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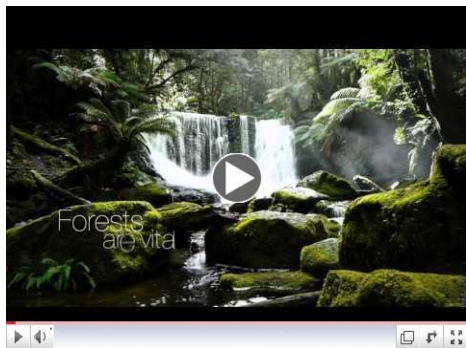


FOCA Elert - March 2016



This Week

This week was **World Water Day** (on March 22nd), an international observance and an opportunity to learn more about water related issues, be inspired to tell others, and take action to make a difference. The sustainability of our precious lakes and rivers is our collective responsibility, and water features prominently in the new UN [Sustainable Development Goals](#).



This week also included the **International Day of Forests**, on March 21st. As beautifully described in the video at the left (click the image to play the YouTube video), our efforts to protect and maintain healthy forests and landscapes can go a long way to protecting our valuable waters.

As our winter ice recedes, FOCA encourages you to ask yourself:

What will I do for my favourite waterbody in 2016?

Recap of the FOCA AGM & Spring Seminar

Thank you to all our attendees, speakers and event sponsors who made our latest event on March 5th such a success! We had another full room and lively networking among our lake association members.

All attendees will be sent a follow-up email next week, containing links to the slide presentations from the day's talks. Association members who were not able to attend the event are welcome to contact the FOCA office for details: info@foca.on.ca



Jack's Lake Association ~ FOCA Achievement Award Winner!

Congratulations to the **Jack's Lake Association**, winner of the **2015 FOCA Achievement Award!**

The award was presented at the FOCA Spring Seminar on March 5th. We had so many great stories to share about recent association successes that several "Honourable Mentions" were also presented this year, to the following members:

- Lake Wahnapiatae Home and Campers Association
- Muskoka Lakes Association
- Talpines Property Owners Association
- Chandos Lake Property Owners Association

For details, or to nominate your association for this annual Award, please visit:
<https://foca.on.ca/member-services/foca-achievement-award/>



Pictured: FOCA Board Director Lynda Corkum presents the award, received by Paul Campbell on behalf of the Jack's Lake Association.

Thank you to FOCA's Gold Sponsors!



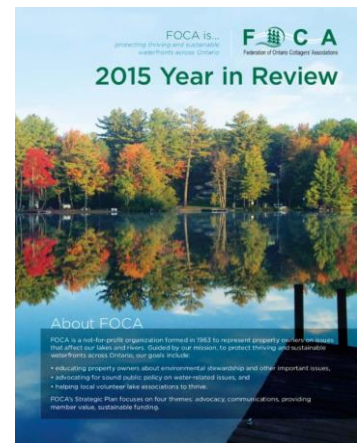
FOCA's Year in Review

Our latest publication is out, and attendees at the FOCA AGM received copies, hot off the press. The **FOCA Year in Review** helps you stay up-to-date about FOCA's work and programs, and is a valuable tool to help answer the question, "*What does FOCA do?*"

[Please click here, or the image at right](#) to access the digital version.

Association Members: we encourage you to share this information with your members! [Contact the FOCA office](#) for extra print copies of the FOCA Year in Review to circulate at your association meeting this summer, or post this link on your website or on social media:

<https://foca.on.ca/foca-year-in-review-2015/>



2016: a Property Tax Re-assessment Year

FOCA was pleased to have senior representatives from MPAC (the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation) at our Spring Seminar on March 5th. MPAC spoke about the new property assessments which are rolling out over the next few months, regional trends in waterfront assessments, and changes coming to the "Request for Reconsideration" (RfR) process for property owners wishing to challenge their assessments.



Carla Nell of MPAC, speaking at the 2016 FOCA Spring Seminar

A listing of the assessment release dates across Ontario, and new RfR deadlines can be found on the FOCA Property Taxation webpage: <https://foca.on.ca/focas-property-tax-position-overview/>

Upcoming Events

April 1-3, 2016 - [Spring Cottage Life Show](#), Toronto. Plan to visit FOCA at this season-starting event. **Buy your tickets online at a \$3 discount, from FOCA!** [Click here to order](#), and remember to use Promo Code: **FOCA16**



April 2, 2016 - [Go Wild Grow Wild](#) Expo, London - for outdoor adventurers, gardeners, nature lovers and families - of all ages! Chat with experts, buy gear, learn about native plants, get info about outdoor activities or book an adventure tour.



