



IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CALL 911

Contact information *(please fill in)*



Telephone Number:

Civic Address:

Special Information:

Kahshe Lake

Good Neighbours' Handbook

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About this Handbook

This Good Neighbours' Handbook is intended for use by cottagers and residents in the Kakshe and Bass Lakes area. It was written and published by the Kakshe Lake Ratepayers' Association with the aim of providing useful information for anyone interested in maintaining a positive community and clean environment.

We hope that you will keep this handbook in a convenient place at your cottage and share it with your family and friends.

There are many people who helped in the creation of this book and we thank each every one of them for their hard work and invaluable contributions.



What is the Kahshe Lake Ratepayers' Association?

KLRA is an energetic group of volunteers dedicated to the preservation of this valuable resource. We sponsor and organize many activities that are designed to protect and enhance all aspects of life at the lake. Our association is led by an elected executive and board of directors. As well, there are many other positions that people assume with the singular goal of supporting KLRA.

KLRA is a not-for-profit organization and operates under a constitution. We hold an annual general meeting (AGM) at which members are brought up to date on the activities of our association, approve the budget and elect members to the offices of our association.

We are funded through membership dues, which are amongst the lowest in Muskoka. At different times, we also run specific fund raising events for specific purposes (e.g. rock markers).

Communication with members is an ongoing process with two main components being the content-rich website, www.kahshelake.ca and our must-read newsletter, The Kahshe Krier.

We hope that you take advantage of the many opportunities and activities at the lake throughout the year. And we hope that you may consider joining one of our many committees or event work groups. No special skills are required, just a commitment to the lake and a willingness to get involved. If you would like to find out more or wish to volunteer, just call one of the KLRA executive member listed on the back cover.



Your Civic Address Number

There are many different ways that people describe where they are on the lake. Unfortunately, being told to look for the “two-storey brown cottage at the end of the road, just past the swamp that is next to the beaver dam” or “the small island just south of the deep channel near the north part of the lake” is no longer good enough, especially when emergency responders need to locate you in a hurry. Fortunately a standardized protocol has been developed and each property on the lake has a unique identity. Please make it a point to learn and use yours.

Essentially, there are three types of properties at the lake, each with their own address format:

- Road Each dwelling on a road will have a number, i.e. **150 North Kahshe Lake Road**, or **85 Bell Road**
- Island The format for islands is: (property #) **Island (Island#)KL**
i.e. **7 Island 15 KL** or **2 Island 23KL**
- Mainland, but water access only These are shown as “(property #) **Kahshe Lake**”
i.e. “400 Kahshe Lake”

By using these conventions, we know immediately if a property is on a road, island or if it is on the mainland but is water access. People will be able to locate you and, in the case of emergency responders, be able to provide assistance quickly.

Please take a moment to record your civic address in the front cover of this handbook, so that you can quickly refer to it.



Useful Telephone Numbers

Emergency Numbers Call 911

Ambulance.....	(705) 687-2323
Fire Department.....	(705) 687-3414
Fire Hazard Hotline.....	1 (877) 847-1577
Hydro One.....	1 (800) 434-1235
Ontario Provincial Police.....	1 (888) 310-1122

Other Useful Numbers

Town of Gravenhurst.....	(705) 687-3412
Gravenhurst Public Library.....	(705) 687-3382
Gravenhurst Landfill Site.....	(705) 687-8067
Gravenhurst Opera House.....	(705) 687-5550
South Muskoka Memorial Hospital (Bracebridge).....	(705) 645-4400
Soldiers' Memorial Hospital (Orillia).....	(705) 325-2201
Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit.....	(705) 721-7520
Ministry of Natural Resources.....	1 (877) 847-7667
Bear Hotline.....	1-866-514-2327
Denne's Marina.....	(705) 689-5082
Rockhaven.....	(705) 689-6080
Summerland General Store.....	(705) 687-7776



The Inaugural Meeting of the KLCA - 27 April, 1923

"The summer residents on L. Kahshe met at Mr. J.H.Day's home and organized the Kahshe Lake Cottagers' Association for the promotion of their common social and material interests. Meeting was enthusiastic in every way. Mrs. Day afterwards served a delightful lunch at the close of the meeting. The fee was set at \$2 per annum."

From Clare Henderson, "The KLRA: Growth from Roots to Trees", The Healing Waters of Kahshe Lake, Vol.2 p8,

Kahshe & Bass Lakes Statistics

Bass Lake

- 101 acres (40.8 ha) of surface area
- 2.8 miles (4.5 km) of shoreline; no islands
- 268 feet (81.7 m) of public shoreline – Bass Lake Park
- 2.75 miles (4.4 km) of privately held land
- Maximum depth: 8 metres

Kahshe Lake

- 2,046 acres (828 ha) of surface area
- 53 miles (85.3 km) of shoreline, including many islands
- 7.7 miles (12.4 km) of public shoreline
- Home of the protected Kahshe Barrens – 3,200 ha of unspoiled land and habitat of many rare species
- two Crown reserves; public beach
- Maximum depth: 21 metres
- 45 miles (72.4 km) of privately held land
- 85.5 per cent of the shoreline is privately owned
- Two lake communities: Kilworthy and Kluey's Bay
- More than 800 lots
- Two dams: south end of Grants' Bay and South Kahshe Lake Road, near the Government dock

Upstream Lakes

Three Mile Lake and Little Sunny Lake



About Kahshe and Bass Lakes

Our lakes are part of the Trent-Severn water system, a water course that was created by the glaciers in the last ice age. A major feature of our section of the Canadian Shield is the prominence of rock; both on the land and in the water. This creates a challenge for trees to develop deep roots – hence the great number of scrub oak. However, the White Pines thrive and this was the key to development of the lakes.

