



Event Summary for Members

We had a successful **FOCA AGM and Spring Seminar on March 3rd, 2018**, with 140 attendees at the Boulevard Club in Toronto. Thank you to all of our event participants, sponsors, speakers and partners who joined us for a lively day of learning and sharing!

Here’s an overview, including links to the slide presentations:

Terry Rees, Executive Director of FOCA, opened the event with an **overview about FOCA’s** project, program and partner highlights from the past year, as well as FOCA’s 2018 priorities.

Download a copy of [Terry’s slide presentation](#) (PDF, 40 pages).

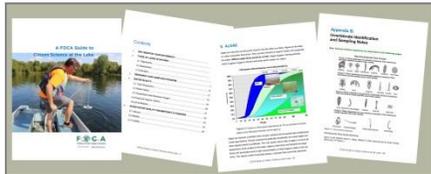
Also, please read and share the [2017 FOCA Year in Review](#), posted on the FOCA website. Want copies to hand out at your local association event? Contact the office: info@foca.on.ca 705-749-3622

Terry screened FOCA’s new video release: “**Citizen Science Matters**” (please share the video link: https://youtu.be/owliN_D8WZc) and introduced FOCA’s latest publication, “**A FOCA Guide to Citizen Science at the Lake**,” which is available for digital download, here: <https://foca.on.ca/a-guide-to-citizen-science-at-the-lake/>. This guide includes chapters about why to monitor your waterbody, how to classify your lake, designing a water sampling program, an overview of Ontario citizen science monitoring programs, and an introduction to invertebrate sampling and identification.

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At 10:00am, the Executive of the FOCA Board of Directors took the stage for the **FOCA Annual General Meeting** (business meeting), chaired by President Terry Kennedy. Membership voted in-person and online on the following items of business:

- ✓ approved 2017 AGM [Minutes](#) (PDF, 1 page)
- ✓ accepted FOCA’s [Audited Financials](#) (PDF, 12 pages) for the fiscal year ending September 30th, 2017
- ✓ approved the [slate of Directors](#) (PDF, 1 page) recommended by the FOCA Nominating Committee.



GOVERNANCE & NOMINATIONS – material for AGM

FOCA Board Slate for 2018

Continuing Directors (mid-term)	Joined Board
Terry Beettam	Lake Weeslemoon Conservation Assoc. 2017
Tony Lepine	Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners Assoc. 2017
Wendy Sue Lyttle	Catchacoma Cottagers' Assoc. 2017
Daryle Moffatt	Otter Lake Ratepayers Assoc. 2017
Ben Thorpe	Kennebec Lake Association 2017
Bruce Moore	Canotio Lake Property Owners Assoc. 2016
Marlin Horst	Baptiste Lake Association 2016
Craig Dawson	Barrow Bay Property Owners' Assoc. 2016
Terry Kennedy	Kennebec Lake Association 2014
Ian White	Lake of Bays Association 2014
Jeff Clark	Go Home Lake Association 2013
Directors re-elected in 2018 (Second term)	
Steven Kerr	Jack Lake Association 2015
Candidates elected as Directors in 2018 (First term)	
Pat Drew	Lake of the Woods District Property Owners Association 2018

Thank you to the Lake of the Woods District Property Owners Association for sharing their “*Zoom webinar*” platform, to enable participation in the AGM by FOCA members at a distance! Thank you also to FOCA’s Auditor, Stephen Bark, for attending and confirming a clean audit opinion for FOCA. Download the [FOCA Business Meeting slide presentation](#). (PDF, 22 pages)

After a refreshment break that was generously sponsored by Cottage Life, attendees split into three groups for break-out sessions on first aid, cottage rental, and roads issues:

Thank you to our refreshments table sponsor:

Cottage Life

SESSION > Cottage Country First Aid:



This session was planned to acknowledge that our cottage communities are remote and often distant from first responders. Jon Alcide of [Action First Aid](#) led a hands-on performance of CPR and use of an AED (Automated External Defibrillator).

Participants also received a free 84-page *First Aid, CPR and AED Manual* filled with safety information. [Contact Jon](#) to ask about the Manual, or to organize a first aid training session for *your* upcoming lake association event. Session materials and related links:

- Visit: <https://foca.on.ca/emergency-response-in-remote-areas/> and download a sample “Emergency Call List” from FOCA.
- [Shock-on-the-Dock Training info sheet](#) (PDF, 1 page)
- [Home/Cottage AED info sheet](#) (PDF, 1 page, Action First Aid)



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SESSION > Renting Responsibly:



This session was led by Craig White of [CottageLINK Rental Management \(CLRM\)](#). Discussion was lively, with many participants expressing concern about the growing footprint of commercial renters, especially as relates to noise levels, inappropriate outdoor burning, fireworks, pets, nuisance or dangerous boating. Craig and Christina from CLRM reviewed rental best practices, and provided resources for those interested in renting. See their informative “[Responsible Rental](#)” Guide (PDF, 9 pages).

