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# Pike Lake Community Association

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## **Pike Lake Stewardship Handbook – Update 2011-2016**

The stewardship handbook, “Keeping Pike Lake Healthy” (2011) provides an overview of Pike Lake, a summary of the key issues facing Pike Lake, and simple, inexpensive, and effective actions we – individually and collectively – can take to keep Pike Lake healthy for present and future generations. It draws on the outcomes of the several-year process in which Pike Lakers identified issues affecting the present and future quality of the water and the Pike Lake environment more generally, and discusses how to preserve and improve the water quality and the lake environment.

The intent is that it is a resource for everyone that can be updated and revised as desired. In any given year, the Pike Lake Community Association (PLCA) selects a small number of projects or activities on which to concentrate effort, taking into account volunteer interest and any available programs. The intent is that over time, a variety of projects and activities can be undertaken to address all three priority areas of concern that emerged from the consultations. Table 1 summarizes the actions that have been undertaken by the PLCA since the 2011 Annual General Meeting (AGM), and provides suggestions of activities for the future.

In addition to addressing the key themes with action identified in the stewardship handbook, the PLCA has remained responsive to emerging issues and opportunities as they have come to light. Table 2 summarizes the actions taken by the PLCA to address issues and opportunities as they have presented themselves.

### **Summary:**

Since 2011, the PLCA has undertaken stewardship actions each year. Stewardship actions have addressed all three priorities: water quality, natural environment and development pressures. Since publication of the handbook, concerns relating to nuisance and toxic algae blooms, ticks and Lyme disease, and forest fire have emerged. The PLCA also received a grant for fish habitat enhancement work. The PLCA has taken action to address these issues and leverage the grant opportunity. The PLCA should continue to build on its successful initiatives.

**Table 1: Status of action items as proposed in the stewardship handbook, “Keeping Pike Lake Healthy” (2011), and possible next steps**

Priority Theme and Action(s). <i>(Responsible Individual)</i>	Actions by PLCA from 2011-2016	Possible Next Steps
<b>WATER QUALITY</b>		
Participate in the Rideau Valley Conservations Authority’s (RVCA) Watershed Watch Program, and report results and follow up as appropriate <i>(Lake Steward)</i>	<p>PLCA participated annually in the Watershed Watch Program since it began in 2001</p> <p>Lake Steward provided annual report of water quality at AGM.</p> <p>Summary report of water quality results from 2001-2010 in 2011 Pike Lake Post</p> <p>Feature article on water quality testing in 2015 Pike Lake Post</p> <p>Monitoring data 2001-2015 posted on pikelake.ca (July 2016).</p>	<p>Examine value of further partnering with a data management organization (e.g., Water Rangers, waterrangers.ca) to have data mapped and easily accessible to PLCA membership and public. Factors to consider include dependence on a third party, costs, value of mapping tool for analysis and data sharing, etc.</p> <p>Following sampling at all sites A-G in 2016, review historical data to identify any areas of particular concern and discuss possible follow-up with RVCA, as appropriate.</p>
Investigate nutrient levels at Site D <i>(Lake Steward and Vice-President)</i>	Special study undertaken in partnership with RVCA Tay Valley Township and PLCA. RVCA completed additional sampling at Site D (2012, 2013). Concluded nothing of concern at this time. However, will continue to monitor water quality at Site D.	Continue to review sampling data at Site D collected as part of Watershed Watch Program. No further action recommended at this time.

Priority Theme and Action(s). (Responsible Individual)	Actions by PLCA from 2011-2016	Possible Next Steps
Shoreline Naturalization (Everyone)	Importance of shoreline is intertwined with news articles and stewardship report in the Pike Lake Post and at the AGM. For example, information article on “Naturalized Shoreline” and grant opportunities featured in 2011, 2012 and 2013 Pike Lake Post.	Identify possible demonstration site (i.e., crown or private land volunteered by landowner). For example PLCA could provide volunteers to do plantings and follow up, while RVCA provide expertise and plants at cost.  Host plant day to promote naturalized shorelines and to make native plants accessible to membership  <u>Grant/Funding Opportunities:</u> RVCA’s Rural Clean Water Program, Shoreline Naturalization Program, Green Acres Program, Trees for Tomorrow.  Biodiversity Education & Awareness Network (BEAN) International Biodiversity Day Grant Program (Applications due April 1).
Safeguard your Septic System and Your Health (Everyone) Have septic system inspected and pumped out every three to five years.	Promoted importance of proper septic system maintenance - intertwined with news articles and stewardship report in the Pike Lake Post and at the AGM.  In concert with Tay Valley Township, The Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority, the Lake Networking Group, and the Otty lake Association, sponsored and promoted a free workshop, “Be Septic Savvy” (2012).  Provided info about outdoor showers in 2014 Pike Lake Post.	Provide summary of outcomes of voluntary and mandatory septic inspection programs on area lakes over 5 year period
Use Phosphate-free Soaps and Detergents (Everyone)	Promoted use of phosphate-free soaps and cleaners at Lake Steward’s report at the 2013 AGM.	