April 12, 2016 - Cottage Country Planning Event, Huntsville - about **Planning and Environmental Issues**, including "Roads in Cottage Country from a Surveyor's Perspective," and more. [Download the event Agenda & Registration form here](#) (PDF, 8 pgs).

May 27-28, 2016 - **Muskoka Summit on the Environment:**

This year's theme is: **Solutions for a Warming World**. Speakers include Elizabeth May, Leader of the Green Party of Canada, and David Miller, President & CEO of the World Wildlife Fund, Canada. FOCA is once again proud to be a [Gold Sponsor](#) of this biennial event. See you there!



Thank you to FOCA's Silver Sponsors

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Advocacy, Ministry and Policy Updates

New Electricity Pricing for 2016 and beyond:

Within the next month, Hydro One customers will be receiving 2016 electricity bills that reflect the change to "all-fixed" distribution rates. Find out more about new electricity pricing, here: <https://foca.on.ca/electricity-pricing-tips-and-tools/>

Ontario Water Quality Report:

The Government of Ontario has released a report providing a comprehensive outlook on water quality in Ontario, with references to environmental monitoring and relevant legislation focused on the Great Lakes, inland lakes, plus streams and groundwater. Find the link here: <https://foca.on.ca/new-report-water-quality-in-ontario/>



Algonquin Land Claim update:

Members of the Algonquin First Nation have recently voted to endorse an agreement-in-principle (AIP), which should pave the way for the negotiation of this historic land claim over the coming years. See news here: <https://foca.on.ca/algonquin-land-claim-agreement-in-principle-signed>

Nuclear issues:

FOCA and 100 other non-governmental organizations signed a recent letter urging the Canadian and U.S. federal governments to designate **radionuclides** as Chemicals of Mutual Concern. Read more, and enlarge the "Nuclear Hot Spots" map, here: <https://foca.on.ca/great-lakes-strategy-and-action/>



In separate news, Environment Minister McKenna has delayed the federal decision on the **Deep Geological Repository** plan for nuclear waste storage near Lake Huron, with a request for more studies. Get links to recent news, here: <https://foca.on.ca/radioactive-waste-storage-in-the-great-lakes-basin-overview>

FOCA on the Road

March 21, 2016 - FOCA was in Sudbury for the **Greater Sudbury Watershed Alliance** (GSWA) Annual General Meeting at the Vale Living with Lakes Centre (LLC) at Laurentian University. FOCA was pleased to attend and participate in a lively discussion about 2016 challenges for this grassroots group of lake associations including: blue-green algae, rail safety around water, and invasive species.



The GSWA has two important events coming up: meeting with the Mayor of Sudbury Brian Bigger at The LLC on April 7th; and on April 20th, [Greater Shorelines](#), [Greater Living](#) public event at the Vale Cavern, Science North 6:30-8:30 (Free). All are welcome and encouraged to attend. For more information, visit: <http://gswa.ca/>

Get the news to your members!

Part of FOCA's role is to ensure important information is delivered to every waterfront property owner.



In addition to our monthly [E!ert](#), FOCA also has articles and information available for use in your local association newsletter. Ask us about articles on almost any subject, whether that is "Clean - Drain - Dry" invasive species prevention tips, maintaining healthy shorelines, or other topics.

FOCA and our partners are also interested in your newsletter deadlines and in paid advertising space in your publications. Contact info@foca.on.ca to pursue this!

CottageFirst
Insurance
Get back to carefree
Learn More →
Cottage & Home Insurance Package for FOCA Members

The advertisement features a photograph of a woman in a white tank top and sunglasses sitting on a wooden deck, holding a straw hat. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Environmental Bill of Rights (EBR) Postings

At a recent meeting of community leaders in Peterborough (image at right), Ontario's Environmental Commissioner (ECO) Dianne Saxe encouraged interested citizens to take advantage of the [research of the ECO](#), and the many public input and notification tools.



