

# 2009 Muskoka Watersheds Progress Report Card

## Municipal Progress Since 2007

Goal	Why is it Important?	Current Situation	Are Things Improving?	Required Action
	☺ - Optimistic	☹ - Cautiously optimistic		☹ - Concerned
<b>Protect Shoreline Vegetation</b>	<p>Shoreline Vegetation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Protects lakes from nutrients and toxic chemicals.</li> <li>Provides wildlife habitat and protects water quality.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger development policy has been adopted.</li> <li>Two municipalities have adopted tree-cutting and site alteration bylaws.</li> <li>One municipality has adopted a development permit bylaw.</li> <li>However, many shorelines are still vulnerable to clear cutting.</li> </ul>	☺	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More tree-cutting and site alteration bylaws.</li> <li>Education to protect shorelines.</li> <li>Greater involvement by property owners.</li> <li>Additional resources for by-law enforcement.</li> </ul>
<b>Control Stormwater Runoff</b>	<p>Stormwater:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carries nutrients and toxins to lakes and rivers.</li> <li>Reduces groundwater used by private wells, plants and animals.</li> <li>Increases flooding.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muskoka-wide Stormwater Management Strategy is being developed.</li> <li>Larger new development is using new techniques.</li> <li>Stormwater in urban cores is not treated.</li> </ul>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Stormwater Management Strategy.</li> <li>Remediate urban core areas.</li> <li>Implement low-impact development.</li> <li>Monitor compliance more vigorously.</li> <li>Develop education and stewardship programs.</li> </ul>
<b>Protect Wetlands</b>	<p>Wetlands:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are the kidneys of the watershed.</li> <li>Protect water quality, water quantity and base flow.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There have been no new programs to evaluate or protect wetlands.</li> <li>Protection of wetlands on site-specific development is often not supported.</li> </ul>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate more wetlands.</li> <li>Implement stronger policy to protect all wetlands.</li> <li>Adopt implementation tools to protect all wetlands.</li> <li>Educate individuals about the values of wetlands versus the negative image of a "swamp"</li> </ul>
<b>Maintain Large Natural Areas</b>	<p>Natural Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide habitat for plants and animals.</li> <li>Moderate climate and clean our air.</li> <li>Are the basis of our tourism and recreation economy.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muskoka has initiated background studies that will be incorporated into a natural areas strategy.</li> <li>Algonquin Highlands has initiated the Water Trails program.</li> </ul>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a natural areas strategy.</li> <li>Adopt implementation tools to protect large natural areas.</li> <li>Track the cumulative effect of development decisions to understand watershed impact of site-specific decisions.</li> </ul>
<b>Remediate Degraded Areas</b>	<p>Degraded Areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visually detract from a "Natural Muskoka."</li> <li>Do not provide the ecological values needed for a "Healthy Muskoka."</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several Area Municipalities have renaturalized shorelines.</li> <li>Gravenhurst has created fish habitat at the Muskoka Wharf.</li> <li>Huntsville is improving the old lumber yard.</li> </ul>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Require strategic analysis of our watershed to develop a comprehensive plan for conservation.</li> <li>Continue shoreline renaturalization.</li> <li>Establish natural corridors for movement and migration of wildlife.</li> </ul>
<b>Encourage New Development to Locate in Urban Areas</b>	<p>Disperse Rural Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consumes rural land and natural areas.</li> <li>Increases the use of vehicles that emit carbon.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muskoka is developing a Growth Management Strategy.</li> <li>Site-specific rural residential applications are still routinely approved.</li> </ul>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and implement Growth Management Strategies at the local level.</li> <li>Educate individuals about the values of development occurring in urban areas versus widespread rural development.</li> </ul>
<b>Reduce Carbon Emissions</b>	<p>Carbon Emissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead to climate change that has environmental and ecological impacts across the watershed.</li> </ul>	<p>Since 2007:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Several municipalities have energy reduction programs and purchase or lease fuel efficient vehicles.</li> </ul>	☹	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to lead by example and undertake stronger actions.</li> <li>Encourage senior government action.</li> </ul>

The Muskoka Watersheds Progress Report Card is produced by the Muskoka Watershed Council, an organization founded by the District Municipality of Muskoka and the Muskoka Heritage Foundation. The Muskoka Watershed Council's goal is to champion watershed health. For the full report prepared by the Muskoka Watershed Council, visit [www.muskokaheritage.org/watershed](http://www.muskokaheritage.org/watershed). The next full Report Card will be published in the spring 2010.



**Muskoka**  
WATERSHED COUNCIL