Priority Theme and Action(s). <i>(Responsible Individual)</i>	Actions by PLCA from 2011-2016	Possible Next Steps
Think before you cut <i>(Everyone)</i> Follow proper invasive aquatic plant management practices.	Raised awareness of how Eurasian Milfoil can spread as part of Lake Steward's report at the 2014 AGM.	
Clean boats to reduce the risk of importing zebra mussels & other invasive species <i>(Everyone)</i>  Ask visitors or cottage renters who are bringing boats onto the lake to clean their boats. Follow other good practices outlined in the handbook to reduce introduction and spread of invasive species.	Applied for and received funding from MNR, and installed signage at boat launch to raise awareness for practices to reduce spread of invasive species.	Continue to raise awareness about risks of invasive species in the Pike Lake Post and website (e.g., feature article), and at special events.
<b>ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE TO PROTECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</b>		
Protect Loons and Other Waterfowl <i>(Everyone)</i>  View loons and other waterfowl from a distance. Use non-toxic sinkers, jigs, or shotgun shot alternatives such as steel and bismuth which are readily available.	Participated in the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey, (2012-present). Promote responsible loon viewing following survey protocols and report observations in the Pike Lake Post and at AGM. Survey results promote discussion of threats to loons and other waterfowl.	Further promote participation in Canadian Lakes Loon Survey and other Bird Survey programs to increase robustness of observations at Pike Lake.  Should findings indicate three successive years of no nesting, consider installing loon nesting platforms to provide suitable habitat.

Priority Theme and Action(s). (Responsible Individual)	Actions by PLCA from 2011-2016	Possible Next Steps
<p>Promote Responsible Use of Crown Islands (Vice-President).</p> <p>Work with MNR and others as appropriate to install signs on the islands where people camp and, if possible, privies and fireboxes, to promote and facilitate responsible camping.</p>	<p>Worked with MNR to identify suitable campsites on Crown Islands. Applied for and received funding from MNR, and installed signage at boat launch promoting responsible camping. Installed tent symbol on Big Island where camping is permitted and no camping signs for islands MNR advises are too small for healthy camping. Initiative to install privies and fire boxes cancelled on account of liability concerns.</p> <p>Cleared and set up three camp sites (2012, 2013) and cleaned camp sites of trash several times annually.</p>	<p>Continue annual clean-up and check of camp sites.</p> <p>Install additional signage as required.</p>
<p>Promote Responsible Boating (Vice-President)</p> <p>Work with the Ministry of Transport to install buoys and signs at selected locations to encourage boaters to reduce their speed to protect children and other swimmers, to protect waterfowl, and to reduce the risk of erosion.</p>	<p>Private donor funded “slow” signs at sensitive locations; consulted with MNR &amp; Transport Canada on sign. Obtained funding from MNR for signage at boat launch (2012).</p> <p>Established a sub-committee which presented a guide, “Watch your Wake” included with 2013 Pike Lake Post &amp; on website. This has been distributed and shared as an example for boaters at other lakes.</p>	<p>Review lake to identify other sensitive areas and hazards for potential marking, and mark as appropriate .</p>
<p>Enjoy the Dark Night Sky (Everyone)</p> <p>Use the lowest possible wattage, add shields that point lamps downward, and keep outside lights off unless needed.</p>	<p>Article entitled Starlight Theatre in 2014 Pike Lake Post</p>	<p>Schedule a talk or star gazing event for amateur astronomers.</p>
<p>Use Alternatives to Toxic Chemicals (Everyone)</p>	<p>-</p>	<p>Promote use of natural cleaning products by providing examples as door prizes at the AGM</p>

