

# The Otty Lake Management Plan

## *Executive Summary*



**Otty Lake Association and Volunteers**

**With Assistance from:  
The Lake Management Planning Program**



Fisheries and Oceans  
Canada

Pêches et Océans  
Canada



Rideau Lakes  
Environmental  
Foundation

## ***Executive Summary***

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### **Intent**

The intent of the *Otty Lake Management Plan* is to provide a community developed, long-term action plan that works to protect the health and special features of Otty Lake.

### **What is a Lake Management Plan?**

A lake management plan is a long-term action plan, developed by a lake community, to protect the health and special features of a lake. A lake plan reflects community consensus about what is needed to protect the natural, physical, cultural and economical aspects of a lake and its watershed.

The lake planning process offers the opportunity for everyone with an interest on a lake (everyone who works, lives or plays within a lake watershed) to come together to discuss their concerns. The process of gathering community input is as important as the end result. Through discussions, residents identify what they value about a lake, learn about the issues affecting it, and offer recommendations on goals, objectives and actions that promote sustainable development and overall protection of a lake and its watershed.

### **How the Otty Lake Management Plan was Developed**

There is a long history of dedicated volunteers working to protect the health of Otty Lake. For almost forty years, many caring volunteers have devoted their time and skill to ensure the water quality and environment of Otty Lake is maintained and enhanced for future generations.

Recognizing the need to protect the lake's long-term sustainability, the Otty Lake Association acknowledged the role a lake management plan could play in the future health of the lake. In 2004, based on the foundation of the dedicated effort of many lake volunteers, a lake management planning process was initiated.

The lake management planning process provided the Otty Lake community an opportunity to develop a strategic, long-term plan that encouraged a co-operative and shared responsibility for the protection of the lake, using this guiding principle:

***"We believe that Otty is a special and beautiful lake and that the use of the lake is a privilege available to current and future generations who are responsible for its well-being"***

### **Vision for Otty Lake**

In the summer of 2005, the Otty Lake Management Planning Committee developed a vision statement for the lake management planning process, based on questionnaire feedback from the lake community and its partners:

***"To protect and sustain the health of Otty Lake through the combined efforts of the residents and users of the Lake and its watershed, and of concerned community partners in government and non-government organizations."***



*Photo courtesy of  
Rosemary MacKinnon*

## The Otty Lake Management Plan

The *Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed* provided a summary of what is currently known about the Otty Lake watershed and how that information relates to the issues that are important to the people who use the lake. This Report was used as the basis to forming the *Otty Lake Management Plan*.

The Plan is based on the recommendations and input gathered from community workshops as well as from many emails, letters, phone calls and informal discussions with lake residents. The Plan includes; goals, objectives and actions that address the eleven issues identified by the lake community. Implementation of the actions will result in the protection of our lake through education, stewardship action and land use regulation.



**In the fall of 2007, an Otty Lake Property Owners' Survey was distributed to all lake residents. A significant 45% of the surveys were completed and returned. Members of the lake community identified water quality, aquatic vegetation, development pressures, responsibilities of landowners and shoreline protection as the most important priority areas. During the first phases of the Plan's implementation, focus will be placed on implementing those identified objectives and actions.**

The Otty Lake planning process has utilized a two pronged approach, using education as its primary focus. It is assumed most lake residents understand their responsibility and the role they play in protecting their lake, but may not be fully aware of how to be involved. Where education and action strategies alone may not meet goals, the second approach, supporting municipal regulation affecting the lake, will be used. The *Otty Lake Management Plan's* objectives, goals and actions have incorporated both education and regulation approaches to protect the lake.

The *Otty Lake Management Plan* is a living document that will be revisited and revised over time, adapting to new issues as they arise. Implementation of the Plan will be the responsibility of the lake community and its partners. An ongoing process, the lake community will work in partnership with government and non-government agencies to care for Otty Lake and its watershed on behalf of future generations. Continual monitoring of the education and action strategy efforts will be carried out to ensure the identified lake issues are being addressed, and implementation of action strategies are producing the intended results.

Guided by the lake community's vision for the future of Otty Lake, both the *Report on the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed* and the *Otty Lake Management Plan* have addressed each of the eleven issues that were identified through the initial lake resident questionnaire and focus group discussions.

Otty Lake's vision is reflected throughout the recommendations and actions in the Plan, outlining resident responsibility and community partnerships as fundamental roles in protecting the long-term health of the lake.

The *Otty Lake Management Plan* is based on input from the lake community and others who have a vested interest in the long-term health of the lake. It has provided an opportunity for the lake community to work together with various government and non-government agencies to address identified issues and develop goals, objectives and actions that will protect the water quality and natural environment of the lake and its watershed in the years ahead.

## Issues, Goals Objectives and Action Strategies:

The goals, objectives and actions for each of the eleven issues listed below are based on input from the lake community and partners and how they thought the lake community should protect the long-term health of Otty Lake. A detailed list of actions for each of the 11 objectives can be found in the Otty Lake Management Plan.

### The Otty Lake community identified eleven goals as priorities for action on our lake:

1. **Water Quality:** To protect, maintain and improve the water quality of the lake
2. **Aquatic Vegetation:** To manage excessive aquatic vegetation growth in problem areas of the lake
3. **Groundwater Quality and Quantity:** To protect groundwater resources in the Otty Lake watershed
4. **Water Levels:** To preserve the lake's natural water levels
5. **Development Pressures and their Impacts on the Otty Lake Watershed:** To protect the lake environment and ecosystem from the impacts of shoreline development and redevelopment
6. **Fish and Wildlife Health:** To protect the lake's wildlife, terrestrial and aquatic habitats and ensure sustainable management of watershed resources
7. **Shoreline Protection and Health:** To restore and maintain a healthy 'Ribbon of Life' around the lake
8. **Mining Rights and Claims:** To protect the Otty Lake watershed from the impacts of all mining activity
9. **Impacts of Boating:** To minimize the negative impacts of boating on the lake
10. **Responsibility of Landowners in Protecting Lake Health:** To encourage and promote environmental awareness, responsibility, education and action
11. **Partnerships in Lake Management:** To establish, maintain and expand upon effective partnerships in lake management

Throughout the lake management planning process, every effort was made to keep everyone with an interest in the process informed and involved through community meetings, mailings, and regular updates in Captain Otty's Log and the lake association's website. As we go forward, the Otty Lake Association will continue to encourage community input and participation in protecting the health of the lake at any point in the process.

## To Receive a Copy

The Otty Lake Management Plan and supporting lake planning documents including the State of Otty Lake and its Watershed Report can be found on the Association's web site: <http://www.ottylake.org/>. The Plan will soon be available in hard copy. For information on how to receive a copy please contact [ottylake@sympatico.ca](mailto:ottylake@sympatico.ca).

*Cover Photo courtesy of Norm Hull*