

# lake of bays ASSOCIATION currentconnection



## Your Questions ~answered

by Tim Hadwen

**Q:** *What is an Official Plan and what does LOBA have to say?*

**A:** The Township of Lake of Bays Official Plan (OP) governs growth and development in the communities, rural areas and waterfront around our lakes. The OP is currently under review, and the outcome will shape the future of lands in the township.

The Official Plan determines how land will be used and designates land as:

- rural
- waterfront
- urban residential, core and commercial, or
- community residential, core and commercial

Policies are set governing development within each designated area. There are specific rules about what land uses are allowed, what structures can be built in each area, their size, and where they can be put. These rules include

...continued—page 2

LAKE OF BAYS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER VOLUME 36, NUMBER 2

FALL 2025

Through education, advocacy and engagement, our mission is to foster a healthy natural environment, responsible waterfront development, a thriving community, and a Lake of Bays shared respectfully and safely by all.

## INVASIVE aquatic plants

*What is that plant growing in the water?*

by Penny Thomas

**N**ative aquatic plants have roots, stems, and leaves and are a natural part of a healthy lake ecosystem, providing crucial habitat for fish and preventing shoreline erosion. Invasive aquatic plants can enter our lake when they break off boats and trailers that have been in a waterway that has an infestation. It is important to distinguish between native species, invasive plants, and algae.

If you don't recognize a plant on your shore or in a bay or if you suspect it's an invasive species, take photos and note the location using GPS coordinates. Report it to Ontario's Invading Species Hotline at **1-800-563-7711** or through the Early Detection and Distribution Mapping system, **EDDMaps.org** where you can register and report your sightings. The Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program is a partnership between the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.

...continued—page 2



**above:** Eurasian Watermilfoil can grow rapidly, outcompete native vegetation and interfere with recreational activities. As they decompose at the end of each season, they deoxygenate the water killing other aquatic species.

continued—Official Plan...page 1

requirements for roads, water and sewage and protection of the environment. Policies are set governing development within each designated area. There are specific rules about what land uses are allowed, what structures can be built in each area, their size, and where they can be put. These rules include requirements for roads, water and sewage and protection of the environment.

The Lake of Bays Association wants the rules for the waterfront areas to be balanced while protecting the shoreline. There are ever greater pressures to develop the waterfront of Lake of Bays, and it is crucially important for the OP to contain provisions that will prevent over-development.

After consultation, the Township has released a draft new OP, which can be found at [engage.lakeofbays.on.ca](http://engage.lakeofbays.on.ca). LOBA supports many new elements of the draft OP but further improvement is needed to protect the natural shoreline environment, water quality and visual beauty of the lake. LOBA has set out its recommendations for improved policies in our submissions which can be found on our website. We will keep you posted as consultations about the OP continue. As always, your comments are welcome. 



continued—Invasive Aquatic Plants...page 1

**I**nvasive plants like Eurasian Watermilfoil and European frog-bit, can grow rapidly, outcompete native vegetation and interfere with recreational activities. As they decompose at the end of each season, they deoxygenate the water killing other aquatic species. The presence of either would greatly impact water quality in Lake of Bays.

***Invasive plants like Eurasian Watermilfoil and European frog-bit, can grow rapidly, outcompete native vegetation and interfere with recreational activities.***

Eurasian Watermilfoil has slender stems up to 2.5 m long. The plant is a perennial that grows under the water surface and has feather-like green leaves that circle the stem in groups of four or five. Eurasian Watermilfoil blooms in late July and early August and has orange/red flowers that are 4–6 mm long. Flowers are produced in the leaf axils on a spike that can be 5-20 cm long held vertically above the water surface.

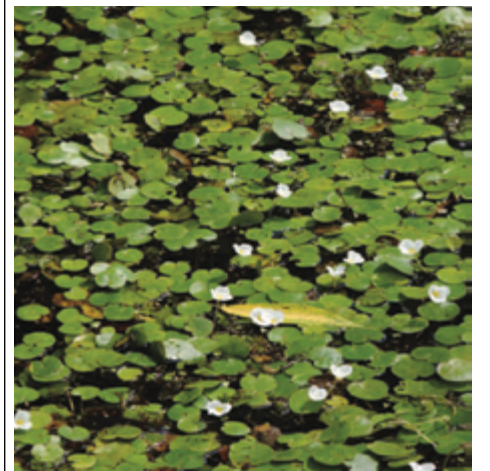
European frog-bit is a free-floating, sometimes rooted, aquatic plant that resembles a small water lily. These plants can form impenetrable mats at the water's surface.

