

# Lake Stewards Newsletter

Summer 2018



# Words from the Incoming President of the Board

## Marlin Horst



A dozen years ago, my wife and I purchased our cottage on Baptiste Lake. Before that, we had rented cottages almost every year, all over Southern Ontario from Muskoka to the Kawarthas, to eastern Ontario and the area around Bancroft. What I relish about the cottage is the unspoiled view of the lake from my screened porch. I want to ensure that view, and similar views all across Ontario, remain in place for future generations to enjoy.

By day, I'm a partner in a Toronto law firm, Shibley Righton LLP, and I have also been a Sessional Instructor at the Queen's University Faculty of Law. When I'm not in a suit and tie, you'll find me at the lake. In 2009 I joined the board of our local Baptiste Lake Association, where I remain a Director, and was President from 2011 to 2017. I'm also involved in a number of Interlake groups around Hastings Highlands and beyond.

*In 2016 I joined the FOCA Board of Directors, and took the helm as Board President earlier this year. I want to thank Past President Terry Kennedy for his contributions to the FOCA organization!*

FOCA itself has been around since 1963, when 125 people from 40 cottage associations met in a Toronto hotel to come together as a provincial organization. Today, FOCA has more than 500 member Associations, representing 50,000 waterfront families across the province. The issues have changed over time, but the motivation remains the same: to protect the waterfront for our kids, and their kids.

FOCA ensures the interests of waterfront property owners are heard by policymakers, helps lake associations to effectively organize, and works tirelessly to protect waterfronts across Ontario. Whether it is electricity pricing, mining rights, water quality or taxation, FOCA sits at the table where individuals cannot. Together, we have a strong voice.

FOCA works all year 'round on behalf of the Ontario waterfront. Connect with FOCA for news and updates about cottage country issues in monthly Elerts (e-newsletters), on social media, through brochures and publications, and on the website where you can always search for answers to your questions: <https://foca.on.ca/resources/>.

Sincerely,

**Marlin Horst**

FOCA Board President

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## FOCA's Mission

To protect thriving and sustainable waterfronts across Ontario.

Find out more:

<https://foca.on.ca/our-work>



# Vote for your Future: 2018 Municipal Elections

The next Ontario Municipal Elections will be held on Monday, October 22nd, 2018. This is a once-every-four-years opportunity to talk with candidates and choose leaders who will advocate on behalf of issues that are important to you.

**Waterfront property owners have a right to vote in municipal elections in their rural municipality!**

FOCA has launched our 'Vote for your Future' campaign to encourage our members to get involved in the 2018 Municipal election process. We want lake associations to spread the word, and inform members about the ways they can participate in the municipal vote.

## We want you to pledge to vote in your waterfront riding!

FOCA has created a **Vote for Your Future Municipal Elections Toolkit** for our member Associations, that explains:

- Why municipal government matters
- Why **you** should vote
- Why **lake associations** should get involved in the process
- How FOCA has been ensuring waterfront property owners have a voice, since 1963.

**The Toolkit includes everything you need to know about voting in Municipal elections including:**

- Who can vote
- How to verify you're on the voters' list, and checking the voting rules in your municipality
- Tips for communicating, including:
  - sample notices to your Association members
  - example questions to send to the candidates
  - sample social media, website or newsletter posts
  - tips for setting up a Vote information booth at your AGM or summer meeting
  - tips for hosting an All-Candidates meeting
- How to register as a Municipal candidate!

The Toolkit also includes important information about rules surrounding 'Third Party Advertising' (note: endorsing a candidate has implications).

Email [info@foca.on.ca](mailto:info@foca.on.ca) for your Toolkit, or download a free copy from our webpage: <https://foca.on.ca/vote-for-your-future-2018-municipal-elections/>.

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# FOCA's Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program

by Deanna Panitz

FOCA Membership & Programs Coordinator

FOCA is very concerned about the potential impacts of introduced aquatic species and the effect they can have on our Ontario waterways. These invaders can alter the environment, damage our economy, and negatively impact our communities. In 2017, FOCA once again tapped our network of lake Associations across the province, to help spread the word—this time, about invasives.

The 2017 FOCA **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program** initiative was made possible through funding from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR). FOCA's work supported the Ontario Government's commitments in implementation of the Ontario Invasive Species Strategic Plan, and the Invasive Species Act. FOCA's AIS Program promoted best management practices to members across Ontario, aimed at reducing the risk of spreading invasive species, primarily due to the movement of boats between waterbodies.

During the Summer of 2017, in addition to a radio ad campaign reminding boaters to 'Clean+Drain+Dry' their boat before moving between lakes, FOCA partnered with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, to create a new AIS prevention sign. (see image) Two hundred of these metal signs were distributed across Ontario through our member Associations!



FOCA also created and released a new publication, titled, "*A Shoreline Owner's Guide to Invasive Species.*" Over 2500 copies have already been distributed, and available for your Association. If you haven't seen this booklet yet, we encourage all lake stewards and FOCA members to download your free digital copy here: <https://foca.on.ca/invasive-species-guide/>. (Let the FOCA office know if you would like to distribute additional print copies at a local event or with your Association Newsletter or welcome packages. Email us: [info@foca.on.ca](mailto:info@foca.on.ca))

FOCA worked with several of our member Lake Associations to run Pilot Projects aimed at addressing aquatic invasive species at the local level. These projects focused on education and outreach, identification, or invasive species control, management and eradication. 26 FOCA Member Associations from 24 different townships across Ontario were funded for Association Pilot Projects in 2017. Response to the program was overwhelmingly positive!

