

Trout Lake Study Implementation

Trout Lake Conservation Association

Presentation To

East Ferris Mayor and Council

February 13, 2024

TLCA Key Points

- TLCA agrees that more up-to-date, robust land use planning measures need to be incorporated into East Ferris and North Bay Official Plans, to ensure effective long-term protection of Trout Lake
- TLCA is not necessarily opposed to some new lot creation, but any new lots must be guaranteed to have minimal impact – “Best Management Practices” recommended by consultants may be inadequate, as well as difficult to effectively implement or enforce by municipalities
- An independent, third-party scientific peer review of consultants’ assumptions for Lakeshore Capacity Modelling and phosphorus loadings would ensure scientific validity of reports’ findings and predictions
- Consultants’ recommendations depend on an ambitious, costly long-term water sampling and monitoring program, without identifying who would conduct or pay for this work

Scientific Assumptions

- Questionable assumption that measured phosphorus discharges from a few Eastview Estates subdivision lots are typical of all septic systems on Trout Lake
- Those Eastview septic systems were specifically designed and installed for “tertiary level” phosphorus removal, as required by 2003 OMB ruling
- Few, if any other Trout Lake septic systems are close to comparable
- Using Eastview data to predict phosphorus loadings from all existing and future lots may not be accurate
- However, the consultants used this data and other assumptions as the basis to re-run the Lakeshore Capacity Model (LCM) and predict that Trout Lake will not be affected by significant increases in development of existing lots and new lot creation
- Ministry scientists ran the LCM a few years ago, with very different results

Failure to Consider Impacts of Climate Change

- Expected impacts from climate change are not adequately addressed, despite good scientific consensus of inevitable significant impacts on coldwater lakes and Lake Trout populations; using terms like 'potential' and 'uncertainty' is misleading
- Impacts will include warmer water temperatures, loss of dissolved oxygen (DO), loss of Lake Trout habitat decreased ice cover, increased nutrient loadings from storm run-off, increased internal phosphorus loadings from lake sediments
- Blooms of toxic blue-green algae will be more common and widespread due to climate change
- Minimizing impacts of development on Trout Lake is under municipal control; climate change is not

Application of Best Management Practices, Other Measures

- BMPs can be nothing more than recommended voluntary actions that property owners may choose to take; e.g. maintaining vegetated shoreline buffer zones, reducing use of lawn or garden fertilizers, preserving tree cover, minimizing paved areas and storm runoff
- Voluntary BMPs are only effective if property owners are well-informed, highly motivated, and understand why measures are necessary for lake protection
- Even legal measures like Site Plan Control Agreements can be difficult to enforce – legal enforcement requires political will, and is very costly for municipalities, consuming resources and staff time
- Public consultation during this study flagged inconsistent and ineffective enforcement as a long-standing problem all around Trout Lake

Responsibility and Funding: Future Water Quality Monitoring and Modelling

- The consultants' October 2023 report made 6 recommendations for ongoing future sampling of Trout Lake and inflowing streams, modelling and sampling of downstream lakes
- Recommendations include:
 - adding additional types of laboratory tests (parameters),
 - more intensive, complex sampling programs of Trout Lake and inflowing streams
 - designing and implementing an entirely new comprehensive Dissolved Oxygen monitoring program,
 - include Turtle and Talon lakes in future monitoring and modelling
- In past decades, Provincial ministries have done most sampling and laboratory submissions at no cost to municipalities; NBMCA also sampled and monitored
- These agencies were not consulted about the report; with funding cuts to CAs and ministries, municipalities may have to undertake all the necessary laboratory work, sampling, monitoring and modelling – have they obtained a cost estimate to do so?