Dealing with aquatic growth requires ongoing and responsible action from all of us.

The most impactful action involves preventing excess nutrient runoff—primarily phosphorus—from entering the lake. Waterfront property owners and users can significantly reduce this by maintaining natural shorelines with vegetative buffers, avoiding chemical fertilizers, and properly maintaining septic systems. If we do this, we can protect the ecological balance of our beautiful Lake of Bays. 



**above:** Eurasian Watermilfoil has wispy fern-like slender stems.



**above:** European frog-bit resembles a free-floating water lily-like surface plant

## LOBA IN ACTION

*This past summer, a Lake of Bays resident raised concerns about an aquatic plant growing offshore, where there had not previously been growth. Environment committee chair Penny Thomas assisted the resident in collecting a sample and submitting photos through the EDDMaps app. The plant was identified as Pondweed, a native, harmless aquatic plant. Thanks to Penny and the environmentally-aware Lake of Bays resident! Want to learn more about Aquatic Plants? Download the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations' comprehensive guide *Understanding the Underwater World of Plants* at [foca.on.ca/aquatic-plants](http://foca.on.ca/aquatic-plants).*

So far, 2025 has been another active year for LOBA. The Township of Lake of Bays is reviewing and updating their Official Plan (OP). LOBA representatives attended OP Open Houses in Dwight and Baysville in August. We reviewed the Draft Official Plan in depth and submitted a detailed response to the Township as well as making a deputation to Township Council on August 25. Further meetings will be taking place this year, but in general we are pleased with the direction the OP is taking, particularly with respect to protecting shorelines and providing clearer policies with respect to redevelopment and expansions to existing cottages.

In 2015, the Township approved reducing the minimum area of backlots in the Waterfront Area from 10 to 7 acres. LOBA appealed this reduction to the then Ontario Municipal Board, but we were not successful. The current Draft OP is proposing a further reduction to 5 acres without any rationale for the change. LOBA is advocating against this out of concern that increased backlot development could have an adverse impact on the health of the lake.

Ninety percent of all lake life is born, raised and fed in the area where the land and water meet. The shallow water and first 10-15 metres of shoreland form a ribbon of life around lakes that is essential to the survival of many species. Natural vegetation plays an important role in preventing soil erosion and improving water quality. Unaware of the importance of shoreline vegetation, many landowners clear their shorelines and transform them into front lawns. Native plant species are far more effective in protecting properties from erosion and runoff than the roots of grass which only reach 8 cm below the surface. In an effort to educate property owners of what they must know before developing their properties, altering their shorelines or removing vegetation,



**Ninety percent of all lake life is born, raised and fed in the area where the land and water meet . . . Unaware of the importance of shoreline vegetation, many landowners clear their shorelines and transform them into front lawns.**

we reached out to the Township to produce a summary brochure that could provide property owners with some of the essential facts. LOBA paid to have the resulting Community Planning Permit System (CPPS) brochure distributed to every dock on Lake of Bays with Dockside magazine just prior to the Labour Day long weekend. If you are unsure about whether your project complies with the CPPS, contact the Township Planning Services Department at **705-635-2272** or email **planning@lakeofbays.on.ca**.

## president's report **Paul Gleeson**

### The Township of Lake of Bays reviews and updates its Official Plan

The District of Muskoka has begun implementing changes to its waste management policies in an effort to maximize diversion and extend the life of their one and only landfill site. Waste is to be sorted into organics, recycling, and garbage. As of January 1, 2025, only clear garbage bags have been accepted for curbside pick up in Muskoka. Coming January 2026, the same rules will apply to those using a District Waste Facility to dispose of their waste. To learn more about the clear bag program visit [muskoka.on.ca/clear-bags](https://muskoka.on.ca/clear-bags). Use the District's online Waste Wizard, [muskoka.on.ca/wastewizard](https://muskoka.on.ca/wastewizard), to determine if an item belongs in garbage, recycling or organics.

The District of Muskoka is also undertaking a comprehensive Solid Waste Master Plan to meet their needs for the next 30 years and LOBA has been participating as a member of the Steering Committee. The Master Plan is scheduled to be completed by June 2026. For project updates and to learn more, visit [engage-muskoka.ca/solid-waste-master-plan](https://engage-muskoka.ca/solid-waste-master-plan).

