

Leonard Lake Stakeholders Association

A community focused on protecting, nurturing and cultivating the natural, physical and social characteristics of Leonard Lake



Friends
of the
Muskoka
Watershed

SALTY MUSKOKA SURVEY

ASH PROJECT MARCH 15

Excessive road salt use is contaminating Muskoka's lakes to the point where aquatic life is negatively impacted. One result is the decreasing population of the small creatures that eat the algae in the lakes. Road salt levels have increased in lakes with developed watersheds and will likely worsen with continued population growth and climate change unless action is taken.

Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW) has been awarded an EcoAction grant from The Canadian Water Agency to support their work finding ways to reduce the excessive use of road salt, and to educate the public about road salt risks. According to studies, most people are using (likely unknowingly) five to 10 times more road salt than required.

Bill Heatlie, a Road 2 resident and active member of the LL Water Team is the Lake Steward for "SaltyMuskoka" and asks if you could take five minutes to complete the short survey BELOW to help inform the Muskoka-made plan.

Road Salt Threat and 10 Key Environmental Questions



SURVEY TIME

Please complete this SALTYMuskoka survey. Your answers will help us develop a Muskoka-made plan to reduce excessive road salt usage and protect your watershed forever.

This survey should take about five minutes. Thank you!
Contact Alesha@fotmw.org for more information

This project was undertaken with the financial support of
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de



Canada
Water Agency

Agence de l'eau
du Canada

[CLICK TO BEGIN SURVEY](#)



It's also a great time to meet our
SALTYMuskoka Project Lead
Alesha Breckenridge



It's ash drive time!

1062 Rosewarne Drive, Bracebridge
Visit fotmw.org or email friends@fotmw.org
to learn more

Help restore our forests and watershed.
Bring your cold, clean fireplace or
woodstove ash to our next ash drive

Saturday, March 15
from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.



A MUSKOKA RESPONSE TO AMERICAN TARRIFS

SHORT TERM RENTAL ACCOMMODATION (STRA)

James Cox, Economic Development Officer, Township of Muskoka Lakes - **NOTE TO COUNCIL MARCH 3, 2025 REGARDING AMERICAN TARRIFS**

In light of the impending imposition of American tariffs, economic development staff from the District and area municipalities, along with local Chambers of Commerce, tourism organizations, and other business support groups, have assembled a working group to coordinate response and adaption in Muskoka. The District is leading this project with support from a number of other groups.

Visit the [*Muskoka Tariff Information Hub*](#) on Engage Muskoka for current information.

Our Ward B Councillor Gord Roberts, reports that the March 13, 2025 [*Planning Committee Agenda Package*](#) is posted on the Township website, and he directs our attention to Agenda item #13 regarding the proposed revisions to the **SHORT-TERM**

RENTAL ACCOMMODATION (STRA) BY-LAW.

The Staff Report to the Planning Committee includes various recommendations for amendments to the STRA bylaw, and a delay in implementation until 2026. The proposed revisions to the bylaw would allow new and existing STRA owners until December 31, 2025 to submit a STRA application. The final By-law requires approval by Council.

With the 2025 'cottaging season' approaching quickly, and the opening of the STRA portal delayed due to technical issues, Planning Staff are eager to provide clarity to the public and STRA owners regarding new timelines and requirements regarding Waterfront and Community Residential Zone restrictions and will update all of the information on the Township website accordingly.

