

## CONCESSION LAKE

UTM Ref. 17TPV041925

Medora Township, Muskoka Lakes  
Status: Recommend Heritage Area

Area: 485 ha

### *Site Characteristics*

Concession Lake is the largest of three lakes, including Stevenson and Speiran, which form part of a headwater wetland complex draining into Medora Lake and from there to Lake Muskoka. The lakes occupy lowland areas of swamp and organic deposits and are flanked by bedrock ridges supporting rock barren pine-oak communities. Mixed Sugar Maple-Eastern Hemlock and Sugar Maple - Beech with Red Maple, White Ash and White Birch deciduous stands occupy areas of deeper till.

Beaver ponding is common throughout the area, with dams controlling the water levels and flow between the lakes. The northern end of the wetland complex, north of Speiran Lake, is dominated by a dense Black Spruce - Tamarack conifer swamp forest. Speiran Lake is in the process of filling in with dense aquatic vegetation and shrub thickets. Stevenson Lake contains areas of open water with an island-like ring of floating shrub mat and Virginia Chain Fern poor fen. Concession Lake is mainly open water with a few wet sedge-grass meadow marshes and shrub thickets filling in shallow bays. Most of the shallow, gently sloping shoreline is ideal habitat for Atlantic Coastal Plain marsh communities. Concession Lake exits to Medora Creek at a beaver dam. The creek is fairly wide for most of its length with a soft shoreline of heath and shrub species dominated by Sweetgale, Glossy Buckthorn and Water Willow. The deeper portion of the creek supports a dense floating aquatic community of Fragrant Waterlily and Watershield, submergent aquatics and dead trees. Blanding's Turtles were abundant in this creek and a small wetland area to the west of Concession Lake.

### *Flora and Fauna*

Total numbers of species recorded were:

Vascular Plants	204 native; 21 introduced 9 A.C.P.F. with a score of 45 (Moderate)
Birds	29 observed during breeding season
Mammals	9
Herpetofauna	14
Butterflies	7

### *Significant Natural Values and Selection Criteria Met*

1. **Hydrology** - (A3) As the headwater area for a bay of Lake Muskoka, this wetland complex functions as a source and provides some water quality enhancement and storage.
2. **Quality and Disturbance** - (B3) There has been very little development on the lakes, even though much of the land is under private ownership. The landowners restrict boating to canoes or rowboats only and have a strong sense of stewardship toward the area. The quality of the wetland and rock barren communities is good, and although not diverse, the flora and

fauna represent a good mixture of common and uncommon to rare species. Shoreline habitat on Concession Lake supports a moderate representation of Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora. Four small deer yards occur in the areas where Eastern Hemlock-Sugar Maple groves are present.

3. **Rare Species** - (B4) Concession Lake provides habitat for the following rare species:

**Wildlife**

*Heterodon platirhinos* Eastern Hognose Snake [PR]\*

*Sistrurus c. catenatus* Eastern Massasauga [NR PR]\*

\* Reported by landowners

**Vascular Plants**

*Panicum spretum* Eaton's Grass [PR]

*Platanthera blephariglottis* White Fringed Orchis [PR]

*Rhexia virginica* Virginia Meadow Beauty [NR PR]

*Triadenum virginicum* Marsh St. John's Wort [PR]

*Xyris difformis* Slender Yellow-eyed Grass [PR]

In addition, one butterfly, one snake, one salamander and two species of vascular plants were recorded as regionally uncommon.

***Ownership and Disturbance***

Approximately one-third of the area is Crown land, with the remainder in private ownership. Minimal disturbance was observed in the area including the shoreline of Concession Lake which is virtually undeveloped. One disturbance to the area is the invasion of Glossy or European Buckthorn (*Rhamnus frangula*) along Medora Creek and the lower end of Concession Lake.

***Sensitivity***

The sensitivity of this site is related to the hydrological function of the wetland, the shoreline supporting coastal plain flora and the rock barren communities which provide habitat for rare species. Suitable policies related to protection of shorelines for A.C.P.F. and provincial policy guidelines for wetlands should be followed. Disturbances to the barrens adjacent to the wetlands should be minimized within a suitable buffer zone that incorporates sufficient habitat for rare species.

***Major Sources of Information***

Bergsma, et al., 1993; Kor & Miller, 1987; Reid, et al., 1991; OMNR, deer yard surveys 1988, 1989.