

SITE EVALUATION REPORT

*Proposed Mainland Access Treasure Island,
Lake Waseosa*

CHAFFEY WARD, TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE
DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY OF MUSKOKA

MAY 2019

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction.....	1
2.0 Existing Conditions.....	1
Terrestrial Habitat	1
Shoreline and Aquatic Habitat	2
3.0 Proposed Mainland and Road Access	3
Access road	3
Parking Facilities	3
Shoreline Access and Boat Launch	4
4.0 Impact Assessment	5
Muskoka Heritage Areas & Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest.....	5
5.0 Recommendations	6

1.0 INTRODUCTION

FRi Ecological Services was retained to conduct a Site Evaluation Report (SER) for a proposed waterfront landing site consisting of parking and boat launch facilities required to access two lots located on Treasure Island. Access to this site will be achieved by the creation of a private road traversing Parts 4 and 5 of Lot 12, Concession 2, Chaffey Ward in the Town of Huntsville. The boat launch site and parking area will be located wholly on Part 5 (Figure 1).

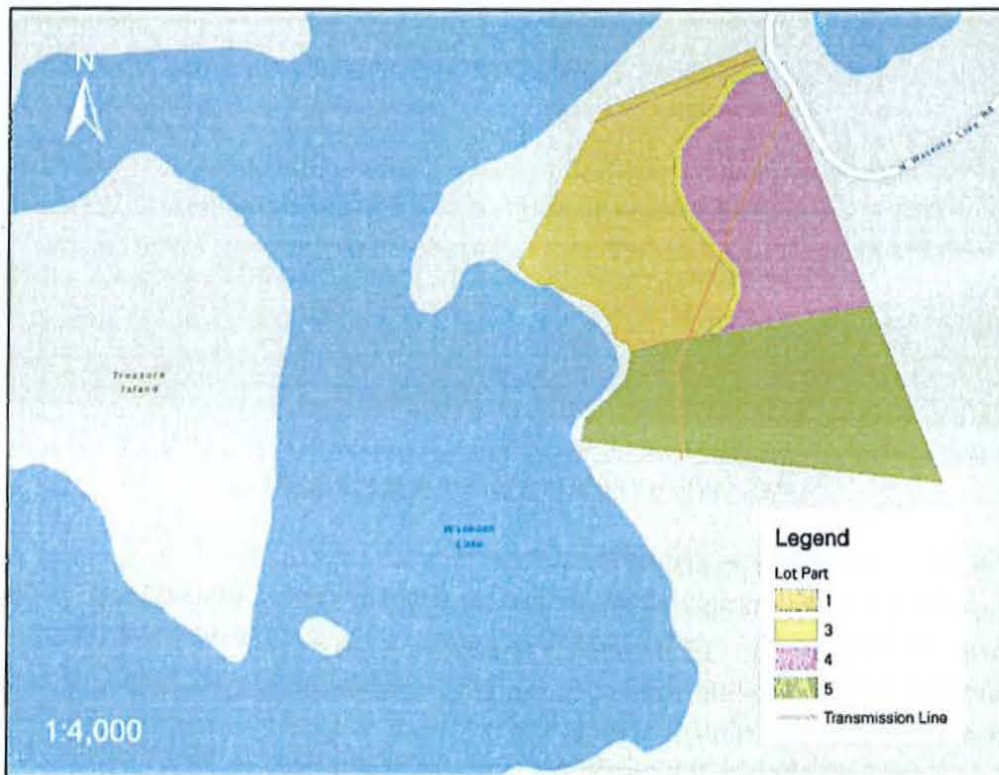


Figure 1: Location Map

2.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

TERRESTRIAL HABITAT

Part 4 is located to the east of the private drive (Part 3) accessing the seasonal dwellings at 622 (Part 1) and 600 (Part 5) North Waseosa Lake Road. Part 4 consists of an upland maple hardwood forest with gradual elevation changes and sandy soils (Photo 1). A wood pole transmission line crosses through parts 1, 3, 4, and 5 of the property as mapped in Figure 1 (Photo 2). The maple hardwood vegetation community is contiguous through Part 5 moving south (Photo 2) towards the shoreline. Approximately 80m upland from the shoreline of Lake Waseosa, the maple hardwood vegetation community transitions to a coniferous ecosite predominated by eastern hemlock, balsam fir, and white birch.



Photos 1 and 2: Left - existing private driveway accessing Lots 600 & 622 North Waseosa Lake Road; Right - upland maple hardwood ecosite

SHORELINE AND AQUATIC HABITAT

The shoreline where activity is proposed has been designated as Type 2 fish habitat, as confirmed during the field investigations. Sand and cobble substrate are predominant along the shoreline with some in-water woody debris present. The gradually sloping shoreline is naturally shaded and undisturbed, apart from a section of shoreline to the north of the proposed launch site directly in front of the existing dwelling to the north. There is an existing dock and the shoreline has been described as "buffered lawn" in the Lake Waseosa Land Use Survey produced by the District of Muskoka.

