

The TLA as a Non-Profit Organization

The Temagami Lakes Association (TLA) was founded in 1931 by a group of property owners who were concerned about the future of the Lake. The founding Association executive consisted of President Robert Newcomb, Secretary Gilbert “Gib” Cochrane, and Treasurer Sherman Thorpe.

The TLA was incorporated as a non-profit organization on March 28, 1967. Here are some additional details:

1. The TLA is a “member-benefit” (“non-public-benefit”) association and functions primarily to serve its members – not the community at large.
2. Being a non-profit organization has provided a number of advantages over the years, but does have some restrictions. For example, the TLA may receive only up to \$10,000.00 in a given year from public donations, grants, and interest on investments.
3. In addition, because the TLA does not qualify for status as a charitable organization, it does not have a charitable registration number and cannot issue tax receipts.

Establishing a related charitable organization dedicated to organizing, funding, and participating in environmental-monitoring and research projects to preserve and protect Lake Temagami and surrounding areas – and increasing public understanding about these issues – was a response to the limitations listed above. Thus, Temagami Environmental Research and Stewardship (TERAS) was incorporated as a charitable (“public-benefit”) organization in 2013. By establishing a registered charity with the Canadian Revenue Agency (CRA), TERAS could accept bequests and donations, as well as issue tax receipts for donors filing annual CRA returns. One of the organization’s first actions was to take over the TLA’s water-quality testing program. Since that time, it has also engaged in other environmental initiatives (e.g., a paleolimnology study) on Lake Temagami. Further information about TERAS is outlined in the “TLA Business” section of each issue of the *Temagami Times*.

The TLA provides many important services to its members, including: property patrols (up to four times per year); annual publications (the *Temagami Times* and TLA Membership Directory); merchandise (e.g., Lake Temagami shoal maps; TLA history books and apparel); and, services/amenities at the TLA Building (e.g., VHF-radio announcements and monitoring; mail delivery; Wi-Fi; landline; outdoor privy).

In addition, the Association monitors and addresses municipal policy and planning initiatives that may affect Lake Temagami and Cross Lake. To achieve this, the TLA communicates regularly with the Municipal Council and represents the interests of our members on Lake Temagami – especially regarding matters of development, environmental issues, the Lake Temagami Access Road, and taxation.

The TLA is dedicated to ensuring that the “Tenets For Temagami” are embedded in all planning documents for the Temagami area. The “Tenets” are a set of principles (agreed upon by the Township of Temagami, the TLA, and the Lake Temagami Permanent Residents’ Association on March 8, 1994) that promote the TLA’s core values of no mainland development, protection of the “Skyline Reserve” (and “Ecological Buffer Reserve”), and a ban on new road access to Lake Temagami. As a condition of amalgamation, they were incorporated into the Municipality of Temagami’s “Official Plan”. This remains the case for the 2026 iteration of this plan.

After 95 years, the TLA has approximately 550 members – most of whom are cottage owners from all corners of the Lake. Our membership also includes commercial entities, and people who support the mission of the Association but do not own property.

The TLA is the voice, eyes, and ears for its members, who value the “Temagami Experience” and wish to protect Lake Temagami and Cross Lake. If you are not already a member, please consider joining the TLA. Contact us at temagamilakes1931@gmail.com for further details.

Sources:

Government of Ontario website (2026)

Temagami Lakes Association: The Life and Times of a Cottage Community (Pamela Glenn Sinclair, 2011)