

Lake Huron Southeast Shore Working Group
Terms of Reference
March 2011

Introduction

The stretch of the Lake Huron shoreline between Sauble Beach and Sarnia has enjoyed a long history of recreational use and cottaging. It has also been plagued with episodes of poor water quality, algal blooms, aesthetic problems, and restricted use of public beaches. This has, in turn, prompted an increasing number of public complaints to local, provincial, and federal agencies.

The Lake Huron Southeast Shore Working Group first met in July, 2002 in response to the identification of poor water quality in the area as an emerging domestic priority issue under the Lake Huron Binational Partnership. This area has also been identified as a priority under the Canada Ontario Agreement (COA). Through a renewed initiative in 2010 the working group now is tasked with reporting to the Lake Huron Southeast Shore Project Executive Steering Committee who's key objective is to identify priority (sub)watersheds within the Lake Huron Southeast Shore area and to develop strategic integrated plans in which remedial actions are identified to improve water quality. This Terms of Reference document is meant to formalize and provide direction and structure to the Working Group.

Purpose

The purpose of the Working Group is to:

- Cooperate and share information amongst partners to identify priority areas within the Lake Huron Southeast Shore area.
- Provide support and direction to subwatershed teams to develop integrated strategic plans and implement projects.
- provide support for setting and implementing research priorities, policy development and decision-making.
- Provide support to the Communications Team in the development of communication and outreach materials to educate and inform the public and stakeholders on key issues in the area of interest.
- Report on Working Group activities and priorities to the Lake Huron Southeast Shore Executive Steering Committee.

Area of Interest

The area of interest for this committee is the shoreline of Lake Huron's main basin between Tobermory and Sarnia, Ontario, including the watersheds of all tributaries along this stretch of shoreline, and its corresponding nearshore zone, which is the area beginning at the shoreline extending out to water depths that are usually less than 10 metres (see Map 1).

Members

The working group will be co-chaired by Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, who will also provide administrative support.

Representatives from the following agencies/organizations make up the core of the Working Group:

- Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority
- Bruce Power
- County of Bruce
- County of Huron
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans
- Environment Canada
- First Nations
- Grey-Bruce Health Unit
- Grey-Sauble Conservation Authority
- Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation
- Huron County Health Unit
- Lambton County
- Lambton County Community Health Services Department
- Maitland Valley Conservation Authority
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Ministry of Environment
- Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources
- Parks Canada
- Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority
- St. Clair Region Conservation Authority
- University of Western Ontario

Membership may change over the course of the project to reflect new members or areas of interest.

Subcommittees

The Working Group will from time to time designate standing committees or *ad hoc* committees as subcommittees. Chairs of these committees or their designates will sit on the Working Group as their representatives.

Current subcommittees of the Working Group are as follows:

- Subwatershed Project Teams – these teams represent interests in the identified priority areas with membership consisting of local representatives. However, working

group members that can provide necessary skills and knowledge to these teams will participate when required.

Decision Making

- Issues will be resolved by consensus of the members. If consensus cannot be achieved on a significant issue, then the issue will be referred to the Lake Huron Southeast Shore Executive Steering Committee for resolution.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the Working Group will be held as deemed necessary by the members - with the intention to meet at least two to three times per year. These meetings can either be face to face, via teleconference or webcasts.

Reporting

The Working Group will report on progress of priority subwatershed plans and implementation to the Executive Steering Committee. It will also be the responsibility of this group to report on key scientific activities as well as other important initiatives underway throughout the entire Lake Huron Southeast Shore area of interest.

Map 1: Working Group area of interest

