



MUSKOKA
HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Muskoka Stewardship Conference
April 30, 2011

Outline



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- Muskoka Heritage Foundation
- Muskoka Stewardship Program
- Well Aware Program
- Get Involved!

About MHF



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Mandate:

to protect, conserve and nurture Muskoka's natural and cultural environment now and for future generations.

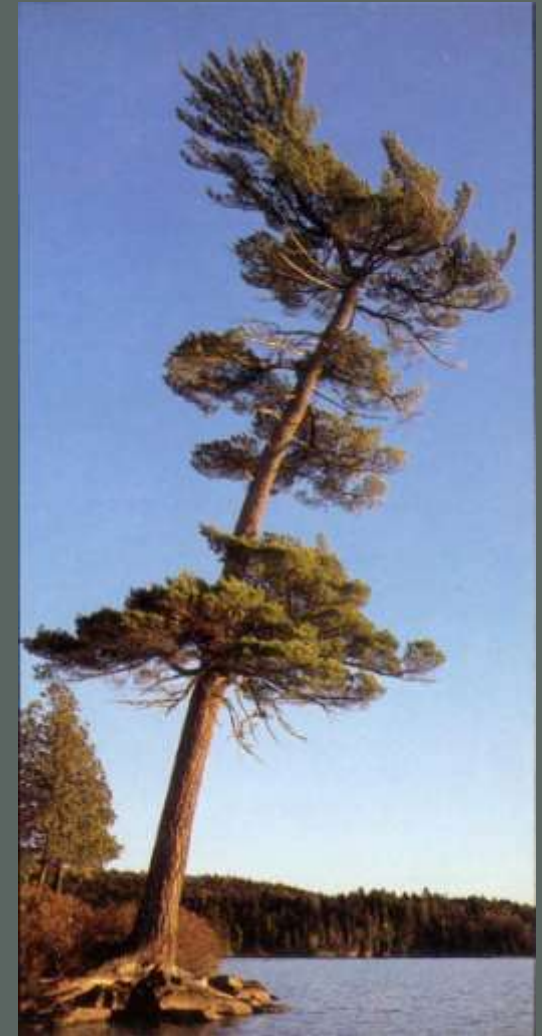


About MHF



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- Collaborates with
 - Muskoka Heritage Trust
 - Muskoka Watershed Council
- MHF achieves its goals through:
 - Help of volunteers
 - Science-based research
 - Stewardship
 - Education
 - Environmental leadership





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Stewardship Program

Mission



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Conservation
Through
Private
Stewardship



Goals



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- To increase private land stewardship
- To increase general public awareness of stewardship activities



Master Stewards

- 11 volunteer Master Stewards
- Master Stewards conduct site visits with interested landowners
- Deliver information, educate, encourage landowners
- Make an individual volunteer commitment to private land stewardship



What is private land stewardship?



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- Forest Management
- Fish & Wildlife Habitat
- Wetland Care
- Shoreline Care
- Native Species
- Invasive Species
- Species at Risk
- Dark Skies
- Water Quality
- Well-Aware Program



What is private land stewardship?



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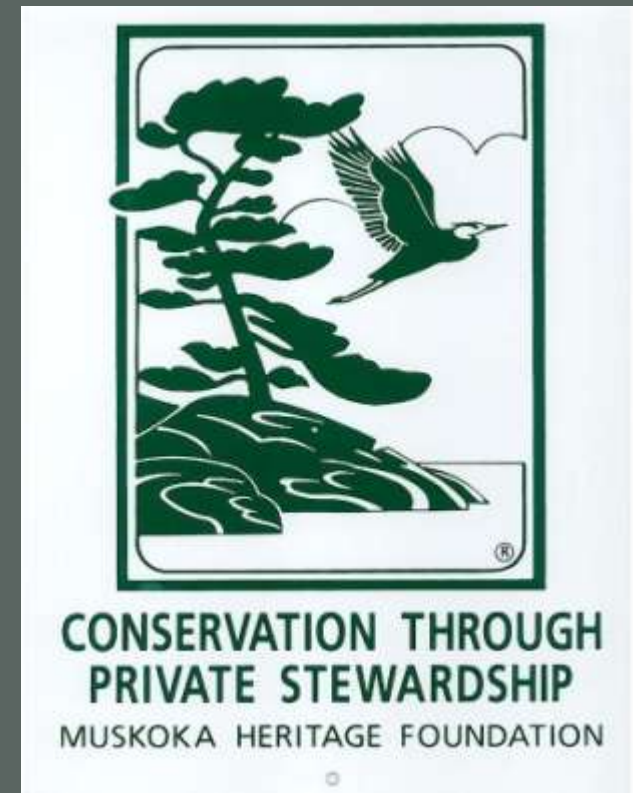
- How do you use your land?
- What are you interested in?
- Stewardship starts there
- Eventually comes full circle



Gatepost Sign



Have you seen this gatepost sign?



