



GEORGINA

Corporate Services Department, Clerk's Division

March 26, 2026

Sent via email; premier@ontario.ca

Province of Ontario,
Legislative Building,
Queen's Park,
TORONTO, Ontario M7A 1A1

RE: Town of Georgina Council Resolution, Mitigation of Water Soldier in Lake Simcoe

Please be advised that Council for the Town of Georgina received a presentation during its February 25th meeting from the Invasive Species Centre on behalf of the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group highlighting the growing concern of Water Soldier, an invasive aquatic plant most recently reported in Lake Simcoe, and the immediate need for a coordinated, long-term approach focusing on prevention, monitoring, community involvement and collaboration in required mitigation methods.

Subsequently, during its March 4th meeting, Council considered and adopted the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. C-2026-0059

Moved by Councillor Biggerstaff

Seconded by Regional Councillor Davison

WHEREAS the invasive aquatic plant Water Soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*), a species prohibited under Ontario's Invasive Species Act, has been confirmed in Lake Simcoe;

AND WHEREAS the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group was formed in 2025 to support water soldier surveillance, monitoring and response in Lake Simcoe, and explore options to reduce its impacts;

AND WHEREAS monitoring efforts in 2025 found approximately 450 hectares of water soldier in Cook's Bay, the largest infestation reported in North America;

AND WHEREAS the impacts to Lake Simcoe are significant including decreasing native plant biodiversity, inhibiting recreational activities such as swimming, boating, angling, and hunting, impacting the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation access to drinking water and cultural practices, impacting local farmers irrigation, reducing safe access for waterfront properties, and impacting drinking water intakes for Georgina residents;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Georgina's Corporate Strategic Plan, Climate Action Plan, and stormwater management initiatives commit the municipality to protecting Lake Simcoe, reducing environmental stressors, and working collaboratively to address emerging environmental risks;

AND WHEREAS the Clean Water Act, 2006, the Lake Simcoe Protection Act, and the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan guide the environmental protection of Lake Simcoe;

AND WHEREAS the Canadian Action Plan to Address the Threat of Aquatic Invasive Species recognizes that the urgency and magnitude of the threat suggest the need for new investment, and notes that the federal, provincial, and territorial governments bear overall the responsibility for putting this plan into action, in partnership with other stakeholders;

AND WHEREAS Ontario's Invasive species strategic plan (2012) states that early detection and containment of Water Soldier have been critically important in the Province's efforts to eradicate this species and that once established, they are extremely difficult and costly to control and eradicate;

AND WHEREAS the Town of Georgina and other watershed advocacy organizations have consistently called for strong municipal, provincial, and federal leadership, sustained funding, and coordinated action to protect Lake Simcoe from emerging environmental threats, including invasive species;

THEREFORE be it resolved that:

1. Council acknowledges the discovery of 450 hectares of water soldier in Lake Simcoe as a matter of significant concern to lake health, recreational use, and public safety, and requires timely and coordinated action.
2. Council recognizes the need for immediate action to prevent the spread of water soldier, minimize increased pressures on shoreline residents and businesses over time, and maintain the viability of future management options.
3. Council endorses the 2026 Integrated Management Plan Approach proposed by the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group, to 'draw a line' and initially address the smaller populations to reduce the spread beyond Cook's Bay.
4. Council urges the Province of Ontario (such as Ministry of Natural Resources and/or Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks) and Government of Canada (such as Department of Fisheries and Oceans and/or Canada Water Agency) to provide immediate funding for the 2026 Integrated Management Plan Implementation, estimated at \$750,000 to \$1.5 million.
5. Council supports the approach of using 2026 management results to inform long-term management strategies for larger southern populations in Cook's Bay.
6. Council urges the Province of Ontario (such as Ministry of Natural Resources and/or Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks) and Government of Canada (such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and/or Canada Water Agency) to provide longer term funding to manage the current population of water soldier in Lake Simcoe, estimated at \$5 million over five years (2026-2030).
7. Council reaffirms its support of Town staff participating in the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group to support implementation and communication to residents.

8. Council urges each municipality in the Lake Simcoe watershed to similarly designate staff representation on the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group.
9. Council requests that every municipality in the Lake Simcoe watershed designate up to \$10,000 through their 2027 budget toward a lead agency to advocate on behalf of the municipalities in the watershed.
10. Council supports enhanced public education and prevention initiatives, including 'Clean, Drain, Dry' messaging and reporting tools, to reduce the risk of further spread of water soldier through recreational and shoreline activities.
11. Council requests a bi-annual update from the Lake Simcoe Water Soldier Working Group on the status of water soldier monitoring and management in Lake Simcoe.
12. Council requests that this motion be circulated to MP Jacob Mantle and MPP Caroline Mulroney's offices and requests a meeting with them to discuss the issue.
13. Council requests that a joint delegation be requested through the Association of Municipalities of Ontario with the Minister of Natural Resources and the Minister of Environment, Conservation, and Parks to brief them on the issue, in partnership with other local governments around Lake Simcoe.
14. Council requests that this motion be sent to municipalities and First Nations within the Lake Simcoe watershed.
15. Following the delegations from the Invasive Species Centre to each municipality bordering Lake Simcoe, Council encourages each municipality to endorse a similar motion.

We respectfully request your careful consideration of this motion.

If you have any questions, please contact Alex Demoe, Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Council, at 905-476-4301, extension 2261 or ademoe@georgina.ca.

Sincerely,



Rachel Dillabough
Town Clerk
The Corporation of the Town of Georgina
Email: rdillabough@georgina.ca

cc: Honourable Tom Hodgson, Minister of Natural Resources, tim.hodgson@parl.gc.ca
Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, minister.mecp@ontario.ca
Honourable Joanne Thompson, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, DFO.Minister-Ministre.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Mark Fisher, President, Canada Water Agency, president@cwa-aec.gc.ca
Association of Municipalities of Ontario, amo@amo.on.ca
Jacob Mantle, MP, Jacob.mantle@parl.gc.ca

Honourable Caroline Mulroney, MPP, caroline.mulroneyco@pc.ola.org

Lake Simcoe Watershed municipalities

Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation; kelsey.trivett@georginaisland.com

Chippewas of Rama First Nation communications@ramafirstnation.ca

Georgina Environmental Advisory Committee