One proposed change that concerns us is reducing the garbage bag maximum from two to one bag per week. LOBA has already voiced its concerns about the difficulty seasonal cottagers will have with this limit, particularly during peak season when they have an overflow of visitors resulting in greater garbage generation.

...continued—page 5

# A COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION

by Mary Ann Peden

## INSTALLING A LIFE-SAVING AUTOMATED EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATOR



*On pages 30-33 of the 2025 Lake of Bays Annual, Mary Ann Peden wrote about the importance of automated external defibrillators (AED) in the event of sudden cardiac arrest. In this follow-up article, she describes how her laneway community worked together to install two AEDs.*

Cottage communities are often at higher risk when it comes to surviving sudden cardiac arrest due to longer response times from first responders. Many cottagers and residents are not properly equipped to handle these life-threatening situations. Ideally an AED needs to be within four minutes for a person to retrieve it and return to the person receiving CPR.

Our first step was to arrange for Deb Hennig and her team at **Action First Aid (AFA)** to come out to our laneway, assess what was needed and provide us with a quote. We chose this company because of their over 25 years of experience. An added bonus was the discount they offer through the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA). LOBA is a member of FOCA which entitles all our members

to this discount. Deb determined that we would need a year-round AED in a temperature-controlled cabinet located at a resident's home where he could ensure it was backed up by a generator in case of power outages. A second portable three-season AED would be available further down the laneway on the side of an accessible building near the laneway and stored in an alternate location during the winter months.

We communicated the details to our neighbours and 100% supported purchasing the AEDs. We set up an account, and each family household paid \$350 for the two AEDs. The account will be kept active as the pads and batteries need to be replaced peri-



**WHILE AEDs ARE DESIGNED TO BE SIMPLE TO USE, TRAINING PROGRAMS ENSURE USERS ARE EMPOWERED TO CONFIDENTLY STEP IN AND RESPOND IN A CARDIAC EMERGENCY.**



**Use this QR code to watch a video about our community's AED journey.**



**above:** Deb Hennig and her team demonstrate the Action First Aid (AFA) program  
**above right:** Deb Hennig from the Action First Aid (AFA) program

*continued—Call to Action...page 4*

odically. AFA offers a complimentary service that will alert us when the pads or batteries are expiring.

The final step in the process was education and training. While AEDs are designed to be simple to use, training programs ensure users are empowered to confidently step in and respond in a cardiac emergency. In early July we set up an AFA workshop called "Shock on the Dock" on our boathouse deck. The AFA team provided the equipment for CPR training and AED demonstration. Eighteen individuals participated for three hours and the neighbours who were unable to participate were sent a link for online training videos available through AFA.

We are proud to say we have a safer, connected community that is prepared to take action and save lives. Hopefully we never have to use the AEDs, but they are there if we need them. I encourage our neighbours on Lake of Bays to start the process and make their community safer as well. 

*continued—President's Report...page 3*

As it is time to renew your LOBA membership, I would remind you that retaining a large membership gives us an effective voice to advocate on issues that affect our quality of life on Lake of Bays. LOBA's mission is to foster a healthy natural environment, responsible waterfront development, a thriving community, and a Lake of Bays shared respectfully and safely by all. Please [renew your membership](#) to support our mission and encourage any non-members you know to join.

Thank you for your ongoing support. 

**Save the Date**  
**Winter Town Hall Meeting**  
**and Lunch**  
**Saturday January 24, 2026**  
**Bethune United Church,**  
**Baysville**

**Muskoka's lakes and shorelines are among our most valuable natural assets, but they are at risk from invasive species.**

## **PROTECTING OUR LAKES FROM INVASIVE SPECIES**

*By Andrea Alldred*

*Invasive Species Technician, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters*



**I**nvasive species are non-native plants and animals that spread aggressively, outcompeting native species and disrupting ecosystems. Ontario has more invasive species than any other province, and while Muskoka has fewer than southern Ontario, new threats continue to emerge.

### **How Do They Spread?**

Invasive species are mainly spread by human activity. Seeds cling to shoes, pets, or bikes on trails. Boats, trailers, and fishing gear can carry aquatic plants or tiny organisms between lakes. Firewood moved from one property to another may harbor insect larvae. Even releasing unwanted pets or aquarium plants can introduce new invasives. Once established, they are extremely difficult and costly to remove.

