

Love Your Lake

Climate Communications Case Story



Feedback



Personalization



Social Norms and Prompts



Visual Storytelling

PROJECT AT-A-GLANCE

Project Title: Love Your Lake

Location: Various freshwater lakes across Canada

Project Partners: Canadian Wildlife Federation, Watersheds Canada, Local Communities

Date: Launched in 2013

Climate Issue: Freshwater ecosystem health and erosion prevention

Action Area: Environmental stewardship

Behavioural Theme(s): Feedback, Personalization, Social Norms and Prompts, Visual Storytelling

Audience: Shoreline Property Owners, Lake Organizations



It was only after receiving the Love Your Lake report that we considered naturalization as an option for our shoreline.

— Diane, Ontario Program Participant²⁰

IMPACT STORY

The Love Your Lake program launched in 2013 as a shoreline evaluation initiative developed by Watersheds Canada and the Canadian Wildlife Federation. Through the program, lake associations and residents are invited to “volunteer” their lakes for assessment. Once accepted, every property on the lake goes through a standardized evaluation process and landowners receive a personalized property report which can be downloaded through the program website. The report includes results from a community values survey as well as information on overall lake health, providing recommendations on improving lake health for both residents and wildlife. By involving residents in data collection and providing tailored recommendations, the project fosters a sense of collective responsibility toward lake stewardship. In its first 10 years, 216 lakes and almost 50, 000 properties across the country were assessed as a part of this effort to support the health of Canadian freshwater lakes.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES INCLUDE...

- Assessing the health of freshwater lakes;
 - Educating property owners on best practices for shoreline management; and
 - Encouraging community-led conservation efforts.
- **Personalized Reports:** Property owners receive detailed reports and recommendations for improving shoreline health.
 - **Workshops and Resources:** Educational sessions and materials are provided to support community-led conservation.



COMMUNICATION & ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

BEHAVIOURAL STRATEGIES & TAKEAWAYS

- **Feedback:** By receiving personalized reports with actionable insights, participating property owners are directly connected to a collective practice of environmental stewardship and community caretaking.
- **Personalization:** Tailored recommendations based on the specific conditions of each property help property owners feel empowered to take action.
- **Social Norms and Prompts:** As the program engages every property on the “volunteered” lakes, property owners are more likely to adjust their actions to align with those of their neighbours.
- **Visual Storytelling:** Program communications use photos and visual data to communicate the importance of healthy shorelines in an engaging and accessible manner.

CONCLUSION

The Love Your Lake program illustrates the power of involving and empowering community members to act by providing them with relevant, timely resources and tools for shoreline conservation. By engaging local residents in the assessment and care of their lakes, the project cultivates informed stewardship and fosters a collective commitment to protecting freshwater ecosystems.

SOURCES

Love Your Lake. (2019). *Love Your Lake*. <https://www.loveyourlake.ca/>

Watersheds Canada. (n.d.). Healthy shorelines for healthy lakes. <https://watersheds.ca/our-work/love-your-lake/>

MORE CASE STORIES AND RESOURCES ONLINE

This case story was developed by ICLEI Canada through the Ontario Resource Centre for Climate Adaptation (ORCCA) as part of a Climate Communications Toolkit. Find more case stories and additional climate communications resources online at icleicanada.org/project/climate-communications-toolkit

ORCCA is a pilot initiative led by ICLEI Canada and supported by the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks alongside financial support from the Government of Canada through the federal Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada.

CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

