runoff can promote algae growth, reduce oxygen for fish, and harm wetlands that filter water naturally. Even small changes, like clearing vegetation along a stream or using fertilisers near a wetland, can have measurable impacts on the lake.

Quick Tip!

Stay informed—municipal planning impacts the lake as much as your property.

Reach out!

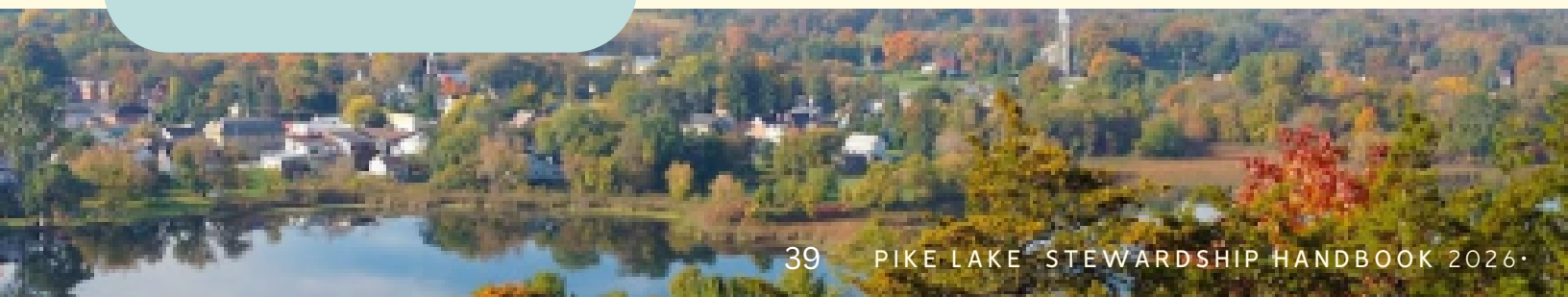
Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) provides information on watershed science, planning guidelines, and buffer recommendations.

Provincial agricultural agencies such as the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) provides guidance on nutrient management, erosion control, and livestock exclusion from waterways.

Watershed organisations such as Watersheds Canada and Ducks Unlimited provide best practices for wetland protection and riparian buffers.

The Tay Valley Township planning offices provide local permitting and shoreline development rules.

Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) provides advocacy, lake stewardship, and education resources for cottagers.



BEING PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES



Community Safety & Resilience: Emergency Preparedness

Personal and Property Safety - Why It Matters

Climate and weather patterns across eastern Ontario are changing. Emergency preparedness agencies emphasise that climate-related hazards such as fire, floods, drought, windstorms, heat waves, and ice freeze-thaw events are increasingly part of our "new normal," and can affect our personal and property safety. Living on a rural waterfront property where first responders may take longer to reach us, we must be prepared and resilient. It is vital that we are ready in the event of an emergency, and can quickly contact emergency service providers as well as family and neighbours.

Extreme Weather Events

Everyone likely remembers the derecho that impacted our area on May 21, 2022. It was one of the most impactful weather events recorded for our region, sweeping from southwestern Ontario into southern Quebec leaving widespread tree destruction, prolonged power outages and significant infrastructure damage. Another example was the EF1 tornado that touched down near Perth on July 24, 2024 and caused significant damage along a 39-kilometre path within the Tay Valley Township.

Preparing for emergencies helps protect people, property, and the lake community. Cottage areas often have limited access, delayed emergency response, and power outages, making preparedness especially important.

BEING PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES



Community Safety & Resilience: Emergency Preparedness



Science Says!

- Climate change is increasing the number of extreme weather events and natural disasters.
- There has been a 5 times increase in natural disasters over the last 50 years.
- Warmer temperatures are linked to an increase in the frequency of extreme heatwaves, wildfires, and droughts which in turn lead to seasonal changes in our ecosystem that can have impacts on our water supply, health of our woodlots and increase our susceptibility to invasive plant and aquatic species, including ticks.
- Higher temperatures allow the atmosphere to hold more water vapour, leading to more intense precipitation and flash floods.