3.0 PROPOSED WATERFRONT LANDING FACILITY

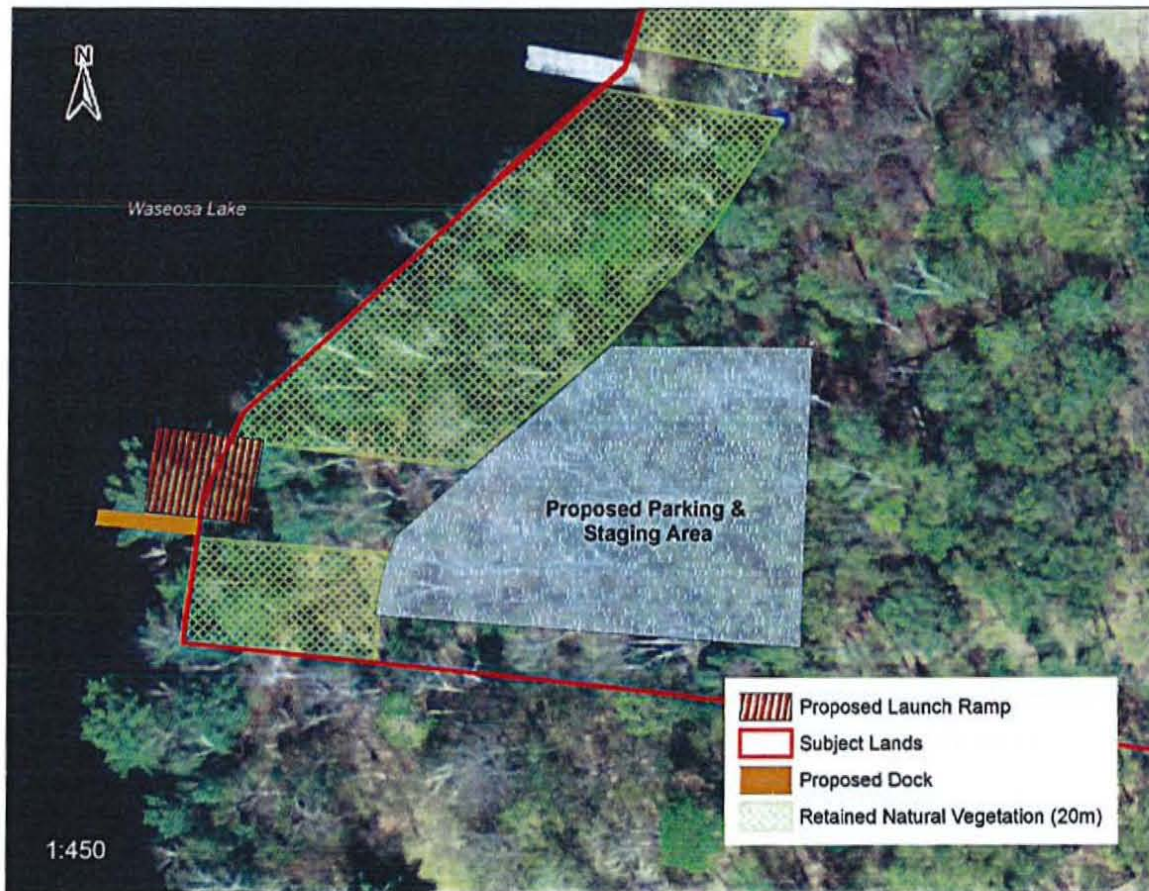


Figure 2: Proposed waterfront landing facility, located at 600 North Waseosa Lake Road

ACCESS ROAD

Accessing the proposed mainland boat launch site required to service the 2 proposed lots on Treasure Island will be achieved by a gravel road that traverses Part 5 of the property. Utilizing the existing pathway will minimize tree clearing required and the finished corridor proposed will be approximately 7.5m in width.

