



September 19th, 2001

LAKE SIMCOE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGY(LSEMS)

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - PHASE III

among the

**Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs,
Ministry of the Environment,
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing,
Ministry of Natural Resources,
Regional Municipality of Durham
Regional Municipality of York
City of Barrie
City of Orillia
County of Simcoe
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
Town of New Tecumseth
Town of Innisfil
Township of Oro-Medonte
Township of Ramara**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

The above noted agencies have agreed to enter into a partnership by establishing this new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for LSEMS - Phase III. The purpose of this MOU is to establish a new working relationship among all partners for the Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy (LSEMS). It is important to note that, in addition to this MOU, municipalities within the Lake Simcoe Watershed also support this Memorandum and the LSEMS initiative. Municipal resolutions of support are attached as Appendix A to this Agreement.

This MOU reflects an expanded LSEMS partnership and builds upon the successful programs delivered in Phases I and II. It presents a new and enhanced approach and focus on strategic planning, including the preparation of a comprehensive State of the Watershed Report, an Integrated Water Resource Strategy, and a Strategic Resource Management Plan for the Lake Simcoe watershed. This MOU supports the LSEMS objectives through partnerships, resource stewardship and an ecosystem approach.

This Phase III MOU will be in place for a six year period (effective November 1, 2001 - March 31, 2007) and its progress will be reviewed annually by an Executive Advisory Committee along with plans developed for continued implementation. A Business Plan has been developed to encompass the six year period. The plan is a long term document, broad in scope, which outlines works to be completed within the MOU time frame and budget requirements. This MOU is consistent with the Phase II submission to continue and expand LSEMS through partnerships, resource stewardship and an ecosystem approach. This new working relationship will also include a greater involvement by community partners.

1.2 LSEMS Goal

Under Phase III, the goal of the Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy has been expanded to reflect a more holistic ecosystem approach and is:

To improve and protect the health of the Lake Simcoe watershed ecosystem and improve associated recreational opportunities by:

- 1. Restoring a self sustaining coldwater fishery,***
- 2. Improving water quality,***
- 3. Reducing phosphorus loads to Lake Simcoe, and,***
- 4. Protecting natural heritage features and functions.***

The coldwater fish community (lake trout, lake whitefish and lake herring) has been the focus of the past goal statement because it is an excellent indicator of water quality and overall ecosystem health and is of high economic and social value. Vital to the attainment of this goal is the restoration of water quality to a level that will support such a fish community. Accordingly, this remains one of the primary objectives of LSEMS. At risk is a valuable natural heritage and recreational resource which generates more than 200 million dollars annually to the local economy.

The LSEMS goal is linked to a six year Business Plan and is concurrent with the term of the Agreement, two terms of Council, two terms of the Authority's Board of Directors, and includes specific objectives, targets, roles, performance measurements and linkages to municipal planning documents. Work plans will be developed which outline annual objectives within the context of the Business Plan and long term phosphorus targets. The six year LSEMS Business Plan is attached as Appendix B.

1.3 Phosphorus Loading Target

Present-day understanding of the phosphorus - dissolved oxygen relationship suggests that a total phosphorus loading of 75 metric tons per year is required to achieve the LSEMS goal. This represents a reduction of 25% or 25 metric tons given that the average loading to Lake Simcoe is estimated at 100 metric tons per year. This loading reduction should restore end-of-summer hypolimnetic dissolved oxygen concentrations to 5 mg/L (from present-day levels averaging 3.3 mg/L). Although 5 mg/L is not optimal for lake trout, it does represent a practical target and one that will provide measurable benefits to Lake Simcoe.

1.4 Phase III Components

Implementation during Phase III will continue to focus on the four major program components established during Phases I and II. Program areas to be continued include:

- strategic planning to minimize impacts associated with new development,
- remedial measures and control options for phosphorus reduction,
- resource monitoring and modelling to assess performance targets, and,
- education, communications and community action.

A series of additional objectives will be established for each program area to serve as the focus for the six year Business Plan and for the LSEMS Phase III working groups.

2.0 A NEW DIRECTION FOR LSEMS

2.1 Process

Implementation of the Lake Simcoe Environmental Management Strategy embraced a new philosophy under Phase II. LSEMS expanded through additional partnerships and an adoption of an ecosystem approach. However, implementation continued to be coordinated through a Steering Committee and a Technical Committee. Given existing funding constraints, it is imperative that new partners, with new ideas, resources and solutions become part of the process. Therefore, to be successful in Phase III, LSEMS will establish a new organizational model with the addition of an Executive Advisory Committee. This committee would consist of political representatives and include the following:

- Chair of the LSRCA,
- Watershed Members of Provincial Parliament,
- Watershed Members of Parliament,
- President, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Foundation,
- Watershed Mayors and Regional Chairs, and
- Chair, LSEMS Citizens Advisory Committee.

