



# Love Your Lakes Project

YEAR 3 PROJECT EVALUATION REPORT

Southern Interior Land Trust | January 2022



**Southern Interior Land Trust**

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# Acknowledgments

The **Southern Interior Land Trust (SILT)** thanks all the organizations, individuals, businesses, and landowners that helped make our *Love Your Lakes* project possible. Substantive funding was provided by the *South Okanagan Conservation Fund (SOCF)* administered by the *Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen*, the *Canadian Wildlife Federation*, *Watersheds Canada*, and other supporters.

**Special thanks to those shoreline owners who were early adopters of suggestions for actions to improve lake health—you are making a positive impact on your lake!**

Biology professionals **Eva Antonijevic, RPBio** and **Darryl Arsenault, RPBio** added expertise, as did the owner and staff of *Sagebrush Native Plant Nursery* in Oliver. Contractor **Allison Haney** and project staff **Makeena Hartmann** and **Lindsay Lalach**, and **Valerie Blow** of *Okanagan-Similkameen Stewardship Society*, and other helpers and volunteers provided much appreciated assistance during all phases of the project.



SOUTH OKANAGAN  
CONSERVATION FUND



## LNID - Lower Nipit Improvement District



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## Summary

A healthy lake depends on a healthy shoreline.

Natural shorelines, with their ribbon of native trees and shrubs benefit wildlife; protect properties from flood and erosion; and support ecological processes essential to clean, drinkable, swimmable, and fishable water.

With the current trend in the South Okanagan of replacing old-small waterfront homes on large lots with new-large homes on small lots, and other lakeside developments, the ecological function of our lake shorelines is clearly threatened.

The intent of SILT's Love Your Lakes project was to provide shoreline property owners with the knowledge and tools needed to act, at their pleasure, on specific aspects of their property that, if addressed, will improve lake health.

SILT met proposed targets for all project deliverables.

Ninety-five percent of evaluation survey respondents would recommend that other shoreline owners on their lake obtain and read their own LYL personalized property report.

Sixty-eight percent of evaluation survey respondents said they will act on their property to protect lake health; a further 21% may act; their lack of time being a key factor.

100% of evaluation survey respondents that self-identified as having fair or poor knowledge of lake health before reading their LYL shoreline property report, said they had somewhat more or much more improved knowledge after reading their report.

*Recommendation 1: Periodic public reminders from governments to lakeshore landowners through social media platforms, utility billings, and property tax assessments (such as currently done for the FireSmart Program) will keep the LYL project 'alive' and extend its effect over time as more (and new) shoreline owners become aware of their LYL report and realize the benefits of taking action themselves to protect the health of their lake.*

*Recommendation 2: Local and provincial governments should consider further commitment to strict regulatory enforcement of riparian and shoreline development rules, integrated with continued and meaningful staff engagement with biology and bio-engineering professionals committed to improving lake health.*

## Introduction

### **A healthy lake depends on a healthy shoreline.**

Natural shorelines, with their ribbon of native trees, shrubs, grasses, and forbs benefit wildlife; protect properties from the negative effects of climate change such as flood and erosion; and support ecological processes essential to clean, drinkable, swimmable, fishable water. With the current extent of lakeshore modification in the South Okanagan, the trend to replace old-small waterfront homes on large lots with new-large homes on small lots, and other lakeside developments, the ecological function of our lake shorelines is clearly threatened.

**'Love Your Lake'** is an innovative program designed to protect lake health in lakefront communities that are traditionally difficult to reach with generalized stewardship or climate-change advice because they often have a high proportion of seasonal residents or absentee owners. This 3-year project provided lakeshore landowners on Okanagan Lake in Summerland, Skaha Lake, Vaseux Lake, Twin Lakes, Trout Lake, and Tuc-el-nuit Lake with a free, personalized evaluation of their individual shoreline.

Each of 800+ reports are tailored specifically to each property and include suggested voluntary actions to reduce flood and erosion risks, and improve wildlife habitat and lake health, while maintaining waterfront views. **Direct transfer of property-relevant knowledge to each shoreline landowner is likely the most effective way to catalyze individual actions that will protect and improve lake health.**

### *Project objectives*

- complete 800+ unique property assessments and reports available to the landowner, one for every shoreline parcel on eight South Okanagan area lakes.
- provide up to three presentations on the LYL project and lake stewardship in each year.
- support creation of up to 3 public shoreline restoration demonstration sites on public land (parks) where landowners and others can see how shoreline restoration works.
- help landowners design and implement suggested actions on their lands.
- provide a summary of landowner responses, feedback, testimonials, and project success.