*Find out more about Invasive Species, and get resources from FOCA, here:*

<https://foca.on.ca/invasive-species/>

The advertisement for Sunspace features a large sun icon in the top left corner. Below it, a list of services is provided: Bugrooms, Sunrooms, Decking, and Railing, each with a checkmark icon. The text "COTTAGE COUNTRY'S FAVOURITE FAMILY SPACE" is written in a bold, red banner across the middle. At the bottom, the phone number "1-800-755-3365" and the website "sunspacesunrooms.com" are displayed. To the right of the contact information are several icons representing different services or features, including a house, a sun, a bug, a mosquito, a fly, and a rain cloud.

# Communications: AIS Education and Outreach

Many 2017 FOCA AIS Program participants expressed interest in finding ways to educate their local community about the potential impacts of AIS on their waterway, and what individuals should be doing to prevent AIS introduction or spread. As part of the 2017 FOCA AIS Program, participants held invasive species seminars, distributed invasive species awareness t-shirts, or put up signage warning boaters to 'Clean+Drain+Dry' their boat before moving between waterbodies.

## Example Pilot Project:

The **Scugog Lake Stewards** worked with FOCA to design an aquatic invasive species sign for their community. The association knew how busy their local boat launch was on any given weekend in the summer, and wanted to educate boaters about the risks of spreading invasives, before they launched their boats. With the support of the program, a new 4' x 6' foot sign was created for display at the Port Perry municipal boat launch, to educate boaters from the community and visitors from all over the Greater Toronto Area that come to the lake.



FOCA is very pleased to have supported our member Associations across Ontario on their work to prevent the introduction or spread of aquatic invasives. By working with so many local Associations, awareness was significantly increased about the issue of AIS in new areas. As one group reported to FOCA, *"The project has engaged our cottagers' association and raised awareness among many of the waterway's cottage owners."* And, **"AWARENESS = CHANGE."**

## Example Pilot Project:

The **Jack's Lake Association (JLA)** designed a vibrant t-shirt touting "Keep Invasive Species OUT of my lake" on the front, and listing a variety of best practices on the back:

- Buy live bait locally
- Destroy unused bait
- Never release aquarium plants or animals
- Drain water from your boat on land
- Look before you leave
- Report sightings of invasive species.

Thank you to JLA for agreeing to allow FOCA to create additional copies of the t-shirt and distribute them amongst fellow associations during 2017! It is hard to miss someone wearing these bright shirts, as FOCA's Terry Rees made clear in one of his video addresses to members last year.

One of the Associations that circulated these t-shirts was the Big Gull Lake East End Cottage Association, who provided this report to FOCA about their fishing derby event and the impact of the invasives messaging:

*There were 33 kids—youngsters—who registered online by Saturday morning. These 'anglers' and a few more youngsters, along with parents, participated in the event. The orange AIS T-shirts were a huge hit. It was easy to keep track of the youngsters wearing the bright shirts AND the message on the shirts was a reminder to others on the lake of the importance of keeping aquatic invaders out of the lake. FOCA's Lynda Corkum gave a presentation to all who attended, talking about FOCA's AIS program and describing each of the invaders [depicted on the T-shirts] and the effect each invader has on lake ecosystems.*

These initiatives will have enduring benefits and we thank all the participants for galvanizing local efforts and for promoting ongoing stewardship. We thank our program funder, the MNRF, for making this work possible. As one project participant wrote in their final report to FOCA:

*The ability to stretch our program dollars with the support of FOCA is a great benefit and opportunity not to be passed up. Aside from the funding support, the moral and promotional support provided by FOCA is very valuable and most appreciated.*



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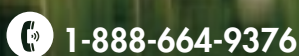
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## Investigation: AIS Identification

A handful of 2017 Pilot Project groups expressed concern about having identified potential AIS at their waterbodies, but lacking the expertise to confirm their suspicions. FOCA was able to provide these associations with an expert to provide advice and resources to assist with identification and suggest next steps.

### Example Pilot Project:

The **Eagle Lake Conservation Association** (ELCA) in Parry Sound was concerned about potential invasive stands of Phragmites on their lake. FOCA connected the association with an expert in AIS identification, Robert Canning, who visited the lake and confirmed the presence of the invasive plant. A detailed lake report was created to outline what was found during the site-visit, and recommend steps that can be taken to attempt to control and eradicate the Phragmites. ELCA reported back to FOCA that, as a result of this report, the Township is taking more interest in the issue, and the report has helped to inform the viewpoint of some local residents who had thought the vegetation was a native species.



## Mitigation: AIS Eradication

Some of our 2017 Pilot Project member groups were ready to go ahead with AIS management and eradication efforts. FOCA reminds readers that, prior to starting any eradication efforts, it is important to do your due diligence to see if any permits or special permissions are required in your area.