Proactive actions discussed in this session included:

- providing practical and useful prompts for all cottage visitors (e.g. posting the [Coalition of Haliburton Associations' rental posters](#) on topics like septic system use, garbage, etc.)
- using municipal planning tools to manage the impacts of short term rentals on the neighbours and the larger community. Several jurisdictions are contemplating (Oro Medonte, Seguin), or have implemented (Twp. of the Blue Mountains) zoning, permitting or other rental controls. Visit <https://foca.on.ca/responsible-cottage-rental/> for related links.
- continued education of renters and guests by the rental agencies involved, local government, and lake associations. FOCA announced that the Crane Lake Association has made available a template version of their [Lake “Welcome Binder”](#) which can now be customized for your local Association needs. Together with the responsible rental guide tips (which we have added as “Chapter 8” of the template), these resources could become a significant tool for your members!



FOCA will continue to keep members up-to-date on rental developments, with the hopes that all who want to visit and enjoy our lakes and rivers can do so in a respectful and sustainable way.

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SESSION > Road Issues:

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The roads group had a lively exchange of questions and sharing of members' best practices. Thank you to Simon Dadds of the East Stoney Lake Road Association, who shared ESLRA's experiences, leading to the creation of a 5-year road plan.

[Read the ESLRA Road Plan](#) (PDF, 25 pages) and [review the slides](#) (PDF, 7 pages) presented by Simon. Extra thanks go to Daryle Moffatt, FOCA Board Director, who helped to moderate the discussion and questions from the floor, and to Ross Fraser of Cade Associates Insurance Brokers (who manage the [FOCA Lake and Road Insurance Program](#)) for fielding insurance and liability-related questions. Additional roads information:



- [Road Association Insurance](#) information sheet, from Cade Associates (PDF, 2 pages)
- review lots of statistical information about your fellow road associations in the [FOCA Road Survey Summary \(2011\)](#) (PDF, 4 pages).
- see the wealth of information about rural roads that is posted on the FOCA website (start here: <https://foca.on.ca/cottage-roads/>), or [contact the FOCA office](#) to be put in touch with a peer to trouble-shoot specific road issues.



During breaks and at lunch hour, our program partners and sponsors shared valuable information with our attendees at display tables.

Thank you to all the partner organizations that participated, including:

Thank you to our
lunch sponsor:



>**Vote for your Future** – in attendance: John Beebe, Democratic Engagement Exchange, Ryerson University. FOCA circulated an [info sheet](#) (PDF, 2 pages) about the 2018 municipal elections and our “Vote for your Future” campaign. We will be following up in April with more election resources for Associations (voting in your local election, top issues for waterfront Ontario, questions to ask local candidates, hosting an all-candidates meeting). Watch for updates in the Elert, or here: <https://foca.on.ca/vote-for-your-future-2018-municipal-elections/>



YOUR CALL TO ACTION: Does *your* Association have tips and other election-planning materials to add to FOCA's “Vote for your Future” Kit for members? **Please share them with us now!** info@foca.on.ca



>**Lake Pulse Project** – in attendance: Catherine Brown and Yannick Huot of the NSERC Canadian Lake Pulse Network. This 5-year project asks, “How healthy are Canadian lakes?” The Lake Pulse project brings together lake research, environmental protection and policy communities, and will result in new online accessible tools about lake health and water quality data. The project team needs FOCA member feedback about what kinds of online tools and information are needed. The survey link is below:



YOUR CALL TO ACTION: Please share your thoughts about lake health, and what kinds of data would be useful to you and your association. Take the Lake Pulse survey: <http://lakepulse.ca/survey/>

>**Waterfront Property Owners: Economic Development Contributors in Rural Ontario** –

in attendance: Katherine Howes, project researcher, University of Guelph School of Environmental Design and Rural Development. With some modest funding from RED (the Rural Economic Development program of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs), FOCA has conducted a survey of over 800 property owners across eastern Ontario, plus conducted interviews with municipal leaders and rural economic development staff, to inform how our waterfront community might become more deeply involved in the success of our local rural communities. Thank you to everyone who has participated in the project! *Watch for FOCA's project report later this year.*



>**Perceptions Regarding Algae** – in attendance: Carmen Pereira, project researcher, Queen's University. This research project is a collaboration between Queens, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, the Muskoka Watershed Council, FOCA and Nipissing University. The researchers are looking to compare current perceptions about algae on our lakes to results from a similar survey conducted 30 years ago! The survey about algae impacts still needs your input:



YOUR CALL TO ACTION: Please take the survey, and **circulate this algae survey link** to others: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/algae1>

>**Lake Partner Program** - FOCA is pleased to continue working with the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change on this long-standing program of water-quality monitoring across Ontario's inland lakes. 2017 saw the release of a report on [Secchi Trends Across the Province](#) (PDF, 2 pages), noting a decline in the number of Secchi depth readings collected in recent years. What does it mean? We need *more volunteers like you* to participate in this annual citizen science program!