### *Purpose of this Evaluation*

**The intent of SILT's LYL project was to provide shoreline property owners with the knowledge and tools needed to act, at their pleasure, on specific aspects of their property that, if addressed, will improve lake health.** SILT's LYL project was never about achieving an aspirational number, type, or area of stewardship actions in a set time. Consequently, some people may worry that the LYL project was not an effective means of informing and engaging shoreline owners in lake stewardship issues or activities. However, project proponents recognize the long-term value of the LYL property reports as they 'run with the land' and will always be available to the landowner to consider and implement in time, whenever it makes sense to the owner to do so.

**This evaluation explores project success based on project achievements to date, landowner response, and other feedback.**

## Method of Evaluation

This evaluation compares key activities (objectives) and achieved outcomes (results) for the project, as compiled by SILT over the 3-year duration of the project.

A key aspect of this evaluation was SILT's collaboration with national LYL Program staff to send a standardized evaluation survey to the ~300 owners and land managers that had directly accessed their property reports by November 2021.<sup>1</sup> As an incentive to complete the survey, we offered respondents a chance to win a \$100 gift certificate for native plants. Survey responses were summarized and comments about the project reviewed.

A challenge of evaluating traditional metrics of on-the-ground effect (e.g., area of shoreline buffers restored, or actual number of engaged landowners) was the legislated and policy-related need to maintain the privacy of the shoreline property owners. Local government interpretation of privacy laws generally prevented cost-effective access to owner contact information other than street or mailing address. By policy, project staff neither disturbed shoreline users during or after shoreline assessments, nor accessed private property at any time without invitation.

## Results

**The project goal was to maintain ecological functions** provided by *shorelines by increasing landowner understanding* of how they influence water quality and wildlife; *by identifying and prescribing specific opportunities for protecting and enhancing shoreline habitats* and, *by inspiring and achieving landowner action to restore and protect their shoreline* while maintaining, and perhaps enhancing, their property values and views.

**Many shoreline landowners have an interest in protecting water quality and wildlife yet may not know that their actions are negatively affecting these values.**

The 3-year LYL project commenced in SOCF fiscal year 2019-20 and ended in 2021-22.

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<sup>1</sup> A further 100 or so shoreline property reports, mostly for highway parcels, municipal parks and other public lands, were downloaded by SILT and provided to the various land managers. Total report downloads to early December 2021 = 408 of 896 available (Table 1).

**Objective 1: 800+ unique property assessments and reports available to the landowner, one for every shoreline parcel on eight South Okanagan area lakes.<sup>2</sup>**

SILT’s target of hundreds of shoreline property reports on several lakes was intended to create a ‘critical mass’ of available information, because only a proportion of the resulting stewardship suggestions might receive landowner attention within the project timeframe.

In each year, SILT focused on lakes with existing shoreline modification where the shorelines were respectively “urban” and “semi-rural”, had areas of developed shoreline that potentially limit wildlife use and movement, had known plant and wildlife species-at-risk that depend on lakeshore habitats, and had known or potential development-related water quality issues.

Lake selection was also based on lake-association or community interest. In Year 1, the shoreline of Okanagan Lake within Summerland represented the “urban” lake and Vaseux Lake the “semi-rural”. In Year 2, Skaha Lake, three lakes in the Twin Lakes area, and Trout Lake near Twin Lakes were assessed. SILT proposed to assess Osoyoos and Tuc-el-nuit Lakes in Year 3, but sufficient community interest was not forthcoming for Osoyoos Lake, and technical advisors to the SOCF had suggested limiting further property assessments. Consequently, only the shoreline of Tuc-el-nuit Lake was assessed in Year 3.

<b>Lake Name</b>	<b># Parcels Assessed</b>	<b># Reports Accessed</b>	<b>Download Rate (%)</b>
Okanagan Lake	240	109	45
Skaha Lake	404	156	39
Vaseux Lake	81	69	85
Twin Lakes	83	64	77
Trout Lake	15	10	67
Tuc-el-nuit	73	n/a	n/a
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>896</b>	<b>408</b>	<b>63</b>

*Table One: Summary of Shoreline Parcels Assessed, Number of Reports Accessed and the Report Download Rate indicate landowner interest. Reports for Tuc-el-nuit Lake will not be available until April 2022.*

**Finding:** *The targeted number of shoreline parcels to be assessed was met. Report download rates indicate considerable landowner (or land manager) interest in the LYL lake stewardship information and property-specific suggestions to improve lake health. 408 of 896 available reports were accessed to early December 2021.*

<sup>2</sup> This evaluation deals with seven of eight lakes; reports for the eighth, Tuc-el-nuit, will not be complete until Spring 2022, after mandatory SOCF reporting dates have passed.