In the late 1800s it was felt that the Kahshe River would be a profitable location for the harvesting and milling of the White Pines. However, the river was difficult to navigate, so a dam was built at the west end of the lake. The water levels rose, the river got wider and soon we had what is now known as Kahshe Lake.

Over time, the lumbering gave way to more recreational activities and enterprises. As people's interests changed, so did the face of the lake.

Did you know we had “alligators” in Kahshe Lake during those years? Did you know that we had dance pavilions, with live bands filling the air with music on weekends? Did you know we had a number of different resorts, lodges and camps on the lake? We were quite a destination for people seeking refuge from city life and the opportunity to relax, fish, swim and enjoy life at the lake.

We have a very rich history and thankfully, we have a small group of dedicated volunteers who continue to record it for all to see and read. Be sure to check out the archives in our website. It is loaded with photos and information. And, be sure to get your own copies of the different volumes of [The Healing Waters](#), a prolific collection of anecdotes, musings, photos and records of years gone by. Who knows, you may find out where the “alligators” were.



Bass Lake is small, pretty and joined at the proverbial hip to Kahshe Lake via the Kahshe River. Well, sometimes.

Low-water levels in the summer can make that trip difficult in a motorboat. But Bass Lake is worth it. A perfect lake for canoeing (and water skiing,) it is about a kilometre long and a half a kilometre at its widest and about 8 metres deep. The lake has a sandy bottom on the south shore where many cottages are located and a gorgeous granite ridge on its north side.

Apparently, it was named after its most common catch – the largemouth and smallmouth bass. But it's a great lake for fishing yellow perch, black crappie, walleye and northern pike too. According to one source, in the spring, pickerel from Kahshe come up the Kahshe River through Bass Lake and up Gartnersnake Creek to a small eight-foot waterfall.

It is in Ryde Township, now part of the Gravenhurst district, which has a busy community centre.

"Summer arrived...and my wife and I drove to Rockhaven Inn where the Sales docked their boat. When I navigated the last turn in the road, and found myself at the gov't. dock, my heart skipped a beat, my jaw dropped and a big grin spread across my face. I had never seen any place as beautiful before. The water, sky, rocks, trees and the wonderful smell of Muskoka enchanted me."

Robert Alexander
The Healing Waters of
Kahshe Lake

Kahshe and Bass Lake Water Quality

Kahshe Lake is monitored for water quality under two main initiatives.

The Lake Partner Program is operated annually by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment through the Dorset Environmental Science Centre, but the legwork is done by one of us – a cottager, who, as the KLRA's Kahshe Lake steward, leads a volunteer team that measures water clarity and quality.

Water clarity is measured every two weeks during the ice-free period at four locations using a Secchi disc. The findings are forwarded to the Ministry for compilation and comparison with other lakes in Ontario.

Water is sampled from two locations in Kahshe Lake in May and analyzed by Ministry experts for phosphorous content, an indicator of the potential for algal blooms and nutrient enrichment.

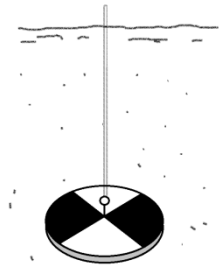
Several agencies and ministries are involved in The Lake System Health Program which takes place every two years in both Kahshe and Bass Lakes and is run by The District of Muskoka. This program has been ongoing for more than 25 years.

In May, sampling is conducted for phosphorous, dissolved oxygen, base chemical parameters, water temperature and water depth. Secchi depth measurements and temperature and dissolved oxygen.

Generally speaking, Kahshe and Bass Lakes are healthy and thriving. But we must remain vigilant in our overall lake stewardship, as our waters are becoming warmer and consequently more prone to algal growth. This could negate potential improvements in nutrient enrichment and other chemical indicators of lake health. It's important to note that coliform contamination is not routinely being monitored in either of our lakes or at the public beaches by any

organization. That is one of the reasons we strongly recommend you don't drink the lake water.

If you are drinking lake water and want to ensure your water filtering system is working properly or if you suspect a neighbouring septic system might need pumping or improved management, you can submit a sample your tap water to the Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit for coliform analysis. And it's free.



Secchi Disc used to test water clarity

More Info...

Detailed reports on the latest findings of lake water quality at www.kahshelake.ca. Click on the lake stewardship link.

Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org 2-5
Pineridge Gate, Gravenhurst, ON, P1P 1Z3. 705-684-9090

Boating with Respect

As the fourth largest lake in Muskoka, Kahshe Lake is full of corners, channels and wide-open spaces to explore. As one of Muskoka's smaller, secret jewels, Bass Lake is also a boater's paradise.