### Example Pilot Project:

The **Honey Harbour Association** used their funds to purchase a Stihl Underwater Cutter that was used by volunteers to eradicate stands of invasive Phragmites around the lake. The association organized community cuts on both private and crown lands, and held information sessions about invasive Phragmites and how to use the underwater cutter. By the end of the 2017 FOCA AIS Pilot Project, the Association reported that 66 sites had been cut with the help of over 104 volunteers.

*Dedicated volunteers accomplished so much in their local communities!*



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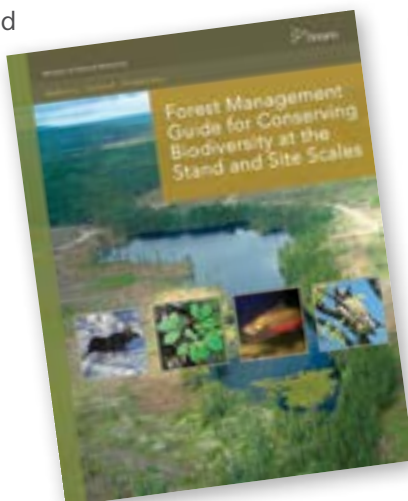


# FOCA on Forestry

FOCA is participating on a Stakeholder Advisory Team for the **Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scales Revision Project**.

Forest management activities on crown land adjacent to lakes with cottages are informed by a series of forest management guides. One of these guides, the *Forest Management Guide for Conserving Biodiversity at the Stand and Site Scales* ("Stand and Site Guide") contains direction that addresses fish habitat, water quality, and shoreline habitats.

Based on the recommendations in a recent review of this guide, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) has begun a formal revision of the Stand and Site Guide. As part of this process, MNRF have assembled a team representing various stakeholder groups, including FOCA. This team will provide advice to the MNRF staff revising the guide, based on the interests and knowledge of their organizations' members.



## The advisory team will:

- Review and prioritize the recommendations in the 5-year review of the Stand and Site Guide.
- Suggest additional topics for consideration in the revision that were not covered in the 5-year review.
- Review proposed revisions (including soliciting comment from others within their organizations).

FOCA will participate for the expected 2-year project (approximately April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2020).

Many of the topics likely to be addressed in the revision of the guide (e.g., direction for fish habitat, water quality, and shoreline forest) are of interest to FOCA's members. If you have specific interest or input to provide to FOCA please direct comments by email to [info@foca.on.ca](mailto:info@foca.on.ca). Stay tuned for updates from FOCA.



We know. You'd rather be enjoying the view, not thinking about your septic system. But a septic system, private well or heating oil fuel tank that hasn't been properly maintained may pose a risk to your water sources – including sources of drinking water for you and your community.

**Let's work together to protect the water we use and enjoy. For tips on maintaining your septic system, well or fuel tank, visit [protectingwatermatters.ca](http://protectingwatermatters.ca).**



With support provided by





# Update on Septic Systems

## by Terry Rees

FOCA Executive Director

On February 23rd, 2018, FOCA and the Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association (OOWA) submitted a Request for Review to the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO\*), related to the ongoing management of residential onsite wastewater systems (septics, etc.).

OOWA's and FOCA's joint submission requested that the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) review the efficacy of the provisions in the Building Code that deal with maintenance and management of onsite sewage systems (Reg 332/12, Building Code, Division B, Part 8, Section 8.9 - Operation and Maintenance). In addition, the submission requested that the Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) consider the need for new provisions and/or Regulation under the Ontario Water Resources Act to govern the operation and maintenance of onsite septic systems.

The review was prompted by concerns about the capacity and effectiveness of the MMAH in administering the operation and maintenance of onsite septic systems, to ensure ongoing functional and performance verification of all wastewater treatment systems.

While FOCA and OOWA believe that the Building Code is adequate to ensure the sound design, installation, and permitting of private site sewage systems, it is lacking in its ability to ensure the critical maintenance, ongoing management, and accurate record-keeping of these systems after their final inspection.

This gap presents concerns about the long-term ability of these systems to provide the required protections to public health and the environment, and is an often-cited concern of the FOCA membership.

Part of the request from FOCA/OOWA was for the consideration that another body take over the management of the maintenance and record keeping—possibly MOECC, in line with their responsibilities to do the same for larger (>10,000L/day) on-site systems.

Watch FOCA's video about septic system parts, maintenance and signs of trouble. Visit <https://youtu.be/5VeTGVnkYA4>, or search "FOCA septic" on YouTube.



## The Outcome

The Ministries' mandated response period was 60 days. *To FOCA's great disappointment, and despite a compelling case laid out for a better maintenance regime for on-site sewage systems, both Ministries have stuck to the status quo.*

In the MOECC response, they countered that high priority risks from sewage were already being addressed through the Clean Water Act (which only considers municipal drinking water sources) and that, through the existing Building Code, local municipalities were empowered to undertake further measures. In reality, this happens unevenly, with poorly understood results.

The MMAH response referenced the fact that the OBC Part 8 had just recently (2016-17) been reviewed by a technical committee, and they reiterated that during this review they made a political decision NOT to mandate a tank pump out. They also took no interest in any related provisions such as requiring record-keeping or other maintenance obligations.

FOCA, and OOWA, will continue to press policy makers and to work with our local community partners to build a robust and long-term approach to ensuring these important systems continue to provide effective waste water treatment for the many Ontarians who rely on them to service their homes, and to protect our surface and ground waters, and our health.