**Objective 2: Provide up to three presentations on the LYL project and on lake stewardship in each year.**

Table Two summarizes the events and number of people attending LYL presentations in each year. In addition to in-person and online presentations, SILT generated several print and online media articles about the project each year. The Castanet online news service produced several articles about the project each year; Castanet has about 40,000 followers.

In Year 3, project staff received invitations to present on the LYL Program from the Christina Lake Stewardship Society and Cultus Lake Stewardship Society, and fielded questions from the Kootenay Lake Stewardship Society. These requests indicate broad interest in the LYL Program among stewardship groups in other parts of the province.

Project Year	Event	Est # of People	Location
Year 1	SORCO Open House	350	Oliver
	Summerland Council	20	Summerland
	OBWB Water Stewardship Council	35	Kelowna
	BC Lake Stewardship Society	65	Lake Country
	Trout Creek Elementary School	61	Summerland
	Penticton Museum lunch lecture	40	Penticton
Year 2	Okanagan Falls Regional Library	10	Ok Falls
	RDOS Kaleden Sewer Open House	50	Kaleden
	LNID & GTLA Stewardship Society	18	Online
Year 3	CLSS "Healthy Shorelines" webinar	75	Online
	SOREB "Unpacking the Guide"	25	Online
	Cultus Lake Stewardship Society	8	Online
<b>TOTALS:</b>		<b>757</b>	

Table 2: Summary of LYL Presentations and Number of Attendees

**Finding:** The targeted number of presentations was met in each year. About 750 people heard about the LYL program, the South Okanagan Conservation Fund, and the need for lake stewardship action to counteract the negative effects of climate change.

***Objective 3: Support creation of up to 3 public shoreline restoration demonstration sites on public land (parks) where landowners and others can see how shoreline restoration works.***

In Year 1, SILT established two shoreline restoration demonstration sites in collaboration with the District of Summerland, one in Powell Beach Park, the other in Peach Orchard Beach Park. A third site on public lakeshore in Summerland was designed but could not be implemented pending Province of BC approval. In Year 3, a fourth restoration demonstration site was designed in a community park on Skaha Lake; it is currently being considered by community representatives.

**Public Demonstration Site #1 – Powell Beach Park, Okanagan Lake**



2019



2021

The object of Site #1 was to expand the existing shoreline buffer by planting 102 native trees and shrubs and by not mowing existing grasses. The site was planted in 2019 by students from Trout Creek Elementary School. Flooding in Spring 2020 killed about 50% of the trees and shrubs. They were replaced in 2021 with more flood resistant species. Shrub survival is now estimated at 80%, mostly red-osier dogwood, cottonwood, snowberry, and Oregon grape. Signage was installation by the District of Summerland in 2021. Area size = 500 m<sup>2</sup>

## Public Demonstration Site #2 – Peach Orchard Beach Park, Okanagan Lake



2019



2021

The object of this site was to expand the narrow shoreline buffer and prevent bank erosion by planting 121 native trees and shrubs between the walkway and beach, and adjacent to another existing shoreline buffer (not pictured). The site was planted in 2019. Flooding in Spring 2020 killed about 50% of the shrubs, some of which were later mowed that year by parks staff. The lost shrubs were partially replaced with about 30 more flood resistant species. Several metres of the shrub area along the walkway were partially mown by parks staff in Summer 2021, resulting in some further shrub mortality. The 2021 photo is post-recovery. Shrub survival overall remains estimated at 50%, mostly red-osier dogwood and rose. Summerland Parks has said it will install a barrier, e.g., logs or boulders, to prevent the site from being mown in future. Signage was installed by the District of Summerland in 2021. Area size = 150 m<sup>2</sup>

### Public Demonstration Site #3 – Skaha Estates Waterfront Park, Skaha Lake



2021



**Drawing 1.** Planting and fence layout at Habitat Pod 1. See Table 2 for plant species. Layout in consultation with a qualified professional.

2021, Proposed Pod 1 Planting Design

The Skaha Estates Improvement District owns a common-property waterfront park on behalf of all property owners in Skaha Estates. The park has about 125 meters of shoreline, much of which has been altered from its natural state. In 2021, a project consultant designed an initial shoreline and riparian restoration plan for the community to consider.