It is not easy to achieve that elusive balance between sun-and-wind-on-your-face boating fun and the tranquility and calm of cottage living while protecting and maintaining the lifestyles and habitats of the amphibians, fish and fowl that also live on, in and near the water. But it is necessary.

So, here are a few rules and suggestions for respectful boating starting with noise, the number-one complaint of cottagers, according to a recent survey. Help keep your engine noise down by keeping your engine tuned and in top shape. Drive softly – start slow from your dock or shore so you don't wake your neighbours napping in their hammock or scare the kids jumping from the next dock.

Drive your boat at the no-wake speed when you are close to shore. Not only are you quieter but your wake is smaller. This guards aquatic babies – both flora and fauna – from wave and prop action and minimizes shore erosion. And remember that Kahshe has a speed limit of 70 kph once you are more than 30 m from the shore. If you are within 30 m, you can only go 10 kph.

Other thoughtful actions:

Keep right when passing. And wave when you go by. It's a great cottage custom and it's friendly.

Decelerate when you cross paths with a non-motorized boat such as a canoe, sailboat or kayak. They may not want the thrill of fording your wake nor the roar of your motor.

Whenever possible, fill up with gas and replace any oil away from the water.

Never drink when driving, but you already knew that.

Check the state of your on board stock of PFDs, paddle and emergency safety kit. Might be time to refresh/replace them.

Carry your boaters' licence on board. (You do have a licence, right? If not, don't drive. Ever.)



Rock Steady

As long as there have been all those rocks in Kahshe Lake, there's been a KLRA rock marker committee.

Well, so it might seem. It was 1924 when – as the minutes of the day have it – “ Prof. Craigie brought up the matter of buoying the dangerous rocks at the expense of the Association.”

KLRA'S webmaster, Clare Henderson, spotted a reference in the lake's history to the formation of subcommittees to deal with the matter of the rocks in the 1980s. In the '90s Henderson created a map indicating the location of rock markers on the lake, using data provided by cottager Clint Rohr.

Even so, people don't call it “Crashy Lake” for nothing.

So in 2012, cottager John Mertl decided the lake needed more – and better – markers. His research led him to conclude that Kahshe needed commercial markers, the same type used by government agencies all over Europe and North America.

And that is what we now have. You'll see three types of buoys on the water. Two of them are lighted – the red-and-white lighthouses and the white regulatory buoys with an orange stripe that stand about 4 ½ feet out of the water. Then there are the fender style white buoys – 33 of them in all and counting.

Because the KLRA's marker fundraising drive was such a huge success – more than twice the \$12,000 cost of the markers was raised from the sale of Randy Craig's photos of the lake and



Large buoy with solar light on top

from selling rock naming rights – you can count on more markers on the lake in the years to come.

Under the guidance of the KLRA, a crew of volunteers maintains the rock markers. They put them in the lake in the spring and remove them after Thanksgiving. And as a result, the rest of us can boat more safely.



Lighthouse



Bonfire Song (to tune of "This Land is Your Land")

This lake is your lake,
This lake is my lake
From Housey's Rapids,
To the Old King's Highway
From the Three Mile portage.
To the Deep Bay waters
This lake belongs to you and me

Share-a-Shore by Florentine Hrabi, *The Healing Waters of Kawshe Lake*, Volume 2, page 22

Shhhhh....

“Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.”

-Desiderata/Max Ehrmann

Good sounds surround a cottage. Water lapping onto the shore. A gentle breeze brushing through the pines. Of course, the loon. And kids, wet and happy and laughing.

Then there is noise. Too loud music. Chain saws. Boat motors cranked and revving. Unhappily, they're all part of cottaging, too. Yet a KLRA survey in 2009 had noise – from boats and neighbours – as a top concern of most cottagers.

So here are some suggestions that go a long way towards creating lakeside peace and harmony.

- You are on or near water. Sound travels. Voices carry. Music and machinery are amplified when you are outside. Tell your guests. Repeatedly. Don't stop reminding yourself and your family to keep voices and music down. Otherwise there are no secrets at the lake – especially at night.
- Fireworks are fun, but set them off as early as possible. It's just unreasonable after 11 p.m.
- Use your power boat respectfully. If it has a loud exhaust, fix it or sell it.
- Oh, and if you are lucky enough to travel to the cottage in your own plane (!) , please arrive before 9 p.m.



Embrace the Night

A precious part of the joy of cottage life is the night sky. Most city skies seem virtually empty of stars, but not at the Lake.

Yet, even here poorly designed artificial lighting can wash out night's darkness and its magic. Our light pollution can also disrupt the migration, reproduction, and feeding processes of many birds and animals, with potentially disastrous results.

The good news is that this is an easy fix. Here are some suggestions for preserving the glory of our night skies (and reducing your energy bills).

- Replace high wattage bulbs with 25 or 40 watt bulbs or LEDs.
- Use full cut-off or partial cut-off lighting fixtures to minimize glare. Full cut-off means that no light is emitted above the horizontal. They actually increase safety because they give off very little glare, the kind that reduce our ability to see into shadows. The brighter the light, the darker the shadow.