Achievements in 2010



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- Pilot Project: 16 landowner participants made a voluntary stewardship pledge
- Media coverage on 12 separate occasions
- Continuous new posts on the blog
 - www.muskokastewardship.blogspot.com
- Total of 397 acres and 4400 feet of shoreline protected under voluntary stewardship pledges.



Why is the stewardship program important?



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- 1-on-1 visits
- Protects land
- Fills a gap
- Empowers local volunteers



Resources

- Forestry
- Shorelines
- Wetlands
- Trail Building
- Species at Risk
- ***NEW*** Stewards' Guides Series



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Species at Risk in Parry Sound-Muskoka

**STEWARDS'
GUIDE SERIES**

WHAT ARE SPECIES AT RISK?
There are 5 classifications for species at risk in Ontario:

STATUS	DEFINITION
Extinct (Ext)	a native species that no longer lives anywhere in the world.
Extirpated (Exp)	a native species that no longer exists in the wild in Ontario, but still exist elsewhere.
Endangered (End)	a native species facing extinction or extirpation.
Threatened (Thr)	a native species at risk of becoming endangered if steps are not taken to address factors threatening it.
Special Concern (Sc)	a native species that is sensitive to human activities or natural events which may cause it to become endangered or threatened.

WHY ARE THESE SPECIES AT RISK?

Habitat loss (Wetlands are being filled in, forests cut, and grasslands ploughed and fenced)	Competition from other species (invasive & introduced)
Habitat fragmentation (roads, development)	Pollution & Chemicals
Disease	Traffic mortality
Predation	Illegal/Over Hunting

DESIGNATION
There are 2 levels of designation for species at risk. They can be listed provincially and/or federally.

Federal: COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) is a committee of academics, independent specialists, Aboriginal knowledge-holders, government biologists, museum staff and independent experts who act as the authority for assessing the conservation status of wildlife species that may be at risk of extinction in Canada.

Provincial: COSSARO (Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario) is another committee of experts whose role it is to review COSEWIC species at risk and classify those that occur in Ontario. This booklet uses provincial designations.

Common map turtles (Ext)
Photo: Kelsey Ottensmeyer

Eastern milksnake (Thr)
Photo: Scott Gilingerwater

Black-throated blue (Sc)
Photo: Scott Gilingerwater

Species at Risk

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New for 2011



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- Stewardship Conference
- N2N
- Workshop Series
- Annie Williams Park Restoration



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Well Aware Program

Are you Well Aware?



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Guided Self Assessments for Rural Well and Septic Owners



* Voluntary

* Conducted by a trained
water guide

* Confidential

* Non-regulatory

Learn how to:



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- Do an annual checkup on your well
- Maintain your well and septic system
- Correctly take a water sample
- Save water in your home
- Take care of an abandoned well
- Protect your community's groundwater



Well Assessment includes:



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- A 90 minute visit with a trained water guide
- Written report of recommendation on well maintenance and upgrading
- Opportunity to ask specific questions about your well and septic
- Free Well Aware kit and publications
- Septic safety information and tips to avoid costly repair bills





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Get Involved!

How you can help



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Get excited about stewardship!

- Be a landowner participant
- Get involved with N2N
- Become a Master Steward
- Have a Well Visit



Stay Informed!

- Visit the blog:

www.muskokastewardship.blogspot.com

Get Involved!



- Native Plant Sale
- Biodiversity Festival
- Lecture Series
- Cottage Tour
- Golf Tournament



More information at the booth in the lobby
or at www.muskokaheritage.org

Get Involved!



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Become a member of the Muskoka
Heritage Foundation

Well
Aware.ca

Spread the word about our
programs



Contact



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Check out the blog!

www.muskokastewardship.blogspot.com

