



# Stewardship Network of Ontario

## SNO Squall

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*Stewardship: caring for the land now and for the future*

### **Recent MNR re-alignment helps stewardship delivery across the province**

Over the past decade, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) has been transforming the way government works. In an effort to modernize and keep pace with rising public expectations for high-quality, cost-effective public services, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) completed a realignment to create efficiencies and synergies within its programs. As a result, a Stewardship and Conservation Incentives section was formed within the new Integration Branch. The section combines a number of stewardship programs that MNR offers to support field delivery in the Ministry's Regional Operations Division.

The Stewardship and Conservation Incentives section includes the Ministry's Land Securement Program, Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program, Ontario Stewardship, Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program and the Community Fish and Wildlife Involvement Program. The Stewardship and Conservation Incentives section will coordinate the suite of complimentary stewardship programs and provide the integration of stewardship delivery across the province.

This realignment demonstrates MNR's commitment to natural heritage and biodiversity protection with an aim to enhance a healthy, natural environment for all Ontarians.

### **Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program Update**

Recently, the MNR's Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP) underwent a policy review process to provide greater transparency and accountability in implementation of the program.

The final policy document is the result of recommendations and comments received by the land conservation community and others during the public consultation period.

The policy document and supporting guidelines for Community Conservation Lands applications can be found on the CLTIP page of the MNR website. Follow the link "CLTIP Environmental Registry Notices" under the *In This Section* tab to download your copy. The webpage is located at:

[Ontario.ca/CLTIP](http://Ontario.ca/CLTIP) [www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/CLTIP/index.html](http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/CLTIP/index.html)



## TAKE THE PLUNGE!

### Stewarding Ontario's Waters

For over 45 years, the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) has been the united voice of the Ontario waterfront. FOCA's 500 lake and rural road member associations have a combined membership of 50,000 waterfront property owners. This network of committed landowners plays an important role in the monitoring, management and future health of our watersheds.

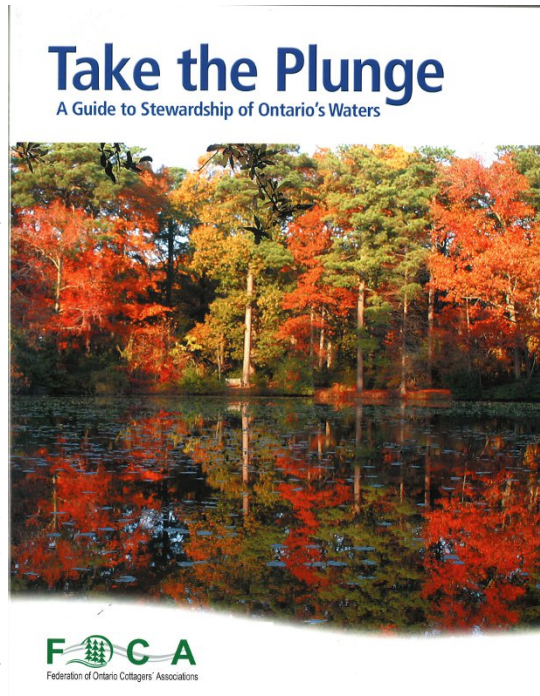
Stewarding our important resources starts with understanding and appreciating them. Rural waterfront residents are encouraged to do their part. The answers to tonnes of water and shoreline questions can be found in FOCA's publication, *Take the Plunge: A Guide to Stewardship of Ontario's Waters*. This collection of articles, written by professionals in the field, helps shoreline property owners understand their surroundings with information about water quality, wetlands, land-use planning and sustainable waterfront living. Learn how to live with wildlife around your property, and which plants and insects are invaders to Ontario's habitat. *Take the Plunge* includes comprehensive lists of organizations, websites and other resources for existing or curious lake stewards.

The *Lake Planning Handbook for Community Groups* is a companion

document that provides a practical, hands-on approach to lake stewardship and planning activities. The Ontario Professional Planners Institute recognized French Planning Services with the 2010 'Excellence in Planning Award' for their part in the development of the Handbook. The handbook was prepared in partnership with FOCA, the Haliburton Highlands Stewardship Council, and a working group of lake and property owner associations, with financial support from the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

FOCA is also proud to be part of the Lake Partner Program, one of the largest volunteer water-quality monitoring networks in the world. Delivered through a partnership with the Ministry of the Environment and a network of 800 volunteers, the Lake Partner Program supports important research related to the health of Ontario's fish and aquatic habitats.