The object of this restoration site will be to help prevent further bank erosion, to filter runoff from adjacent upland residential properties, to simplify and reduce the cost of park maintenance, and to enhance wildlife habitat and wildlife viewing. Implementation of the restoration, should it proceed, will be coordinated by the landowner. Area size = 350 m<sup>2</sup>

***Finding:*** *The targeted number of public shoreline restoration sites was met. Two public restoration sites are complete. The third site is designed but pending further consideration by the property owner.*

**Objective 4: Help shoreline landowners design and implement suggested actions on their shorelines.**

Throughout the 3-year project, staff continuously interacted with shoreline property owners.

**Hundreds of dockside chats about the project and lake health allowed project staff to front-end load key stewardship messages and advice.**

Project staff took note of owners that were interested in taking immediate action to protect lake health and whose property could be available as demonstration sites to the nearby lake community.

For selected properties, SILT offered simple incentives for the owner or land manager to engage early, such as by providing a project-funded riparian buffer design and/or a few free plants. Some projects proceeded promptly; others may take some years to complete.

**Site Example #1 – Private Property Buffer, Vaseux Lake**



2019 Pre-buffer



2020 Post-install



2021 (other direction)

This small residential lot on Vaseux Lake originally had mowed lawn to a loose rock retaining wall and beach. The object was to create a narrow, deep-rooted riparian buffer between the lawn and wall to intercept runoff (protect water quality) and enhance wildlife habitat (birds and pollinators).

The owners wanted to protect their view and preferred a landscaped, ornamental look. Starting with a narrow buffer as an ‘operational trial’, the owners now intend to widen the buffer in 2022, and again in 2023 to expand it to about three times its current width. The project provided the owner with a design plan and 105 plants; the owner installed and maintains the buffer. Current buffer size = 30m<sup>2</sup>

## Site Example #2 – South Okanagan Sailing Association, Okanagan Lake



2019

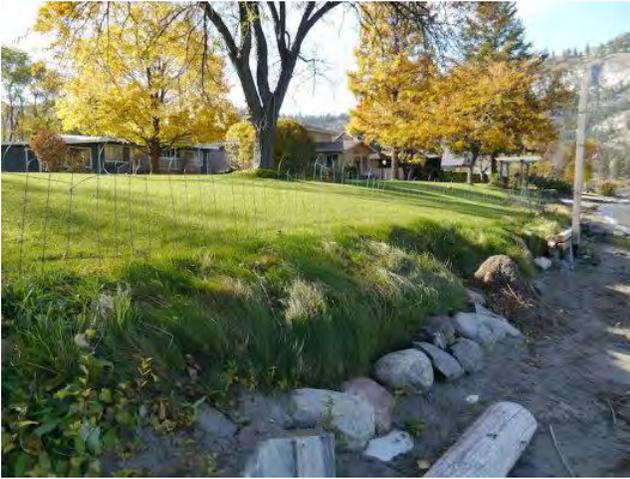
Proposed Planting

Project staff initially thought this shoreline property was owned by the District of Summerland. The site has been occupied by the South Okanagan Sailing Association (SOSA) for decades. The SOSA is keen to repair earlier flood damage and reduce further erosion risk.

Considering the many boats, a project consultant designed a modest ‘initial’ restoration plan of 50 deep-rooted native trees, shrubs, and flowers. These would engage SOSA members in naturalizing the shoreline and, by ‘jump-starting’ further physical restoration works, would help to reduce erosion risk while providing earlier future wildlife habitat.

**However, planting the shoreline was thwarted by the Province of BC.** According to a provincial biologist, the land is unauthorized fill put in the lake some 60+ years ago. As the site may be a ‘trespass’ the provincial government would not give authority to plant the shoreline. *This shoreline restoration opportunity remains on hold.*

### Site Example #3 – Another Private Property Buffer, Vaseux Lake



2019

Proposed Planting

The owner is constructing a new house and wants to add a riparian buffer between the existing mowed lawn and the beach.

Maintaining a view of the water was an important value, as was removal of thousands of invasive Siberian Elm tree seedlings. The object of the deep-rooted 50-shrub design was to help intercept runoff from the lawn (protect water quality) and add wildlife habitat (for birds and pollinators).

The owner has engaged a qualified environmental professional to assist with re-developing the property. LYL project staff have encouraged the owner to share the LYL buffer design and property report with their environmental consultant.

