



Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations

FOCA Elert

April 2014

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FOCA encourages you to support:



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Spring Water Conditions Update

Most water levels have stabilized in inland lakes, yet water levels are generally still quite high as large volumes continue to pass through Southern Ontario watersheds. Even with little to no new precipitation, it will take several days or possibly weeks for the water to move through the lakes and for water levels to subside.



For updates on your area, visit: www.ontario.ca/flooding

Shoreline property owners are advised to take precautions to protect themselves and their property, to monitor water levels closely, and to contact their local municipality should any flooding concerns arise. Local municipalities are the first to respond to, and assist with, flood emergencies.

Elevated lake levels and wave action can impact the stability and safety of shoreline infrastructure. Shoreline areas will continue to be extremely dangerous, as banks are very slippery and may be saturated and undercut. Please stay away from water bodies, as well as water structures such as bridges, culverts and dams. Warn children of dangerous conditions and maintain a close watch on children who are outside.



For Terry's recent video blog, including reminders about shoreline safety, click the image below:



Terry's 2-minute update: water safety, April 2014

OPP Costs Update

FOCA's Executive Director met with the Minister of Rural Affairs, Jeff Leal, in early April to discuss current waterfront concerns. As part of these discussions, it was revealed that changes to policing costs for rural municipalities are being reviewed again, **in light of the significant backlash from affected communities!**

If you have not yet made your thoughts known to your local politicians, FOCA encourages you to do so immediately. Get details here: http://www.foca.on.ca/Policing_Costs, including a recent overview from the District Municipality of Muskoka on their deliberations.

FOCA will continue to update you on this significant topic, as developments occur.

Experimental Lakes Area - reprieve!

IMPORTANT UPDATE: As of April 1, 2014, a deal has been signed between Ontario and the International Institute for Sustainable Development, to continue the work of the Experimental Lakes Area.



image: www.saveELA.org

Get links to the latest news here:
<http://www.foca.on.ca/ela>

Spring Cottage Life Show & CottageFirst Draw Winner!

FOCA had a very busy time at the Spring Cottage Life Show, March 28-30, 2014. It was the largest Cottage Life event in a decade, and we were located right in the thick of the action.

At the show, FOCA and our partners at Cade Associates were very excited to launch **CottageFirst**, a new group insurance program available exclusively to FOCA Members.

Congratulations to Bob T. of Nine Mile Lake (Parry Sound), who won the draw for the Big Green Egg BBQ/smoker prize, provided by the program Insurer, Travelers Canada! Thanks also to [Dickson's BBQ Centre](#) for helping to arrange prize delivery.



FOCA, Cade and Travelers partners with the coveted Big Green Egg, at the launch

CottageFirst is the first group insurance program for cottagers. If you belong to a FOCA association, we encourage you to visit www.cottagefirst.com to learn more about this exclusive program, and to take advantage of the opportunity for great coverage and reduced insurance premiums.

CottageFirst
by Cade Associates

Provincial Policy Statement Update

The Province of Ontario has released a revised Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), which provides policy direction for land use planning. FOCA has represented waterfront interests in this process, as part of the Northern and Rural Working Group.



The PPS 2014 includes enhanced policy direction to better reflect the needs and unique circumstances of northern and rural Ontario. **The PPS 2014 will come into effect on April 30, 2014.** Get updates on FOCA's [Hot Topics - Land Use Planning webpage](#).

Municipal Elections 2014

Property owners: exercise your right to vote in your rural municipality in the October 2014 Ontario Municipal Elections!

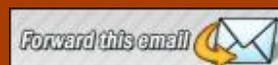
What to do now? Ensure you are on the voter list. You should be registered to vote in each municipality where you own property. Click the video at right for an overview, or go straight to www.voterlookup.ca to:

- confirm the accuracy of your elector information
- update your information
- add a name to the enumeration



Note: for some cottage addresses, you may need to reference the Roll number from your last Property Assessment Notice or municipal tax bill.