Since November, 2012, the Town of Gravenhurst (that includes Kahshe Lake) has required new outdoor lighting to be completely shielded full cut-off fixtures.

- Ditch the dawn-to-dusk security light. Replace them with lights activated by motion detectors or by solar-activated sensors that have a timed turn-off setting.
- Aim lighting away from the water and neighbouring properties.
- Use non-intrusive solar lighting for the boat dock.

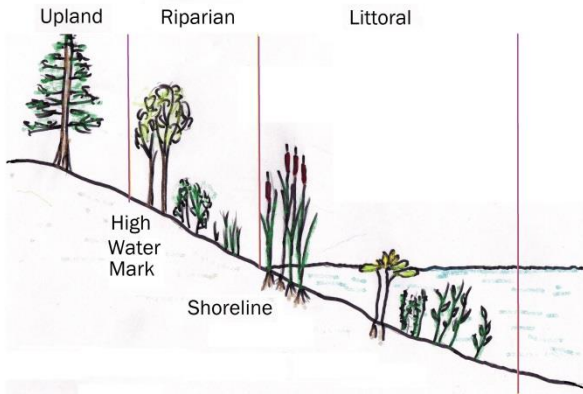
More Info...

www.gravenhurst.ca/en/yourtownhall/resources/Dark_Sky_Bylaw.pdf

Shorelines – The Ribbon of Life

This lakefront land is your land. And, as its guardian, you really do have a responsibility to nurture and maintain its natural beauty and health for future generations. There are many ways to minimize our impact and make sure we tread lightly on our shoreline.

But first, here's a geological breakdown of a typical cottage property from the shore on back.



That patch of shallow water that extends out to where the sun can't penetrate to the lake bottom is called the Littoral zone. It's important because 90 per cent of all lake species pass through – or live in – this zone. They spawn and forage here. The Shoreline zone is where land and water meet. It, too, is a busy place which insects, animals and birds traverse. Overhanging shade can keep the water cool and acts a constant source of aphids, ants and other insects that fish feed on.

Here are a few of the things you can do to respect and preserve these natural enclaves.

- try not to rip out aquatic plants for a swimming area. Instead, build your dock as a bridge over weedier shallows.

- resist the temptation to bring in truckloads of sand for a beach. When sand erodes it can smother fish and frog - spawning areas
- do not replace or replenish your shoreline with fill or a breakwall. It affects the fish habitat, may alter water currents and can increase erosion on adjacent properties.
- unless they are a safety hazard, leave trees where they fall

The land running from the shoreline, usually to the cottage, and your property's stable forested area, known as the Upland zone, is called the Riparian zone. Vegetation here acts as nature's filter reducing soil erosion and can reduce up to 90 per cent of rainfall runoff. Here is home for many shoreline birds and animals.

Limit any development to the Upland zone. Replace any concrete or asphalt surfaces with gravel or wood chips, more permeable surfaces.. As it is the farthest from the lake, this is also the best site for any lawns, vegetable and fruit gardens you may have.

If you are really serious about saving your part of the planet Consider setting up a land trust, conservation easement or land steward program.

More Info...

<http://muskokaconservancy.org/>

<http://www.muskokawatershed.org>

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/> (Canada's ecological gifts program)

<http://www.muskokawaterweb.ca>

A Dozen Ways to Think Green

1. Kick the lawn habit. Plant native plants instead.
2. Don't soap in the lake, ever. Even if a soap says its phosphate free and biodegradable, it can hurt aquatic life.
3. Stock up on green cleaners. Or go back to basics such as vinegar or baking soda. Household chemical cleaners can destroy beneficial bacteria that break down septic waste.
4. Pick up after pooch. Otherwise rain carries the coliform bacteria with the run-off into the lake.
5. Refuel chain saws, pumps and generators away from the water. Recommended is using a tray in a shelter with a hard floor and a rag for mopping up spills.
6. Plant a tree. Deciduous trees on the south and west sides of a cottage provide shade in summer; conifers on the north and north-west sides block cold winds.
7. Switch the cottage wattage. LED bulbs last up to 40 times longer and use a fraction of the electricity.
8. Hold in the heat in hot water tanks by wrapping them in insulating blankets. Turn the setting down or switch to an on-demand system.
9. Retire that old beer fridge. It could be costing up to \$130 a year by using more than four times the energy of a newer energy efficient model.
10. Opt for a low-impact dock – a floater or cantilever – that causes less disturbance to the lakebed.
11. Let dead trees stand for woodpeckers and other birds, mammals, and insects.
12. Do something wonderful: Create a wildlife corridor full of native shrubs, grasses and flowers to allow animals and birds access to the water without going out in the open.

Fires in Open Air - Guidelines

First the good news: You do NOT need a permit for an outdoor fire smaller than 75 cm. and less than 1 m. high. And if it is sited on bare rock or other non-combustible material, at least three metres from vegetation, two metres from anything flammable, 15 metres away from any buildings or vehicles and is attended at all times by a responsible person. Make sure there is a supply of water nearby, too. Burn only wood, cloth, paper or leaves. Then bring on the marshmallows.

