



# BALSAM LAKE ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY NEWS

## Spring 2023 Edition



### PROTECTING OUR WATERFRONT THE RIBBON OF LIFE

Enjoying the waterfront is one of the main reasons we love coming to the lake. The condition of our shorelines directly affects the quality of water we swim and play in. Healthy shorelines control erosion, soil loss and the flow of pollutants and nutrients into the water. Nutrients washing into the water can negatively impact water quality, fish habitat and encourages growth of algae and aquatic plants. Naturalized shorelines anchored with a variety of native plants can slow down natural runoff and trap nutrients before they make it into the lake.

Winter is often the time when shoreline renovations start and last winter the BLA received several inquiries about work underway around the lake. The BLA isn't the regulating body for shoreline work but we can help cottage owners understand the process.

Balsam Lake falls under the Kawartha Region Conservation Authority so all shoreline modifications require an approved permit from the conservation authority as well as from Parks Canada - Trent Severn. Modifications include shoreline work like a new stone wall, fill (sand, gravel and rock), and dredging. Trent-Severn regulations can be found at [parks.canada.ca](https://parks.canada.ca).

### FROM THE BLA EXECUTIVE

For those who had a friendly wager on it, the last of the ice disappeared from Balsam Lake on April 14, 2023. Our minds are now turning to summer projects. As you start your spring clean up remember that the CoKL city-wide burn ban started April 1, 2023.

If you're looking for a spring challenge consider joining the Jump-in-the-Lake Challenge, May 6, 2023 in support of the Coboconk Food Bank. I've included details on how to join below.

We have a busy summer planned. With the ice gone, boats are back in the water and the BLA yellow hazard marks will be going back in. Thanks to BLA association members around the lake who help to maintain these marks each year. The BLA will be participating in the Fresh Water Summit Festival again, Saturday June 17, so stop by for a visit. We'll also be planning to hold a general members information session later this summer so stay tuned for more information on that.

I'm on the hunt for photos of life at the lake to use in our communications. If you'd like to add "published photographer" to your resume please send pics to "contact us" on our website. If you'd like to know more about BLA activities follow us on the web at [balsamlakeassociation.ca](https://balsamlakeassociation.ca) or on Face Book.

Barb Callander (President)  
Balsam Lake Association

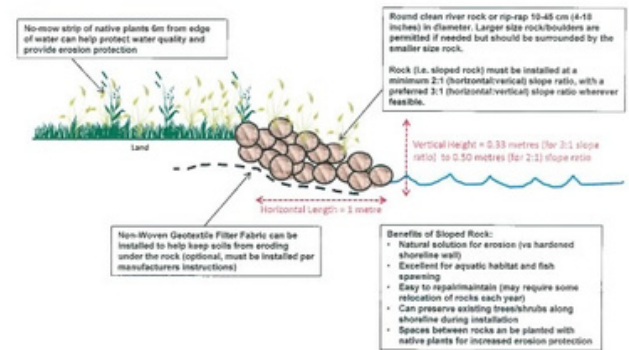


## PROTECTING OUR WATERFRONT

Kawartha Conservation provides a number of services to help you navigate the process including resources if you want to naturalize your waterfront. This information can be found at [kawarthaconservation.com](http://kawarthaconservation.com). Remember to post your permit both lakeside and roadside.

If you have questions about whether permits have been issued for a project in your area, look for the posted permits, talk to the owner doing the work or contact Parks Canada - Trent Severn.

Example Cross-Section Drawing of Sloped Rock for Shoreline Protection



Source: Kawartha Conservation

## STAR LIGHT - STAR BRIGHT

One of the magical things about coming to the cottage is watching the night sky. Away from city lights the Kawartha Lakes is one of the few places in southern Ontario where the Milky Way is sometimes visible. However, there is a growing trend to bring the city to the cottage with the use of architectural and decorative lighting. Dormer, valance and dock lighting is becoming more prevalent. Residents are realizing the night sky is becoming more difficult to enjoy with an increase in the number and intensity of lights around the lake throughout the year (including lights left on when no one is home). There are implications and solutions for everyone to consider.

Many site safety and security as the reason to light up at the lake but bright lights at night can have the opposite effect, putting a spotlight on personal property and negatively impacting our night vision. There could be an impact on neighbours or simply bright lights pointing directly across or shining into the lake. The issue is well documented. Studies have clearly identified that the problems with night light pollution extend well beyond human impacts and neighbourly relations to the animal world. To learn more, Ray Ford's article "[Blinded by the Light](#)" is a good overview of why night time darkness should be protected.

Residential or waterfront lighting has a significant impact on aquatic life. Most aquatic (and terrestrial) species are extremely light sensitive compared to humans. Dock, boathouse and shoreline lights mask the natural light signals that trigger life cycle changes such as breeding and larval rearing for insects, frogs, fishes, turtles and birds. The shoreline is the nursery for the lake. These lights also alter the nightly movement of aquatic invertebrates in the water column which seriously disrupts normal feeding behaviours for fishes and amphibians. We know that night lights attract terrestrial insects including important nocturnal pollinators, deflecting them from pollination activity. Our lights capture other insects depriving night time feeding for predators like bats and amphibians. In short, night lighting is an additional stress on an already stressed ecosystem and it's within our control to act.

## HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

As Earth Day 2023 approaches, let's turn out the lights for more than an hour and make a permanent change. It's one of the easiest things we can do as individuals to help the fight against climate change, save energy, bring back the night sky and help biodiversity in our own back yard. And your neighbours will thank you for dimming the lights.

1. Turn off the lights when not in use, including LED and solar lights.
2. Reduce the number of lights.
3. Add shields or light caps and have lights that angle to the ground.
4. Remove shoreline lights and use reflectors on docks and boathouses.
5. Use longer wavelength lights i.e. "warm lights", orange and red, NOT cool blue

Sources: The Land Between, CBC News, Cottage Life, Ontario Nature, Sky News

LIVING IN THE COUNTRY SERIES

# OUTDOOR LIGHTING

WHAT ARE THE ISSUES? HOW TO DO IT RIGHT.

**ARTIFICIAL LIGHT AT NIGHT CAN BE HARMFUL TO WILDLIFE**

Outdoor lights can cause light pollution which interferes with the health, navigation, mating, hunting and sleep cycles of many organisms (including us)! This is why preservation of a dark night sky is so important!

*How do I keep star gazing and seeing fireflies while getting a better night's rest?*

-  **★ KEEP LIGHTS OFF WHEN POSSIBLE**  
When not outside keep lights off. If you are leaving and need lights when you return, consider installing motion sensor lighting.
-  **★ CHANGE COLOUR OF LIGHT BULBS**  
Full spectrum lights contain UV rays which causes wakefulness in many creatures. To stop this, install warm coloured (red, orange, etc) light bulbs.
-  **★ ANGLE LIGHTS DOWNWARDS <70°**  
Lights pointed out/up into the air cause light pollution. Angle lights downwards at 70° or less and add a cap to the top to minimize this effect.

 The Land Between  
connecting communities



The 4th annual Jump-in-the-Lake Challenge takes place **Saturday May 6 at 2:00 pm**, with a goal to raise \$25,000. Since 2020 over 100 participants and generous donors have raised over \$125,000 for our local community.

This year's Jump-in-the-Lake Challenge will be dedicated to fighting hunger in our community. Donations are going to support the Coboconk and Area Food Bank (CAFB) supporting communities of Norland, Kirkfield and Coboconk and surrounding areas. According to CAFB Chairperson Amy Alfredsson, with food prices at an all time high "food bank use in our area has more than doubled in the last 18 months and continues to increase." The need has never been higher.

To join the challenge as a participant or donor, click "get involved" at

[kawarthalakeside.com](http://kawarthalakeside.com)



## THE BUOYS ARE BACK IN TOWN

Enhancing safe enjoyment of the lake is one of the BLA's missions. Thanks to the support of BLA membership, we maintain a series of hazard markers around Balsam Lake and with your feedback marks have been added over the time. For the 2023 boating season hazard marks are located in the following locations. Marks are in place between the May 24 and Thanksgiving weekends. These are not considered navigation buoys and should not replace GPS and other marine navigation tools:

- A. Togo Rock - southeast of Grand Island with three buoys installed in a triangular formation outlining an island of rocks just inches below the surface.
- B. Grand Rock - approx. 200 meters north of Grand Island marking an island of rocks just at the surface.
- C. Mackenzie Point - indicating the shallow portion of the shoal on the east side of Mackenzie Point.
- D. North Lightning Point - marking the shallower part of the shoal which runs east of the navigation channel leading toward Coboconk.
- E. Delamere Island - marks the shoal that runs between Delamere Island and Cherry Island.
- F. Indian Point - marking a shallow reef approx. 50 meters off shore
- G. Ball Island - marks a hazard that is near the small unnamed island north of Ball Island

If you notice a hazard mark missing or find one that has broken away from it's anchor please reach out to the BLA through our Web site [balsamlakeassociation.ca](http://balsamlakeassociation.ca).

Boater safety continues to be an area of focus. In 2022, the BLA received numerous concerns from residents of Indian Point and North Bay about the number of rental canoes and canoeists from Balsam Lake Provincial Park that were rescued. Feedback was provided to the Park Superintendent by residents of Indian Point and the BLA. The Park Superintendent confirmed that they will be making modifications to their canoe rental program to improve boater safety and wants your continued feedback if there are challenges again this season. If you're responding to a boat in distress only do so within the limits of your capability and safety equipment without putting yourself in harms way. Call 911. First responders are trained in water rescue and the CoKL has approved additional rescue boats for emergency services.

## THIS AND THAT

The Cith of Kawartha Lakes held two drop-in Short Term Rental public information sessions in February and March. Results from the STR survey are available on the CoKL Short Term Rental Jump In project page. Council has reconvened to define next steps. If you have a short term rental make sure you're up to speed.

Thanks to the Residents of Rosedale and the Coboconk, Norland Chamber of Commerce, repairs have been made to the Rosedale boat ramp. There's more to be done. Stay tuned for ways you can support.