Get more info about the upcoming election here: [www.foca.on.ca/Municipal Elections](http://www.foca.on.ca/Municipal_Elections).



Click to share this news with other waterfront property owners!

RBC Water Attitudes Survey 2014

FOCA participated again this year in the annual release of the **RBC Canadian Water Attitudes Study** results.

Despite the fact that 1 in 3 Canadians polled knew someone directly affected by flooding in 2013, less than 10% have taken precautionary measures to protect themselves and their property.

As freshwater expert Bob Sandford noted in his comments during the release of the Water Attitudes study: "We are not sitting ducks," when it comes to water issues. **"What individuals do to prevent water damage on their own properties DOES MATTER."**



image courtesy MNR

You can access the presentation slides and full audio recording via a link on the FOCA Environment webpage: www.foca.on.ca/environment

Events

March 27, 2014: FOCA attended this year's **David Schindler Professorship in Aquatic Science Lecture** at Trent University, featuring renowned paleolimnologist **Dr. John Smol**. The work of Dr. Smol and his colleagues (see YouTube video link at right) continues to inform our understanding of our aquatic resources.



FOCA is pleased to be partnering with Dr. Smol on a new 3-year NSERC-funded research project designed to develop predictive tools in a multi-stressor world for Ontario Lake Trout lakes.

Coming Up Next:

May 4-5, 2014: **Queen's University** - FOCA is facilitating a workshop with graduate students to improve the connection between water research and public involvement and understanding of our lakes and rivers.

May 8-9, 2014: **Muskoka Summit on the Environment** - "Environment vs. The Economy," in Bracebridge. FOCA is pleased to be a Gold Sponsor of this event. Watch Terry's short blog (in crazy Spring weather!) about the link between the environment and economy. Register for the Muskoka Summit here: <http://muskokasummit.org/2014-summit/>



Terry Rees blog: upcoming Muskoka Summit links environment + economy

New Great Lakes Agreement released for public comment

This week, the Province of Ontario released the 8th Canada-Ontario Agreement (COA) on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health for [public comment](#) until July 3rd.

COA is the legal framework through which the governments of Ontario and Canada

coordinate their work protecting the Great Lakes, with priorities that include nutrients, harmful pollutants, aquatic invasive species, climate change impacts, and the protection and restoration of Great Lakes native species and their habitats.

An interview with FOCA

FOCA's Executive Director, Terry Rees, was recently a guest on Lawrence Gunther's Blue Fish Radio Show.

Terry and Lawrence talked about Great Lakes issues, sustainable waterfronts and the generational motivation behind so much of FOCA's ongoing work.



[Click here to enjoy the podcast...](#)

Lawrence Gunther is an outdoor adventurer, competitive fisher, and founder of the [Blind Fishing Boat](#).

Support FOCA

FOCA works all year long on your behalf, to protect thriving and sustainable waterfronts across Ontario. **How can you help?**

1. Get on the **FOCA Elerst list** so we can keep you up-to-date. If this message did not land in your Inbox directly from FOCA, [CLICK HERE](#) to join the Elerst list today!

2. Like us on Facebook, to connect with FOCA on social media.

[Like us on Facebook](#) 

3. Donate to support FOCA today.



4. Share this message with others!

FOCA believes everyone has the right to be alerted to issues that could affect their waterfront property investment.

Roadmap for Rural Ontario

Ontario's recently released "**Rural Roadmap**" tries to get at some of the challenges and opportunities that face our communities. From the limited sources of local revenues, municipalities must still deliver important services and invest in the infrastructure (including roads, bridges and high speed internet) to help our communities thrive. Find the link to the Rural Roadmap on FOCA's [Rural Services webpage](#).

FOCA remains very vocal with the Ministry of Rural Affairs about the role of residential waterfront property owners within the economic fabric of small town and rural Ontario. In some municipalities, over 90% of the property tax base comes from the residential component. In addition, our sector generates economic activity every time we shop in our local communities.



Do your part: support the merchants and service providers in your waterfront community - [shop locally!](#)

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Thank you also to our Silver and Bronze level sponsors:



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