### **Key Invaders in Muskoka**

Several invasive species are already affecting Muskoka's landscapes and waters. Phragmites (European Common Reed)

### **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

- Everyone who enjoys our lakes has a role in prevention.
- Clean, drain, and dry boats and equipment before moving between lakes.
- Avoid planting invasive ornamentals. Choose native or non-invasive alternatives.
- Buy and burn firewood locally.
- Report sightings of invasive species to help track and manage them early.

grows up to 5 metres tall, forming dense stands that choke wetlands and damage property. Japanese Knotweed, with roots spreading 5 metres deep, can grow through pavement. Himalayan Balsam destabilizes riverbanks, while Dog-Strangling Vine threatens monarch butterflies. In local lakes, Eurasian Watermilfoil forms dense underwater mats that interfere with boating and swimming, and Spiny Waterflea clogs fishing gear while disrupting the food chain.

*...continued—page 8*



# A Long and Winding Road

## High Float Surface Emulsion

High float surface emulsion, commonly known as tar and chip, is a pavement treatment for low volume roads that involves applying a specialized asphalt emulsion mixture. This mixture, rich in polymers and additives, enhances resistance to wear and damage. High float surface emulsion is applied after the road surface has been prepared via pulverization.

The emulsion is spread evenly across the pavement using specialized equipment, creating a durable wearing course that extends the pavement's life and protects it from traffic, weather, and environmental factors.

A key benefit of high float surface emulsion is its ability to withstand heavy traffic and seal the pavement, preventing water damage and oxidation. The application process includes surface preparation—cleaning and repairing defects, followed by adding specialized gravel—before applying the emulsion and allowing it to cure before reopening to traffic.

## The Township of Lake of Bays Focus on Preservation Management of Roads

**By Steve Peace**

*Director of Public Works, Township of Lake of Bays*

Whether it's a quick trip for groceries, a daily commute, or leaving the stress of the city for your cottage, as you drive along the township's beautiful twists and turns, it's easy to forget just how many roads connect our municipality. Behind the scenes, the Township is responsible for maintaining 218 kilometres of roadway. Most of these wind through rural areas, with a smaller portion running through our villages and semi-urban development. Of that total, about 127 km are gravel, 67 km are surfaced with high-float (see side bar), and 24 km are paved with asphalt.

All municipal roads in Ontario follow several provincial regulations to ensure they are safe, well-maintained, and planned for the long term. The Provincial Minimum Maintenance Standards help determine how much traffic a road sees and set the baseline for how it should be cared for. The Ministry of Transportation's Inventory Manual guides how we rate the condition of each road through what is called a Road Needs Study. From there, the Township's Asset Management Plan combines the Roads Needs Study with the projected costs of maintaining each road over its lifetime, helping us plan for the future.

Every five years, the Township hires an independent engineering firm to carry out a Road Needs Study. This study gives staff a clear picture of all our roads, helping us identify which ones need work and setting priorities for repairs and improvements over the next five to ten years. The study also looks at the type of surface on each road and recommends the best surface based on traffic levels.

Sometimes a road may have a surface that seems “better” than the traffic would normally require. This is usually due to local needs and considerations; heavy commercial trucks using Franklin Landfill Road, higher use around Baysville or Dwight Beach, or the fact that it makes more sense for maintenance crews if nearby roads have matching surfaces. For example, a single gravel road located 15 km from the nearest gravel road is not efficient to maintain.

We are also putting a strong focus on something called preservation management. Simply put, this means keeping good roads in good condition for as long as possible. One of the biggest threats to a road’s lifespan is water penetrating the road structure. To help combat this, we use a treatment called micro-surfacing on asphalt roads. It seals the pavement and helps water run off rather than seeping in. This product is expected to extend the life of a road by an additional five to seven years. In recent years, we’ve used this treatment on roads in Baysville, Dwight Beach, and most recently on Seabreeze Road.

By following provincial standards, using detailed studies, and investing in treatments like micro-surfacing, the Township works to keep our roads safe, smooth, and lasting longer.

**If you have questions or want to learn more, visit the [Public Works section of the Township’s website](#) or contact our office at 705-635-2851. **

## Welcome to incoming LOBA Board members...

**Heather Yates** has been coordinator of the Area Stewards program for the past three years. Heather is doing a fantastic job recruiting, training and supporting our Area Stewards. With a finger on the pulse of the various issues around the lake, Heather’s input on the board is greatly appreciated. Heather has cottaged on Lake of Bays her whole life.



