

2011 WORKPLAN



Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council

protect • conserve • improve • restore

Successful completion of the following projects is contingent upon the amount of received funding, partner contributions, volunteers, license/permit approvals (where applicable) and time available from the project lead/coordinator/board of directors. Results will be summarized and communicated through the annual report which will be completed at the end of 2011 and released in the spring of 2012.

McQuaby Lake Walleye Monitoring Project



The McQuaby Lake Restoration Project which began in 2007 effectively wrapped up in 2010 with the trap & transfer of 198 adult walleye and augmentation of the final spawning shoal. All fish which were transferred are legally protected by a regulation slot size and there is a voluntary ban on walleye fishing in the lake in order to protect the brood stock. Adult fish were chosen because each of the other remedial steps to rehabilitate the lake as per Ontario's Provincial Stocking Guidelines (including the stocking of walleye

fingerlings) have proven unsuccessful. This adult transfer was the final attempt at recovering the walleye population on this lake and there are high hopes that it will be successful. Anglers may continue to fish for smallmouth bass and northern pike or panfish; other recreational fish species found in the lake.

If the initiative is successful, it is expected to take 5-7 years to establish sufficient year-classes to support a walleye fishery, though even then, McQuaby will never be a "walleye factory". Inherent environmental and natural resource characteristics of the lake will, at its best only produce a limited annual harvest of walleye.

When the time comes to lift the ban, the Friends of McQuaby Lake and the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council will work with MNR biologists to better understand population dynamics and set a manageable harvest limit for the lake. Exactly how to do this has been a subject of great debate, but there is time to find a solution. With or without regulatory assistance, a self-sustainable population of walleye for future generations will only be possible with the ethical help from all anglers.

To gauge the success of completed efforts, the partners will be conducting a spring walleye spawning survey to observe spawning numbers of fish and evaluate the condition of the spawning shoals. These efforts will help forecast the outcome of our restoration efforts.

Activities for 2011 are expected to include:

- A spring walleye spawning survey
- Shoal cleaning if necessary
- Continued lake-wide voluntary closure of the walleye fishery

North Bay Natural Habitats Program



The North Bay Natural Habitats Program is an ongoing project of the stewardship council's which has been in progress since the fall of 2007.

Originally, the project was designed to start and wrap-up in a single year, but has been extended due to the resounding levels of support received from funders and partners.

The goals of this project are numerous, but are primarily to increase the buffer width coverage along Chippewa Creek as an initial effort towards restoring the creek to its former coldwater status. This project will also to increase the green space/riparian wildlife habitat within the City of North Bay. This is often a challenge given urban pressures through any city, but despite this, the project has been progressing quite well.

At this time, most of the planned tree planting efforts have been completed. The remaining scheduled activities include only the erection of partnership signage to recognize those who participated in the program. Following the production of these materials remaining funds (if any) will be used to replant areas with seedlings where survival has been an issue.

Partners participating include: The City of North Bay, the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority, the Evergreen Foundation, Wal-Mart Canada, Green Streets Canada, Burrows Country Store and Garden Centre, Nipissing Forest Resource Management Inc., The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Eagle Tree and Landscaping Services.

Northern Treeplanting Program



This effort will remain in its infancy for 2011, however, it has been suggested that Northern Ontario both needs and deserves a broader treeplanting program which is available to private landowners through local partners.

In 2009, the GNSC participated in a local meeting of partner agencies, consultants, tree nursery reps, volunteers and interested individuals to gauge opportunities for such an initiative and it met with positive results. Since then, work has continued in the background to further the suggestions and interest brought forward in order to generate interest and continued forward progression in the creation of this program.

Firm planning has begun working with Trees Ontario, various provincial and federal partners as well as the other five Ontario Stewardship Councils (Manitoulin & Area, East Algoma, Thunder Bay District, Rainy River and Temiskaming) present north of the French & Mattawa rivers.

Discussions being held will determine how to establish a management framework and sustainable funding stream to realize the goals of establishing and delivering such a northern program. The Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council will be taking part and providing leadership support as necessary.

TD Tree Days



Last fall, the stewardship council partnered up with Tree Canada and the local TD Friends of The Environment to plant a small riparian area alongside Chippewa Creek at the outflow into Lake Nipissing.