Resources

<https://foca.on.ca/emergency-preparedness/> — Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association Emergency Preparedness in Remote Areas

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/emergency-preparedness> — Helpful tips to prepare for a disaster, develop a plan, and develop an Emergency Kit.

Resources that can be shared

- Water pump and fire hoses
- AED (automated external defibrillator)
- Chainsaw operators
- Electricians or plumbers
- First aid or nursing expertise

Community Preparedness Checklist

At a Glance: What You Can Do

Practical Action	Why It Helps
Get to know your neighbours and their expertise	In emergencies, neighbours are often the first people available to help.
Create community hubs along access roads	Shared communication and coordination improves response time.
Share key resources (water pump, chainsaws, medical skills)	Pooling equipment and expertise strengthens community resilience.
Identify neighbours with medical training or emergency skills	Critical support before emergency responders arrive.
Maintain a shared contact list for neighbours	Enables quick communication during emergencies.

Cottage Preparedness Checklist

At a Glance: What You Can Do

Practical Action	Why It Helps
Develop a household emergency action plan	Ensures everyone knows what to do during emergencies.
Create a communication plan	Text messages often work when phone calls fail.
Keep emergency numbers accessible	Include 911, family, and nearby neighbours.
Plan evacuation routes by land and water	Some properties may only have one access route.
Know how to shut off utilities	Electricity, propane, and water shutoffs prevent hazards.
Consider medical needs and mobility challenges	Plans should account for all occupants.

COTTAGE EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT

Every cottage should maintain a 3-day emergency kit. Do you?

At a Glance: What You Can Do.

Item	Recommendation
Water	4 litres per person per day
Food	Non-perishable food for 3 days
First aid supplies	Basic medical kit and medications
Lighting	Flashlights or lanterns
Communication	Battery radio
Power backup	Extra batteries, portable battery or generator
Emergency supplies	Matches, candles, portable stove if safe

Your Fire Safety Checklist - Indoor

At a Glance: What You Can Do

Action	Why
Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on every level	Early warning saves lives
Install CO alarms near sleeping areas (required if emitting source)	Carbon monoxide is odourless and dangerous
Keep 10 lb ABC fire extinguishers in key locations	Kitchen, exits, wood stove areas
Inspect chimneys and woodstoves annually	Prevents chimney fires
Check electrical wiring each spring	Rodents often damage wires over winter
Create a fire escape plan with two exits per room	Essential during fast-moving fires

Your Fire Safety Checklist - Outdoor

At a Glance: What You Can Do

Action	Why
Maintain a 1.5 m non-combustible zone around the cottage	Reduces wildfire risk
Store propane tanks and firewood 10 m away	Prevents rapid fire spread
Clear brush within 10 m of structures	Reduces wildfire fuel
Clean roofs and gutters annually	Prevents ember ignition
Prune tree branches to 2 m above ground	Reduces ladder fuels
Use wood burning or propane fire bowls to avoid the risk of inadvertently starting a fire underground and reduce risk of runaway embers	Prevents accidental spread
Fully extinguish fires before leaving	Ensures embers cannot reignite

What to Do When Severe Weather Hits

Part 01 - An Extreme Weather Preparedness Checklist

Windstorms

- ✔ Remove dead or overhanging branches
- ✔ Secure outdoor furniture and docks
- ✔ Inspect roof and shingles
- ✔ Ensure gutters and drainage are clear

Tornadoes

- ✔ Stay indoors and away from windows
- ✔ Move to lowest interior room or basement
- ✔ Shut off propane supply
- ✔ Disconnect sensitive electronics

Heavy Rain

- ✔ Clean gutters and downspouts
- ✔ Extend downspouts 1–2 m away from cottage
- ✔ Seal doors and windows
- ✔ Check sump pump and backup power
- ✔ Slope ground away from foundation
- ✔ Elevate valuables in basements

