



Frequently Asked Questions by Shoreline Property Owners

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About the Program

What is the Love Your Lake program?

Love Your Lake is a shoreline evaluation program developed by Watersheds Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF) and is conducted on shoreline communities across the country by local organizations.

The program invites lake associations and organizations to volunteer their lake(s) as participants in the program. When lakes become part of Love Your Lake, every property on the lake(s) will be assessed using a standardized assessment protocol. Shoreline property owners will have access to their personalized shoreline property report which contains details on the state of their shoreline with recommended voluntary actions for improving lake health for people and wildlife. Participating lake groups will also receive a Values Survey/Lake Summary Report, which provides insight into what shoreline property owner's value about their lake, summarizes the data from the individual assessments (all personal information is removed) and highlights the health of the entire lake shoreline.

How does it work?

Lakes participating in the program have their shorelines assessed on a property-by-property basis by trained staff on a boat using a standardized Shoreline Survey Protocol and datasheet.

Shoreline property owners on participating lakes will receive a letter explaining the program and when they can expect the program to begin. Once the entire shoreline has been assessed and the information has been entered into the Love Your Lake database, shoreline property owners will receive a letter in the mail the following spring with their unique survey code. This survey code can be entered online at MyReport.LoveYourLake.ca and property owners can download/order their shoreline property report.

The report will contain information about the state of their unique shoreline with suggestions of voluntary actions that can be taken to improve the natural state of their shoreline and lake health.

Participating lake groups will also receive a Values Survey/Lake Summary Report summarizing the data collected along the entire shoreline and encouraging stewardship actions at the community level. Please note that personal information is not included in these reports.

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Who is involved?

The Love Your Lake program has been developed by Watersheds Canada and CWF. These program partners provide program materials, marketing materials, training, and support to regional partners who facilitate local delivery with lake groups to shoreline property owners. The program is designed to be delivered to entire lakes where shorelines of all properties are assessed without disrupting shoreline property owners.

To see a list of our regional partners, please visit loveyourlake.ca/lakes-regions/

Why is it important?

Shorelines are one of the most unique places on earth and people's influences can have a huge impact on these delicate interfaces. Daily actions by all individuals can help conserve our lakes. Keeping shorelines healthy and natural is the easiest way to protect water quality. This not only helps maintain or improve property values but also provides cleaner, clearer water that will benefit future generations and wildlife.

What is the history of the program?

Love Your Lake is a modified and updated version of a scientific protocol developed by MAPLE (Mutual Association for the Protection of Lake Environments) in the 1980s. Watersheds Canada had been using a modified shoreline assessment protocol for over ten years and in 2012 they partnered with CWF to officially brand and broaden the program into the Love Your Lake program today.

How many lakes have been assessed so far?

As of 2021:

- 152 lakes in Ontario
- 21 lakes in Saskatchewan
- 4 lakes in Alberta
- 8 lakes in British Columbia
- 2 lakes in Nova Scotia

How many properties have been assessed so far?

As of 2021, 44 274 properties have been assessed.

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Where can individuals find more information?

More information about Love Your Lake can be found at LoveYourLake.ca.

About Shoreline Property Owners Properties and Participation

Will assessment staff access individual properties?

No; staff will conduct assessments from the water by boat. Under no circumstances will staff be required to set foot on properties. However, for staff to properly complete the survey it will be required that they come within a few metres of the shoreline of each property.

Are assessment staff looking for permit infractions?

No, staff are not looking for permit infractions; the goal of the program is strictly educational and is non-regulatory.

Why are assessment staff taking photos?

Photos are taken of each property being assessed. These photos are used for reference and confirmation when entering the collected data into the database. One photo is selected to include in each personalized property report. Some photos may be used for training purposes; however, identifiable information such as location, address and ownership are not included or revealed. Photos will not be taken if people are within the field of view.

What about privacy?

The Love Your Lake program administrators and regional partners take privacy matters very seriously. Love Your Lake field activities do not infringe upon personal privacy within the letter of the law.

Watersheds Canada and CWF provide each regional partner with policies, procedures and agreements, including a Love Your Lake Privacy Policy and confidentiality agreements. Program staff and volunteers involved in delivering the program in each region (including shoreline assessment staff and volunteer boat drivers) are required to sign a confidentiality agreement. All information contained in the personalized property reports is non-regulatory. Values Survey/Lake Summary Reports are based on summarized data.