Established partnerships with the City of North Bay, North Bay/Mattawa Conservation Authority and the Ontario Stewardship Ranger Program will ensure that the seedlings are looked after and sites are replanted as necessary.

The simplicity of the project and the easy going nature and dedication from the Friends made it an easy decision to make when council was asked to participate again in 2011.

The site to be planted in September of 2011 will be selected later on in the spring and consist of approximately 500 seedlings.

Partners who may wish to suggest a site for planting are encouraged to contact the stewardship council. The only condition applied to the planting is that it must be within a 30 minute drive of the North Bay City Centre in order to be readily accessible to the North Bay centric partners involved in this project.

Shoreland Buffer Program



Shoreland health has become more and more prevalent as a natural resource management concern in the past few years -especially so after the passage of the Clean Water Act in 2006. Source water protection (for our own drinking water purposes) have help highlight the need for improved management of these land & water interfaces that will benefit fish & wildlife as well.

Shorelands are some of the most highly sought after yet

also the most highly fragile properties. Improving the buffer zones on these lands addresses many of the challenges related to nutrient loading, pollution, habitat loss and soil erosion.

Healthy shoreland buffers accomplish the following:

- provide resting & feeding habitat for fish, wildlife & birds
- provide spawning & nesting habitat for fish & wildlife
- provide travel corridors for aquatic & terrestrial willdife
- provides cleaner water through natural surface & sub-surface filtration system binding runoff from agricultural, industrial, roadways, residential and commercial areas to soils and plants.
- provide a natural barrier to nuisance willdife
- reduce and eliminate soil erosion
- adds property value for landowners
- reduces heating and cooling bills for cottages and residences built on shorelines

Over the course of 2011, the stewardship council will endeavor to build a shoreland buffer program to make native trees, shrubs and support services readily available to landowners. Funding has already been secured which will allow for the planting of a few demonstration sites.

Lake Nosbonsing Loon Educational Project



Some concern has been expressed about the reproductive success of Lake Nosbonsing's loons over the past few years.

In 2010, local Corbeil residents partnered with the stewardship council and a crew of Ontario Stewardship Rangers managed jointly by the council and local MNR Office with support through MNR Youth Programs to find out what might be happening with this iconic bird species on Lake Nosbonsing.

A habitat survey was conducted taking into consideration the entire lakes shoreline to evaluate nesting potential for the common loon. Even with the high level of development around the lake, it was found that there is sufficient nesting habitat to support a healthy population of loons.

A nesting survey was also completed in conjunction with the habitat survey. The unexpected early spring made nesting season unpredictable and therefore slightly more difficult for volunteers observe nesting loons during the usual timeframes.

However, two confirmed active nests and one suspected third loon nest (possibly an abandoned or older nest) was found. Despite the unusual weather patterns (or perhaps because of them) the nesting season was successful for atleast 2 mating pairs of loons on Lake Nosbonsing. One pair was observed with a single chick and the second pair with a rare, but occasionally documented, set of triplets.

Numerous additional adults were also observed over the course of the year, feeding during the summer and staging prior to fall migration.

As it is much easier to sustain a healthy resource than it is to rebuild a damaged one, efforts for 2011 will shift from the expected habitat repair necessary to education and awareness for local and visiting users of the lake.

Planned efforts for 2011 will include:

- Erection of public educational signage at Nosbonsing's various access points
- Discussions with spring fishing tournament organizers to minimize impact on migratory bird nesting habitat
- Educational materials made available for landowners who wish to learn more about the stewardship of loons and other migratory birds.
- Opportunities made available to landowners who wish to naturalize their shoreline to improve the health of the lake.

Environmental Projects

Annual Used Household Battery Collection Competition



The stewardship council has been a lead partner of Nipissing Environmental Watch's 'Used Battery Contest' for a number of years now. A trend over time increase in the quantity collected now sees approximately 10,000+ pounds of batteries collected annually.

The competition is held amongst secondary schools across the region. Participants for 2011 will include the following area institutions:

- Near North District High Schools
- Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord High Schools
- Nipissing Secondary School

At the conclusion of the project in the springtime, the batteries are disposed of in the most environmentally friendly way possible at the North Bay hazardous waste disposal site. This avoids these materials entering landfills' common waste facilities.