Proposals that are environmentally significant in Ontario are posted on the Environmental Registry for public comment. A few recent examples of cottage-country-related EBR postings include:

- [Approval of an Official Plan Amendment](#) for the County of Lennox and Addington
- Notice of [Appeal for an approval of a wind energy project](#) in the Township of Clearview (Simcoe County)
- Proposed renewal of the [Permit To Take Water](#) for snowmaking at Alpine Ski Club near Collingwood

Any interested member of the public can create their own [keyword News Alert from the ECO](#). For example, your association might choose to create a News Alert search for your Township name.



For an overview about the EBR, see the [2015 FOCA webinar](#) that featured Deputy Commissioner Ellen Schwartzel.

Partners in Septic System Health

FOCA recently presented a talk, "Cottage Associations: Your Connection to 250,000 Septic Systems," at the 17th Annual Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association ([OOWA](#)) Conference in Kingston. [Rural waste water management](#) remains an important and ongoing focus of FOCA's work towards sustainable waterfront living.



*Pictured: Rick Esselment of OOWA presenting the 2015-2016 OOWA **Corporate Steward Award** to FOCA's Executive Director Terry Rees!*

Healthy Forests Sustain Healthy Waterways

In Ontario, the management of our vast and important woodlands is subject to MNRF (Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) forest management planning. How and where wood is harvested can directly and indirectly affect aquatic resources, and many other aspects of the waterfront experience. Forestry activities include cutting and removing trees, building of roads and bridges, replanting, and other management. Forest management planning for Ontario's Crown forests is intended to be sustainable, and to consider stakeholder and public involvement.



For more information, including recently released **harvesting plans** for LANARK-MAZINAW, SUDBURY FOREST, and SPANISH FOREST, visit: <https://foca.on.ca/using-our-forest-resources-sustainably/>

Thank you to FOCA's Bronze Sponsors



Funding Opportunities

Again this year, BEAN (the **Biodiversity Education and Awareness Network**) is offering small grants to organizations holding events to celebrate International Biodiversity Day which will be celebrated this year on May 22nd. Grants of up to \$500 are available for events that take place between May 1st and July 31st. Past funding has been provided for invasive plant pulls, native plantings, educational workshops, conferences, nature hikes and BioBlitzes. The 2016 theme is "Mainstreaming Biodiversity: Sustaining People and their Livelihoods." Get details and **apply by Friday, April 1st:** <http://biodiversityeducation.ca/biodiversity-day/ibd-grant/>



MORE FUNDING NEWS...

Fisheries and Oceans Canada has announced the latest round of funding for their **Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program** (RFCPP). The RFCPP supports conservation organizations through partnership projects aimed at restoring recreational fisheries habitat in Canada. The program can fund habitat restoration projects such as riparian planting, the stabilization/enhancement of habitat, etc. One-year (2016-17), two-year (2016-18) and three-year (2016-19) project proposals will be accepted up **until April 22, 2016**.



Example of past funded project to create fish habitat (Photo: Jennifer Lamoureux)

The RFCPP focuses primarily on funding requests in the \$20,000 to \$100,000 range (to a maximum of \$250,000 per project per year). Note that Federal government cash support to the project must not exceed 50% of the total project value. Get info, Guidelines and Forms, here: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/rfcpp-ppcpr/application-soumission-eng.html>

Your Role

How can you help FOCA? There are many ways to help us with our mission, **To protect thriving and sustainable waterfronts across Ontario**, including:

1. support your local lake Association
2. encourage a friend or colleague to get on the [FOCA Eleret](#) list - join nearly 10,000 subscribers who receive our monthly updates about waterfront Ontario!
3. connect with FOCA on social media:

Like us on **Facebook** 

Follow us on **twitter**

View our videos on **YouTube** 

Find out more about your role, here: <https://foca.on.ca/about/your-role/>

Did you know?

You can always find FOCA's Facebook, Twitter and YouTube channels quickly and easily: look for the social media icons located along the bottom of every page of the FOCA website: <https://foca.on.ca> (See the image at right, where the links have been circled in red.) Please share the news, and connect with us on social media today!



FOCA believes everyone has a right to hear about issues that affect waterfront Ontario. Those who have an existing business relationship with FOCA may receive email from us based on [Implied Consent](#) in Canadian Anti Spam legislation. You can unsubscribe from Elerets at any time.