

## MOREAUS BAY

UTM Ref. 17TNV833843

Freeman and Gibson Townships, Georgian Bay  
Status: Recommend Heritage Area

Area: 445 ha

### *Site Characteristics*

This site, situated in the Go Home Bay area of Georgian Bay, consists of one large island, plus bays, channels and lakes behind this island. Uneven, impermeable bedrock knolls and ridges, some with shallow sandy till, alternate with low wetland areas characterized by poor drainage.

On Big Island, beaver dams have created three shallow lakes; Galbraith Lake, Loudon Lake and Burwash Lake, plus numerous other marsh and poor fen wetlands.

Sand Run Channel, Moreaus Bay, Pittsburgh Channel and Iron City Bay behind Big Island make up an extensive area of sheltered shoreline. The waters are generally less than two metres deep with levels controlled by Georgian Bay. A shallow gradient from shore has predominantly sandy or gravelly soils, with peat accumulations. These conditions are ideal for Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora. Distinct bands of shoreline vegetation communities run parallel to the shoreline and correlate to the moisture gradient.

Tate Lake was formed by a large beaver dam with drainage flowing through a small channel to the south into Iron City Bay. The north end of Tate Lake is a large marsh area.

The dominant upland vegetation community types are dry Oak barrens with a savanna like appearance due to the predominance of grasses, lichen covered rocks and Common juniper; mixed Pine-Oak forests on dry-mesic soils with a semi-open canopy; and successional ie. Common juniper deciduous forests dominated by Large-tooth Aspen, White Birch and Red Maple.

### *Flora and Fauna*

Total numbers of species recorded were:

Vascular Plants	169 native; 2 introduced 9 A.C.P.F. with a score of 42 (Moderate)
Birds	22 observed during breeding season
Mammals	5
Herpetofauna	3
Butterflies	2

## *Significant Natural Values and Selection Criteria Met*

1. **Rare Species** - (B4) The Moreaus Bay area provides habitat for the following rare species:

### Wildlife

*Mergus serrator* Red-breasted Merganser [RR]

*Sterna caspia* Caspian tern [NR PR]

### Vascular Plants

*Elatine minima* Water Wort [PR]

*Galium boreale* Northern Bedstraw [RR]

*Isoetes lacustris* Lake Quillwort [RR]

*Linum medium* Yellow Flax [NR PR]

*Lobelia kalmii* Brook Lobelia [RR]

*Megalodonta beckii* Beck's Bur Marigold [RR]

*Panicum ovale* American Panic Grass [RR]

*Polygonum careyi* Carey's knotweed [PR]

*Sanicula marilandica* Black Snakeroot [RR]

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

In addition, eleven vascular plant species were recorded as regionally uncommon.

2. **Fish and Wildlife Concentrations** - (B5) Moreaus Bay is classified by MNR as a sensitive area based on the shallow nature of the bay which is surrounded by marsh, the diverse fish community, and excellent potential Pike, Muskellunge and Bass spawning habitat.

3. **Scenic Landscapes** - (C7) Pittsburgh Channel was identified as having a high scenic value, as an attractive narrow waterway accessible to boaters.

### *Ownership and Disturbance*

Much of the Moreaus Bay area is undeveloped and protected by a private conservation group. Three cottages are present on the north shore of Moreaus Bay at Sand Run, and one cottage is located on the west shore of Pittsburgh Channel.

### *Sensitivity*

The sensitivity of this site is related to the potential fish breeding habitat and the inland lakes and peatlands which provide habitat for the rare plant species, including shoreline habitat for Atlantic Coastal Plain Flora. Suitable policies related to the protection of shorelines for A.C.P.F. and fish habitat protection should be followed. Inland wetlands should follow provincial policy guidelines for wetlands. Disturbances to the forests and barrens adjacent to the wetlands should be minimal within a buffer zone defined by slope and aspect.

### *Major Sources of Information*

Berney, & Reid, 1993; Geomatics International, 1992; Keddy, & Sharp, 1989; Kor, & Miller, 1987; Tomlinson, 1983.