Traditionally, cash prizes are only offered to the first and second place schools which collect the most non-rechargeable (disposable alkaline) batteries. Because this is the 10th anniversary of the contest, \$500 in two new prize categories is being offered. An extra \$250 will be awarded to the school with the greatest improvement (over 2010) in the amount of batteries collected. Consideration is also being afforded to varying sizes and enrolment of the different high schools involved by awarding an extra \$250 to the school with the highest level of improvement (over 2010) in the amount batteries collected per student.

The partners would also like to encourage you to consider using (cadmium free) rechargeable and/or mercury free alkaline batteries in your household appliances.

Many thanks to Nipissing Environmental Watch and to TD Canada Trust for keeping this successful initiative going. More details including:

- A list of participating high schools,
- Printable electronic pamphlets/posters to get your organization involved
- Award Details
- Contact information to arrange for dropping off batteries

can be found at the NEW or GNSC websites using the following respective internet addresses: <http://www.nipissingenvironmentalwatch.org/> & www.greaternipissing.ca

Community Outreach & Involvement Programs in Natural Resources

Ontario Stewardship Rangers - North Bay Crew



The Ontario Stewardship Ranger Program has operated successfully in the North Bay District in 2000, 2006, 2007, 2008 and 2010. For the summer of 2011, North Bay will again receive a crew.

Four *17-year-old crew members and an *older crew leader will be hired on for a summer contract to work on natural resource and environmental improvement projects in the local area. Hiring notices will be posted in the spring.

This allocated crew will be based out of the MNR office on Trout Lake road. The lion's share of the crews work schedule will be at the discretion of the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council, but there will also be experience opportunities working with MNR field programs and staff to round out the work plan.

Specific projects which the Rangers will be working on will be decided upon in the spring and confirmed after the crew leader is hired on in early June.

Typically, students work on a variety of short-term projects. Past examples have included:

- Waterfowl Banding
- Radio Telemetry of Species at Risk
- Assisting at the Local Fish Culture Station (Fish Hatchery)
- Backcountry Canoe Route Cleanups
- Electrofishing
- Clean Ups of Beaches, Parks & Public Land
- Plantation Management
- Collecting/Updating Computer Mapping Information
- Trail Construction & Maintenance
- Tree Planting
- Helping Out At Wildlife Rehabilitation Centres
- Provincial Park Maintenance Work
- Building & Installing Duck/Bat Boxes
- Natural Resource/Community Outreach Efforts
- Fisheries Assessments
- Restoring Rare Ecosystems

Applications and advertisement for *Crew Lead* and *Crew Member* positions will be made via:

- The Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council's website
- The province of Ontario's MNR Youth Programs website
- The province of Ontario's GOJOBS website
- Guidance departments of in area high schools,
- Local 'Service Canada' employment centres
- Local 'Service Ontario' centres

Newspaper ads may or may not be utilized to broadcast these employment opportunities.

Successful applicants are hired from an open, fair and competitive interview process.

Partners participating will be identified in June after the hire of an OSR Team Lead. Should any partners have project ideas or needs suitable to an OSR team, please contact the GNSC's Stewardship Coordinator.

**To be eligible for hire, Crew members must be turning 17 years of age in 2011, meaning they have to have been born in 1994. In the event that insufficient numbers of applications from 17 year olds are received, students who are 16 years of age (born in 1995) or 18 years of age (born in 1993) may be considered for hire. As such, students of these age groups are encouraged to apply. Crew Leaders are typically college or university aged students and in some circumstances have been older professionals. Crew leaders must be at least 18 years of age and demonstrate the maturity and other relevant competencies required to meet the conditions of hire.*

50th Annual North Bay Regional Science Fair Awards



Each year the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council Supports the Regional Science Fair.

This is done with two certificates and cash awards for the top science fair project in either the Junior or Intermediate competition levels. There are no specific criteria other than the project must have an environmental or natural resource flavour. Selection of winners is completed by the judging committee during the evaluation of submissions.

Partners for this activity include the Near North District School Board and participating post-secondary institutions.

Youth Hunting Opportunities Day



In 2011, the council will undertake the planning necessary to make a program available for youth which allows them to learn more about hunting as a resource management tool and its role in today's society.

