

FAWN LAKE WETLAND HERITAGE AREA

BACKGROUND

During the summers of 1990 to 1992 fieldwork was completed to assess candidate areas in Muskoka for their heritage value. A final report was produced in 1994. In total 48 heritage areas and 11 heritage sites were recognized as being significant within Muskoka.

The current District Official Plan policies that pertain to heritage areas were approved in 1991. These policies need to be reviewed and enhanced where appropriate to help deal with land use issues related to the heritage areas. Heritage areas are at the very heart of what makes Muskoka such a unique and vibrant place.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AREA

Location: Macaulay Township, Bracebridge

Size: 400 hectares

Features: This palustrine wetland occupies an extensive low-lying area of peat and muck soils between Bonnie and Fawn Lakes. The drainage is northwards with one source from Bonnie Lake, a second from a small creek and beaver pond in the southwestern corner, and the major source from a complex of open beaver-controlled ponds supporting marsh and fen vegetation. These ponds, which are about 25m above the larger wetland basin, are connected through a narrow steep rocky gorge into the southeastern end of the wetland. This is a Provincially Significant Wetland.

CRITERIA FULFILLED:

Hydrology

Representation

Quality and Disturbance

OWNERSHIP & DISTURBANCE

Ownership: The area is entirely privately owned.

Disturbance is minimal.

SENSITIVITY

Ownership: The area is entirely privately owned.

Disturbance is minimal.

NEXT STEPS

Muskoka is reviewing existing land use policies within the District Official Plan as they relate to heritage areas. Landowner, agency and interest group involvement in the process will help determine appropriate policy for these valuable natural areas, and will help to identify local concerns and issues.