

LNG Spring Meeting 2025 - Watersheds Canada Update

Lake Links Update:

- Save the date Saturday October 18th at the Elgin Lions Club Hall
- Me, My Lake, My Watershed – Living Lakeside, Thinking Watershed Wide
- This will be an in-person networking event
- We would like to add an afternoon breakout group component this year to allow for even more networking between groups. And we are asking for suggestions of different topics/themes you would like to see in those group discussions, send your ideas to Melissa Dakers, dakers@watersheds.ca
- We are also asking associations and groups to participate in the display booths, share with everyone a project you completed or things your association are proud of. To reserve a table space contact Meaghan McDonald (RVCA), Meaghan.mcdonald@rvca.ca

Watersheds Canada National Conference:

- This inaugural conference was held in Haliburton, Ontario and brought together waterfront association representatives, Indigenous leaders, government officials, fisheries and wildlife managers, environmental organization staff, conservation club members, and environmental graduates for an engaging experience that took people beyond the conference room and into the field with hands-on stewardship project demonstrations and interactive seminars.
- Participants left empowered, connected, and ready to make a tangible impact on Canada's watersheds and their own community!
- Access [#WatershedsConf25](https://watersheds.ca/wc-conference-2025/) materials: <https://watersheds.ca/wc-conference-2025/>
- Big thank you to our sponsors for this event: the [Great Lakes Fishery Commission](#), Ontario Phragmites Action, [Haliburton Highlands](#), [Co-operators](#), [DataStream](#), [Grounded - Haliburton](#), [FOCA - Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations](#), [Outdoor Canada & Outdoor Canada West](#), [Wildlife Habitat Canada](#), and [Blue Fish Canada](#). Special thanks to [Haliburton County Development Corporation](#) and [Boshkung Brewing Co.](#)
- Big thank you to our speakers as well, including Mark Mattson from [Swim Drink Fish Canada](#) and [Lake Ontario Waterkeeper](#), [Mark Cullen](#), [Canada's Gardening Guru](#), Joel Zhang, Dr. Norman Yan from [Friends of the Muskoka Watershed](#), Barb Elliot, Frank Figuli from [U-Links Centre for Community Based Research](#), Lee-Ann Smith from [Fisheries and Oceans Canada](#), Gabi Parent-Doliner from [Water Rangers](#), and Kathy Jones from [Birds Canada](#).

LYL Update:

- Completed 52,252 assessments on 229 lakes, as of 2024.
- Survey code letter went out to 2024 lakes property owners to download their reports. If you didn't receive your letter please contact Melissa Dakers.

- For the 2025 season, we will be assessing Black Lake, Sand Lake, North & South Otter Lakes
- We have had a recent vacancy and are looking for a lake association with about 250 properties to be assessed in August. If interested, please contact Melissa Dakers, dakers@watersheds.ca

Fish Habitat Update:

- 10 year anniversary, Fish Habitat Restoration Program – 55 projects on 37 waterbodies
- We have 6 spawning beds restorations planned for the fall
- As well as 7 brush bundle – in-water woody debris fish habitat restorations planned.
- Have funding for 1 more brush bundle project for August 2025 – if interested please contact Melissa Dakers, dakers@watersheds.ca

NE Update:

- Started a new type of naturalization planting project, creating riparian habitat around newly constructed wetlands. This is a new partnership with DUCs. This past April, we planted 4 sites and over 6,000 plants. We will plant an additional 10 wetland sites this fall.
- Continuing with our plantings throughout Eastern Ontario. With a focus on the St. Lawrence River Area of Concern (Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative grant) and Crowe Valley watershed (EcoAction grant).
- **Looking for site visits** throughout the region, but again, particularly in the St. Lawrence River Area of Concern (Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative grant) and Crowe Valley watershed (EcoAction grant). Contact Chantal Lefevre at naturaledge@watersheds.ca
- Testing and launching our new Waterfront Climate Change Resilience tool. To create custom reports to improve waterfront resilience and reduce the impacts of climate change.

Education Update:

- Watersheds Canada's *Nature Discovery Backpack* program continues to grow with new gear, book, and science equipment lending libraries launching in 2025 in six communities (Manitoba - Carman; Ontario - North Hastings, Gravenhurst, Addington Highlands, Kingston, Owen Sound). The program works alongside public libraries, Indigenous communities, waterfront associations, and community/children groups to reduce barriers for families to explore and connect with local nature and freshwater areas. Learn more about the program, and about starting your own *Nature Discovery Backpack* lending library, here: <https://watersheds.ca/our-work/nature-discovery-programming/nature-discovery-backpacks/>
- Watersheds Canada's lead educator, Monica Seidel, attended the Outdoor Learning Conference in Banff, AB in early May. The theme for the conference was “Place and

Pedagogy: Where Learning Happens”, and featured workshops on Indigenous Ways of Knowing, Health & Wellbeing, and Environmental & Climate Change Education. This was Watersheds Canada's first time attending the conference which provided a valuable place to meet new educators and potential partners, including those who can help the organization's education programs grow further west.

- Stay tuned for: upcoming education toolkits to be released on hot tubs and pools, algae blooms, and septic health. Be sure to follow Watersheds Canada on Facebook, X, Instagram, Bluesky, or LinkedIn to get access to all of the new free resources.
- Stay tuned for: new e-library coming to Watersheds Canada website
- Watch the latest Freshwater Stewardship Community webinar, "Stronger Together: Supporting Farm Stewardship Through Collaboration", featuring Farms at Work, Ducks Unlimited Canada, East Central Farm Stewardship Collaborative, Eastern Ontario Farm Stewardship

Collaborative: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0vDCxsr8WY&list=PLn7t96YFncXiEWnaFSPJ9fSjPXJ0K1Z-Y>

- Read Watersheds Canada's recent feature on the State of Ontario's Biodiversity website: <https://sobr.ca/watersheds-canada-restoring-the-ribbon-of-life/>