
Lake Simcoe Protection Act

December 2, 2008

Four decades of scientific studies show that impacts from human activities have impaired the health of the Lake Simcoe watershed ecosystem. The Lake Simcoe Science Advisory Committee recommends that Ontario needs to act immediately to protect the lake. Otherwise, the impact of current activities, future growth and other major stressors, notably climate change and new invasive species, will affect the health of the lake.

LAKE SIMCOE PROTECTION ACT

The Lake Simcoe Protection Act passed by the Ontario Legislature sets the framework for protecting the lake by:

- requiring the province to create the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan
- setting the objectives of the plan
- setting the scope of the plan and the mechanisms for carrying it out
- creating science and stakeholder advisory committees to support plan implementation
- allowing the province to regulate activities in shoreline and other critical areas of the watershed to protect water quality
- promoting environmentally sustainable land use practices and development
- allowing the province to require municipalities to pass by-laws to control site alteration, top soil removal, tree cutting, use of lawn fertilizers and pet waste.

Information about the new legislation is posted on the [Environmental Registry](#). The registry number is 010-3753.

DEVELOPING THE LAKE SIMCOE PROTECTION PLAN

The plan would set the priorities and targets for addressing key threats to the health of the Lake Simcoe watershed ecosystem based on science. Threats include:

- excessive phosphorus and other pollutants
- climate change
- invasive species
- loss and fragmentation of natural areas and habitat
- changes to the hydrologic cycle
- human use of resources.

The Lake Simcoe Protection Plan would use a mix of mandatory and voluntary measures to achieve the targets. It would integrate and build upon Ontario's existing frameworks for environmental protection and land use planning. This would provide protection for the lake where it most needs it without duplicating existing protections.

The Lake Simcoe science and stakeholder advisory committees and Aboriginal communities are involved as the government develops this long-term protection plan.