



Muskoka

WATERSHED COUNCIL

Minutes

Friday, October 20, 2023

1:00 pm

Council Chambers (District of Muskoka) & Zoom

Present (In-person)

Peter Sale (Chair)

Andrew Fyfe

Julia Rodgerson

Patricia Arney

Peter Johnston

Kevin Trimble

Susan Boudreau

Michael Peppard

Present (Zoom)

Brian Bochek

Lance DeCaire

Cathy Oakden

Chris Cragg

Joan Frain

Geoff Ross

Ann Curley

Richard Lammers

MWC Staff

Rebecca Willison

DMM Staff

Glenn Cunnington *

Christiane Masters

Guests

Rupert Kindersley

Preston Nielsan *

Dan McLeod *

Forrest Pengra *

Amanda Vincent *

Deborah Frame *

* Attended by Zoom

Welcome

MWC Chair Peter Sale called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm with an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement.

Confirmation of Minutes

MOTION

Moved by Andrew Fyfe, seconded by Peter Johnston

THAT the minutes of the Muskoka Watershed Council meeting dated September 22, 2023, be approved.

CARRIED

Business Arising from the Minutes

- None.

Presentations

What Did Our 2023 Report Card Really Say: Consequences of failing to act in a rapidly changing world

– Dr. Peter Sale

Peter Sale gave a brief presentation highlighting some of the concerning trends identified in the 2023 Muskoka Watershed Report Card, specifically low calcium levels in lakes, increased chloride levels in lakes, increasing number of cyanobacterial blooms in area lakes, rising winter temperatures and a corresponding decrease in annual days of ice cover.

He also identified some trends that we were not able to assess for the Report Card around development, including the impacts of growing development pressures, increased use, and changing forms of use. Due to lack of data, we were also unable to report on wetland changes, general forest health, and biodiversity loss.

Peter concluded his presentation by noting that the environment is not a passive space awaiting development. Rather, it is a living, breathing, multi-species entity that responds to whatever stresses are placed on it. We see evidence of some of those responses, and if we are to manage it, we must understand how it responds and we must do what we can to modify those responses. He noted that, at a time of substantial change, we need humility as we approach the challenge of environmental management.

Following Peter's presentation, there was discussion about different development impacts, including septic systems and the loss of wetlands.

Next Steps in Developing an Integrated Watershed Management Plan – Kevin Trimble

Kevin Trimble reviewed the presentation he gave at the District's Community and Planning Services Committee meeting the previous day outlining a path forward to developing an integrated watershed management plan for the Muskoka River Watershed. He stressed that a collaborative partnership is needed to bring IWM to all the upper and lower tier municipalities in the region. Based on a review of case studies outlined in the [Watershed Governance](#) report produced for MWC in 2022, MWC is well-positioned to bring this partnership together.

The next steps, as the IWM Community Roundtable (CRT) sees them, are:

1. Form the partnership (including governance model and funding formulas)
2. Detailed scoping for a Master Watershed Strategy or Plan
3. Synthesis and Gap Analysis

MWC requested that the District of Muskoka agree to the following:

- That DMM commits to being a member in a partnership of watershed municipalities and other key stakeholders, led by MWC;
- That MWC would lead in the development of this consortium until it can develop a governance model, with funding formulas to manage the detailed scoping of a watershed management strategy;
- That District staff work with MWC on an MOU to further define our relationship; and

- That the agreed upon watershed management strategy be implemented

Following Kevin's presentation, there was discussion about the lack of funding from the Province for developing and implementing an integrated watershed management plan. It was suggested that MWC approach the Province independent of DMM's discussion with the Province.

