

Huron County Lakeshore

Environmental Strategy Update July 2009

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Lakeshore Update 2009

- Welcome
- Your hosts:
 - Ashfield Colborne Lakeshore Association (ACLA)
 - Friends of the Bayfield River (FoBR)
 - Bayfield Ratepayers Association (BRA)
 - Bluewater Shoreline Residents Association (BSRA)

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Lakeshore Update 2009

- **Huron County-** two main economic engines
 - Agribusiness
 - Tourism

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- Lake Huron water quality not a new issue
 - Huron MOH concern dates back 30 years+
- Enhanced testing and posting-warning was the response
- Analysis shows warnings may be misleading

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- Stream testing began in Ashfield over ten years ago
- MVCA and local Council support it

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- Further south, BSRA and FOBR have pursued similar testing
- ABCA and Bluewater Council have supported
- Mitigation attempted
- Blue Flag beach designations not achieved
- Concerns exist in Central Huron as well

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- Testing was for nitrates, phosphates, e-coli, and pathogens
- Source concern led to basic DNA testing

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- Toronto Star article 03/04
- Provincial and Federal Government attention

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- Since then:
 - Municipal support has increased
 - Voluntary septic inspection
 - Lakeshore Stewardship Program
 - Stream testing has continued
 - Sewage system investments

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- But water quality has not improved, and as a result..
- More detailed scientific research has been conducted over a period of several years.

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- Federal research failed to find evidence of septic system contamination along the shoreline
- Provincial research conducted along the shoreline and over a number of years

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- March 2009 Canadian Journal of Microbiology
- Determined that >60% of e-coli came from livestock, and less than 3% of human origin

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Canadian Journal of Microbiology

“ Our results demonstrated that the dominant source of *E. coli* pollution of the lake was agriculture, followed by environmentally adapted *E. coli* strains, wildlife, and then humans. A similar ratio of contributing sources was observed in all samples collected from various locations including the river discharging to the beach in both 2005 and 2006.”

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- Now time for more investment in prevention
- Makes good business sense
- ACLA, FoBR, BRA, BSRA working together
- Today's meeting is the start

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- Goal is to acquire funding to accelerate dramatically the initiatives that are now occurring

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- Lakeshore groups recognize that agriculture in Huron has multiple challenges, including
 - High Canadian \$
 - Weather 2009
 - Global recession
 - Fluctuating oil prices
 - Loss of off farm income opportunities

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- Provincial and Federal Governments will attempt to deal with these Province wide issues
- Our local joint needs go beyond these issues

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- Will involve Provincial Ministers next
- Goal is significant Provincial investment beginning in 2010/2011

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- **Outcomes sought:**
 - A cleaner, safer Lake Huron
 - A prosperous Huron County

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- **Next Steps**
 - Meet Provincial Staff late summer/early fall
 - Meet Ministers in fall
 - Need small group from Councils to join with us

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Questions/Comments?