**Sarah Macintosh** is a recently retired CPA with a resume that includes finance positions at Price Waterhouse and Manulife. When LOBA was looking for a bookkeeper in 2023, Sarah offered to take on the role to help us scope and define the position we needed to fill. With a new bookkeeper now hired (welcome Victoria Mobbey!) and a vacancy on our board, Sarah agreed to take on the position of Treasurer for LOBA.



**Penny Thomas** has been a long-standing member of LOBA’s Water Quality testing team. When our Environment Chair, Susanne Gossage announced that she needed to step back from her volunteer commitments, Penny volunteered to take on the portfolio. Penny is also a member of the Muskoka Watershed Council and the Integrated Watershed Community Round Table. She is passionate about Lake of Bays and is keen to work on LOBA’s behalf advocating and providing outreach to our community to foster interest and respect for our lake environment.

## Thank you retiring LOBA Board members...

**Kathy Ogryzlo** served on the board as Treasurer from 2017 to 2025. LOBA benefited from Kathy’s financial acumen acquired over her long and successful career in banking. Kathy put in many hours on our behalf, and under her guidance, our audits were flawless. Kathy’s opinion on any financial matters was always well-considered and practical. Kathy is also an Area Steward. Thank you, Kathy, for your long and outstanding service.

**Susanne Gossage** joined the board in 2020 serving on the Communications committee. Her interest in environmental issues was obvious, and she provided several topical and informative articles for our yearbook and newsletter. In July 2023 Susanne became Environment Chair. In her relatively short time as Environment Chair Susanne initiated the development of an Operations Manual for the Water Testing Program. Incoming Environment Chairs will be thanking her for years to come! 



## Huronia

Security & Monitoring  
Fire & Safety  
Audio Video  
Lock, Key & Safe

Safe. Secure. And Sound.

### Muskoka

705.645.4108 | 844.363.9311

### Midland

705.526.9311 | 844.363.9311

### Collingwood

705.445.4444 | 844.363.9311

[huronialarms.com](http://huronialarms.com)



## 2026 A MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS YEAR

Monday October 26,  
2026 is Election Day

Stay tuned with LOBA  
as we keep you  
up to date on the candidates  
and local issues

*continued—Invasive species...page 5*

### Chinese Mystery Snail

This summer, Chinese mystery snails have been spotted in Lake of Bays. These large freshwater snails can survive out of water for up to four weeks, allowing them to spread easily. They reproduce rapidly, out-compete native snails, and may contribute to algae blooms that affect water quality and recreation. They are larger than native snails, with dark greenish-brown shells and a distinct "trapdoor" (operculum) that seals them inside. If you see them, do not return them to the water, report sightings through the EDDMaps Ontario app (EDDMaps.org).

By staying vigilant and taking simple precautions, we can protect the biodiversity, beauty, and recreational value of our lakes for future generations. 

### Lake of Bays Winter Pantry

Accepting donations of nonperishable goods at:

LCBO – Baysville & Dorset  
Groovy's – Baysville & Dorset  
Robinson's – Dorset  
Royal LePage

Financial donations by e-transfer to treasurer810@gmail.com. Please note in the message that it is for the Winter Pantry.



## LOBA 2025 photo contest!

**LIFE at the LAKE:**  
people, pets and dwellings

**NATURE:**  
wild plants and animals

**LANDSCAPE:**  
land, water and sky

Open to all Lake of Bays Association members and families. Photos must be previously unpublished and taken in the current year—limit of 5 per category. Send in high resolution to [info@loba.ca](mailto:info@loba.ca).

Deadline December 31, 2025.

It's that time of  
year again.

Renew your LOBA  
membership for

**2026**



**Renew Today!**

Your membership fee supports our efforts to educate, advocate and engage in issues that impact the sustainability of the environment, economy, and natural beauty of our lake community. Where a strong united voice is required, each member counts.

Go to [loba.ca](http://loba.ca) to renew/join and pay online or download a membership form to renew by mail.

Questions about your membership?

Please contact the office at 705-767-3395 or by email at

[admin@loba.ca](mailto:admin@loba.ca)



**CURRENT CONNECTION** is published two times a year by The Lake of Bays Association for the information of its members. Suggestions, inquiries, manuscripts, photos, etc. can be sent to: Lake of Bays Association P.O. Box 8, Baysville ON P0B 1A0 ■ Phone: 705-767-3395 ■ [info@loba.ca](mailto:info@loba.ca) ■ [loba.ca](http://loba.ca) ■ [www.facebook.com/lobaontario/](http://www.facebook.com/lobaontario/) ■ [@lakeofbaysassociation](https://twitter.com/lakeofbaysassociation)