Committee Updates

- **IWM Community Roundtable** – Kevin Trimble reported that the CRT has received some good feedback from municipalities following the delegations, especially for the municipal IWM conference schedule for February 9, 2024. The CRT continues to meet monthly to discuss what to do next with the various subsets of recommendations. He noted that many of the high level activities of CRT are also being integrated into MWC's other committees, like fundraising and communications.
- **Communications Committee** – In the absence of Committee Chair Pete LeMoine, Julia Rodgerson gave a [brief presentation](#) outlining the Committee's goals and objectives, membership, and key initiatives for the remainder to 2023 and 2024. She noted the media coverage for the release of the 2023 Muskoka Watershed Report Card, and highlighted the extensive social media campaign currently underway to promote MWC, the 2023 Muskoka Watershed Resort Card, and IWM.
- **Finance Committee** – In the absence of Committee Chair Daryle Moffatt, Peter Sale reported that the MWC budget for 2024 is being drafted for review by the Committee and approval by the Board of Directors.
- **Fundraising Committee** – In the absence of Committee Chair Daryle Moffatt, Peter Sale reported that the budget will set out the amount of money the committee will need to raise to carry out MWC's activities over the next year.
- **Membership Committee** – Committee Co-Chair Michael Peppard reported that two new members have joined MWC, Susan Boudreau and Julia Rodgerson. Both introduced themselves.

Partner Updates

- **Huntsville Nature Club** – Andrew Fyfe distributed some literature and gave a brief introduction about MWC at the Huntsville Nature Club's last meeting and received a very positive response. Andrew noted that the connection will be important as MWC looks for ways to better report on the health of the land component of the environment.
- **Township of Lake of Bays** – Mike Peppard that LOB is moving ahead with actions in their climate change mitigation plan and have recently met with Lakeland Power to discuss charging stations.
- **Town of Gravenhurst** – Councillor Peter Johnston reported that he will be giving lectures at the Gravenhurst Library and the Muskoka Discovery Centre. Both lectures will be recorded to be shared with other libraries. He has a 5-minute standing item on the Gravenhurst Council agenda where he provides an update on MWC or IWM initiatives.
- **Township of Georgian Bay** – Councillor Brian Bocek is a board member of the Severn Sound Environmental Association (SSEA) and he is looking forward to getting more involved in MWC to help collaboration between the two organizations.
- **Georgian Bay Association** – Rupert Kindersley reported that GBA has written to the Province requesting that the ban on unencapsulated dock foam from being used in new dock construction

or repairs, which was enacted in May 2021 and was supposed to go into effect on May 2023, be put into effect. GBA is also trying to get legislation in place to require filters on washing machines to capture microfibres.

New Business

- **Donations** – Peter Sale reported that two unexpected but welcomed donations have been received recently, one from the Three Mile Lake Association and another from the Great Muskoka Paddling Experience, which has officially ceased operations. There will be letters sent to thank them.

Next MWC Meeting

MWC's next meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 24th and will take place in Council Chambers at the District of Muskoka administration building, located at 70 Pine Street in Bracebridge.

Adjournment

Peter Sale adjourned the meeting at 3:05 pm.



