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Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations

FOCA Alert

January 2014

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March 1, 2014**

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**What are the Benefits of
Supporting FOCA?**

Notice to Members:

FOCA Annual General Meeting Saturday, March 1, 2014



Please join us at the 2014 FOCA Annual General Meeting and Spring Seminar on Saturday, March 1st. Location this year: Hart House, University of Toronto main campus.

Click to read the official Notice to Members
of AGM business to be conducted.

**> Click the image at right for an
overview of topics & speakers**

Every FOCA member Association in good standing can vote at the Business Meeting. [Click here to register now...](#) so your vote card will be ready!



Can't be there in person?

Members can participate in the Business Meeting (9:30-11:00am) by webinar. Contact the FOCA office: info@foca.on.ca or 705-749-3622

*** Read this call-to-action from the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, related to the FOCA 2014 AGM!**

Policing costs to change dramatically

Reliable policing services are important to all of our communities. These services represent a significant portion of municipal budgets. There are significant funding changes being proposed that will affect every one of the 300+ municipalities served by the OPP.



Please read the latest updates from FOCA [here](#). Learn what is happening to the affordability of policing in your community, and what the impact will be on your property tax bill!

Water Level Management Meetings

Over the past month, FOCA and partners have been involved in a number of meetings about water quantity management in Ontario, of concern to so many of our members.

[Click here for more about these meetings...](#)

(image: courtesy MNR)



FOCA launches Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring program

NEW: In partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH), FOCA has launched the **Lake Association Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Monitoring Program**.



Volunteers will be trained in aquatic invasive plant identification and monitoring utilizing the web-based Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) Ontario.

We need interested Lake Stewards to contact us immediately about an upcoming workshop! info@foca.on.ca or 705-749-3622

Thank you to FOCA's Gold Sponsors:



Tax Appeal Deadline Approaches

Want to file a Request for Reconsideration (RfR) of your property assessment? The

deadline for this year is March 31, 2014.

Get details about how to file on the [FOCA Taxation webpages...](#)

Municipal Elections

FOCA encourages our members and all individuals to get involved in the **October 27th Ontario Municipal Elections**. Seasonal residents should plan to vote at the municipality of their waterfront property, as well as their home municipality.

[Click here...](#) for FOCA's "Quick Facts" sheet for you about the Election.

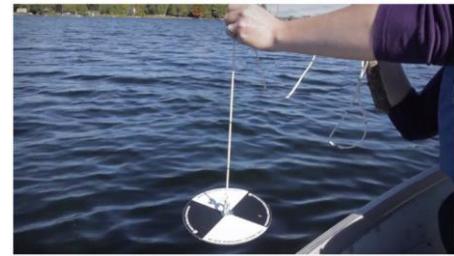
Follow this issue on our new Hot Topic page:
http://www.foca.on.ca/Municipal_Elections



Lake Partner Program - 2013 results

Get the preliminary 2013 results for total phosphorus and water clarity for all Ontario lakes participating in the LPP monitoring program, an ongoing partnership between FOCA and the Ministry of the Environment. Visit: www.foca.on.ca/lake-partner

Interested in becoming a volunteer? Contact the FOCA office: info@foca.on.ca or 705-749-3622



Pictured: a still from the new FOCA video demonstrating LPP water sampling procedures. The video will be screened at the FOCA AGM on March 1, 2014.

Survey: Waste & Recycling

FOCA is working with the [Trent Centre for Community-Based Education](#) to find out about waste and recycling habits while at the cottage, and any gaps in municipal services.

Do you get garbage pick-up at your waterfront property, or drive your waste and recycling to a local dump/transfer station, or cart it all home with you?!?

Please, take 5 minutes for our brief online survey now:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FOCA2014WasteRecycleHabits>



Feel free to share this link with others at your waterfront. Survey closes February 15th. Stay tuned for summarized highlights!

ELA Update

Please note that there are proposed changes to Ministry of the Environment (MOE) regulations, intended to facilitate the continuation of experiments at the **Experimental Lakes Area**.

