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Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations

FOCA Elert

March 2014

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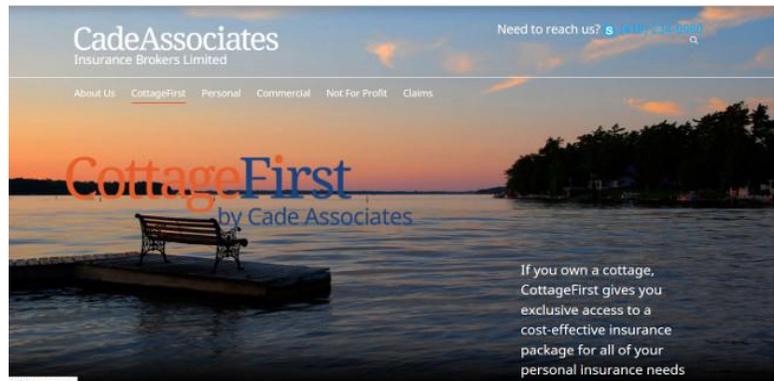


Exciting NEW Benefit for All FOCA Members:

CottageFirst

by Cade Associates

CottageFirst is a new group insurance program exclusively available to FOCA Members, providing exceptional group discounts. CottageFirst is the first program of its kind to recognize the importance of cottagers and their properties.



CottageFirst is the complete solution for your insurance needs, bundling together your cottage, home, auto, watercraft and other personal insurance products under one insurer.

CottageFirst will provide you with the confidence and peace of mind that comes with working with an independent insurance broker who is well versed in cottage life.

CottageFirst will be officially launched at the Spring Cottage Life Show. 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 this opportunity for reduced insurance premiums.

Thank you to
FOCA's Gold Sponsors:



Cottage Life



CottageFirst was designed by cottagers, for cottagers, in consultation with FOCA and is offered by Cade Associates Insurance Brokers Limited and underwritten by The Dominion of Canada General Insurance Company, one of the Canadian licensed insurers comprising Travelers Canada.

A quick March overview

Spring may be on the calendar, but is it in the air???

Take 2 minutes and watch a recent video update from FOCA's Executive Director, about what's happening this March.

Click the image at right to link to the YouTube video:



FOCA 2014 Annual General Meeting

FOCA enjoyed another successful AGM and Spring Seminar, held at Hart House (University of Toronto) on March 1, 2014.

[Click here for a summary of the day's events.](#)

Please NOTE that FOCA Members will be contacted soon with links to all the day's presentations.



Spring (yes, Spring!) Cottage Life Show: March 28 - 30, 2014

FOCA has your discount code to get **\$3 off** the regular adult ticket price, for entry to the Spring Cottage Life Show.

NOTE: To access this offer, you must purchase online before you go: **Click the image at right** and type in the FOCA Promotion Code: **FOCACLS14**.



Print out your ticket(s) and bring with you to the doors of the International Centre. While you are at the show, please drop by to visit us at the FOCA booth in Hall 2 (**Booth #1352**) near the Dock Party zone and the Main Stage. See you there!



Update on Ontario Ombudsman's investigation into Hydro One

Since André Marin's investigation into complaints about Hydro One's billing practices and customer service began in early February, **more than 6,100 complaints and submissions** have been filed. FOCA has provided our input to the Ombudsman; you should, too.

Individual concerns or complaints are encouraged and can be sent via the complaint form at www.ombudsman.on.ca, by email to info@ombudsman.on.ca or during office hours by calling 1-800-263-1830.

Ontario Energy Board

Update: FOCA has been granted intervenor status at the Ontario Energy Board, related to proposed Hydro One charges for electricity distribution for the period from January 1, 2015 through December 31, 2019.

Keep up-to-date on the subject here: [FOCA Hot Topics - Energy webpage](#).

Welcome to FOCA's "Environment Corner"

New "Plain English" Climate Change Report

The folks at The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) have just published a report intended to provide a clearer explanation of climate change.

What we Know: The Reality, Risks and Response to Climate Change is a somewhat less technical perspective, and offers the warning that even if you haven't yet felt the impacts of a changing climate personally - you will. [Read more online by clicking here](#), and to access a download link to the whole report.

Also, take a few minutes and watch a video (click the image at right, to link) featuring Marshall Shepherd, Director of the Atmospheric Sciences Program, University of Georgia, and President of the American Meteorological Society. **Notable quote about Climate Change:** "It's not all about the polar bears, it's about your kids and my kids. It's about the price of Cheerios, and your future health..."



Ontario's Environmental Bill of Rights: 20 years of public involvement in environmental decision-making

The Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) recognizes that while the provincial government has the primary responsibility for protecting, conserving and restoring the natural environment, the people of Ontario have the right to participate in government decisions about the environment and the right to hold the government accountable for those decisions. The EBR has several tools:



- **The Environmental Registry** - a versatile and searchable online database for thousands of current environmental proposals and past decisions of the Ontario government. This is the official and very public tool for submitting comments to the government - comments the government must consider in its decision-making.
- **Reviews and Investigations** - This EBR tool lets the public be proactive in bringing environmental concerns and solutions to the government's attention. Ontarians from all walks of life have submitted over 600 applications since the EBR was enacted.
- **Appeals** to certain site-specific decisions on licences, approvals and other environmental instruments. For example, this tool can give members of the public a say on conditions in a company's water taking permit.

Noteworthy: the [Annual and Special Reports](#) of the Environmental Commissioner (ECO) provide a wealth of information and unique analysis, at your fingertips.