Muskoka
WATERSHED COUNCIL

INTEGRATED WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PATH FORWARD

Kevin Trimble
Director

Peter Sale
Chair

October 19, 2023

DMM CPSC

1

2023 REPORT CARD

6th report card since 2004

Combined trends must be
dealt with collectively and at
a watershed scale

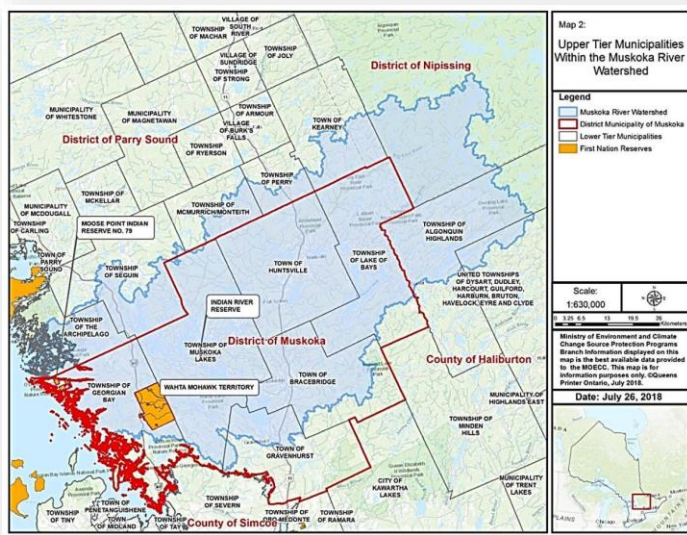


2

We need to....

Integrate solutions and coordinate across the whole watershed but...

We need a collaborative partnership to do this



Watershed governance

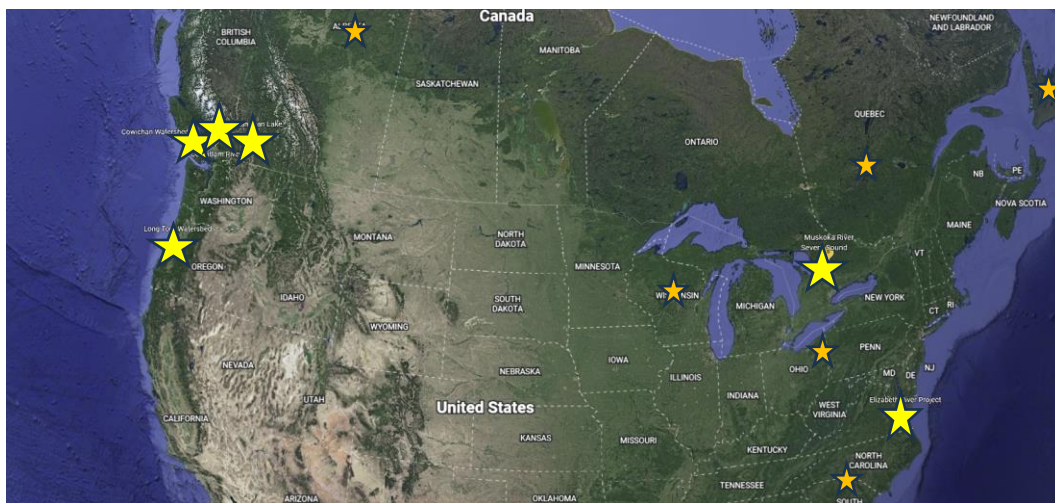
A selection of case studies for informing integrated watershed management in the Muskoka River watershed.



January 2023 | Full report

Governance Models





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Community-led Watershed Organizations