Such programs have been successfully implemented across the province of Ontario over the last number of years to engage partners and a diversity of youth in the outdoor sports. Such efforts have won positive recognition from

sporting association and provided numerous opportunities for youth to make informed decisions about this heritage activity.

Implementation is not expected on this program until 2012. Planning time spent will allow the council to layout the event in a comprehensive manner and deliver a quality experience for all those participating.

Partnerships will be sought out with councils with pre-existing program models, national resource management agencies as well as local shooting sports, rod & gun clubs and various tourism-based businesses.

Media Partner Activities



If you have seen an ad in the newspaper or a service announcement on television about the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council, we have our media partners to thank for that.

For 2011 through 2013 they are: Cogeco Cable, the North Bay Nugget and CTV. Each media organization has entered into an agreement with council which will allow for the in-kind efforts similar to those completed in the past to continue.

The council makes use of this time to publicize projects such as tree planting and educational events, advertise the meeting dates and location of our 'Annual General Meeting' and invoke community participation and support for our various other activities.

Their generous donation of in-kind media coverage makes each of them valuable corporate sponsors and accounts for approximately one hundred & seventy three thousand dollars of contributions annually. Their assistance in preparing these announcements is greatly appreciated and further demonstrates the benefits of truly local television & media.

Local OFAH Lottery Coordination



The Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters annually holds a Conservation Lottery. This is a fundraising activity where the prizes consist of unframed prints, all the way up to a fully outfitted truck, boat & trailer combo.

For each \$20 ticket book sold, \$6 (30%) goes immediately back to the rod & gun club (local OFAH chapter affiliate) who raised the funds –earmarked for local conservation work.

While the council will not directly receive the financial benefit for this effort, our partners will, and we have jointly worked on a number of projects over the past few years which has made use of these financial resources for the betterment of our natural ones.

The stewardship council has set aside some time and funding that will allow for these clubs to access new venues and support their efforts across the Greater Nipissing area. A council director will be contacting the clubs and help them open new doors and opportunities for fundraising with the end goals of helping further our communities environmental activities.

Project Partners:

- Local OFAH affiliate clubs

Presentation of the Lake Nipissing Educational Kit (French Version)



In 2007, the Stewardship Council created a primary grade elementary school educational kit and made it available through the Near North District School Board.

Karen Anderson, the author and a retired teacher herself, made sure that the unit included everything a teacher would need to fit the unit into Ontario's primary school curriculum when she initially wrote the material and put the kit together.

The kit contains a teacher's reference, source material, visual aids, an original board game and even an original storybook which traces a dog named Diggy around Lake Nipissing's various landmarks & points of interest.

Near North teachers may currently sign out the kit from the board office and a copy of the kit has also provided to the elementary school in Dokis.

Intentions were always been to translate these materials into French and provide a copy of the unit to the French school board as well. Two copies were printed and assembled last year. Arrangements were made to present the kit in the fall of 2010, but deferred until January 2011.

Project Partners:

- Karen Anderson
- Conseil scolaire catholique Franco-Nord
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (Support Funding for translation)

Compliance Support Program



In 2010, the stewardship council worked with a variety of government and non-government partners to create and post signage across the GNSC area which promotes the public to report poaching.

Two signs were produced in 2010 and council will pursue funding opportunities to obtain additional signs for 2011. Intentions are to increase public awareness and the reporting of illegal activities as well as to expand this

program, making the resource materials available to other stewardship councils in the north.

Partners participating include: Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters 'Zone D', Sturgeon Falls Rod & Gun Club, Commanda & Area Anglers and Hunters and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources' Aviation and Forest Fire Management Branch (North Bay Headquarters), Provincial Enforcement Branch and the local MNR enforcement team.

Treaty Rights Workshop



2008 and 2009 saw successful Treaty Rights Workshops respectively held at the North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority and the North Bay Public Library.

The purpose of the workshops is to educate the public, non-First Nations and First Nations alike on the subject and importance of Treaty Rights. In both previous years this was accomplished by a presentation in an environment designed to promote open discussion in a non-

confrontational manner.

Given the interest and the positive public response, the workshop will be held again in North Bay in 2011 (location to be determined), possibly for the third and final instalment in the series.

This year, the workshop will incorporate the suggestions collected from participants over the past two years and a focus on a panel discussion.

