

How can my family and I help to combat climate change as cottagers?

Hi, I'm April and I am eleven years old. I live in Victoria, BC and cottage on Sugar Island with my grandparents. I love to read historical fiction or history. I crochet and dream about being an activist for making our world more friendly and healthy. As healthy and natural as it is to want to win a contest, if I don't win that's okay. The more we talk about coming up with ideas for taking action against climate change, the stronger our ideas get.

For cottagers on Gull Lake to combat climate change, let's start with the basics first. Let's think about this lake for a minute. I love how ducks and any animal just do their thing and live on these islands like we are not here and nobody hurts them as far as I know. I always see them and I love the way they are allowed to be their natural selves.



Now let's think about climate change and how we can change to make the lake better. One morning when canoeing, it was so peaceful with no motor boats. Maybe we can change how much people boat ride. I'm thinking we could have a day each month where no boats are out on the lake and we can hear the birds chirping and the waters still. If you lived in the middle of nowhere and there were no roads near your house, you would hear nothing except birds chirping and all the animals in the forest. That would be nice, right? No boats on the lake, just waves. I would personally love that, especially if I was reading outside to relax.

There's a bunch of really tiny islands close to Sugar Island and I went to one and I saw a ratty, rusty chair, a few destroyed docks, and a fire pit with nails and metal that I don't want to end up in this lake or have animals be hurt. I want to try to keep the islands safe even if no one lives there. Just think about it. We could have a little group of people cleaning up these islands, and they can sign up for this somewhere.



I wakeboard, and there's a few wakeboards with stickers and I thought maybe it could be possible that some stickers could rip off and litter the lake. Some people like to collect stickers, and I've seen people put stickers on water bottles or skateboards. That's okay, but it's just easy to lose those stickers and litter in the water, so maybe we can try not to put stickers on wakeboards just to help the lake. The water cycle can't clean our water when we pollute. We need to take action and do our best to keep our waters clean.



People like to fish. I like to fish and I live in Victoria where sometimes people overfish. Overfishing means too many people fish and then there's not a lot of fish and the fish become endangered. I don't want that to happen here, and if waters are warming from climate change some fish will become endangered. Also, I heard people sometimes accidentally put fish in the lake that aren't supposed to be here because they don't clean their boats properly, and this disrupts the natural ecosystems.

Remember when there was a fire on Sugar Island and there were a lot of people helping out so the fire wouldn't spread too much. That is a very good example of how people took action quickly. There are lots of things we can do as cottagers to take action against climate change. It's important to always think about how we can keep Gull Lake a better place. The most important thing is that we do what we say and we say what we do. It's not enough to talk about climate change, we have to take action so that we can keep living on Gull Lake!