*Learn more about what YOU can do at your own property:* <https://foca.on.ca/septic-systems/>.

## \*About the ECO

The Environmental Commissioner of Ontario (ECO) is the province's environmental watchdog, an independent officer of the Legislature. All of the ECO's powers and responsibilities are established by the Ontario Environmental Bill of Rights. Under EBR, you can ask the Ontario government for a new environmental policy, act or regulation, or for changes to existing ones.

*Learn more about the ECO:* <https://eco.on.ca/>.

# Exploring Septic Re-inspection Programs: A FOCA Project

by Sarah Minnes

FOCA has undertaken a collaborative research project with university and organizational partners to explore successes, challenges, and lessons-learned via Ontario municipal re-inspection programs for residential on-site wastewater systems, commonly called septic systems. FOCA initiated the call for this research because of concerns brought forward by our members across Ontario about the state of their rural communities' onsite wastewater systems, and re-inspection programs—or lack thereof.

FOCA has identified a need to share knowledge about how septic maintenance programs and inspections are being done, why they're done, whether the programs are seen to be effective (and the metrics used to evaluate efficacy), and how these types of programs are funded.



*Liz Huff of Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands; Terry Rees of FOCA; and project lead Sarah Minnes.*

To date, such programs have been delivered in an uneven manner across rural Ontario, leaving citizen groups, taxpayers, and municipal councils lacking information required to make informed decisions.

The collaborative research team working on this project is made up of experts from FOCA, the Ontario Onsite Wastewater Association, the Canadian Environmental Law Association, the University of Guelph, and Memorial University of Newfoundland. This project has also received encouragement from the Rural Ontario Municipal Association, as well as funding from the Rural Policy Learning Commons. (See: <http://rplc-capr.ca/about-the-rplc/>)

The field research for this project consists of semi-structured interviews, resulting in the creation of short case studies on five rural municipalities' re-inspection programs for residential on-site wastewater systems. Additional research underway with other team members will also be relied upon in this research.

These additional projects include: three Master's of Rural Planning and Development thesis projects related to on-site systems; a larger literature and policy scan of septic inspection practices in Canada and the United States; and case studies evaluating the efficacy of septic maintenance programs from the perspective of residential homeowners.

*Stay tuned for updates from FOCA about the findings of the project! For more about cottage-country septic issues, visit: <https://foca.on.ca/septic-systems/>.*



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# Trees or Forest?

by David Sexsmith

Past President, Ontario Woodlot Association

*For many of us, the number one pleasure derived from owning a cottage is the proximity to water. However, a close second may be the enjoyment we get from being in amongst our trees.*

Trees absorb carbon, produce oxygen, provide habitat, change colour and generally add to the richness of our lives. Even a single mature specimen adds value to a property, both visually and economically. Forests, on the other hand, are even more complex; a warehouse of biodiversity, each element combining to clean our air and water, temper our weather extremes and much more.

*For cottagers, the trees and forest around us have a direct connection with the clean water in front. But which do we have, trees or forest?*

On a small lot, we tend to notice individual trees, but if we look beyond our boundaries, we may see that collectively, all the landowners in the area are part of a much larger landscape. Each individual parcel contributes to the total “forest”.



While it may be difficult to create a natural forest on a small property, there are ways to mimic some of the same features. If neighbours do likewise, the benefits can be amplified. Maintaining an unbroken canopy overhead helps to minimize unwanted growth such as prickly ash and wild raspberry. It also provides highways for those critters who travel above our head.

If there aren't young trees on the property, consider planting strategically to ensure a variety of age groups in the future. You may never see the final result of your stewardship, but the next generation of landowners will benefit. Plant a variety of native species in order to increase the biodiversity on your property. You can establish nesting boxes and plant native shrubs to support the bird population. Even on a small property, steps can be taken to mitigate our human impact on the landscape.

If you're lucky enough to own a larger property, you have opportunities to maintain downed woody debris, cavity trees, vernal pools and other features of a natural forest. If that parcel is over 10 acres in size, you may be eligible for a lower property tax assessment under the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP). Information is available at [www.ontario.ca/page/managed-forest-tax-incentive-program](http://www.ontario.ca/page/managed-forest-tax-incentive-program).

If your property is large enough, you may own some 'interior forest' that is home to different flora and fauna than in smaller parcels. Now you have an even greater opportunity for a lifetime of learning and stewardship.

The Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA), dedicated to “healthy, productive woodlots”, is a good source of sustainable forest management information, and a strong advocate for the private landowner as steward of this most valuable natural resource. The OWA is currently developing a handbook for cottagers wishing to make their property as natural as possible. You can learn more about the OWA and find a chapter near you at [www.ontariowoodlot.com](http://www.ontariowoodlot.com).

## 4 SIMPLE TIPS FOR SEPTIC SYSTEMS

If you take good care of your system, you will save yourself the time, money and worries involved in replacing a failed system. Here are a few tips.



### 1 SCRAPE YOUR DISHES

Scraping your dishes into the garbage will make sure solids don't go into your septic system.

### 2 KEEP THE PLANTS AWAY

Don't plant trees or shrubs too close to the system or leaching bed.



