



CHIEFS OF ONTARIO

First Nations Perspectives on Integrated Watershed Management in Muskoka

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Chiefs of Ontario

Who We Are

- The Chiefs of Ontario Secretariat is the initial point of contact for many provincial ministries when it comes to engagement on policy, legislation, and regulatory changes
- The Secretariat does not maintain any inherent authority and is not a political body – rather, it is a technical body that support First Nations leadership and relays information to them
- Requests for engagement directed to the Secretariat must be rejected as technicians cannot speak on behalf of First Nations leadership as **they are not the rights holders**
- The Secretariat can play a role in developing and implementing engagement strategies, but only if mandated by Chiefs-in-Assembly resolution for Leadership Council motion

First Nations Perspectives on Integrated Watershed Management in Muskoka

- First Nation Participation
- Watershed Planning Guide (Province)
- Best Practices for First Nations Engagement
- Collaboration and Relationship Building

The way to promote respectful and mutually beneficial relationships in the management and protection of land and water is to support the meaningful participation of First Nations in Integrated Watershed Management processes.





Meaningful First Nations Participation

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS, 2020)

Requires planning authorities to engage with Indigenous communities and coordinate on land use planning matters

First Nations Engagement Best Practices include:

- Early engagement is vital and contact with First Nations communities should be made prior to commencement of watershed planning.
- Meaningful representation on steering committees/governance structures.
- Support and resources for participation and capacity building throughout watershed planning development and implementation.
- Discuss with each First Nation community how best to work together.
- Learn from each other and foster relationship building.



Collaboration best practices include:

- Development of stewardship programs and conservation partnerships that support Indigenous knowledge and participation.
- Develop initiatives and materials that include Indigenous perspectives in watershed awareness.
- Involvement in environmental monitoring and input into current and future watershed planning efforts.
- Collaboration to address the maintenance of water quality and quantity within watersheds.
- Promote mentorship opportunities for planning and infrastructure
- Provide opportunities for Indigenous youth to network with non-Indigenous youth in municipalities regarding watershed planning.



The Seventh Generation Principle is based on an ancient Haudenosaunee (Iroquois)* philosophy that the decisions we make today should result in a sustainable world seven generations into the future.