Uncover some ideas from FOCA's resource guides, and then share the knowledge with friends and neighbours around your waterfront. We encourage our partners and all residents to "take the plunge" into water stewardship.



## *PROTECT ONTARIO'S DRINKING WATER SOURCES THROUGH STEWARDSHIP*

Conservation Authorities are partnering with the Provincial government to assist in delivering the second phase of a popular drinking water stewardship program designed to protect municipal sources of drinking water in Ontario.

The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program (ODWSP) is a \$28 Million four-year commitment from the Provincial Government to assist landowners, businesses and municipalities to protect municipal drinking water. 2011 marks the introduction of the second phase of the program moving from Early Actions to Early Response.

"We're very pleased to continue this important partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Environment", said Jo-Anne Rzadki, Watershed Stewardship Coordinator for Conservation Ontario, the association that represents the province's 36 Conservation Authorities.

"Today, there are 34 Conservation Authorities participating in this phase of the program, working with landowners and businesses to ensure clean water sources for Ontario communities," Rzadki said, "The types of projects they deliver include: improving septic systems, decommissioning abandoned wells, managing and storage of pesticides and fertilizer as well as proper fuel storage and management."

The second phase of the ODWSP is a voluntary program, similar to the earlier phase, but addresses specific local drinking water threats identified by Source Protection Committees through

the Source Protection Assessment Reports. The program is being delivered by Conservation Authorities to landowners and businesses through an application process.

Phase one of ODWSP ran from 2007 – 2010 and funded many different stewardship projects delivered to landowners and businesses by Conservation Authorities as well the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) in conjunction with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA).

The types of projects delivered in phase one included: well decommissioning and upgrading, septic system inspections and upgrades, runoff and erosion control, pollution prevention reviews for businesses, other best management practices and public education. Many have been completed, but some are still underway across Ontario.

The ODWSP operates under the Clean Water Act (2006) which helps protect drinking water from source to tap with a multi-barrier approach that stops contaminants from entering sources of drinking water - lakes, rivers and aquifers.

Ontario's Clean Water Act:

- requires that local communities - through local Source Protection Committees - assess existing and potential threats to their water, and that they set out and implement the actions needed to reduce or eliminate these threats
- empowers communities to take action

to prevent threats from becoming significant

- requires public participation on every local source protection plan - the planning process for source protection is open to anyone in the community requires that all plans and actions are based on sound science.

More Information on ODWSP and Conservation Authorities - **Conservation Ontario Backgrounder** [http://www.conservationontario.ca/source\\_protection/protection.html](http://www.conservationontario.ca/source_protection/protection.html)  
Ministry of Environment: Clean Water Act and Source Protection <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/category/water/index.htm>  
Ministry of the Environment: Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program

## *Permit To Take Water—Progress Report*

Amendments to the Water Taking Regulation, under the Ontario Water Resources Act, in 2004 introduced changes to the Permit To Take Water (PTTW) process administered by the Ministry of the Environment (MOE). These changes are reflected in the 2005 PTTW Manual, the MOE policy document that established a risk assessment model used to classify the potential risk of a proposed project and assign it to a Risk Category of 1, 2 or 3, with 3 being the highest risk. The application requirements for a permit increase in complexity according to the level of risk. An outcome of the policy established by the 2005 manual resulted in most wetland projects being deemed high risk and the consequent application process has slowed or cancelled many conservation projects and cost landowners and conservation

organizations time and money.

Recognizing the urgent public interest in promoting the restoration and enhancement of wetlands, the MOE has developed a consultation draft of a Risk Assessment Framework that is intended to provide additional clarification and guidance to wetland project proponents and the MOE permit staff. With this additional clarification of how wetland projects fit into the manual's risk categories it is envisioned that many of the simplest projects will be deemed not to be water takings at all. The result would be a simpler, quicker, cheaper process yielding more wetland projects with the added bonus of reducing the burden on MOE staff. Truly a win-win situation that has arisen from a collaborative effort on the part of the MOE and the stewardship sector.

## *SNO Welcomes Our New Chair*

The Stewardship Network of Ontario is pleased to announce the appointment of Suzanne Barrett as our new Chair. Suzanne is an independent consultant with over 25 years of experience in environmental planning, waterfront revitalization and public engagement. She replaces outgoing Chair, Don Gordon, who is moving to Victoria BC to go scuba diving. (and work in marine conservation)