### 3 PUMP IT OUT

Pump your tank out when solids reach 1/3 of your tank's capacity. Keep records of system maintenance or service calls. Keep an 'as built' system diagram for reference. Know the location of your tank and tile bed.

### 4 CONSERVE WATER

Reduce the amount of wastewater your system must treat. Replace old toilets with low-flush models.



A poor system can degrade water supplies and reduce property values

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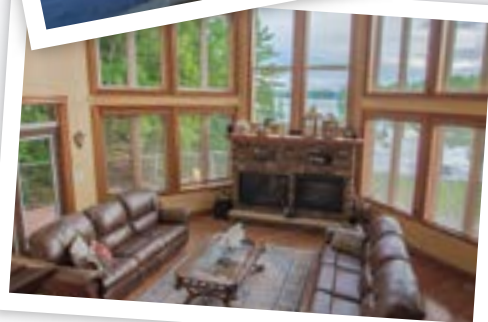
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# The Big Picture for Your Property

by Michelle Lewin

FOCA Communications & Development Coordinator

You know and love the trees along your waterfront, but the forest does not end at a property line! The land you steward as a waterfront property owner is part of a much larger picture: an extended natural heritage system. FOCA encourages you to take an eagle's-eye view of the big picture, and your place in it.

## Kawarthas, Naturally Connected Project

In the Kawarthas region, there is now a great way to do this, utilizing natural heritage system mapping that has been undertaken by the Kawarthas, Naturally Connected (KNC) Collaborative. Since 2009, the KNC Collaborative has brought together community groups and agencies to create and implement a Natural Heritage System made up of core areas and significant linkages that, if protecting, will maintain biological diversity and a healthy natural environment.

FOCA is a member of the KNC Collaborative, and is helping to communicate about this project, to share and encourage use of the mapping tools in support of conservation-minded decision-making by individuals and organizations across the landscape. The KNC tools can support sustainable land use planning and resource management decision-making, as well as strategic priorities for stewardship and restoration projects, and conservation land acquisitions.

FOCA encourages all property owners in the Kawarthas region to check out the map, and see how your property fits into the larger picture! Visit <http://arcg.is/2e3IE00>, zoom in, and see if your property might provide a critical natural link between existing core areas. Alternate map formats, including Google Earth files or a PDF download can be accessed from this webpage: <http://www.kawarthasnaturally.ca/resources/>.



*KNC cores and corridors map – Stoney Lake detail*

These maps compile information and spatial data layers available under Open Data license from Land Information Ontario (LIO). The KNC mapping is more detailed and nuanced than the existing Provincial Natural Heritage Mapping, as computer modelling software was used to calculate and map ecological targets developed collaboratively by the project stakeholders. The intent was to identify existing core areas and priorities for natural heritage conservation, as well as potential linkages between these zones.

Supported by a guidance document from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), other Natural Heritage System projects have been undertaken in Prince Edward County, the City of Kingston and the ecological district of Picton, as well as the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville and the ecological districts of Charleston Lake and Smith Falls, and elsewhere.

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Additionally, anyone in Ontario can make a map of their own natural heritage area, using the online tool from the MNRF, available here: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/make-natural-heritage-area-map>.

**QUESTION:** *What does it mean if my property is in a “core” area or an identified linkage on the KNC map? Does it have to remain “natural”?*

**ANSWER:** No, the map does not have policy or legal implications. The “preferred scenario” suggested on the map is based on natural heritage best practices, but does not account for existing zoning. The map depicts how environmental features (like wetlands, meadows, woodlands, habitat for plants and animals) can be connected to support life in the region. A healthy natural heritage system provides benefits such as good air and water quality, erosion prevention and much more. Your efforts to steward your land and its resources will play an important part in protecting biodiversity in the region, and the overall health of the environment.

For more about what you can do on your own property, consult FOCA’s *“Shoreline Owners’ Guides”* on healthy waterfronts, climate change, and invasive species: <https://foca.on.ca/news/publications/>.

## Land Trusts & Long Term Planning

Once you see where your property fits in to the larger picture, you may be interested in discussing its long-term conservation. If so, you will want to connect with your local land trust. Land trusts are charitable organizations focused on stewarding, protecting and restoring significant natural landscapes.

Land trusts take direct action to preserve natural spaces by entering into conservation easement agreements with private landowners or by acquiring properties and protecting them for present and future generations. The Ontario Land Trust Alliance (OLTA) represents and serves over 40 land trust and conservation organization across Ontario. Their message is: “you can help save the land you love!” Through the help of generous donors and land owners, land trusts have been able to protect over 80,000 acres of ecologically significant lands in Ontario so far. To find one near you, visit: <https://ontariolandtrusts.ca/find-a-land-trust/>.

## Partner Profile: Kawartha Land Trust

The Kawartha Land Trust (KLT) was formed in 2001, and has protected over 3,300 acres of land in the Kawarthas. KLT has been using the mapping features underlying the KNC Collaborative project to help supporters and donors visualize how their properties can fit into the conservation picture. KLT recently received Trillium Foundation seed grant funding for targeted stewardship planting and invasive species management on private lands in the Kawarthas identified by the KNC.

