



**Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy
Biennial Conference
Holiday Inn - Barrie
October 21, 2005 - Conference Notes**

Save the Land...Save the Lake...Working Together for a Great Lake

Environmentalism
....someday it will
be common sense

If we don't think
about future
generations – they
will never forget
us!

Our actions can
inspire political,
social, ethical and
economic change

Human and
economical health
fundamentally
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ecological health –
not the reverse.

Lead by
example....be an
exemplary
example of
environmental
stewardship

Opening Remarks:

D. Gayle Wood, CAO, LSRCA and Chair, LSEMS Steering Committee welcomed everyone to Day Two of the LSEMS Biennial Conference and thanked the corporate sponsors:

- Gold Level: Greenland International Consulting Ltd.
- Silver Level: CH2M Hill Canada Ltd.
- Bronze Level: Lura Consulting and Eco Medic.

Gayle reviewed some of the successes of Day One and shared the highlights which included:

- The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario commended the citizens and all LSEMS partners on a rare and unique initiative.
- The lake is showing signs of rebounding – phosphorus loads are down and lake trout are starting to reproduce.
- Several key initiatives are focused on Lake Simcoe the Inter-governmental Action Plan, Assimilative Capacity Studies and Source Water Protection Planning.
- Focus Group sessions provided guidance on the future development of strategies, science and restoration programs.

Gayle introduced:

Dr. John Ferguson, Public Education Advisor from the Office of the Environmental Commissioner.

Dr. Ferguson provided a presentation to the audience. Some highlights from his presentation include:

- Sustainability is fundamentally an ethical concept;
- Environmentalism – someday it will be common sense;
- If we do not think about future generations, they will never forget us;
- Our actions cannot help but make a difference;
- Our actions can inspire political, social, ethical and economic change;
- It is more satisfying to work together toward a common goal;
- We are not only consumers, we are citizens;
- Marketing is a tool for fulfilling needs;
- Human and economical health fundamentally depend on ecological health – not the reverse;
- Those who know they don't know are the wisest people;
- Lead by example;
- Be an exemplary example of environmental stewardship.

We are the link
between

WHAT IS
and

WHAT
SHOULD BE!

Dr. Ferguson congratulated everyone in attendance for being exemplary, committed citizens advising we are the link between what is and what should be.

Diane Humeniuk facilitated a Question and Answer period:

**Q How do we get the public to buy into this process?
They need to see their tax dollars at work.
What do you do in terms of education strategies?**

A Similar to what I am doing here today, I speak in various communities. However, we have a very small office and resources can be an obstacle. People need to be engaged more fully than just being given a brochure. There is a tremendous need for “social marketing” however it is very expensive and requires dedication and time. We need to follow up with people and speak with them continuously.

Comment

- social marketing should be the way of promoting environmental protection and one way of doing this is through education
- It would be a lot easier if our students were raised with an ecological education
- we require a basis for communicating difficult information
- we should move to environmental education with all schools
- environmental education needs to begin in Junior Kindergarten
- we need to start thinking seven years of generations

**Q There is a link between what is and what should be.
We are here today because we want a Lake Simcoe that is healthy.
The bottled water provided by the hotel and the tables at this conference today is a failure.
Bottled water has been the trend for the past ten years and we should instead be drinking the tap water that is in the pitchers on the tables.
Do you have an opinion on this?**

A You are correct.

- bottled water is not as well regulated as municipal water
- We need a trustworthy product
- the bottled water illustrates the point about marketing
- the public believes bottled water is trustworthier than tap water however it is the opposite

Ron Desjardine, District Manager, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Peterborough District Office thanked Dr. Ferguson and presented him with a gift.

He extended best wishes for great success and advised that many people wish you success including the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario.

Information needs to be clearly communicated.

If the media is not clear mixed messaging will be delivered to the community.

We need to assist the media in understanding the underlying science and know the basics.

“Adaptive Management”

...recognize uncertainty
...engage scientists

“The Role of Science in Effective Communication”

Brian Kemp

**Manager, Corporate Communications, LSRCA
and Chair, LSEMS Communications Working Group**

introduced Dr. Carl Hershner, Director, Center for Coastal Resources Management, Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

Dr. Hershner provided a presentation regarding the Role of Science in Effective Communication – Chesapeake Bay Project.

- congratulated LSEMS on what they have accomplished and indicated that LSEMS is well ahead of the Chesapeake program;
- advised that similar to the Lake Simcoe watershed, the problem with the Chesapeake Bay watershed is the rapid development;
- advised that information needs to be clearly communicated. If the media is not clear, mixed messaging will be delivered to the community;
- we need to ensure the media understands the underlying science. They need to know the basics;
- suggested the production of regular media papers;
- we need to understand the model being invested in;
- we are resource bound to the model;
- the modeling world is seductive; models hold a certain level of uncertainty and most people do not understand uncertainty;
- scientists must stay engaged or risk losing impact;
- peer review provides validation and help to prevent problems;
- adaptive management is necessary – recognize uncertainty; engage scientists;
- educate the media – reduce misinformation

Question & Answer period facilitated by Brian Kemp

Q How are wetlands managed?

A We have a commitment to restore 40,000 acres of wetland throughout the watershed.
Science is necessary and we are in agreement with the political will.
Science is used to restore the wetlands however we need to identify the intended use.

Q Further to the issue around bottled water. We heard about water clarity. Your presentation was pre-empted with a statement that nitrogen reacts with air. Can you explain that?

A

- phosphorus is a concern in fresh and salt water
- both have different limited nutrients.
- the amount of nitrogen that controls algae and phytoplankton depends on the system
- in a fresh water lake, nitrogen and nitrates are not as important as phosphorus
- it is not that they have no impact, however you get more results from the investment in dealing with phosphorus

Q

I refer to your distinction between modeling and monitoring. We, the public, are dependant on information provided by the experts. Please explain?

