

LHCCC Newsletter



The Lake Huron Centre for Coastal Conservation

April 2017

Message from our Executive Director



Left to right
Erinn Lawrie; Coastal Stewardship Coordinator
Rhannon Moore; Coastal Outreach Specialist
Hannah LaCroix; Coastal Technologist
Matt Hoy; Executive Director

Welcome to April's edition of the LHCCC Newsletter! Spring has "sort of sprung"? Mother nature is trying her best to bring back our summer weather, and I am sure many of you are contemplating your returns to your cottages and planning your summer vacation. We at the Centre have been working diligently with our many partners to promote coastal awareness through education and collaboration. We have attended and spoke at numerous functions including the International Joint Commission's community workshop, Huron Fringe Naturalist Club, The Bruce Peninsula Biosphere Association, Healthy Lake Huron, and the Lower Maitland Stewardship Group to name but a few. We have also hosted three very successful community workshops in Bayfield, Sarnia and Sauble Beach to garner community support and input for our Coastal Action Plan.

April 1st we held our most successful beach cleanup ever! Our office in conjunction with Zehrs Markets held a cleanup on the Goderich Beach and the mouth of the Maitland River.

We had over 100 volunteers and removed almost 800 lbs (363 kgs) garbage from the waterfront!

Thank you for your support of the LHCCC and our Lake! Please save our website on your "favorites", and remember to hit that **DONATE** button! We can't do the important work we do without your support!

Matt Hoy

Our First Beach Clean Up of the Year

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April 22 is Earth Day



What does Earth Day have to do with Lake Huron, you ask? What is the relationship of land to water? Well, let's unpack this concept and see what we find.

We spend most of our time on earth, good' ole "Terra Firma", with an occasional glance across that wide expanse of water called Lake Huron. We drink it, we sometimes swim and fish in it, but most of the time we spend on dry ground, on shore. This means we may have fleeting thoughts about that quantity of fresh water, but frequently, it is "hidden in plain sight".

Approximately two million residents surrounding Lake Huron draw their drinking water from our Lake, roughly 2/3 of the population from Michigan and 1/3 from Ontario. The cities of Detroit, MI and London, ON are the two major population centres connected by pipelines to our Lake, like two large straws. Comparisons have been made that the condition of the water is a direct reflection of the condition of the land. That means that if there are challenges with Lake Huron water quality (such as with bacteria and algae), we need to look to the land for at least part of the remedy.

Do we put stress on our lake by removing too many trees that buffer the shore, by building too many houses too close to the coast, too many septic systems not being maintained, or too much storm runoff from paved roads and lanes? Do we put too much fertilizer on our properties to grow our lawns or on our fields to grow crops? Or do we use the right amount of nutrients but at the wrong time and they wash away with the rain? Farming communities refer to this as the 4R's of

Nutrient Stewardship- Right source at the Right rate, Right time, and Right place. Urban dwellers commonly refers to the 3R's of Waste Reduction - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle. However, we frequently focus on the third priority to **recycle** without even contemplating the first two priorities of **reduction**, nor the idea of **reuse**.

For example, when enjoying a meal at a restaurant, how often do you hear patrons telling the waiter to for-go the plastic straw in the glass of water as it creates unnecessary plastic garbage? A small pilot project in Barrie this past winter called the "No Straw Challenge", resulted in a total reduction of 14,000 plastic straws saved from the landfill in only 1 month by 10 restaurants (or about 30 straws per restaurant per day). Plastic straws are one of the most common pieces of litter found in shoreline cleanups conducted by our Lake Huron coastal communities. Can we do without them?

On Earth Day this April 22, don't let your actions "be the last straw" for our precious Lake Huron. Consider at least one action, no matter how small, that you will take to benefit our Lake? Better yet, make every day, Earth Day!!

Patrick Donnelly is the Coastal Science and Stewardship Advisor and co-founder of the Lake Huron Coastal Centre. He doesn't use a straw.

Stay tuned for future e-newsletter topics:
What is the Fuss about Phosphorus?
Do we need to form the "United Phrag Farmers of Port Franks"?

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