For those that want to ensure the protection of their land in perpetuity, KLT works with individuals and families to find flexible solutions leading to gifts of conservation easements or gifts of outright land that can include “retained interest” or “life estate” arrangements. Many of these options provide income or property tax benefits. Find out more, here: <http://kawarthalandtrust.org/protecting-our-land/land-protection-options/>.

## For Our American Friends

**American Friends of Canadian Land Trusts (AF)** is a US charity that partners with Canadian conservation organizations such as OLTA, to preserve Canada’s natural areas, and the places that hold generations of family memories. Over the past ten years, AF and its Canadian conservation partners in five provinces have protected nearly 3,000 acres of irreplaceable land acquired from American owners. Find out more: [www.afoclt.org](http://www.afoclt.org)





## A NEW START



As a cottage owner, you know the amazing feeling of opening weekend, and the promise it holds for another remarkable season. The same feeling can fade quickly as you realize the cottage you once loved is now tarnished, dated and in need of many costly repairs. Perhaps the cottage is too small for your growing family, or inadequate for your picture-perfect retirement.

Either way, you will need to make a decision. Do you renovate and add on? Sell and buy new? Tear down and build from scratch? These are not easy choices, especially if you have a longstanding history and many treasured memories with your cottage.

At Home Hardware Building Centre, we want to be part of the conversation and help you discover what is best for you and your family.

For over 50 years, the Beaver Homes and Cottages program has helped aspiring and practiced cottagers alike realize their dreams and potential in home building. For a no obligation consultation, our expert staff will be ready to answer all of your questions.



To speak to the dealer closest to you, and for more information, visit [beaverhomesandcottages.ca](http://beaverhomesandcottages.ca)



# Citizen Science and the Lake Partner Program

by Emily Shapiera

FOCA Assistant Lake Stewardship Coordinator

## What is Citizen Science?

Science is rooted in the finding and interpreting of data, which is pivotal in research and creating environmental policy. In many cases, the amount of data needed is large and far reaching, which can be challenging for an organization or researcher to collect. In these cases, citizen science can be crucial for gathering this important information.

Citizen science is a form of data collection which is done by the general public. Volunteers who are passionate about the natural world can aid scientific research by gathering data or observations. Every citizen scientist follows the same protocol, to facilitate accurate sampling. The information gathered is sent to the scientists on the project team, who then make conclusions from the data; these results are then shared with the public.

Citizen science is a fantastic way for concerned or curious individuals to put their energy and dedication for the natural world to good use, and to learn more about their local environment. Volunteers can gather data across a wide area, allowing researchers to have a wider scope of information than they otherwise could have.



A highly successful example of citizen science is Ontario's **Lake Partner Program** (LPP). This program, coordinated from the Dorset Environmental Science Centre (DESC), is run through the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, with FOCA having been a close stewardship partner for the past two decades. Volunteers who are interested in water quality monitoring are sent tools and equipment in order to sample their lake.

In early 2018, LPP kits were sent to over 600 volunteers, who then will return thousands of water samples to the DESC for water chemistry analysis over the spring, summer and fall months. From there, the data will be processed by scientists and recorded into an ever-growing database, where it can be used for research and monitoring.

## Citizen Science is a Two Way Street

While the work of the LPP volunteers is crucial, the partnership doesn't end there. It is the responsibility of scientists and organizations like FOCA to communicate biology and ecology concepts to the public, and to policymakers. As the general public becomes more aware about issues that affect them, such as water clarity and algal blooms, this knowledge brings a better understanding of how we can help resolve these issues. The Lake Partner Program team strives to communicate in a way that various audiences—from the casual cottager, to a veteran biologist—can understand. In this way we're always working towards a better relationship with our amazing volunteers!

To better understand your Lake Partner Program data, visit the FOCA webpage: <http://foca.on.ca/lake-partner-program-sampling-assistance/>. Additionally, the DESC website includes a page with a number of additional fact sheets to help you better understand your data and learn more about blue-green algae, calcium decline, and water clarity changes. Visit: <http://www.desc.ca/programs/LPP>.





# Citizen Science Resources from FOCA

For more information about getting involved in citizen science, particularly water sampling, download the “*Guide to Citizen Science at the Lake*” from the FOCA website: <https://foca.on.ca/a-guide-to-citizen-science-at-the-lake/>.

Also, watch the latest FOCA video about the importance of citizen science. Visit [https://youtu.be/owliN\\_D8WZc](https://youtu.be/owliN_D8WZc), or search “*Citizen Science Matters*” on YouTube.

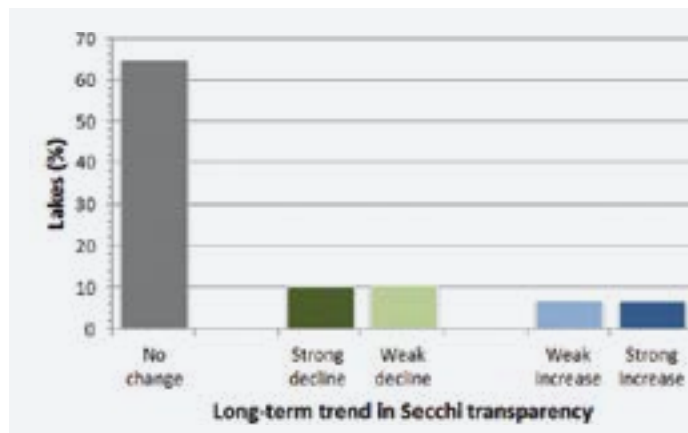


For some lakes, dedicated volunteers have been taking samples for many years, allowing for a strong historical database to draw on. Long-term water quality data can aid in advising environmental policy makers on the health of our lakes, which can lead to new environmental legislation. In addition, as climate conditions continue to change, this monitoring is becoming increasingly important, especially as it contributes to detecting changes in our environments.