Drought

- ✔ Fix leaking taps and toilets
- ✔ Install water-efficient fixtures
- ✔ Limit watering of lawns
- ✔ Reduce dishwasher and laundry use
- ✔ Install rainwater collection systems

Make a Difference: Volunteer Opportunities

A DETAILED GUIDE

Why It Matters

Pike Lake thrives when everyone pitches in. No single cottage or person can protect it alone. When residents, neighbours, and the PLCA work together, the lake stays healthy, wildlife thrives, and everyone enjoys a beautiful, vibrant shoreline. Even small actions—planting native plants, monitoring water quality, or sharing tips with neighbours—add up to meaningful improvements in lake health and resilience. Collaboration also strengthens social connections, fosters shared knowledge, and builds a long-term stewardship culture for future generations.

Volunteer Opportunities.



- Shoreline restoration
- Fish habitat restoration
- Water sampling
- Invasive species monitoring
- Shoreline waterfowl and wildlife surveys



Science Says!

Communities working together achieve tangible results. Citizen science collects valuable data and directly contributes to healthier shorelines, fish populations, and wildlife habitats. Early detection of invasive species or water-quality changes allows prompt response, reducing ecological and recreational impacts. Long-term monitoring highlights trends, helping PLCA prioritise actions and guide stewardship. Coordinated shoreline restoration increases habitat diversity whilst strengthening the lake's long-term resilience.

Get Involved!

- ✓ Attend the AGM; become a PLCA member
- ✓ Volunteer for committees or the PLCA Board
- ✓ Participate in shoreline restoration projects

Stewardship Reference Guide

These practices protect your water quality, wildlife, and shoreline — often all at once.

At a Glance: What You Can Do

Practical Action	Why It Helps	Supports These Lake Priorities
Pump and inspect septic systems every 3–5 years	Prevents phosphorus entering lake and reduces algae risk	Water Quality, Fisheries, Wildlife
Maintain a 75% natural shoreline buffer, choose native plants when landscaping	Filters runoff, stabilises shoreline, protects habitat	Water Quality, Wildlife, Fisheries, Shoreline Stability
Avoid fertilisers near the lake	Reduces nutrient runoff that fuels algae blooms	Water Quality, Fisheries
Use phosphate-free soaps and detergents	Reduces phosphorus entering lake	Water Quality
Install rain barrels, rain gardens, or permeable surfaces	Slows and filters stormwater runoff	Water Quality, Shoreline Stability
Direct roof and driveway runoff away from lake	Reduces erosion and nutrient loading	Water Quality

Stewardship Reference Guide

These practices protect your water quality, wildlife, and shoreline — often all at once.

Part 01 -At a Glance: What You Can Do

Practical Action	Why It Helps	Supports These Lake Priorities
Leave native aquatic plants in place	Provides fish habitat and improves water clarity	Fisheries, Water Quality
Clean–Drain–Dry boats, trailers and gear	Prevents spread of invasive species	Invasive Species, Fisheries
Inspect boats and equipment before launching	Stops invasive species before they spread	Invasive Species
Never dump bait or aquarium plants into the lake	Prevents introduction of non-native species	Invasive Species
Boat under 10 km/h within 30 m of shore	Prevents shoreline erosion and protects nesting wildlife	Shorelines, Wildlife, Fisheries
Avoid shallow bays and weed beds	Protects spawning areas and aquatic plants	Fisheries, Wildlife

Stewardship Reference Guide

These practices protect your water quality, wildlife, and shoreline — often all at once.