But there are plenty of safety precautions that must be adhered to, including foregoing setting any fires if there are wind conditions that could carry the fire to other areas – and an extensive guideline for grass fires.

The **Fire Danger Rating** is posted at the Muskoka Information Centre on the northbound Highway 11. Find it as well on the Kahshe Lake website (www.kahshelake.ca)

In times of extreme dryness, the provincial Ministry of Natural Resources may declare a **TOTAL FIRE BAN** including all outdoor fires and outdoor barbecues.

More Info...

Firesmart at: www.mnr.gov.on.ca or www.foca.on.ca/fire-smart

Muskoka Forest Fire Danger Rating:
www.gravenhurst.ca/en/fire/fire.asp or call 1-877-847-1577

Report a fire: Call 911 (keep your cottage address by your phone)

Garbage/Recycling/Hazardous Waste

Those of us with road access to Kahshe Lake are fortunate to have weekly (in season) garbage and recycling pick up service provided by the District of Muskoka.

Check the Waste Management Guide link on their website at www.muskoka.on.ca for your service pickup day. You'll also find information about the hours and operation of the landfill site (a.k.a. the town dump) at 1052 Beiers Rd. You can call them at:

705-667-8067.

They will take furniture, appliances, electronics, renovation waste, building materials, paint cans – anything larger than a bread box. Take your hazardous waste there, too. That includes pharmaceuticals, barbeque starter fluids, paint, pesticides, corrosive cleaners, even grooming products. Please don't pour any of these items into your septic system or into the lake, or bury them or put out with the regular garbage. Doing so could release toxic fumes, damage sewage systems, or contaminate ground water or soil.

Check the website for certain Hazardous Waste disposal dates.

Get to the Beiers Rd. Landfill by exiting southbound Highway 11 (south of Gravenhurst) at the Harvey's exit.

The District of Muskoka provides and services bins at Denne's Marina, Rockhaven Inn, South Kahshe Lake Road (near the government dock) and on Riley Lake. All for the use of water-access cottagers.

The Royal Flush

LET'S GET RIGHT DOWN TO BASICS: Your septic system is a sewage treatment facility that requires careful attention to design, construction, operation and maintenance. To build or replace one, you must have a permit from the Town of Gravenhurst.

How it Works

There are three parts to a conventional septic system. The first is you, the human body that takes food through mastication, a pepsin and acid bath and catabolism before it enters the septic tank – essential steps for subsequent bacterial breakdown. Bleach, chemicals, anti-bacterial soaps and cleaners can kill these bacteria, so don't use them. Never dump anything into a septic that hasn't been pre-processed by the human body. It's not a depository for leftovers, antifreeze or cooking fat. And please don't install a garbage disposal unit under your sink.

The second part is the septic system itself, typically a large concrete or plastic tank with different chambers. (If your septic tank consists of an old furnace oil tank, replace it.) The location of a pump station to move things along depends on your topography.

Typical septic tanks are designed for a minimum two-to-three day retention time; however, it's a once-through system: every flush in equals a flush out, ready or not. This is why it's important to conserve water. No long showers, take your laundry home to wash, and if you have a large crowd or party, consider renting a porta-potty.

Stuff that can't be broken down either floats or sinks and internal baffles keep that material from passing through. Problems can occur with lint, hair, paper and plastic that can bypass the baffles and plug the leaching bed. Drain strainers and specialized laundry strainers can help protect against this. You can also have an effluent filter installed in the septic tank to reduce the amount of solids entering

the leaching bed and prevent clogs in the tile/leaching bed, the third part of the system.

This is where liquid effluent is dissipated and aerobic bacteria and plants further break it down. Grass, flowers and weeds, but not trees or shrubs, are important because they take up some of the water and nutrients in the effluent. Most of it, though, percolates and leaches down and through the bed.

Parking or driving on the leaching bed is a no-no; this includes snowmobiles, or anything that packs down the snow in winter and causes the leaching bed to freeze. And if the effluent isn't going out there, you'll have a back-up or a very unattractive skating rink.

Maintenance

How often should you have your system pumped? Opinion varies, but you can't lose by having regular inspections, every 2-3 years, for early detection of any problems and getting the tank pumped at the same time.

In Ontario, for construction and maintenance of sewage systems with a flow of less than 10,000 litres per day are regulated under the Ontario Building Code and municipalities inspect and approve all system. In our case this is done by the building department of the Town of Gravenhurst. The Town's septic re-inspection is carried out every five years.

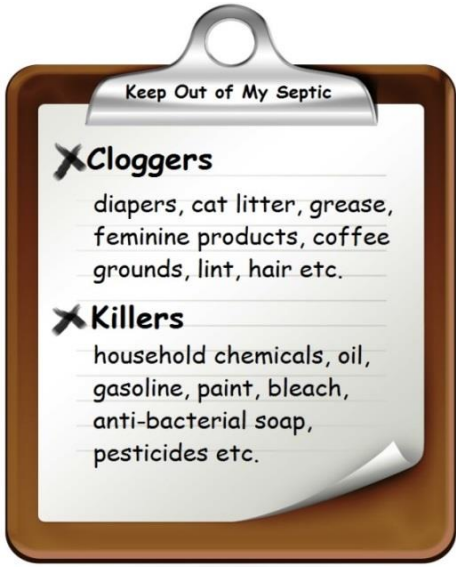
Here's what to expect:

Every five years (on Kakshe, it's 2013, 2018 and so on) trained students visually inspect your tank and bed. If they like what they see, they leave a note and send you a follow-up letter. But if they see problems, you get a notice and follow-up letter requiring you get a pump-out and system inspection. You need a receipt from a licenced pumper as proof. If they see what they consider a serious system failure, you get a stop order until you prove to the Town the problem is corrected.