Having a long-term database to study allows for researchers to notice changes in Ontario’s inland lakes’ water chemistry over time. Using the LPP data, we have been able to monitor changes in phosphorous, calcium, and Secchi depths over the years. (see Figure 1)

This valuable database has assisted in aquatic research in the past, and continues today. The LPP data has been used in work across Ontario, including research on:

- Algal blooms
- Calcium and phosphorus trends and the relationship to watershed characteristics
- Water clarity trends and their relationship to long-term changes in inland lakes.



**FIGURE 1:** Summarized results from trend tests of changes in Secchi depth between 2000 and 2014 in 410 lake sampling sites from the LPP. Of the 21% of sites that have declined in Secchi depth over time, the majority are located within the Canadian Shield.

## How Can You Help?

If you haven’t already registered with the Lake Partner Program, we encourage you to start today! First, find out if your lake is already sampled by contacting the LPP team toll-free at 1-800-470-8322 or by email at [lakepartner@ontario.ca](mailto:lakepartner@ontario.ca).

If your lake would like to join the program, you can visit [www.desc.ca/programs/lpp](http://www.desc.ca/programs/lpp) to register for the LPP, or call or email the LPP team.

If you are already sampling for the LPP, there are more ways you can help. One of the goals of the LPP is to engage more youth in science and long-term monitoring. If you have a child, a younger sibling, niece, nephew, or even young neighbours, please consider taking them out with you next time you sample. You never know; they may enjoy it so much that they email us in the future to register with the program.

To all of our volunteers, we thank you for your dedication, commitment, and help over the years. Without you, this program wouldn’t be possible, nor would the research that uses this valuable data.

*From the LPP team, we wish you a great 2018 sampling season!*



## Special offer for FOCA members

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Order online at  
[cottagelife.com/foca](http://cottagelife.com/foca)

## Member Tools & Success Stories

### A Welcome Binder

FOCA's new "*Lake Association Welcome Binder*" is a fully-customizable template that your Association can personalize and circulate to new members and/or visitors to the lake. This amazing resource is adapted from the **Crane Lake Association's** own document, and is now available for fellow associations to customize.

### Chapters include:

- what the Association does
- shoreline and water quality considerations such as septic systems
- fishing resources
- boating and ATV best practices
- safety and emergency info
- local garbage and recycling considerations
- rental responsibilities
- and much more.

All the groundwork has been done, and now your association can "fill in the blanks" with appropriate local details.

**Download the FOCA Lake Association Binder for your use!** It is available from a members-only link on the FOCA webpage about Association Tools: <https://foca.on.ca/toolkit-overview/>, or contact the FOCA office for a copy: [info@foca.on.ca](mailto:info@foca.on.ca) • 705-749-3622.



### Did you know?

Everyone in your member Association is a FOCA member, and entitled to benefits and discounts. Find out about all your FOCA member benefits: <https://foca.on.ca/benefits/>.



## Metal Collection

Our most-western member Association, the **Lake of the Woods Property Owners Association** (LOWDPOA), recently brought the work of fellow members, the **Malachi Campers Association**, to FOCA's attention.

The Malachi Campers Association held their first metal waste collection event in 2014. Cottagers on the lake responded in large numbers, cleaning up metal waste that had been accumulating for a number of years. The event was such a success for the Malachi group that LOWDPOA instituted a similar program the next year. With the help of many volunteers, a collection point with road and lake access provided by a business member, and a local metal recycler, they were able to offer this free metal recycling day.

Now an annual event, the amount of metal waste collected has increased each year (from over 2 tonnes in 2015 to over 5 tonnes in 2017). This program successfully removes metal waste from the area and helps clean up the environment by reducing the risk of toxic leaching into the ground and water. It has also provided an opportunity to spread awareness about the lake association to a broader audience.

Keep up the great work in northwestern Ontario, LOWDPOA and area associations!

## 100 Years Young

Congratulations to the **Gloucester Pool Cottagers' Association** (GPCA), which celebrates its 100th Anniversary this year!

Check out their old photos, posted here: <https://gpca.wildapricot.org/Photo-Gallery-Old>.

Some things may have changed over the past hundred years, but some things remain top priorities: water, family, fish, safety and social events. The Spring 2018 edition of the GPCA Newsletter made a special call-out to remember Herb White, who was a local cottage off-season "overseer" (to report damage, break-ins, snow loads, etc.) for fifty-one years, from 1940 to 1991.

And GPCA is "still actively protecting the interests of the property owners of Gloucester Pool, MacLean Lake, Baxter and Little Lake by united action, what is often impossible through individual effort." Association activities in 2017 included the 17th annual 'Canoe for Cancer' (raising over \$17,000), Canada 150 celebrations including a kayak draw prize, and a kids' fishing derby.