PARKING FACILITIES

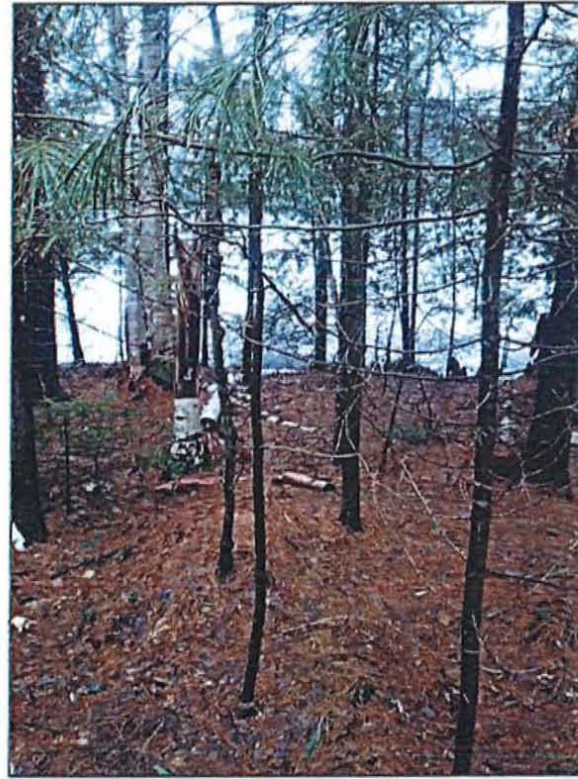
A parking and staging area is proposed on level ground setback 20m from the high-water mark of the lake. The envelope identified during the site visit encompasses an existing natural forest opening in a tall treed ecosite predominantly consisting of eastern hemlock, balsam fir, and white birch. The additional clearing required to accommodate this facility will largely include the removal of thin (<50cm diameter at breast height) trees (Photos 4 and 5).



Photos 4 and 5: Representative photos of existing vegetation contained within the identified construction envelope; Left: taken facing east; Right: taken facing north

SHORELINE ACCESS AND BOAT LAUNCH

A boat launch ramp with a maximum width of 9.5m is proposed to be located beside a narrow floating dock structure, no greater than 2.5m in width at the shoreline. The shoreline is suitable to accommodate the proposed launch and dock facilities and will be located outside of any sensitive or specialized fish habitat. The gentle, level topography and natural vegetation will serve to limit erosion potential and a porous gravel surface treatment has been proposed for both the access road and parking area. Further, the parking and launch area will be setback over 50m from any existing dwellings, whereby the retained natural vegetation to the north and south will serve to screen and buffer the launch site and associated activity from the existing neighbouring residential properties. It is recommended that all existing vegetation within the riparian zone (20m from Lake Waseosa) is maintained outside of the <12m of shoreline clearing required for water access.



Photos 6 and 7: Representative photos of existing shoreline vegetation in the location of the proposed boat ramp and dock; Left: taken facing north; Right: taken facing west, Treasure Island on the horizon

4.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

No wetlands or watercourses are present where the proposed footprint for mainland access to Treasure Island is mapped. Where possible, the access road will utilize an existing cleared corridor. Where vegetation clearing is necessary, it shall occur outside of the breeding bird window of April 15 – August 31 to comply with the Migratory Birds Convention Act and be setback a minimum of 20m from the high-water mark of Lake Waseosa.

The proposed site for the ramp and launch will require minimal vegetation removal and be located outside of any areas with established tree growth or eastern hemlocks of DBH > 50cm, which will serve to minimize erosion potential as well as stabilize and shade the shoreline.

Recommended mitigation measures to achieve impact avoidance for any potential bird, mammal, and reptile species at risk, as outlined in Tables 3 and 4 of the Scoped Environmental Impact Study for Treasure Island (November 2018), are applicable to the proposed mainland development identified in this SER.

MUSKOKA HERITAGE AREAS & AREAS OF NATURAL AND SCIENTIFIC INTEREST

There are no Muskoka Heritage Areas or Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) located on or near the subject property or proposed mainland access location.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on our evaluation, if the proposed following general mitigation measures are applied, the proposed waterfront landing facility and access road satisfy the criteria noted in the Town of Huntsville Official Plan Section 8.4.6, from an ecological perspective. Recommendations include:

- Vegetation clearing shall occur outside of the breeding bird window of April 15 – August 31 to comply with the Migratory Birds Convention Act;
- Where the breeding bird vegetation clearing window cannot be respected, a qualified avian professional may evaluate the road corridor and proposed parking and staging area to ensure there are no active nests within the area to be cleared;
- Delineate 20m shoreline setback prior to construction to ensure vegetated areas nearshore are maintained
- All works shall be conducted to avoid serious harm to fish as per the DFO's Measures to avoid harm to fish and fish habitat (<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/measures-mesures/measures-mesures-eng.html>)
- Develop and implement an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan for the site that minimizes risk of sedimentation of the waterbody during all phases of the project
- Install effective erosion and sediment control measures before starting work to prevent sediment from entering the water body and maintain measures until all disturbed ground has been permanently stabilized, suspended sediment has resettled to the lakebed

Respectfully submitted,



Hannah Wolfram

Biologist