Priority Theme and Action(s). (Responsible Individual)	Actions by PLCA from 2011-2016	Possible Next Steps
<p>Promote Greater Knowledge of the Pike Lake Environment (Everyone)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Consider teaching your children or grandchildren – or yourself – more about the Pike Lake environment by searching the PLCA, RVCA, or other websites, attending talks, or taking a subscription to a nature magazine.</li> <li>✓ Inform visitors and cottage renters about best practices to protect Pike Lake. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Keep your copy of this handbook in the cottage for easy reference.</li> </ul> </li> <li>✓ The PLCA will work with the RVCA and others to hold a bio-blitz, or a day for children to learn about the aquatic environment.</li> <li>✓ The PLCA will include an article on the Pike Lake ecosystem including the animals and plants with which we share Pike Lake in the <i>Pike Lake Post</i>.</li> </ul>	<p>Each year, the Pike Lake Post includes a feature article in the “Science for the Family” section; the Northern Pike (2012), Canadian Beaver (2013), Common Loon (2014), Great Blue Heron (2015), Ticks and Lyme Disease (2016).</p> <p>Copies of the Pike Lake Post, Pike Lake State of the Lake Report, and of “Keeping Pike Lake Healthy” available on website for easy access and reprinting.</p> <p>Hosted “Bug Talk” at Boatilla 2015, where participants young and old learned about the invertebrates that live at the shoreline.</p>	<p>Continue to host workshops and facilitated naturalist activities promoting knowledge of the Pike Lake environment. Note that the Boatilla (or a similar event) is an excellent venue for such activities.</p> <p>Continue to solicit input and article ideas from PLCA membership and include features in the “Science for the Family”.</p> <p>Invite special guest speakers at the AGM.</p>
<b>ACTIONS WE CAN TAKE TO ADDRESS DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES</b>		

Priority Theme and Action(s). <i>(Responsible Individual)</i>	Actions by PLCA from 2011-2016	Possible Next Steps
<p><b>Liaison with the Townships (President, Vice-President)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Maintain liaison with Tay Valley Township and the Township of Rideau Lakes regarding any potential developments on Pike Lake that could impact the lake; e.g. any proposed changes in land use planning permitting subdivisions and second tier development that could increase development pressures on Pike Lake.</li> <li>✓ Request that Townships make use of lake capacity assessment models when assessing potential developments that could affect the lake.</li> <li>✓ Maintain liaison with Tay Valley Township regarding future plans for the Stanleyville Waste Site.</li> </ul>	<p>Invited Reeve to the AGM every year, to speak about municipal issues and events affecting Pike Lake Residents.</p> <p>Provided input based on Lake Stewardship Handbook to Tay Valley Township's Official Plan Review (2014); copy included in 2014 Pike Lake Post</p>	

**Table 2: Actions taken by the PLCA to address issues or opportunities that have arisen since the publication of “Keeping Pike Lake Healthy” in 2011, and possible next steps.**

<b>Emerging Issue or Opportunity</b>	<b>Actions by PLCA</b>	<b>Possible Next Steps</b>
Human, financial and technical resources for fish habitat enhancement initiative made available to PLCA.	<p>Applied for and received \$4000 through the Ontario MNR Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program to create three walleye spawning beds (2012).</p> <p>Enhanced one bed each in winter of 2013 and 2014. One spawning bed outstanding.</p>	Install the third outstanding walleye spawning bed, off Wilson Island
Incidents of Lyme disease increasing.	Invited speakers at the AGM to discuss ticks and Lyme disease: Paula Stewart, Medical Officer of Health in 2012 and PLCA member Doug Sinclair (planned for AGM 2016).	
Nuisance algae blooms at Pike Lake and occurrence of toxic blue-green algae in nearby lakes.	<p>Feature article on research into algae and aquatic plant growth in 2015 Pike Lake Post</p> <p>Invited RVCA to speak about Algae Watch (Aquatic Vegetation Research Project) and learn about potentially harmful algae blooms (2013).</p> <p>Interactive display board on algae featured at 2016 Boatilla.</p>	

<p>Fire on Big Island (presumed cause improper camp fire practices) in July 2016 a near-miss, could have threatened human life and property.</p>	<p>Submitted article to the Perth Courier describing the incident and promoting fire awareness.</p>	<p>Develop communications protocol for fire bans.  For example:  -automatic notification or emails when the County or Township issues a fire ban  -signage at boat launch indicating fire risk or fire bans.</p> <p>Seek clarification on restrictions during fire ban (e.g., allowances for cooking fires)</p>
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