Visit www.foca.on.ca/ela for more information, and to support these proposed changes by following the link to the EBR posting. (Comment by February 15th!)



image courtesy ELA

A Cottage Succession Event near you?

Want to learn how to keep the 'family' in the family cottage? FOCA's Cottage Succession Seminar series, with estate lawyer Peter Lillico, could travel to your region this summer.

[Click for the event application form....](#)



Apply by March 1st, or contact the FOCA office at info@foca.on.ca or 705-749-3622 for more information.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors Save Lives

FOCA has been following developments in carbon monoxide (CO) safety, with the passage of the "Hawkins Gignac Law" in Ontario in late 2013.

At the FOCA AGM two years ago, more than 60 FOCA Association representatives pledged to help spread the news about CO to everyone at the waterfront. John Gignac, who lost family to CO poisoning, asks you to do your part now. **[Click the video at right...](#)**

CO safety is particularly important during the "furnace" season. Whether at the house or cottage, protect your family from CO by installing working detectors in all buildings with fuel-burning appliances or heating systems, fireplaces, or attached garages. Get more info here:
<http://www.foca.on.ca/Fire-Safety>



Winter Weather Safety Updates

FOCA recommends that you check on your cottage property throughout the winter, especially after extreme weather, including **heavy snow fall**. If you are unable to get there in person, have a neighbour or friend check for you. Power outages, frozen pipes and a buildup of snow on the roof can cause big issues. Be proactive about protecting your investment!



*Roof clearing, Severn River, this January!
(image: Kay Soares)*

FOCA's Terry Rees took to the water's edge for a short reminder blog about winter water safety; [click the video at left](#).

Also, Ontario Power Generation reminds us that **dam safety** matters during winter, too. Stay clear of dams; the operation of a power station can cause nearby ice to be dangerously thin. Don't put your life at risk while having fun on the ice.

[Click here to access a new PSA on the topic...](#)

More News to share...

Bob Sandford Video - Missed the FOCA Fall Seminar last November? FOCA now has a full video of Bob's presentation about extreme weather and water issues. Member Associations may contact the FOCA office for the video link. Please share this important information at your waterfront! info@foca.on.ca or 705-749-3622



Second Home Study, Muskoka - The District Municipality has released the results of its 2013 Second Home Study. The result is filled with interesting stats. For example: there were more than 22,000 second homes in the region at the end of 2012, accounting for almost half of all dwellings in Muskoka. [Click here to access the information...](#)

The **Centre for Sustainable Watersheds** is looking for planting volunteers to assist with shoreline naturalizations in southeastern Ontario in April and May. Find out more here: <http://watersheds.ca/en/programs/the-natural-edge-gan.html> and contact CSW to sign up! Also, CSW has posted the presentation slides from FOCA's Executive Director from the last Lake Links Workshop. [Find the link by clicking here...](#)

FOCA is proud to be a Gold Sponsor of the **2014 Muskoka Summit on the Environment**, "[Environment vs Economy: Resolving the Dichotomy](#)" May 8-9 in Bracebridge ON. Don't miss this important event!

Support FOCA

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

Please make a donation to support FOCA today. Click the "support" button to find out more.

Have you found us on Facebook yet?

[Like us on Facebook](#) 

click to support
FOCA now!

Finally, make sure you are on the **FOCA Alert list** so we can keep you apprised of the issues that matter. If this message did not land in your Inbox directly from FOCA, [click here to reach the FOCA website](#), then look for the red "SIGN UP" box at the right to enter your preferred email address.

FOCA's Gold sponsors are listed above.

Thank you also to our Silver and Bronze level sponsors:



A UTC Fire & Security Company



Insurance Brokers Limited



CORPORATE SPONSORS support us. Please, support them.

Want to know more about becoming a FOCA Corporate Sponsor? [Contact us.](#)

* Please share this message. * FOCA believes everyone has the right to be alerted to issues that could affect their waterfront property investment. Remember: FOCA does not sell, rent or share your information with third parties.