

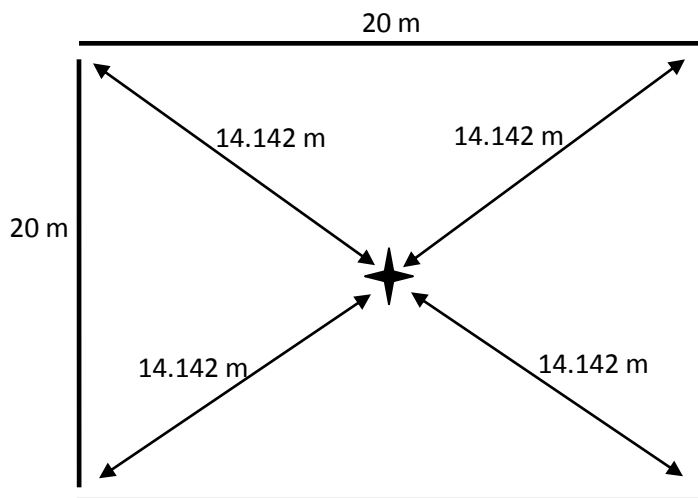
## Terrestrial Plot Monitoring

Ril Lake in conjunction with the District Municipality of Muskoka established a Terrestrial Plot in 2008, with Maggie Braun the District Biotech, Dianne More and Casey Cook. The plot is located on the property of Eldon and Anne Setaih at the corner of South Ril Lake Road and Ril Cove Road. This was done in an effort to develop a variety of methods to track changes in our ecosystem, effects of human impacts, maintain the integrity and health of our lake and ultimately protect all who live in and around it.

Terrestrial plot monitoring is another initiative to develop a long-term study on the health and diversity of a region. This program is based on establishing and using standard methods or protocols to track changes and collect data on species and trends over a long period of time, thus developing a better overview of the area. (Roberts-Pichett P, Gillespie L, 1999)

The basis is to establish a 20 m x 20 m plot to study plant richness, abundance and structure, which allows the study group to monitor changes over time. The plot is set up at a time where both ground cover and larger trees can be monitored, choosing a relatively flat area of forest. There are 4 stakes set up by accurate measurement, the UTM (longitude, latitude) coordinates of each stake is noted and the following data is recorded at the time of establishing the plot: (Roberts-Pichett P, Gillespie L, 1999)

- Trees 10 cm and greater, diameter-breast-height (dbh) are tagged by a number and species recorded – this includes both living and standing trees
- The location of all numbered trees are marked on a map
- The bdh is recorded for all trees
- The condition of the trees is recorded



Our terrestrial plot has been checked to note any changes and will be officially monitored in 2013, the marked trees will be re-measured and data collected and recorded. This is a unique program in that information is counted or measured and no estimates are made in the field gathering process. (Roberts-Pichett P, Gillespie L, 1999)

Again, this project is thanks to the volunteers who continue to support our monitoring efforts and maintain the integrity of Ril Lake.

**Thanks!**

Submitted By: Casey Cook, EMT, ET – Sept 2011 (all references are recorded in the Website Reference Document)