Part 02 - At a Glance: What You Can Do

Practical Action	Why It Helps	Supports These Lake Priorities
Keep 150–300 m distance from loon nests (May–July)	Reduces nesting disturbance	Water Quality, Fisheries, Wildlife
Reduce night lighting near shore	Protects wildlife behaviour and migration	Wildlife
Use lead-free fishing tackle	Prevents poisoning of loons and waterfowl	Wildlife
Retain fallen logs, rocks, and natural shoreline features	Important habitat for fish, turtles, insects	Fisheries, Wildlife
Protect wetlands and small streams	Wetlands filter nutrients and regulate water levels	Water Quality, Wildlife
Avoid hard shoreline structures where possible	Natural shorelines absorb wave energy and reduce erosion	Shoreline Stability, Fisheries

Stewardship Reference Guide

These practices protect your water quality, wildlife, and shoreline — often all at once.

Part 03 - At a Glance: What You Can Do

Practical Action	Why It Helps	Supports These Lake Priorities
Use floating docks or adjustable water intakes	Adapt to changing water levels	Water Levels, Shorelines
Monitor and report algae blooms or unusual plants	Enables early management response	Water Quality, Invasive Species
Participate in community monitoring or surveys	Supports lake management and stewardship	All priorities

RESOURCES & CONTACTS BY PROBLEM TYPE

Find Help by Problem Type - Part 01.

For Water Quality Questions

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) runs the Watershed Watch Program which includes water quality, long term trend reporting for our lake and its connected system (Crosby Lake, Little Crosby, etc. Website: rvca.ca

For Invasive Species

Invasive Species Centre — Invasive Species Hotline 1-800-563-7711 Report sightings immediately.

Ontario Invasive Plant Council: Coordinated provincial response and expert information. Website: ontarioinvasiveplants.ca

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) helps track and share information, provides educational information. website: rvca.ca

For Shoreline Restoration

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority: offers free advice, site visits, planting guide via their Shoreline Naturalization Programme. website: rvca.ca

Watersheds Canada Natural Edge & Love Your Lake Programmes: two programs offering advice in support of healthy lakes and stewardship. website: watersheds.ca

Ducks Unlimited Canada Wetland conservation and habitat enhancement programmes. Website: ducks.ca

For Fish Habitat and Fisheries

Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) Support for fish habitat projects, conservation events, and grants. Find your local zone: ofah.org/zones

Watersheds Canada Habitat stewardship programmes. Website: <https://watersheds.ca/our-work/habitat-programs/>

RESOURCES & CONTACTS BY PROBLEM TYPE

Find Help by Problem Type - Part 02.

For Development and Land-Use Planning

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) Watershed science, planning guidelines, and buffer recommendations.
Website: rvca.ca

Tay Valley Township and Township of Rideau Lakes Local permitting and shoreline development rules. Contact your local planning office.

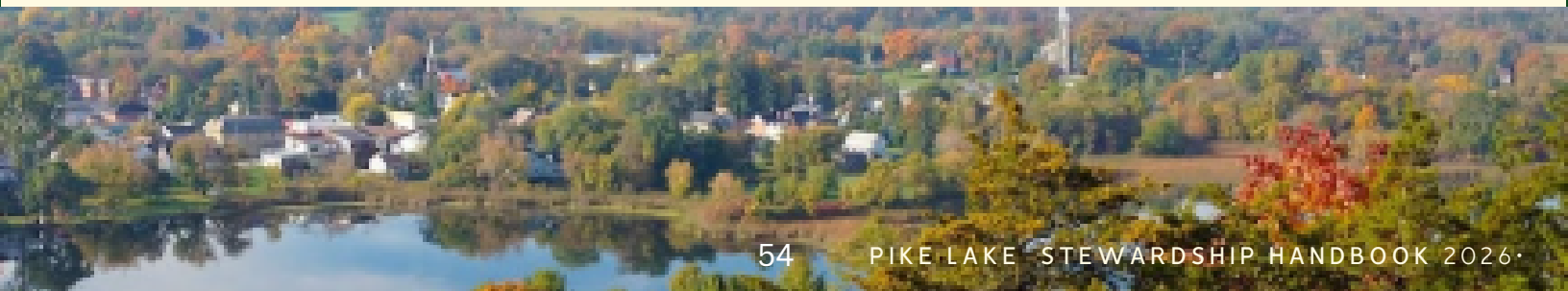
Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) Advocacy, lake stewardship, and education resources.
Website: foca.on.ca