Joint Municipal Services Board

- Severn Sound, ON
- Okanagan Basin, BC

Roundtable

- Coquitlam River, BC

Watershed Council

- Long Tom, OR

Co-Governance Watershed Board

- Cowichan, BC

ENGO

- Elizabeth River Project, VA



1. Context
2. Organizational Structure
3. Social Infrastructure
4. Finances
5. Adaptability

6

Collaborative watershed organizations



COMPELLING CAUSE /
ISSUES THAT RESONATE



CALL TO ACTION;
ESTABLISHING VISION,
GOALS



ESTABLISHING WAYS TO
COORDINATE AND
COLLABORATE

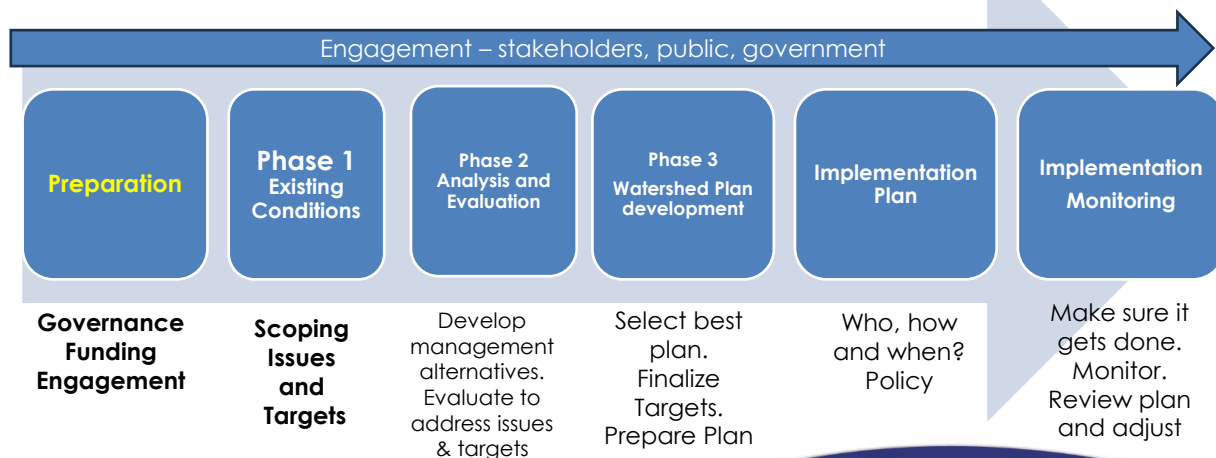


BUILDING KNOWLEDGE
TOGETHER



ESTABLISHING WAYS TO
MAKE DECISIONS

Road Map to an Integrated Watershed Management Plan



Modified from D.M. Downs

Next Steps

- Form the partnership (including governance model and funding formulas)
- Detailed scoping for a Master Watershed Strategy or Plan
 - Synthesis and Gap Analysis



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What we are asking

- that DMM commits to being a member in a partnership of watershed municipalities and other key stakeholders, led by MWC
- That MWC would lead in the development of this consortium until it can develop a governance model, with funding formulas to manage the detailed scoping of a watershed management strategy
 - That District staff work with MWC on an MOU to further define our relationship
 - That the agreed upon watershed management strategy will be implemented