Participating partners for 2011 will again be the Union of Ontario Indians, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and local community members.

Information Booth/ Attendance at Public Events



The Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council endeavours to participate in public events such as trade shows whenever possible.

In 2011, the Stewardship Council will select three events (to be determined as opportunities present themselves) to support and take part in.

Water Quality Education Project



Working in hand with Greening Nipissing, the Stewardship Council is looking to improve local awareness and understanding of water quality. In particular by identifying activities that adversely affect water quality and simple but effective activities that can serve to improve local water quality.

Plans are in place to hold a water film festival making use of available educational resources as well as work with local post-secondary institution's environmental programming departments to produce educational videos that spotlight water quality. Plans are also in the works to conduct hold tours of natural and artificial water features, hold workshops and create some demonstration sites for rain gardens, buffer zones and other eco-friendly projects which can be accomplished even on the small scale by landowners looking to improve their local environment.

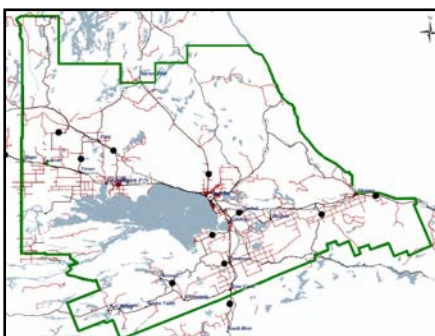
The council will arrange for a speaker on a lake management topic and potentially supply a short video of a lake related project. Council may also make use of our media partners to air some of these materials for the benefit of the public and further place a booth at the Water Day Symposium.

Project Partners:

- Greening Nipissing
- Canadore College

Planning

Greater Nipissing Stewardship Planning Initiative



With such a large area of coverage for the stewardship council (the largest defined boundary of any council in the province) there is a vast amount of possibilities for stewardship work when it comes to project opportunities and partners to work with in the Greater Nipissing Area.

Approximate percentages of ownership in this area are 30% private to 70% Crown. Given these numbers the amount of private property within the Greater Nipissing

Area is equivalent to that of many south western Ontario counties.

The projects and activities of the council tends to mirror this ratio, however the council would like to further assist private landowners in improving the natural resources on their own properties.

The strategic plan created by this initiative would be designed to identify these opportunities and help the council prioritize stewardship activities and further justify larger scale projects to funders which have with higher dollar costs.

Such a plan will not restrict future council activities to the only the recommendations identified by the plan, rather it would serve to improve the decisions made around work planning and project implementation.

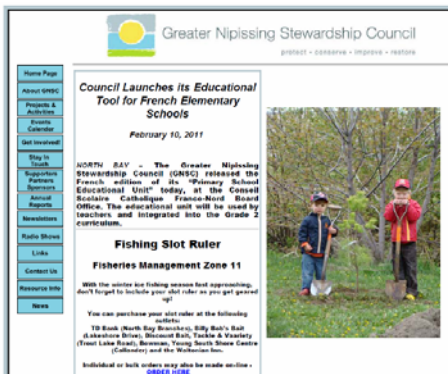
Annually, one or two projects or priority areas identified in the strategy may be selected for action. The plan will otherwise be used to facilitate efficiency of council activities and participation with partners.

This project will also function as a job creation initiative, because in order to create the plan, a plan author will be specifically hired to take on the workload.

Partners for the creation of the plan will be determined as 2011 progresses, however at this time, significant participation is expected from management bodies responsible for various components of natural resources management within the Greater Nipissing Area, including: the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and North Bay Mattawa Conservation Authority. Additional partners may be contacted by the plan author to provide information over the course of this project.

Administrative Activities & Support Projects

Website Administration



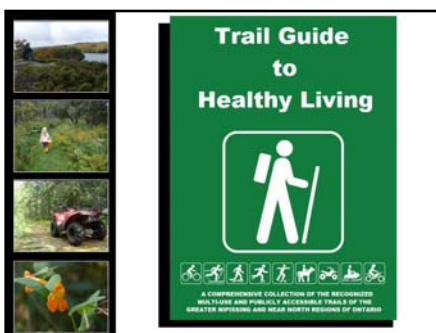
Our new website hit the net in early 2010 and will continue to be maintained throughout 2011 with information updated about our projects and activities as they take place.