For Emergency Preparedness

Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association Emergency Preparedness
<https://foca.on.ca/emergency-preparedness/>

Ontario Emergency Preparedness
<https://www.ontario.ca/page/emergency-preparedness>

Hydro One:
<https://www.hydroone.com/power-outages-and-safety/emergency-preparedness>



Relevant Legislation: What You Need to Know - Part 1

Following these regulations helps protect your property, the lake, and the local ecosystem whilst keeping you compliant with provincial and local laws.

1. Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act (R.S.O. 1990, c. L.3)

Governs dams, water control structures, and water use. Ensures dam operations, like Grants Creek Dam, are safe and protect upstream and downstream water levels.

Link: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90l03>

2. Clean Water Act, 2006 (Ontario)

Protects drinking water sources through Source Protection Plans. Lanark County is governed by a shared regional system called the Mississippi–Rideau Source Protection Region, implemented locally by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) in the eastern part of the county and the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA) in the western and northern parts.

3. Conservation Authorities Act — Section 28 & Ontario Regulation 41/24

Gives Conservation Authorities (RVCA) the power to regulate activities near water, wetlands, and hazard lands. Defines what activities require permits, including shoreline work and new structures. Links: O. Reg. 41/24 | RVCA Section 28 & Permits Info

4. Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA)

Local watershed authority for Pike Lake and the Tay River. Monitors water quality, issues permits, advises on shoreline naturalization projects, and provides stewardship resources. Links: RVCA Regulations & Section 28 Policy | RVCA Shoreline Naturalization: website: rvca.ca

Relevant Legislation: What You Need to Know - Part 2

Following these regulations helps protect your property, the lake, and the local ecosystem whilst keeping you compliant with provincial and local laws.

5. Tay Valley Township and Township of Rideau Lakes

Coordinates with RVCA to review development, protect sensitive areas, and implement Source Water Protection. Provides local water conservation and watering by-laws.

6. FOCA (Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations)

Provides education and advocacy for cottagers on regulations, shoreline protection, and stewardship opportunities. Website: foca.on.ca

7. Watersheds Canada Natural Edge and RVCA Shoreline Naturalization Program

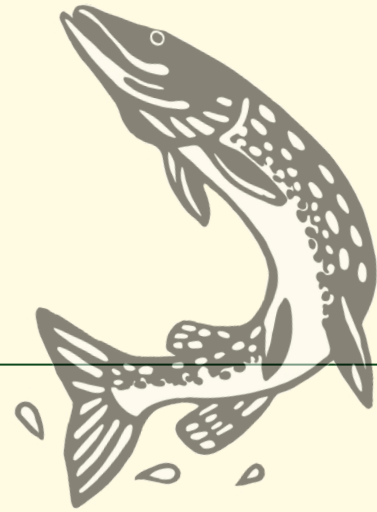
Each organisation provides tools, planting guides, and step-by-step shoreline restoration resources. Both help Pike Lake residents comply with regulations whilst improving shoreline habitat and reducing erosion. Links:

- Watershed Canada: watersheds.ca
- RVCA: rvca.ca

8. Ontario e-Laws & Conservation Ontario

Official repository of Ontario statutes and regulations. Conservation Ontario explains the Conservation Authorities Act and Section 28 requirements.

Conclusion & Closing



Taking the practical actions identified in this handbook can make a difference to the health of our lake.

Stewardship is not about giving things up, rather it's about coming together as a community to manage and protect what makes Pike Lake great, so that we can continue to enjoy the lake now and safeguard it for our future generations.



CONTACT DETAILS:

Email us at info@pikelake.ca or,

Take a look at our site at
www.pikelake.ca

PIKE LAKE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION,
PERTH, ONTARIO, CANADA 2026