If you are interested in learning more about getting the EBR working for you and your community, FOCA members are encouraged to contact the ECO, to arrange personalized presentations or training workshops on the Registry and how to submit applications.



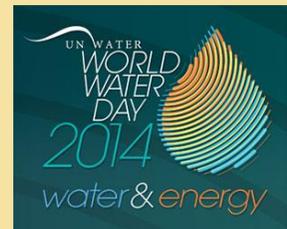
Ellen Schwartzel, Deputy Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, spoke about the EBR at the FOCA 2014 AGM

Happy World Water Day!

This Saturday, March 22nd, 2014 is the United Nation's **World Water Day** and is the launch date for the latest **World Water Development Report (WWDR)**.

The WWDR focuses on strategic water issues and aims to provide decision-makers with the tools to implement sustainable use of our global water resources.

In 2014 the report will address the theme "Water and Energy". Earlier versions provided an overall picture of the state, uses and management of the world's freshwater resources. The latest edition of the WWDR will be posted on the [UN Water website](#) on World Water Day, alongside the previous editions already listed there.



Funding Opportunities for FOCA Member Associations

BEAN Grants

As a member of the Ontario Biodiversity Council (OBC), FOCA is pleased to support the efforts of all Ontarians to "protect what sustains us." The OBC's Biodiversity Education and Awareness Network (BEAN) is offering grants of up to \$500 to support eligible events that must take place in May & June 2014. In the past, BEAN has supported events such as invasive plant pulls, native plantings, educational workshops, conferences and nature hikes. Organizations wishing to apply for funding must complete the [online application form](#) by Friday, April 4th 2014.

** FOCA Note: following the mention of "bioblitzes" at the AGM by biodiversity expert Dave Ireland, groups might consider applying this funding toward a local bioblitz or invasives mapping day. You might propose to use the money for volunteer gifts (native seedlings? nature guide books?) for all participants. What about a "shoreline weed mapping day"?*

Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund

The Great Lakes Guardian Community Fund was established to help people take action to protect and restore their corner of the Great Lakes basin. Apply for grants of up to \$25,000 for projects that have a direct environmental benefit and that support at least 1 of the following goals:

- Protect water quality for human and ecological health
- Improve wetlands, beaches and coastal areas
- Protect habitats and species

Applications are due May 9, 2014 by 5:00pm. [To find out more, click here...](#)

FOCA Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring Program Workshop

There was a great turnout at the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Monitoring Workshop on March 14th, at the Canadian Canoe Museum in Peterborough. The 25 attendees learned about AIS pathways, identification, monitoring and how to use a new Ontario-wide AIS reporting tool called EDDMapS. Presentations were given by FOCA, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters.



[Click here for more information](#) about the AIS monitoring program and the EDDMapS tool. FOCA is looking for lake stewards from each lake to be involved in this program. You can help to detect and report on the spread of alien invasive species. Email the FOCA office to learn more about the program: info@foca.on.ca

In related news: MNR releases new Invasive Species Act

In late February 2014, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources introduced their proposed [Invasive Species Act](#). It is intended to provide the policy and regulatory framework to do more effective risk assessment, monitoring and science, and to effectively communicate and coordinate the response to these threats. If passed, the proposed act would:

- Enable the passage of regulations to restrict certain species (e.g. make it illegal to possess, release, transport, sell, and propagate the species)
- Enable the minister to take immediate action for an invasive species that poses a significant threat
- Enable the ministry to undertake rapid response activities such as implementing control and eradication activities

Comments can be made until **April 14, 2014** via the Environmental Bill of Rights, citing EBR # 012-1120. [Click here to link to the EBR posting...](#)

TSW receives Infrastructure Funding

FOCA attended the March 14th press conference at the Trent Severn Waterways' Visitors Centre, where Parks Canada announced \$58 million of infrastructure investments.

Read the news release, and find other important information, on [FOCA's Ontario Waterways webpage](#)



Other Upcoming Events

Muskoka Summit on the Environment 2014:

"Environment vs. The Economy"

May 8-9, 2014 in Bracebridge

<http://muskokasummit.org/2014-summit/>

Register before April 15th for a chance to win a 1-year Family Membership to the Royal Ontario Museum! FOCA is pleased to be a Gold Sponsor of this event.

Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association - Annual Conference

March 23-25, 2014 (next week!) in Niagara Falls

<http://www.oowa.org/conference/>

David Schindler Professorship in Aquatic Science Lecture:

"Exploring the Past to Protect Our Future," featuring Prof. John Smol

March 27, 2014 at 7pm, Trent University, Peterborough

<https://www.trentu.ca/aquaticscience/>

Edward Burtynsky documentary film "Watermark"

March 31, 2014 at 8 pm, Peterborough's historic Market Hall

This special event, which will have the film director in attendance, is part of the Spark Photo Festival 2014.

<http://tickets.markethall.org/orderticketsarea.asp?p=197&a=18&backurl=default.asp>

Also part of April's Spark Photo Festival:

Exhibition featuring the historical photos from the Fairbairn Mackenzie collection. These images are remarkable not only for their careful composition and fine detail, but for the unique view of cottage life on Stony Lake over 100 years ago. The collection also focuses on several prominent Peterborough families and homes, as well as the building of the Trent Severn canal and other civil engineering projects. Around 70 of the 200 glass plate negatives will be on exhibit at the historic YMCA building located at George & Murray Streets, Peterborough, from 1 pm to 5 pm every day throughout the month of April.

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

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support
FOCA now!

us on Facebook yet? [Like us on Facebook](#)  Finally, make sure you are on the **FOCA Elerst 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.

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