MICHAEL'S CORNER

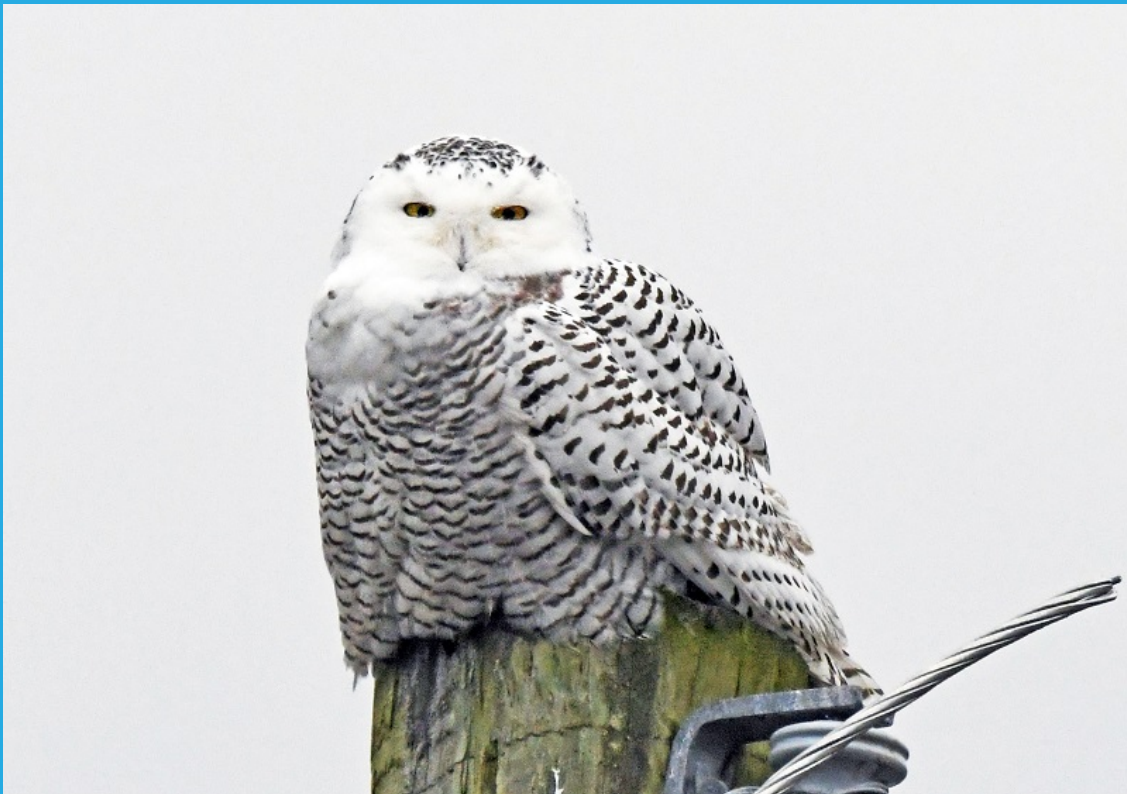
SNOWY OWLS are fascinating members of the avian world known for having a striking appearance and specialized adaptations to cold climates. These large, mostly white owls are native to the Arctic regions of North America and Eurasia where they have evolved to thrive in extraordinarily cold environments. Their plumage provides excellent camouflage against a snowy backdrop, helping them stay hidden from predators.

In winter, it is not uncommon for a limited number of Snowy Owls to move south in search of food. During the past few years, there have been several reports of Snowy Owls seen in Huntsville, Bracebridge and other Muskoka hotspots, always during the colder months.

Males are typically almost pure white, while females sport more black striping on the body and wings. Females are also larger than the males, weighing as much as 2.5 kilograms.



*Snowy Owl (male) above photo taken at Holland March, just off highway 400.
Snowy owl (female) below photo taken at the Bracebridge Sewage Lagoons*



Snowy owls have round faces and large yellow eyes, which enhance their exceptional night vision. Their keen eyesight and excellent hearing help them detect small mammals, which constitute most of their diet. These birds are powerful hunters, using silent flight to swoop down and capture prey without warning.

In terms of physical adaptations, their thick feathers not only protect them from the cold but also cover their feet, keeping them warm in harsh winter conditions. Snowy owls are also known for long wingspans, reaching as much as 1.5 metres. They are one of the few owls that hunt during the day, taking advantage of longer daylight hours during the Arctic summer.

Michael Hatton, Leonard Lake, Road 2

Q: "Michael, have you seen a Snowy Owl on Leonard Lake?"

A: "No. But it's possible. I saw one a couple of years ago out on the ice at Lake Vernon. The closest one to Leonard Lake that I've seen was at the Bracebridge Sewage lagoons. They are around and prefer wide open spaces.

...A note of appreciation to Michael Hatton for his frequent and interesting contributions to EBLASTS - photos capturing birds in their natural (Leonard Lake and environs) habitat; narratives that raise our understanding of the wild birds around us; and finally his generosity in sharing his extensive birding knowledge and experiences.

P.s. Have you spied or photographed a snowy owl this winter? Send us a photo or narrative (or question) to leonardlakemuskoka@gmail.com

Photo Steve Watkins Rd 2...minus 24 degrees C....The Early Snow Hare...



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