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Muskoka
WATERSHED COUNCIL

THANK YOU

Learn more at
www.muskokawatershed.org



Communications Update

Friday, October 20, 2023



Muskoka
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1

Comms Committee

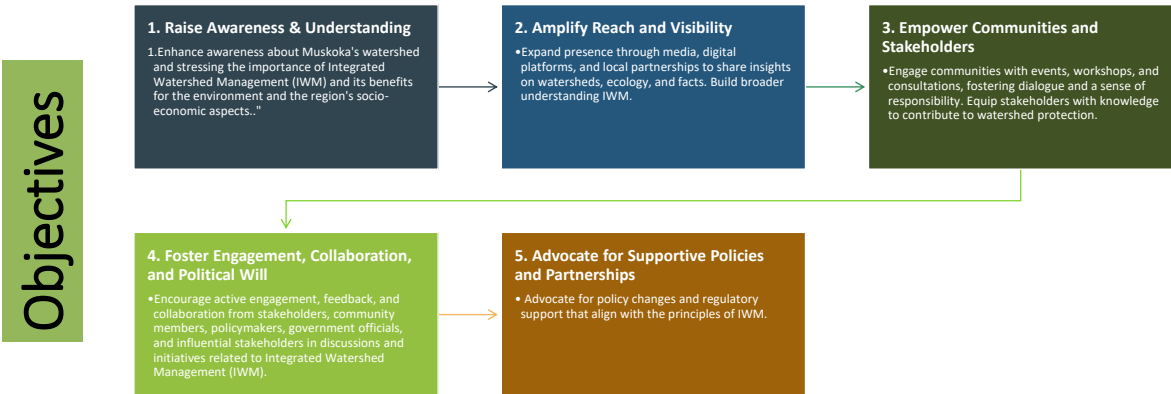
Includes both CRT and MWC as one entity



2

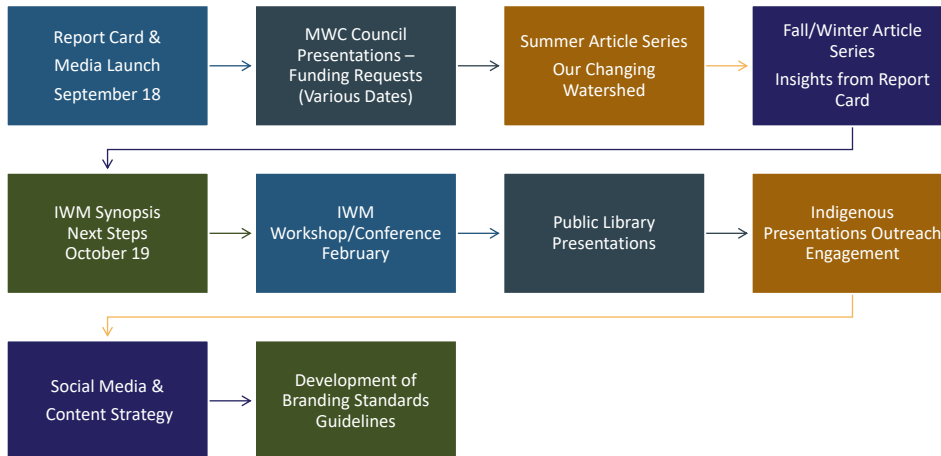
Communication Goal and Objectives

Goal Establish a comprehensive understanding of Muskoka's watersheds, its ecological health, key facts, and general information, positioning MWC as the expert source for all related knowledge. Through this education, we aim to raise awareness, promote engagement, and drive action towards Integrated Watershed Management (IWM) in Muskoka.



3

2023 – 2024 Key Initiatives



DMM Municipal Webcasts: Raise awareness of IWM projects/findings and District resources (GIS mapping, Floodplain mapping, Hydrological modeling, etc.) to support MRW Municipalities."

4

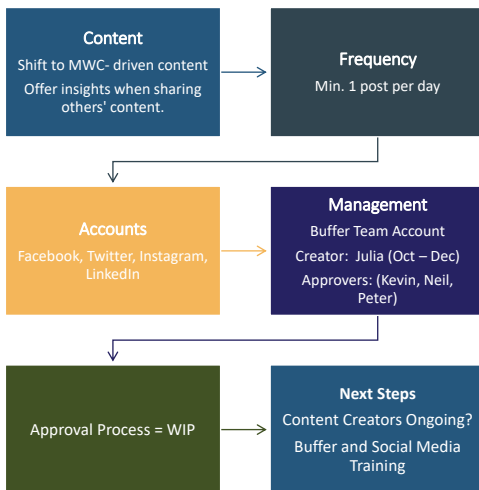
Report Card Launch Media Coverage

1. [Moose Radio Stations](#)
2. [Huntsville Doppler \(media release\)](#)
3. [Muskoka Region \(media release\)](#)
4. [County 102 + Bayshore Broadcasting \(media release\)](#)
5. [Muskoka411 \(media release\)](#)
6. [Cottage Life](#)
7. [Highlander](#)
8. [Your Tv Muskoka](#)



5

Social Media Development



6

Social Media Content Strategy

Knowledge Hub for Conservation:

Showcase the Muskoka Watershed Council's mission and educational content about the Muskoka Watershed's ecological health. Promote Integrated Watershed Management (IWM) to raise awareness and understanding.

Community for Sustainable Actions:

Encourage community interaction and knowledge sharing to drive conservation efforts in the Muskoka River Watershed. Share valuable content and inspire informed environmental choices, supporting IWM and sustainability goals.

Watershed Wisdom and Engagement:

Position the Muskoka Watershed Council's social media as a central platform for comprehensive watershed knowledge. Foster discussions, active participation, and opportunities for resource sharing to engage the community and promote a sustainable future.