This Committee will be chaired by the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Board of Directors' Chairperson. The Executive Advisory Committee would meet once per year, and at the call of the LSRCA Chair, to review the following:

- LSEMS progress and performance measurements from the previous year, and
- LSEMS work plan for the upcoming year.

The current Steering Committee will continue to meet around four times per year to assess progress of the previous year's activities and approve annual work plans. This Committee will be chaired by the CAO of the Conservation Authority. Terms of Reference for the Executive Advisory and Steering Committees are attached in Appendix C.

The Technical Committee will meet on an ad hoc basis depending on the demands of the annual work plan. Work plans will be produced annually, including detailed tasks along with resource requirements or budgets by the Technical Committee. The Technical Committee will be chaired on a rotational basis with all partners participating. Further, a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) will be formed to increase community involvement. Terms of Reference for the Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees are attached in Appendix C. Individual working groups chaired by other LSEMS members will be established depending upon the requirements of the annual workplan. These working groups will be formed to specifically address work plan items and ensure the work plan is achieved. Five working groups reporting to the Technical Committee have been established to initiate the 2001 work plan, as follows:

- Monitoring and Modelling Working Group
- Holland River Water Quality Project Working Group
- Communications Working Group
- Total Water Quality Program Working Group
- State of the Watershed Working Group.

LSEMS will establish new partners such as watershed industries, federal agencies, interest groups, aboriginal peoples and developers as part of the CAC. The business planning approach will ensure that the long term investment required to achieve the LSEMS targets is obtainable. Accountability will be increased and the success of the program can be evaluated through performance and surveillance monitoring. A description of some of the specific work plan initiatives proposed in 2001 to achieve individual targets is provided in Appendix D.

2.2 Agency Roles

Agency roles are governed by the established mandates of the participating agencies and the particular expertise of the individuals serving on the working groups. The annual work plans for the working groups will define in detail the roles of agency representatives serving on the working groups. For example, it is expected that the LSRCA and OMAFRA will assume leadership roles in controlling phosphorus loads from agricultural operations; that MNR will assume a leadership role in monitoring the state of lake trout and lake whitefish populations in Lake Simcoe, while MOE would continue to monitor and assess the biological and chemical changes in water quality. The provincial ministries and municipalities will also be instrumental in the development of the State of the Watershed Report, Integrated Water Resource Strategy and the Strategic Resource Management Plan in cooperation with the other LSEMS partners.

2.3 Administration

Administrative duties will continue to be the responsibility of the Conservation Authority and include:

- producing and distributing meeting agendas and minutes from the Executive, Steering, Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees,
- producing and distributing annual updates to government agencies, municipalities and general public,
- ensuring on-going media coverage of Phase III,
- keeping accurate financial records,
- ensuring that a complete assessment of LSEMS Phase III takes place at the end of year 6.

2.3 Funding Agreement

All provincial partners are expected to provide funding for their initiatives from within their respective allocations. Additional capital funding is required to match municipal and Authority dollars to complete phosphorus reduction projects and initiate other control options. Funding levels will be based on annual allotments and may fluctuate. The proposed budget apportionment for capital funding is provided in the table below.

Partner	Annual Target Contribution	Total Target Contribution
Province of Ontario	\$587,500	\$3,525,000
Watershed Municipalities	\$587,500	\$3,525,000
Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority	\$275,000	\$1,650,000
Lake Simcoe Foundation	\$100,000	\$600,000
Other	\$500,000	\$3,000,000
TOTALS	\$2,050,000	\$12,300,000

NOTE: The above funding reflects dollars required for capital works, administration, planning and communications. Internal allocations from MNR and MOE are not reflected in the above figures.

Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority
Chair

Ontario, Deputy Minister of Agriculture,
Food and Rural Affairs

Ontario, Deputy Minister
of the Environment

Ontario, Deputy Minister
of Natural Resources

Ontario, Deputy Minister
of Municipal Affairs and Housing

The following municipalities are part of the LSEMS partnership:

Regional Municipality of Durham
Regional Municipality of York
City of Barrie
City of Orillia
County of Simcoe
Town of Bradford West Gwillimbury
Town of New Tecumseth
Town of Innisfil
Township of Oro-Medonte
Township of Ramara

Municipal resolutions of support are attached as Appendix A.