If you are concerned about a possible septic failure, you can report it to the Town's building department, which will inspect the problem property. Neighbouring property owners can also submit a sample of lake water from a location close to the suspect property. Send it to the Simcoe Muskoka Health Unit for coliform analysis. Contact them at: 2-5 Pineridge Gate, Gravenhurst, ON, P1P 1Z3. 705-684-9090.

More Info...

- [Care for Your Septic System in Muskoka](#), Muskoka Watershed Council
- [Your Septic System: Protecting Your Investment and the Environment](#), Ontario Rural Wastewater Centre and the Ministry of the Environment
- [A Guide to Operating and Maintaining Your Septic System](#), Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing



LAKE MAP

LAKE MAP

BACK OF MAP

Sharing Your Property with Beavers

Did you know the North American beaver (*Castor canadensis*) is an Ontario native? Bet you are not surprised. Sometimes it seems as if they are as fond of the Kakshe Lake environs as we are and just love to sink their very strong teeth into our trees for snack food.

Fall is their busy season. They cut branches or tree trunks, drag their booty into the water and anchor them in the mud near their lodge for their winter food supply. They like the cambium, the inner growing layer of the tree bark. They prefer smaller slimmer trees but can topple a tree of any size.

As a cottager you have two choices: control the beavers or share your land with them. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources doesn't run any beaver-control programs unless the animals are creating a problem on Crown owned-or-managed land so you are on your own if you opt to destroy dams, shoot beavers or even trap and relocate them. But check with the authorities first otherwise you could face charges under the Criminal Code, Canada Fisheries Act, Lakes and Rivers Improvement Act or the Public Lands Act.

The KLRA recommends you take the land-sharing approach. Here's why: beavers create and maintain wetlands that buffer natural changes in water level. After that dry spell in summer 2012, Kakshe's water level dipped only 19 centimetres below its targeted optimum level. When the floods came that next spring in 2013, Kakshe Lake crested at two centimetres below target level. In both cases the wetlands, aided by beavers' dams, held onto the water.

There are three methods to achieve this peaceful co-existence between cottager and castor. One is to wrap heavy mesh hardware cloth, sheet metal or a few layers of chicken wire about one metre high around the base of a deciduous tree. Another is applying an abrasive paint mixture. Mix five ounces of sand per quart of tree-coloured exterior latex paint the same day you will be applying it. This should last for several years. Or apply animal repellent chemicals to the base of the tree. But be warned: This must be re-applied following rainfall so is the least effective method.

More Info...

[Options for Controlling Beavers on Private Land](#) published by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (Pub.50515;ISSN1198-3744)



Beaver
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Bears

Yes, black bears have come to cottage country. Especially juvenile males on their own for the first time who ramble farther afield to find their own home turf.

And while no one would want to deprive Ontario's bears of habitat and food sources, there is plenty you can do – and more importantly not do – to make sure that they keep a wide berth round your place and you have no face-to-face encounters with these intelligent animals.

Just about all of it involves food.

Don't ever feed them, deliberately or inadvertently. That means never leaving garbage behind. If you have to vacate your cottage before your collection date, take your garbage with you. Don't stockpile garbage. Do not put garbage out the night before collection.

Invest in a bear-resistant container. A wood garbage bin, rubber bin, or old freezer won't stop a hungry bear. Nor will a tin shed, as some cottagers have learned through experience.

Clean the barbecue after EVERY use. Wipe the food residue and grease off the grill; ideally, wash it as well in warm, soapy water. Don't forget to clean the grease trap. Keep any leftover meat or meat scraps in your freezer until garbage collection day.

Do not put meat, fish or sweet food (especially fruit) in your composter. Pick all ripe fruit from the trees; pick up any fallen fruit. Don't leave vegetables on the ground.

Only fill your bird feeders in the winter, the hibernation months. Don't put pet food outside.

And if you do cross paths...

Hey, it happens so it's best to let any bear know you are in the 'hood. Walk with others; make noise so they can avoid you; don't wear headphones; keep an eye out for signs of bears – tracks, claw marks on trees, overturned rocks, bear droppings. Take a whistle, air horn, long-handled axe or bear spray with you. Control your dog; it could actually lead a bear to you, not scare it away. Don't let a bear get a whiff of your food.

But, you round a corner and there it is. If the bear isn't paying attention to you, slowly and quietly back away making sure it's not following you. If it's obvious the bear knows you are there, raise your arms to let it know you are human. Stand tall; look as big as possible. Speak in a firm, non-threatening voice as you look at the bear and back away.

Generally, if the bear is noisy – huffing, pawing the ground – it's less dangerous.