A

- when modeling, we use estimates
- we estimate what is being done in the watershed and the model assigns the loads
- this process estimates the best management practices as if it had known the certainty and it assumes there will be immediate impact
- monitoring uses more precise measurements
- the monitoring can show a different number than what the modeling has predicted

Roy Bridge

Chair, LSRCA and Chair of the LSEMS Executive Advisory Committee thanked Dr. Hershner for his presentation and presented him with a gift.

Roy Bridge announced a 15-minute break.

Gayle Wood:

- following the break, Gayle Wood advised that the comments provided during the morning session in relation to the bottled water have been taken seriously
- in an effort to show the Authority's commitment, a joint program with York Region, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority will be undertaken to produce nalgene water bottles
- further, future conferences will not have bottled water

“Engaging Our Communities”

Brian Kemp introduced:

- **David Dilks**, Vice-President, Lura Consulting
- **Annabel Slaight**, Chair, The WAVE Steering Committee; Vice Chair, Alliance for a Better Georgina; Director, Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition; Co-Project Coordinator, Ladies of the Lake Calendar 2005.

Both provided presentations on the importance of engaging communities in the effort to protect Lake Simcoe.

The Town of Georgina is currently undertaking a \$170 million dollar project to provide sewage servicing to residents in the Town of Georgina.

Take action, stand up and make a change or stand back and enjoy what is here!

Education, education, and education – it is the most important factor...engage the students in "hands on" activities.

Barb Jeffrey, Principal Planner, Regional Municipality of York – facilitated a Question and Answer period.

Barb Jeffrey thanked David and Annabel and presented them with a gift.

The Session broke for Lunch

“Partnerships in Planting Seeds of Hope”

Diane Humeniuk opened the session with an introduction of Mayor Robert Grossi, Town of Georgina.

Mayor Grossi addressed the attendees

- advising that as Mayor of the Town of Georgina and as a resident living on the shores of Lake Simcoe, he has a passion to protect the Lake
- Mayor Grossi announced that the Town of Georgina is currently undertaking a \$170 million project to provide sewage servicing to the residents
- advised that there is strength in communities and by persistence and determination we can collectively make a difference
- addressed the need to contribute the funds provided to the government for gas tax, marina tax, recreational vehicle tax, hunting and fishing fees, etc., which can then be put back into the resources we are using on Lake Simcoe for sustainability.

Mayor Grossi introduced

Robert E. Boone, President, Anacostia Watershed Society

- Mr. Boone co-founded the Anacostia Watershed Society in 1989 and provided a presentation on the Anacostia River and their strides in the restoration
- indicated that there is a sense of harmony amongst the conference participants. Everyone has the same interest.
- take action, stand up and make a change or stand back and enjoy what is here
- we need to raise a generation of people who will support our mission and make a change
- education – education – education – it is the most important factor.
- engage the students in “hands on” activities
- Clean the water, recover the shores and honor our Heritage.

Diane Humeniuk thanked Mr. Boone for his presentation and presented him with a gift.

The Power of Partnerships cannot be over emphasized.

70% of those who live on the Oak Ridges Moraine, do not know they live there, and do NOT know what the moraine is about, BUT do know that water protection is an issue.

“The Strength of Our Communities”

Diane Humeniuk introduced this segment of the Conference advising that the sessions will be divided into two rooms for presentations and discussion.

PART ‘A’ - Working Session

Presentations were provided by:

- **Kelly Clune** - Resident of Orillia
- **Debbe Crandall** - Executive Director, Save the Oak Ridges Moraine Coalition
- **John D. Hall** - Coordinator, Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan
- **Facilitator:** **Robert Orland** - Orland Conservation
- **Session Scribe:** **Gina Casey,** - Executive Assistant, LSRCA

Please see attached Q/A document regarding this session.

PART ‘B’ - Working Session

Presentations were provided by:

- **Robert E. Boone**, President, Anacostia Watershed Society
- **Dennis Ramsarran**, Councillor, Town of Newmarket
- **Robert Eisenberg**, Co-Chair, Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition
- **Facilitator:** **Kimberley MacKenzie**, Executive Director, Lake Simcoe Conservation Foundation facilitated the Session.
- **Session Scribe:** **Sandra Morley**, Administrative Assistant, LSRCA. – Session Scribe

Please see attached Q/A document regarding this session.

Working Session Part “A” & Part “B” re-convened together

Presentations of the working session results:

Michael Scott, Executive Director, Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation, facilitated the session.

Mr. Scott provided the following closing remarks:

- I currently work with the Oak Ridges Moraine Foundation
- Prior to that, I held the position of Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Communications, (Cabinet Office) and watched how decisions were made

When it comes right down to it, if LSEMS wants to engage the community, as everyone here is requesting be done, the following need to be considered:

- 1) the Power of Partnerships cannot be over emphasized. Create partnerships – this will attract both attention and money.
- 2) there is Power in this – clear, concise information. - Stop talking over the heads of the Ratepayer!
- 3) less than 1% of Americans understand the term "watershed";
- 4) 70%, who live on the Oak Ridges Moraine, do not know they live there, do not know what the moraine is about, but do know that water protection is an issue.
- 5) environmental issues will not elect a government but they can contribute to the defeat a government.

Gayle Wood

- presented Michael Scott with a gift for facilitating this session
- thanked everyone for attending the Conference and for their commitment and participation in protecting Lake Simcoe
- Gayle advised that the Conference proceedings will be transcribed and a CD version will be provided to all conference attendees

Day 2 Adjourned