Members of the council, landowners, public agencies, private landowners, partners, funders will continue to find information about the council and our local natural resources more accessible through this site.

Project Partners:

Due North Marketing, Sturgeon Falls

Trail Guide to Healthy Living (Distribution and Sales Activities)



Sales and Distribution of the 'Trail Guide to Healthy Living' produced by the council in 2009 in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Health Promotions, Discovery Routes and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources will continue.

The guide is a comprehensive collection of the recognized and

publicly accessible trails of the Near North.

Over 50 trails and trail systems Trails from across the broader area (pictured right) are described in detail.



Copies are available from area retailers (as noted on our website) and may be made available through the GNSC website as well. Prices of the guide are kept low intentionally to make it more accessible to all members the public regardless of income level. Proceeds from Sales are retained and kept in a specific account to be used for reprinting and updating of the guide when stock has been exhausted.

As of the beginning of 2011, over 1/3 of the guides have been released, finding their way into the hands of residents and tourists alike.

Zone 11 Slot Ruler (Distribution and Sales Activities)



The Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council reproduced the popular slot ruler for Lake Nipissing in 2009 including several improvements and expanded content to include information pertinent to all of Zone 11. This is more reflective of the councils expanded coverage area and the recently updated Ontario Fishing Regulations.

Production of the ruler was made possible with help from Mercury, Power Sports & Marine, Sturgeon Falls Auto Sports and Marine, Hunters Bay Marine, Idylltyme

Sports & Marine, the TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and the Lake Nipissing Partners in Conservation.

Anglers can find the slot ruler decals at various locations across the Greater Nipissing Area, as well as portable 'fish measuring boards' which can be transported from one boat to another, or used in a boat where the owner does not wish to apply a decal to the seat or hull.

In 2011 the council will continue to distribute and sell these rulers to increase awareness of regulated sizes and limits for the local recreational fishery. Proceeds obtained go towards stewardship projects, improving the natural resources within our communities.

To become a distributor of these rulers, please contact the council at: info@greaternipissing.ca

To find out what retailers or resorts are currently selling the ruler, please consult our website at www.greaternipissing.ca

Membership Drive & Newsletter



Over the course of 2011, the GNSC will continue its ongoing membership drive.

Those who become members receive:

- A membership card
- A quarterly news letter
- Voting stature at Annual General Meetings
- Email updates on volunteer opportunities

The cost structure for 2011 is unchanged from 2010 and has been set as follows:

- **Adult (ages 18+): \$25.00**
- **Youth: \$10.00**
- **Family: \$35.00**
- **Life: \$1,000.00 (one-time dues)**
- **Bronze Supporter: donation of \$100.00 or more**
- **Silver Supporter: donation of \$500.00 or more**
- **Gold Supporter: donation of \$750.00 or more**
- **Platinum Supporter: donation of \$1,000.00 or more**
- **Diamond Supporter: donation of \$2,500.00 or more**

Corporate or individual supporters who provide substantial donation receive a plaque in recognition of their donation to the council. Some donations may also be eligible for a tax receipt through the council.

Proceeds from the sale of memberships and donations are used to further the stewardship activities of the council across the Greater Nipissing area.

West Arm Water Quality Committee Participation



The West Arm of Lake Nipissing, while connected to the main body of the lake behaves somewhat differently due to the numerous islands, inlets and riverine systems present there.

The residents surrounding Lake Nipissing's West Arm have expressed concerns over the water quality of that area of the lake and have formed a committee and even created a website to encourage discussion about what may be happening there (<http://www.savelakenipissing.ca/index/Welcome.html>).

Members of the greater Nipissing Stewardship Council will participate on the Water Protection Committee in 2011 and take part in discussions to determine if there are any mutual stewardship opportunities our two groups can work together on.

Lake Nipissing Fisheries Committee Participation



Because of its recreational and commercial impact on the area, the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council continues to maintain an active interest in the management of Lake Nipissing's fisheries.

The committee was struck in 2010 to work with the newly formed Fisheries Management Zone 11 (FMZ 11) committee to stay apprised of management decisions affecting Lake Nipissing. The committee will also use this networking opportunity to identify stewardship project activities as they arise.