Species at Risk in Our Area

We are extremely fortunate to have such a wide diversity of wildlife in our area. Our unique topography has resulted in over 94 bird species, 14 species of reptiles or amphibians, 16 mammals and over 513 species of vascular plants. Of these, there are many species that are at risk – for a variety of reasons:

- destruction of their natural habitat as we build dwellings, roads and clear the land
- pollution whether as acid rain, contaminating the water, or smoky wood-stoves.
- destruction of food sources, such as insects, with the increased use of chemicals and pesticides
- introduction of competitive and undesirable species through carelessness (live bait, dumping of landfill from other areas, importing fire wood)
- disturbing life activities by allowing domesticated animals to run wild

In Muskoka, there are 29 species at risk. These are:

- **Birds** (13): Bald Eagle, Barn Swallow, Bobolink, Canada Warbler, Cerulean Warbler, Common Nighthawk, Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Whip-poor-will, Henslow's Sparrow, Least Bittern, Peregrine Falcon, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Red-headed Woodpecker
- **Fish** (1): Grass Pickerel
- **Insects** (2): Monarch Butterfly, Rusty-patched Bumble Bee
- **Mammals** (2): Little Brown Bat, Northern Long-eared Bat
- **Plants** (2): Branched Bartonian, Broad Beech Fern
- **Reptiles** (1): Common Five-lined Skink
- **Snakes** (3): Eastern Hog-nosed Snake, Eastern Ribbonsnake, Milksnake
- **Turtles** (5): Blanding's Turtle, Eastern Musk Turtle, Northern Map Turtle, Snapping Turtle, Spotted Turtle

Have a look....



Clockwise: Bobolink, Barn Swallow, Eastern Meadowlark, Peregrine Falcon

*All photos:
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More Info...

www.mnr.gov.on.ca - click on the "Endangered Species" tab.



Clockwise: Rusty-patched Bumble Bee, Common Five-lined Skink, Grass Pickerel, Blanding's Turtle, Snapping Turtle, Broad Beech Fern

All photos:

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Muskoka Beaches

On North Kagshe Lake Rd, **Nagaya Beach** is an actual beach, with fine sand that sifts through your toes, a shallow and safe entry into the water, a roped and buoyed swimming area, a swimming platform, seating under shade, even a portable toilet nearby.

And it's yours. Ours.

Operated by the KLRA, Nagaya Beach is for the enjoyment of the Kagshe and Bass lakes communities. Some of the beach is owned by the KLRA through acquisitions going back to the 1940s and some of the land is leased from the Town of Gravenhurst. But the KLRA looks after all of it, paying the full cost of operations. That includes maintaining that sandy shore, the benches and the swimming platform.

There is no lifeguard and the water quality isn't monitored. And please keep your pets at home or at the cottage. The rules of the beach are clearly posted there by the Town of Gravenhurst.



Nagaya Bathing Beach on Kagshe Lake, Kluey's Bay P.O., Muskoka, Canada.

Nagaya Beach circa 1947



Bass Lake Park

Few people know about **Bass Lake Park**, located on the south side of Bass Lake, off Barkway Rd., in Housey's Rapids. It is a gem with a parking lot for at least a dozen cars (and a biffy) that is accessed by a short path through towering pines. Another Muskoka rarity – it's a wide sandy beach perfect for swimming. Bring lunch; there are picnic tables and a large, open grassy area. No overnight camping, please.



"A young man named James Housey was the first settler to arrive at this pretty spot in the spring of 1861...His property took in the rapids that ran from Bass Lake into Kahshe Lake...Hence comes the name 'Housey's Rapids'"

-from *The School Days of Earth* by Jessie Cook, [Healing Waters of Kahshe Lake](#), Volume 1, page 25

Development – Change is Inevitable

Change is inevitable because lake residents' needs and visions inevitably change. But no one wants untrammelled development that could run roughshod over our lake lifestyle. The Town of Gravenhurst is responsible for ensuring change falls within the guidelines set out in its Official Plan and Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw.

The good news is that both of these have sections specific to Kahshe Lake and Bass Lake, driven largely by the Kahshe Lake Plan, a comprehensive and ambitious document undertaken by the KLRA in 2000 and published in 2003.

The KLRA continues to play a role in the way our lakeside community grows. Its Town and Liaison Committee has a mandate that allows it to view and comment on any minor variances and zoning amendment application for properties bordering on both lakes. The committee can involve other committees and KLRA members in reviewing large or sensitive applications. It sends its recommendations to the KLRA board, which, in turn, may decide to send a letter to the Town stating its stance. The letter will be archived and may be stored on the KLRA website.

Here are the criteria that guide this committee:

Environmental impact. How does the proposed development affect the forest, shoreline and adjacent water quality? Would there be material, long-term damage that would be unacceptable to the communities?

Visual impact. Within reason, would the project negatively affect the appearance of the property and its enjoyment by community members?

Property value. Would anything about the project lower the property value of its immediate neighbours or of the lake community in general?

Compatibility. Is the project a good fit in terms of the use and appearance of its neighbours – and of the property use generally about the lakes?

Neighbours. To the best of the committee’s knowledge, are the neighbours on board? Do they want to see this get the go-ahead?