House construction has proceeded but installation of the buffer has not begun. In 2021, the owner confirmed that they do plan to install the buffer when practical, according to the LYL plan. Area size: 130 m<sup>2</sup>

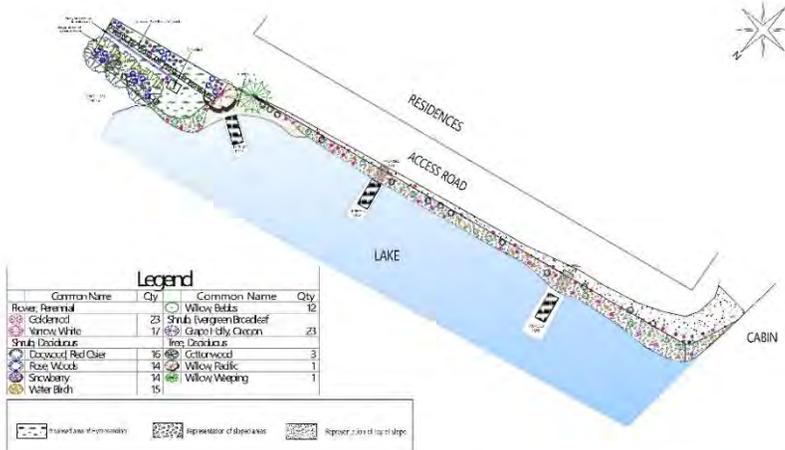
**Site Example #4 – Private Property Buffer, Twin Lakes**



2020 – Portion of gravel fill shoreline



2021 – Phase 1 planting day



Revision #: 00  
Date: 2020-12-14

Scale:  
1" = 20'

**TWIN LAKES**

Landscape Plan:  
1 of 1

Landscape Design by:  
**CAROLINE WHYTE**  
carl.whyte@twinlakes.ca | 707-366-5667



This 9-home Strata property was severely degraded by government flood emergency works in 2018, which left 125 m of shoreline gravel-filled and unvegetated. The owners wanted to re-introduce vegetation and wildlife to the site. In 2020, SILT’s LYL project provided the owners with a restoration plan. The goal was to naturalize the shoreline and riparian zone as much as practical to stabilize the shore slope, filter runoff, and create wildlife habitat. In 2021, applying the suggestions of their LYL property report, and with a micro-grant from Watersheds Canada, the owners implemented an initial phase by planting 60 native trees and shrubs around the pumphouse in the image above. The owners are seeking funds to create a narrow buffer along the remaining shoreline in 2022. Area size: ~900 m<sup>2</sup>

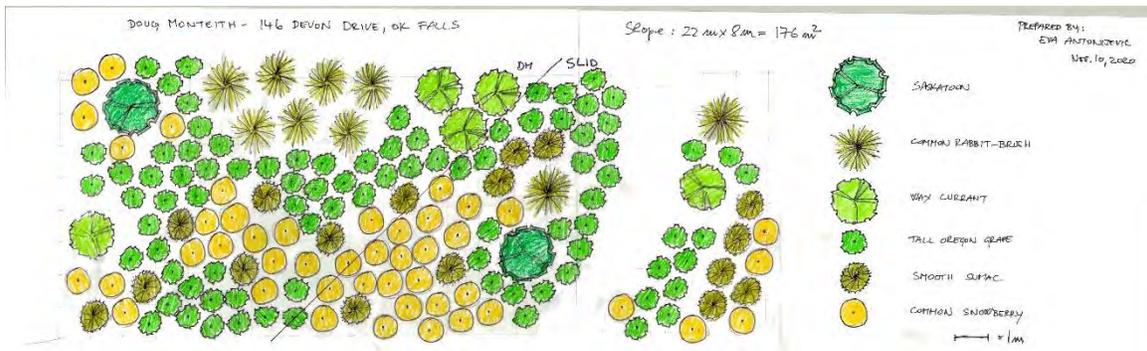
## Site Example #5 – Private Property Buffer, Skaha Lake



2021 – Pre-Planting



2021 – Planting Day



This residential property lies adjacent to the Skaha Estates Park shoreline restoration proposal discussed above. The planting area is within the riparian zone of Skaha Lake. The property owner was interested in creating a shrub and flower buffer to filter runoff and encourage more wildlife use of the site, which borders an existing patch of milkweed protected by the owner. In 2020, SILT’s LYL project provided the owner with a restoration plan. With collaborative funding from SILT’s LYL project, a Watersheds Canada micro-grant, and from the property owner, the 145-plant buffer was successfully installed in 2021. This property will act as a demonstration site for other shoreline/riparian property owners to see the benefits of a riparian buffer. The area will be signed in 2022. Area size planted: 120 m<sup>2</sup>

**Finding:** The project helped five landowners plan and implement suggested actions on their shorelines, including creation of new or expanded riparian buffers. For three, improvements are planned but not yet implemented.