YOUR CALL TO ACTION: Search the Lake Partner map for your lake's results: <https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/map-lake-partner>. No current results found? Learn how you can become a volunteer: <http://foca.on.ca/lake-partner-program-overview/>

FOCA's Corporate Sponsors also brought displays and were on-hand to answer your questions: thank you to CottageLINK Rental Management, Action First Aid, Cade Associates & Hydro One!



Septics: The afternoon session opened with feature speaker **Rick Esselment of the Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association (OOWA)**. Rick

provided an overview of septic system management, described the Request for Review recently submitted by OOWA and FOCA to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario, and revealed some sobering statistics about the state of septic systems across the province. [Review the slides from Rick's presentation](#) (PDF, 35 pages). Rick proposed that mandatory septic pump-outs are not the solution; rather, that pump-outs should be done when solids reach 33% of tank volume. For more information about the parts and maintenance of a septic system, watch FOCA's new video, created in conjunction with Peterborough Public Health: <https://youtu.be/5VeTGVnkYA4>. Share this!



More information about the ECO Request and other important information can be found here: <https://foca.on.ca/septic-systems/>.



Associations in Action

Before our mid-afternoon panel session, FOCA proudly screened another new video, titled "**Lake Associations in Action**," which provides an overview about lake events and ways to create community in lake country.



This is the third video made in partnership with the Environmental Visual Communication program, a joint initiative of Fleming College and the Royal Ontario Museum. The three videos in this series are:

- **Lake Associations** (released Nov. 2017) - <https://youtu.be/MaKrVAaWweo>
- **Citizen Science Matters** (see page 1 of this report) - https://youtu.be/owliN_D8WZc
- **Lake Associations in Action** - <https://youtu.be/F-W7NXDJ29c>

These videos were filmed across cottage country last summer by videographer Chelsie Xavier-Blower, with the assistance of several of our member lake associations. FOCA encourages you to **share these videos** amongst your members, and use them to help explain to newcomers or even your lapsed members about the benefits of connecting with the local lake association!



Find more FOCA videos on our YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/FOCAprograms> and **SUBSCRIBE** to receive updates when we post new material.

Panel: Associations in Action – FOCA’s 2017 Invasive Species Program

FOCA’s Membership and Programs Coordinator, Deanna Panitz, gave an overview of FOCA’s 2017 invasive species program which included funding 26 pilot projects undertaken by member Associations to identify, communicate about, and mitigate against the spread of invasive species in cottage country. Deanna introduced three representatives who spoke about their groups’ 2017 on-the-ground projects:



- Barbara Karthein of the **Scugog Lake Stewards** spoke about their work to monitor for and prevent the spread of invasive Eurasian water milfoil, Curly-leaf pondweed and Starry stonewort.
- Michael Mitchell of the **Eagle Lake Conservation Association** described efforts to bring an expert to identify and map invasives at their lake.
- Heather Sargeant of Georgian Bay Forever described work by the **Honey Harbour Association** to remove invasive Phragmites using gas-powered cutters.

[View the slide presentation from this session](#) (PDF, 30 pages).



Presentation of the FOCA Achievement Award

Congratulations to the **Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association**, recipients of the 2017 FOCA Achievement Award for their efforts to increase membership engagement in the association! Debbie Awde, Judy Wheeler, Paul Lindsay and Nancy Kallina were in attendance to accept the award on behalf of the Association. [See the Skootamatta slide presentation](#) (PDF, 18 pages) about their many activities.



Wendy Sue Lyttle of the FOCA Board of Directors introduced the award, noting the great work done by many other nominees, including the **Lake of the Woods District Property Owners Association** with the **Malachi Campers Association** (metal waste collection events), the **French River Stewardship Council** (water quality projects), the **Chesley Lake Cottage Association** ('Lake Lung' to increase dissolved oxygen levels), and the **Crane Lake Association** (Lake "Welcome Guide" – see page 2 of this report). Learn more about the award, and these additional Association projects, in [FOCA's slide presentation](#) (PDF, 10 pages).

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Thanks to everyone who gave feedback in the Attendee Survey! Here are some comments:

- *"I have never been to a FOCA AGM and felt it was time to attend. It was excellent and gave me an opportunity to meet other cottage owners. The topics discussed were relevant."*
- *"[The sessions] were all so informative and reminded me, once again, that we are increasingly in a dangerous place environmentally, which just makes FOCA all that much more important."*
- *"Very impressed hearing about all the areas that FOCA is involved in, plus their assistance with association endeavours."*
- *"This is the very best and only event where you can access all of your fellow cottage associations' leaders in one place, and gain insights on the great work happening throughout the province!"*

See you at the next FOCA event. Get on the [Elert list](#) for updates.