

Leonard Lake Stakeholders Association

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



A New District of Muskoka (DMM) Lake Health Program is Under Development

The amended policies will directly impact how our lake, and all Muskoka waterways, are protected in the coming years. Leonard Lake, and many lakes across the DMM have experienced substantial water quality challenges, and the incidence of blue-green algae in new lakes is on the rise. The DMM intends to expand avenues for consultation and exploration over the next number of months to help fuel new policy ideas, and the survey below is one of the first steps.

Take this opportunity to have your say in how the District moves ahead with new policies and practices, by completing the survey below.

What would you like to see as the DMM top priority for improving Leonard Lake

and Muskoka Lakes water quality? How can the District of Muskoka do a better job at managing lake health? What can we do as individuals, as communities, and as lake associations to improve lake health?

Please invest the next 15 minutes in the future health of your lake.

Your opinion matters.



You're Invited to Participate in the Lake System Health Survey

Lakes in Muskoka are vital to the well-being of our community, environment, and economy. The District has Lake System Health policies for waterfront development that are based on science and evolving stressors to balance development and protection.

Through the Muskoka Official Plan Comprehensive Review, the District is updating the existing Lake System Health policies to address emerging environmental challenges such as climate change, water quality concerns, and shoreline development. Public input is critical to ensure this policy update is informed by the experiences, concerns, and priorities of our community. The District has launched a survey to gather this information.

We invite you to complete the survey. Feedback will directly inform policies that incorporate environmental, economic, and community interests. The survey can be accessed at the following link and is open until February 6, 2025: [Lake System Health Survey](#).

Please feel free to forward to friends, family and colleagues that live, work or play in Muskoka. Thank you for playing an important role in protecting lakes in Muskoka for future generations.

Sincerely,

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MICHAEL'S CORNER



Ruffed Grouse

The Ruffed Grouse (Bonasa umbellus) is found in forested areas across much of North America and is often seen in Muskoka. It's well known for "drumming," where males beat their wings to create a sound that can often be heard over a long distance through the woods. This drumming is typically carried out from atop a fallen log, may be employed to attract mates, and helps establish territory.

In winter, Ruffed Grouse develop pectinations on their toes, which are comb-like projections that act like snowshoes and help enable them to walk on top of the snow. In geographical areas where snow is typically deeper and softer, Ruffed Grouse populations show increasingly enhanced pectinations.

This species is also known for what is sometimes called snow roosting. This is behaviour where the birds dive into deep snow to create an insulating barrier that helps protect them from brutally low temperatures and cold, heat robbing winds.

Ruffed Grouse eat seeds, insects and even fruit in the summer, and then switch to twigs and tree buds in the winter. This ability to digest fibrous material is uncommon in birds and allows this species to survive harsh, northern climates. Finally, their colourization and patterning makes for outstanding camouflage. Often, hunters and birdwatchers only see

this grouse when it flies out from almost underfoot.

Ontario is home to several grouse species, but the most common one in our area is the Ruffed Grouse. It is possible to see a Spruce Grouse in Muskoka, but only very, very rarely. Consequently, at Leonard Lake any grouse you spot will be a Ruffed Grouse though that is not the case in Algonquin Park where Spruce Grouse are more readily observed.

Several years ago, a resident on Leonard Lake Road 2 reported a Ruffed Grouse that took up residence close to his cottage and would come to the door daily, looking for edible scraps or sometimes seemingly just to say hello!

Courtesy of M. Hatton



Photos from Glen Gordon Road - courtesy of Paul Freeman



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