***Objective 5: Provide a summary of landowner responses, feedback, testimonials, and project success.***

Project staff continuously interacted with shoreline owners, public land managers, shoreline users and tourists. Positive response to the project was overwhelming—of hundreds of on-the-lake conversations about lake stewardship, only four were dismissive of the project – with those four seemingly driven by reasons unrelated to lake health.

Shoreline improvements by owners include invasive plant removal, planting native trees and shrubs, not mowing pollinator plants, and creating wildlife habitat structures.

The LYL Program prepared Lake Summary reports for Okanagan, Skaha, Twin, Vaseux and Trout Lakes. These reports describe the elements that lake shoreline property owners value as well as the types of shorelines and developments on each lake. Summary reports are available at: [www.siltrust.ca](http://www.siltrust.ca).

In late November 2021, LYL Program and project staff also sent an evaluation survey to 244 unique email addresses provided by shoreline owners that downloaded their property reports online, and to ~50 owners where project staff assisted with the download process.

The online survey was a standardized questionnaire used by LYL across Canada. Respondents reported for 19 properties on 6 of 7 BC lakes where LYL reports are available.

To be reliable, a survey must derive respondent insights using a distribution system that broadly shares the survey with the target audience at a convenient time. We had none of this; our survey was by necessity done during a COVID Omicron outbreak, pre-Christmas, during extreme flooding, highway closures, and unprecedented cold weather. Further, provincial privacy laws and local policies limited our ability to follow-up with landowners.

**Two overwhelming survey results:**

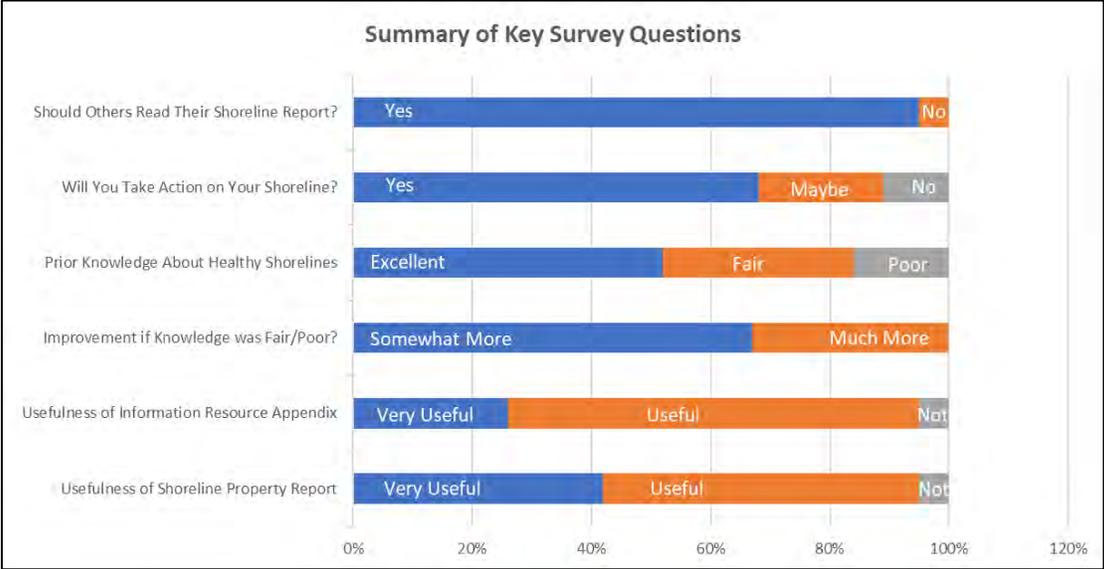
- 1. 95% of respondents recommended that other shoreline owners on their lake obtain and read their own LYL personalized property reports.**
- 2. 100% of respondents that self-identified as having fair or poor knowledge of lake health before reading their LYL shoreline property report, said they had somewhat or much more improved knowledge after reading their report.**

Example of a survey respondent positive comment:

*Excellent program and much appreciated, thank you! Plantings, wood debris and other vegetation may not be fully completed but it is an ongoing goal to improve our natural waterfront landscape to the best of our ability.*