Watersheds Canada and CWF must abide by the federal privacy legislation covered under the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). The personal information of supporters,

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participants and registered users is always held in the strictest of confidence and any use of this information is subject to consent.

For more information regarding our privacy measures, please visit LoveYourLake.ca to view the Love Your Lake Privacy Policy.

What if a shoreline property owner doesn't want to be involved?

Shoreline property owners can opt-out of receiving a personalized property report. However, data will still be collected for the benefit of the entire lake. If a shoreline property is not assessed, there will be a resulting gap in the lake summary shoreline data.

We share our waters and shoreline property owners are encouraged to embrace this free opportunity for education of shoreline ecology and best management practices. Data collected is not reported for infractions and the recommended stewardship actions are not mandated or enforced.

Lake organizations that represent the lake community voluntarily agree to be a part of this program. If shoreline property owners have any questions about their lake's involvement, they are encouraged to contact their local lake organization.

Why are shoreline property owners automatically included in the program without their consent?

Regional partners engage with known representative lake associations or lake stewardship organizations that are established and functioning to meet the needs of the local lake community. The lake groups engage with the regional partners to deliver the program to their lake community. Several opportunities are available for shoreline property owners to learn about the program through their lake group, the regional partner organization, and/or Watersheds Canada and CWF.

How can I get more involved?

Shoreline property owners can get in touch with their local lake organization or regional partner organization for information about how to get more involved in protecting their lake.

Shoreline property owners can also visit LoveYourLake.ca to take a shoreline self-assessment to determine the health of their shoreline. After which, they can download an action checklist for simple, yet meaningful, actions to maintain or improve their shoreline and lake health.

If shoreline property owners are interested in nominating their lake for participation in the Love Your Lake program, an application form can be found online at LoveYourLake.ca.

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About the Data and the Personalized Property Report

What is the data used for?

Data is collected about each shoreline property to produce a personalized property report that will contain information about the state of each unique shoreline with suggestions of voluntary actions that shoreline property owners can take to improve the natural state of their shoreline and lake health.

Participating lake groups will also receive a Values Survey/Lake Summary Report summarizing the data collected along the entire lakeshore and encouraging stewardship actions at the community level.

How is the data stored?

The datasheets are in the possession of the regional partner organizations. Supporting program documents and information may also exist on the computers, servers or other office or operational infrastructure of the regional partner organizations and Love Your Lake program administrators. The data entered into the Love Your Lake database is stored on internal and/or external servers owned by the Love Your Lake program administrators.

Who has access to the data?

Program staff with validated database login credentials from Watersheds Canada and CWF have access to the data, along with program staff at regional partner organizations. The contracted database company will also have access to this data and will use the information from the database to generate the electronic files for the PDF shoreline property reports and the hardcopy shoreline property reports. From time to time, requests to share data may be submitted to Watersheds Canada and CWF and, if approved, this data may be shared in accordance with Canadian Law, providing all identifiable and personal information, such as property addresses, are removed.

Who has access to the personalized shoreline property reports?

During production, staff from the contracted database company will use information from the database to generate the electronic files used to create the PDF reports and the electronic files for the hardcopy reports. The contracted printing facility will use the electronic files and will bind and package the printed reports for shipment.

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Staff from the Love Your Lake program administrators or from the regional partner organizations may require access to the personalized reports to resolve outstanding issues or questions (i.e., to resolve any discrepancies regarding content of a report).

While every effort is made to ensure shoreline property owners receive their correct shoreline property report, issues may arise beyond the reasonable control of the Love Your Lake program administrators and/or regional partner organizations that allow a property owner to receive an incorrect shoreline property report. In these situations, affected property owners can contact their regional partner organization for assistance.

How do shoreline property owners access their report?

Upon completion of the assessments and data entry for an entire lake, shoreline property owners will receive a letter in the mail the following spring. This letter will contain a survey code, which is unique to each individual property. This letter will also provide instructions to visit MyReport.LoveYourLake.ca, where shoreline property owners will enter their unique survey code to order their report. Reports will be available as a free electronic PDF or as a hardcopy for \$20.00 which includes taxes and shipping.

If shoreline property owners do not have access to the internet, they can contact their regional partner organization to order their report.

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