



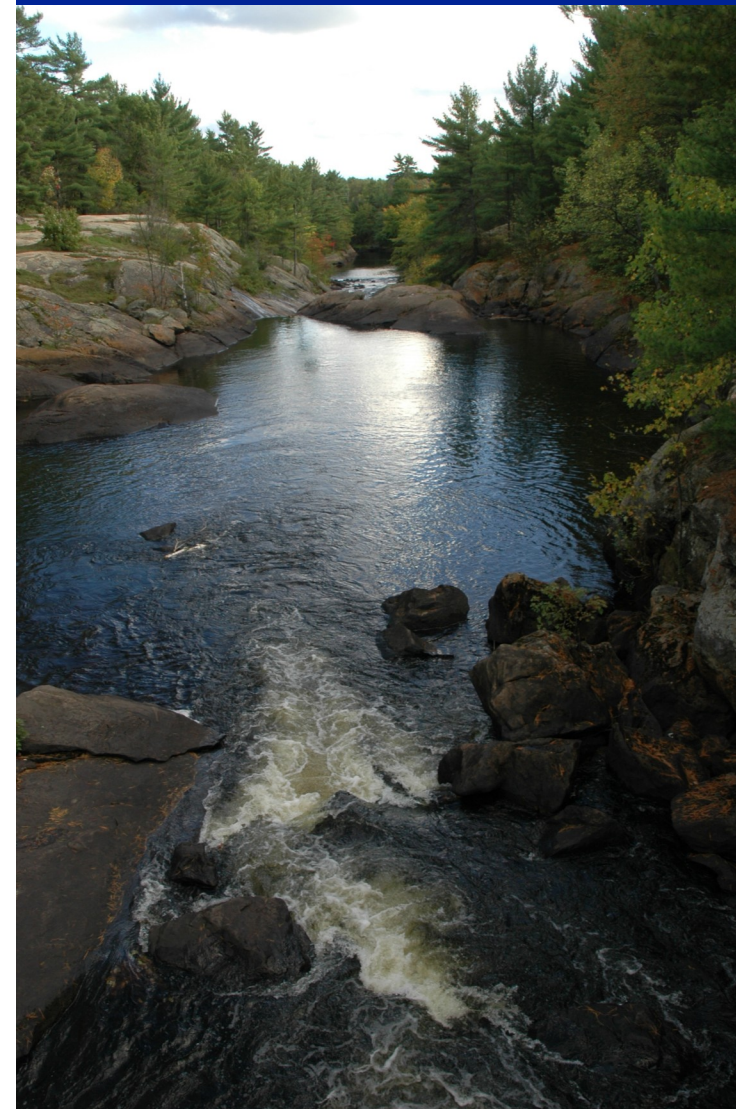
*Muskoka*  
WATERSHED COUNCIL

**CHAMPIONING  
WATERSHED HEALTH**

## WHAT WE DO

- ◆ Produce a series of **Watershed Report Cards**.
- ◆ Develop **position papers** on issues related to watershed health, including aggregates, wetlands, pesticides, power generation, and economic development.
- ◆ Work cooperatively with other organizations on projects related to watershed health.
- ◆ Undertake the **Best Practices** public awareness program, using brochures, public service announcements, community presentations, newspaper articles and a website.
- ◆ Develop public outreach programs including newspaper articles and community presentations.

To sustain and enhance the air, water and terrestrial ecosystems of the watersheds of Muskoka for the environmental, health, economic, spiritual and intrinsic values they provide.



## HOW TO HELP

### Be Aware

*Awareness is the first step to understanding. The watershed report card provides residents with a measure of how healthy our watersheds are and provides a basis for action.*

### Be Accountable

*We are all responsible for our water, so we need to manage our impact on our watersheds.*






### Be Active

*Even small changes can have a big impact. If we all participate, our watershed health will greatly improve.*

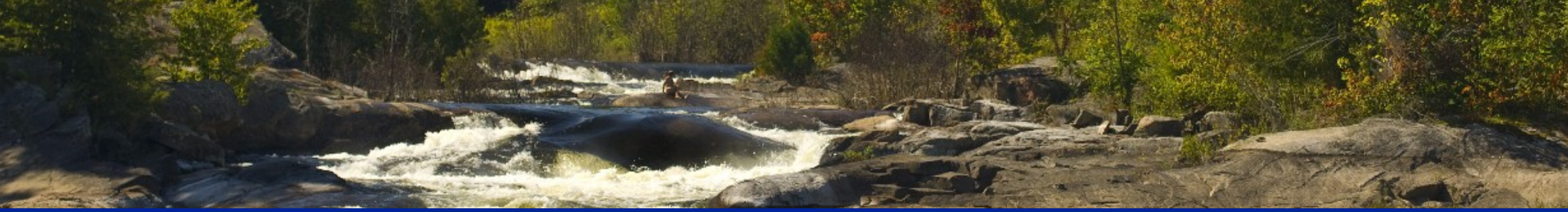


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Banner photos by John McQuarrie



# A strong and independent voice to champion watershed health

## MUSKOKA WATERSHED COUNCIL

Muskoka Watershed Council (**MWC**) is a volunteer-based non-profit organization with the mandate to **champion watershed health**.

MWC is comprised of representatives from a wide range of stakeholders, including municipal, provincial and federal governments; lake and area ratepayer associations; local industry, tourism, real estate and other interests from across our watersheds.

In Muskoka, where there is no conservation authority, MWC provides a coordinated voice on issues affecting the environmental quality of our watersheds.



**WETLANDS** are an important component of the Muskoka landscape. They are the kidneys of our watersheds and ensure that we continue to enjoy excellent water quality. We must encourage the identification, evaluation and protection of our wetlands in order to ensure the long-term health of these essential ecosystems.

## OUR HISTORY

Muskoka Watershed Council was established in 2001 by the *Muskoka Heritage Foundation* and *The District Municipality of Muskoka* in the belief that the most effective way to sustain the watersheds of Muskoka for future generations is through cooperative approaches to watershed management involving a broad cross-section of stakeholders. In 2013, Friends of the Muskoka Watershed replaced MHF as the non-profit community organization supporting MWC.

MWC is not a regulatory or enforcement agency. Instead, it provides information to decision-makers, managers and the general public on ways to protect and restore the resources of our watersheds.



**LAKES** and rivers feature prominently in iconic images of Muskoka's natural environment. Their wellbeing is fundamental to overall watershed health and they are essential to our social and economic welfare. MWC facilitates science-based evaluation of water quality to help define the balance between built and natural environments.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

1. **Evaluate the Watersheds** - Develop and implement science-based programs to research, assess, monitor and evaluate.
2. **Speak for the Watersheds** - Advise on sound air, land and water use planning, as well as management practices and policies.
3. **Communicate and Educate** - Develop and implement public information and education programs that promote sustainable lifestyle choices and an understanding of the impact of human actions on the watersheds.
4. **Promote and Demonstrate** - Promote and facilitate demonstration activities and best practices that support an environmentally sustainable economy and a healthy community structure.



**FORESTS** are a fundamental building block of a healthy watershed. They are essential for maintaining biodiversity and ecological services like water and air purification, nutrient cycling, carbon sequestration, and erosion and flood control. Healthy forests are needed to sustain forestry as a traditional economic activity.