

Traditions - Respecting Sunfish Lake and Its Ecology

Principles

The devotion to Sunfish Lake by seasonal and permanent residents over many decades has protected the environment and is why we enjoy good water quality and abundant wildlife. Please help the lake thrive in the future by following the guidelines outlined below.

Note: Awards have been granted in recognition of our environment stewardship:

1983 - Regional Municipality of Waterloo

2000 – GRCA Environmental Sustainability Award

2005 – Heritage Wilmot Award for Environmental Awareness

	Yes to:	No to:
1	Canoes, sailboats, paddleboats, rowboats, small electric motors, windsurfers	Gas powered boats
Gas powered motor boats pollute the water and disrupt the peace and quiet. In order to maintain the high quality of the water at Sunfish Lake, any water vehicle that is propelled by human energy (rowing, peddling, etc) or by “clean” energy is permitted.		
2	Natural lawns, hedges, and waterfront	Lake nutrients (fertilizers/pesticides)
Remember that what goes on your property goes into the lake. That includes fertilizers applied near the water. Rain and run-off carry these fertilizers into the water and encourage the rapid growth of weeds and algae.		
3	Phosphate-free soap, shampoo, etc to be used indoors with proper plumbing	Direct use of substances in lake: soap, shampoo, detergent, oil, solvents
Soaps should always be phosphate-free. Soapy wastewater from dishwashing and bathing should be disposed of in soil at least 60 meters from the water’s edge to prevent harming wildlife and creating nutrient-induced algae blooms.		
4	Tree planting	Tree cutting
Trees provide a natural wind barrier essential for sheltering the lake and keeping the meromictic layers undisturbed		
5	Natural grass edges at water’s edge (not mowed)	Encouraging invasive waterfowl such as Mallard ducks, Cormorants and Canada Geese
A naturalized shoreline is generally considered the best multi-purpose approach to protecting the lake’s edge. Maintaining or planting a buffer zone of native vegetation along your shoreline will slow erosion, provide food and shelter for fish and wildlife species and protect your property and investment. Best of all, naturalized shorelines mean less work and more time to enjoy the lake! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roots from shrubs and trees absorb wave and ice energy, stabilize soils and prevent erosion • Plants along the shoreline slow surface runoff and filter contaminants before they reach the lake • Shrubs and trees discourage Canada geese, preventing goose poop and environmental damage they can cause 		
6	Catch & release fishing program including using barbless hooks and artificial lures	No type of Bass fishing in June as this is their nesting season
In order to keep the fish plentiful in the lake, use of barbless hooks and “catch and release” is required for all fishing, with the exception of Crappie. These invasive Crappie fish may be removed. To prevent the introduction of invasive species no live bait is to be used. It is your responsibility to ensure fishing seasons and the required provincial fishing licenses are adhered to by your family and guests.		
7	Improving septic systems and maintaining appropriately	Faulty and / or outdated septic systems
Pumping out and inspecting your septic tank on a regular basis (every 1-3 yrs) is critical to ensure it functions properly. The frequency will vary based on the size of your tank, your family size, and the number of appliances you use.		
8	Weed harvesting if required	Herbicides to attempt to kill weeds
Stonewort and Muskgrass are a gray-green to green plant-like algae attached to the sediment or free floating usually caused by an overabundance of nutrients. Mats of filamentous algae may be removed with a rake, screen wire or similar devices. Please ensure that you do not remove fish eggs, frog eggs or native creatures dependent on our natural shorelines.		

Traditions - Respecting Sunfish Holdings Lands

Principles

The following list outlines the principles to be adhered to for the protection and enjoyment of the Sunfish Holdings land:

- Create a buffer zone against development
- Protect the Sunfish Lake watershed
- Maintain forests in such a manner as to prevent potential threats to the health and safety of users
- Ensure all management activities conform to those outlined under the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program
- Provide opportunities to interact with nature which do not:
 1. cause conflict with other property owners,
 2. damage native vegetation and wildlife habitat,
 3. impair the productivity of the forest, or
 4. degrade soil or water.

	Yes to:	No to:
1	Passive recreation, walking, bird-watching, nature study, cross country skiing	Extreme sports, motorized vehicles, dirt bikes, all terrain vehicles, snowmobiles, horseback riding
Extreme sports are not permitted on Sunfish Holdings land as this is in direct contravention of good forestry practices and harmful activities could forfeit our conservation land status along with the generous annual tax credit we receive. If you're not sure whether your activity is permitted, please contact a member of the executive.		
2	Emotional and spiritual refreshment and rejuvenation	Hunting (including firearms and bows and arrows), target shooting, poaching
Hunting of any type on Sunfish Holdings land is not permitted. Due to the number of people on this land out walking, etc hunting simply poses too much of a danger.		
3	Natural succession of conifer plantations – encourage the growth of native hardwood species	Tree cutting or tree removal outside the forestry management plan, blazing of new trails, unauthorized burning or any other activities inconsistent with good forestry practice
Good forestry management is essential to protect and maintain Sunfish Holdings land as well as our conservation land status. Please see any member of the Forestry Management Committee to address any questions.		
4	Conserve native species and habitats representative of the region's biodiversity	Invasive non-native species (purple loosestrife, buckthorn, phragmites, periwinkle, etc.)
Many rare, endangered and regionally significant species are found on the Sunfish lands. We need to protect and encourage these species. Non-native species can inflict permanent damage on an ecosystem.		

Traditions - Respecting Residents

Principles

Maintaining good relationships is important in any community and will help ensure a high quality of life for everyone at Sunfish Lake.

	Yes to:	No to:
1	Peace and quiet	Mowers and chain saws on Sundays
	Loud noise of any kind can ruin people's enjoyment of the lake setting. While we certainly all know that we must maintain our properties, we encourage everyone to refrain from the use of any loud machinery on Sundays. This helps to give all of us at least one day of peace and quiet during the week.	
2	Consideration of neighbours	Loud music
	For those of you who like to play music, kindly be aware of how noise carries across water and the time of day that your music could be annoying to others. Please keep your volumes at a reasonable level.	
3	Control your pets, accompany them at all times and stoop and scoop	Pets running free, unaccompanied
	Pets need to be controlled at all times and must never be unaccompanied. This ensures the safety of all residents as well as ensuring that all waste is removed that could potentially lead to coliform issues in the lake.	
4	Locally grown and cultivated wood (obtained within a 10 km radius)	Imported firewood (outside a 10 km radius)
	Firewood must be obtained locally to prevent the spread of the Ash Borer Beetle, the Asian Longhorn Beetle, and other invasive species that are now prevalent in Ontario.	
5	Native species and natural regeneration	Invasive Species and habitat destruction
	Sunfish residents are urged to plant native wildflowers, trees and plants that will provide food and shelter for rare insects, pollinators, birds and animals found in our area while keeping their properties as natural and wild as possible. Clearing of habitat, large urban lawns, the planting of invasive species - even seemingly harmless species such as Norway maple, Norway spruce, flowering trees, common shrubs like yews, groundcover plants such as periwinkle, etc. are discouraged. The GRCA and several local nurseries specialize in interesting native species you can add to increase the biodiversity and appeal of your property.	
6	Controlled and supervised campfires	Burning without a permit
	Campfires must be controlled and supervised at all times. Check the Wilmot Township by-laws for more information on burning and the fines that the township has been increasingly aggressive with. All burning outside of a campfire definition requires a burn permit and Wilmot Township now requires all campfire pits to be licensed.	
