

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

Hi, my name is Ryann. I'm a 12 year old girl, and I have a cottage on Gull lake. I live with my mom, dad, brother and most of the time my grandma as well.

As you know, climate change is a huge issue in our world today. It affects people and animals all around the world, some more than others. Basically what I'm saying is that climate change is a big global problem that we face on a daily basis. Although there are things you can do to help. For example, here is what my family and I do to help, and some eco-friendly components about our cottage.

First of all, we don't have a lawn at my cottage, which means we don't need a lawnmower to cut our grass. This helps with climate change since we're not polluting the air with gas that would come from a lawnmower. We also don't use any fertilizer because when excess nutrients and chemicals from fertilizers end up in our waters it can intoxicate them, sometimes if it's bad enough it can even make our waterways impassable. Although we don't have a lawn, we do have lots of trees that we make sure stay mostly undisturbed at all times.

Secondly, we have floating docs. They provide fish shelter and areas to spawn. Next, we haven't had any shore line modifications since the cottage was built in 1947. We are protecting the natural habitat of living organisms by not touching our shore line. This also means that native plants can remain to anchor our shoreline which wouldn't be possible if we increased our docking footprint. Once again this also leaves a great environment for fish or other water creatures to spawn.

Thirdly, we always try our hardest to only use the best eco-friendly products, especially if they could end up in our lakes. For example, our grandma has these microfiber cloths that she just started using instead of the toxic glass cleaners she used before. They are reusable and much better for the environment. My parents are also big foodies and make all our food from scratch, this limits the amount of waste and plastic that would end up polluting our lakes and landfills. We also help our neighbour by giving

her our fruit and vegetable peelings that she can turn into compost and use in her garden as opposed to using fertilizers that could have a toxic effect on our waters.

Finally, we are very conscious of invasive species, like rock bass for example. My family and I have participated in the rock bass derby for many years in the past so that we can do what we can to help eliminate invasive species from our lake. The last eco-friendly component of our cottage is that we live a very simple lifestyle. This means very little electricity, along with no air conditioning or heat, besides a fire of course.

In conclusion, my family and I like to do whatever we can to help out our environment and limit climate change and pollution. Whether it's eco friendly cleaning supplies, waste free meals or even just helping out our neighbour with an environmentally friendly garden, we love to help. I hope that other cottagers on our lake will do what they can as well, because together we can make sure Gull lake and all its islands stay clean and pollution free.