Town staff. Is there information available from staff that would help inform the committee’s opinion?

Limiting factors. What alternatives are there to this proposal? Are there factors, such as the nature of the shoreline, terrain, property line location, rights of way, that restrict the development options?

Over time, the committee will analyze the applications with a view to seeking amendments to the Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw to either reduce unreasonable demands on residents seeking building permits or fix bylaw weaknesses.

More Info...

Town of Gravenhurst planning:

<http://www.gravenhurst.ca/en/yourtownhall/planning.asp>

Check out your Zoning requirements:

<http://www.gravenhurst.ca/en/yourtownhall/resources/ZOningBy-law10-04.pdf>

Find out the fee structure for your project:

<http://www.gravenhurst.ca/en/yourtownhall/resources/BuildingDepartmentFeesBy-Law2012-14>

The Kahshe Lake Plan:

www.kahshelake and click “Lake Plan” on the side margin

Guide to Building, Adding-on and Renovation

Chances are you will need to get a building permit from the Town of Gravenhurst. You're off the hook only if your project is smaller than 10 square metres (or 108 sq.ft.) and has no plumbing. Or, if you are re-shingling a roof that needs no structural repairs, replacing siding or windows with no structural changes, painting, flooring, decorating, landscaping, building fences and the like.

But even then you need to ensure you meet the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw, Building Code, and any other applicable law. So the best advice is to check with staff at the town's building department before you pick up a hammer.

Definitely, you will need a permit to build a new sunroom, basement, retaining wall, heating system, install new plumbing or a new fireplace, chimney or woodstove. Ditto for a deck, boathouse, gazebo, shed, carport, bunkie or garage, even stairs/walkways to the waterfront, floating docks.

Here's how to get the permit:

Submit, in person, a completed application form (available from the Town of Gravenhurst) and fees to the Town's building department. The plan is reviewed for compliance with the Ontario Building Code. After approval, expect inspections at various stages along the way to ensure compliance.

What to Consider

First, check all zoning requirements. Yard and setback requirements vary according to where you are and the type of building. A good idea is to check with the Town's building department to confirm the requirements.

The Challenge

New to Kahshe or Bass Lake? Here's a challenge for you.

When visitors come to Kahshe or Bass Lakes, they often comment on how well most of the cottages blend into the environment. It's probably one of the features that attracted you to your new cottage property, right?

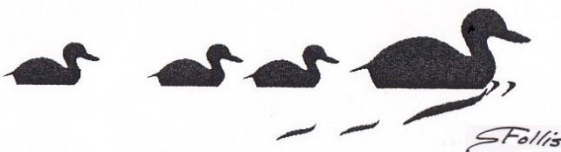
So the challenge is for you to build a cottage that gives you comfort, joy, a great view – and leaves alone as much of the nature around you as you can.

Go out on the boat and have a look at your property from that perspective. Think of what it will look like thirty years from now.

Then cruise your lake checking out what your neighbours are doing. You'll see examples of energy efficient homes nestled under tree lines taking advantage of their shade and protection, new “green” building designs and methods that will diminish your carbon footprint and might even take you off the grid.

Then build/renovate your cottage. Create one that is sustainable, comfortable, almost invisible from the lake that of course has the gorgeous views of the sparkling water through the trees.

And ... welcome to the lake. We're glad you are with us.



Kahshe Lake Conservation Committee

What can we do to make sure that future generations get to enjoy our lakes? Easy. We gathered together some dedicated individuals, agreed upon a common purpose and formed the Conservation Committee. It's a highly respected committee that works under the wing of the KLRA Board.

Consisting of our lake steward, historian, past KLRA presidents along with other interested volunteers, this group has committed themselves to looking after our lake. In very legal terms their mandate is:

“ to preserve, record and retain the background of knowledge, social and historical events and achievements for the future members of the KLRA, acting as preservers of corporate memory. “

They do a great job. Just look at the Lake Plan they developed. It's on our website. As well, they have supported the Heritage Lands initiative and the work of the Muskoka Conservancy. This committee keeps an eye on environmental issues, including new laws, which may affect our lake. And, if the need arises, they will sound the alarm and put out a call for action.



"Originally, Kahshe was a wide spot on the river, and it was the need for more water to float their logs to the mills that moved the loggers to build dams at the South and North Kahshe Rivers. By raising the level of the water 4-5 feet, huge rafts of logs could be taken to the North Kahshe River and sent down to the mills."

-from *Surveyors to Settlers* by Paul Henderson, [Healing Waters of Kahshe Lake](#), Volume 1, page 19

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Thank-you to:

- The following people have all contributed to the production of this book, either as writers, editors, photographers, researchers or designers.
 - Allyn Abbott
 - Rob Abbott
 - Catherine Dunphy
 - Clare Henderson
 - Greig Holder
 - John Kuropatwa
 - George Lindsay
 - Eleanor MacLean
 - John Mertl
 - Alex Milburn
 - Joan Milburn
 - Keith Price
 - Ron Pearson
 - Robert Reyburn

- Sandy Follis for her generous loan of artwork throughout the book.
- The Ministry of Natural Resources for allowing us to use some of their wildlife photos.