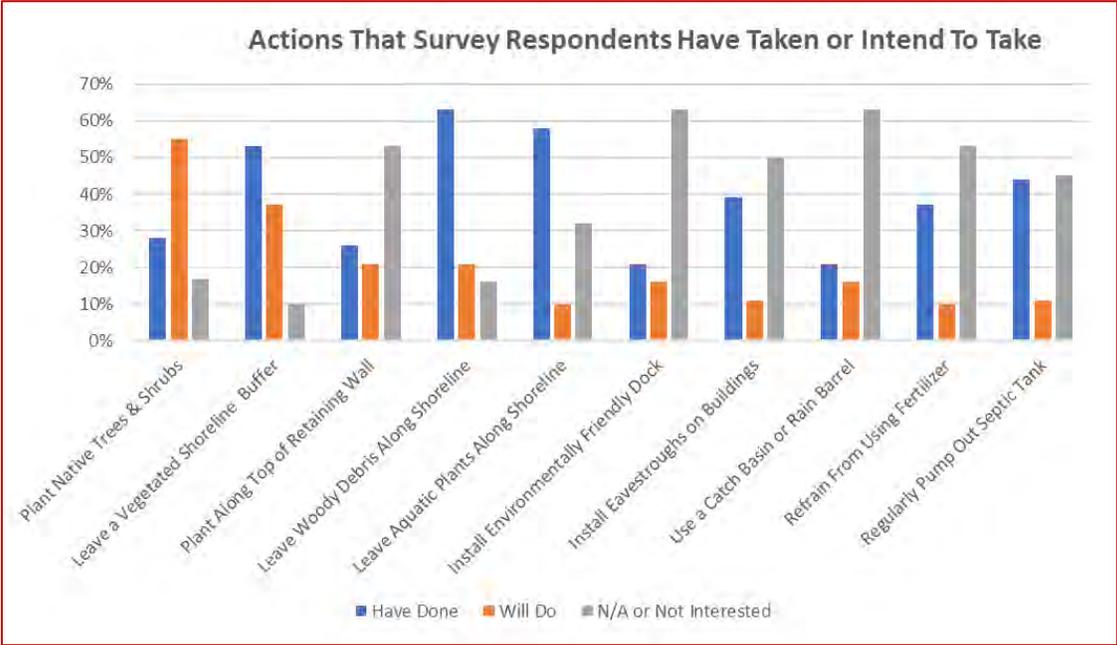
The one survey respondent negative comment:

*I never did see your credentials that make you an expert so your advice is worthless. I would never recommend this process to anyone.*



**68% of respondents will act on their property to protect lake health!**

**A further 21% may act; their lack of time being a key factor.**



## Opportunity

### **Lake shorelines link water to land and play an important role in lake health.**

SILT's Love Your Lakes (LYL) project has provided every lakeshore landowner/manager on eight lakes in the South Okanagan with access to a free, personalized evaluation of their shoreline, with specific suggestions, tailored to their property, for how to voluntarily protect lake health while maintaining their waterfront view. This project fits between traditional generalized shoreline stewardship advice (e.g., the *Lakeshore Living Guide*) and more science-oriented shoreline evaluations such as *Foreshore Inventory Mapping*. Empower shoreline property owners with the knowledge to understand why lake health is important, and with specific suggestions for how to change their property management decisions, will help them to voluntarily improve the health of their lake.

Lake user concerns about floods, algae, aquatic weeds, and shoreline erosion are obvious. It also seems obvious that each of these factors is influenced by shoreline development and climate change. By acting themselves, lake shoreline owners can help to counteract the negative effects of climate change on their property, and support the health of their lake, thus protecting their own interests and the interests of their community.

It seems apparent that previous shoreline development decisions and now climate change have created potentially costly liabilities for governments in the South Okanagan. These include the need for precise flood control, inevitable erosion repair, water treatments, pollution-related beach closures, and species-at-risk recovery efforts. Restoring and maintaining more natural shoreline conditions can help reduce future government costs.

Like RDOS' *Building Climate Resilience Guide*, the Love Your Lake program is a tool designed to remove an information barrier. It is not about "doing the stewardship" or of fixing some targeted amount of shoreline area in a set amount of time—it is about influencing understanding and care.

Long term, widespread, positive results will depend on continued support from governments and stewardship providers to incentivise and help shoreline landowners implement their LYL-suggested actions. This includes periodic public reminders from local and provincial governments, a commitment to strict regulatory enforcement, and continued meaningful staff engagement with biology and bio-engineering professionals.

SILT's LYL individual shoreline property reports will always be available through the national LYL Program and SILT. The reports 'run with the land,' accessible to whomever is the current owner of the shoreline property. Environmental consultants, Habitat Officers, and local government staff dealing with shoreline developments are now aware and should remember that there is a professionally prepared LYL report available to the owner/manager of every shoreline parcel on the eight lakes that SILT has assessed. These reports are a free consultation by a biology professional that can help guide and further inform future lake shoreline development and re-development decisions.

## Conclusion

### **SILT has met proposed targets for all project deliverables.**

It was never the intent of this project to physically implement stewardship activities on private land, which will remain the realm of other stewardship providers. However, this project has resulted in positive change and planned improvements to at least 15 and likely more shoreline parcels on Okanagan, Skaha, Vaseux, Lower Twin and Tuc-el-nuit Lakes.

Reported improvements by shoreline owners/managers range from removal of invasive plants, planting of more native trees and shrubs, stopping the mowing of riparian areas, adding pollinator plants, and creating and protecting important wildlife habitat features.

Behavioural change takes time, it can be a lengthy process. SILT exists to create a legacy of protected habitats for everything and everyone that derives a value or service from natural spaces. A key tenet of this effort is that living things, the lands, and the water sustain us all and should be treated with respect and reciprocity and, if damaged, restored.

The targeted number of shoreline parcels to be assessed was met. Report downloads indicate considerable landowner (or land manager) interest in the LYL lake stewardship information and property-specific suggestions to improve lake health. 408 of 896 available reports have been accessed to December 2021. Report download rate to December 2021 averaged 63% (high of 85% on Vaseux Lake to a low of 39% on Skaha Lake).

The targeted number of presentations was met in each year. Over the 3-years, about 750 people heard about the LYL program, the South Okanagan Conservation Fund, and the need for lake stewardship action to counteract the negative effects of climate change.

The targeted number of public shoreline restoration sites was met. Two public restoration sites are complete. Two other sites are designed but pending further consideration by the property owners or land managers.

The project helped five landowners plan and implement suggested actions on their shorelines, including creation of new or expanded riparian buffers. For three, improvements are planned but not yet implemented.

Ninety-five percent of evaluation survey respondents would recommend that other shoreline owners on their lake obtain and read their own LYL personalized property reports.

Sixty-eight percent of evaluation survey respondents said they will act on their property to protect lake health; a further 21% may act; their lack of time being a key factor.

100% of evaluation survey respondents that self-identified as having fair or poor knowledge of lake health before reading their LYL shoreline property report, said they had somewhat more or much more improved knowledge after reading their report.

## Recommendation

SILT's Love Your Lake individual shoreline property reports will always be available through the national LYL Program and SILT. The reports 'run with the land' and will remain accessible to whomever is the current owner of the shoreline property.

Long term, widespread, positive results from this LYL project will depend on continued support from governments and other stewardship providers to incentivise and help shoreline landowners implement their LYL-suggested actions.

Environmental consultants, Habitat Officers, and local government staff dealing with shoreline developments should remember that there is a professionally prepared LYL report available to the owner/manager of every shoreline parcel on the eight lakes that SILT has assessed.

These reports are a free consultation by a biology professional that can help guide and further inform future lake shoreline development and re-development decisions.

***Recommendation 1: Periodic public reminders from governments to lakeshore landowners through social media platforms, utility billings, and property tax assessments (such as currently done for the FireSmart Program) will keep the LYL project 'alive' and extend its effect over time as more (and new) shoreline owners become aware of their LYL report and realize the benefits of taking action themselves to protect the health of their lake.***

The LYL Program and SILT's efforts in this project were wholly educational and not in any way regulatory. However, shoreline property owners commonly identified stricter enforcement of rules for shoreline developments as an action that they believe would benefit their lake and community.<sup>3</sup>

***Recommendation 2: Local and provincial governments should consider further commitment to strict regulatory enforcement of riparian and shoreline development rules, integrated with continued and meaningful staff engagement with biology and bio-engineering professionals committed to improving lake health.***

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<sup>3</sup> See the LYL Program 'Lake Summary Reports'. Shoreline owners identified stricter enforcement of rules for shoreline developments as a desirable action for Skaha Lake, Okanagan Lake in Summerland, and Twin Lakes.



SILT crew members conducting Love Your Lake shoreline assessments in summer 2021 on Tuc-el-nuit Lake near Oliver.



Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen Area I Kaleden Sewer Open House and Love Your Lake Public Presentation, Pioneer Park on Skaha Lake – July 2020