**FOCA Fall Seminar**

**FOR LAKE ASSOCIATIONS**

**Save the Date!**

**Saturday, October 27, 2018**  
**at the Boulevard Club, Toronto**

- Hear expert speakers
- Meet your peers
- Collect valuable resources

**Watch for details soon, in the FOCA E!ert!**

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*Le MUSÉE CANADIEN du CANOT*

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**MEMBERS VISIT FREE!**



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## FOCA Achievement Award

Congratulations to the **Skootamatta District Ratepayers Association**, winners of the FOCA Achievement Award presented at our Annual General Meeting in March, 2018.

Apply NOW on behalf of your lake association for the next Award. Get details: <https://foca.on.ca/foca-achievement-award/>.



## LKRA: Rocking the Regatta

This will mark the 60th year for the annual Lake Kasshabog Regatta!

Saturday's events include: the best-dressed canoe parade, water races such as canoeing and swimming, and various 'landlubber events' such as horseshoes, nail driving, egg toss, candy run, three-legged race and leap frog.

Sunday features sailboat races, a canoe and kayak marathon, beach volleyball and waterskiing. The **Lake Kasshabog Residents' Association** (LKRA) reminds members that cottage association dues must be paid up, to participate in the Regatta.



**FOCA adds:** FOCA hopes there are diamonds on the lake for the LKRA "Diamond" anniversary Regatta!

## Celebrating Community

by Richard Siegfried, SICA

The **Silver Islet Campers Association** (SICA) is pleased to announce the 150th anniversary of the Silver Islet mining community. Silver Islet, located 45 minutes east of Thunder Bay and on the shores of Lake Superior, was the richest silver mine in North America. The mine operated from 1868 to 1882, then had a colourful history of failed business attempts. It eventually became a summer cottage community, with the Silver Islet Campers Association forming in 1931. Many of the cottages are the original mining homes. This summer's activities will include many celebratory events to honor the rich history of Silver Islet.

**FOCA adds:** With approximately 150 members, this Lake Association has been a member of FOCA since 2007.

Congratulations and enjoy your festivities this summer!

## TAKE BOATING ONTARIO'S CLEAN BOATER PLEDGE

Our colleagues at Boating Ontario, the recreational marine trade association, ask all boaters to take the "Clean Boater" Pledge.

*As a passionate boater that enjoys Ontario waterways, I pledge to do all I can to protect the waters for all to enjoy, now and in the future, by embracing the following Clean Boater practices:*

- Recycle and keep Ontario waterways free of refuse and garbage
- Practice proper fueling techniques
- Keep a clean, oil-free bilge and use oil-absorbent bilge socks or mats
- Use proper pump-out facilities
- Support Boating Ontario's Clean Marine marinas
- Promote Clean Boater practices at all times.



**TAKE THE PLEDGE:** <https://cleanboater.boatingontario.ca/>

# Insurance Q&A for Associations

*For well over a decade, the FOCA Association Liability Program, underwritten by Aviva Canada, and administered exclusively by Cade Associates Insurance Brokers, has been protecting FOCA members.*

The FOCA program provides access to coverage options for Lake Associations, Road Associations, Land Ownership Associations or Trusts, providing both General Liability coverage and specialized liability coverage for Directors & Officers. We asked our colleagues at Cade Associates some common questions about lake association liability insurance that we hear from members.

## Here are the answers from Cade:

### *Do all FOCA Associations carry liability insurance?*

No, but about 75% of them do! Associations have been increasingly relied upon to deliver important services in Ontario's waterfront communities, and these responsibilities come with associated risks. As an independent broker, we work with the Association to arrange proper protection for the organization and its volunteers who are providing these services.

### *Do Lake or Road Associations have to be incorporated to get insurance?*

No! More than half of the Associations currently in the program are incorporated, but it is not required. Your group should have By-laws or a 'guiding document' outlining the purpose of the group and how membership is determined, as this can be extremely useful in the event of a claim or future dispute.

### *What kinds of Association activities might expose us to liability claims?*

You name it! Associations are involved in all kinds of different operations—everything from regattas to rock & shoal marking, circulating a lake or trail map, publishing a newsletter, holding canoe or fishing events, water testing, volunteer fire fighting, renting out space from others, hosting kids' camps or day events, picnics or potlucks. Some Associations own or manage land, while others are responsible for maintaining roads. Some do all of the above! If your Association is beginning any new activities that you have questions about, be sure to talk to your insurance broker. But don't panic; we understand that these are the kinds of activities that form the bedrock of our Lake & Road Associations. The FOCA program is intended to give you peace of mind as you fulfill your significant volunteer roles.

## From desk time to dock time

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### *What kinds of insurance coverage do FOCA Associations tend to carry?*

The most common is Commercial General Liability (CGL) insurance, to respond to claims brought against the Association which allege negligence in the conduct of your operations causing bodily injury and/or property damage to others. In addition to protecting the Association, volunteers and members in good standing are insured by this policy should they be named in a claim for actions taken on behalf of the Association.

#### **SAMPLE CLAIMS:**

- Regatta spectator trips over supply boxes left by volunteers and sues for injuries sustained.
- Volunteer is sued for negligence after a buoy they installed on behalf of and at the direction of the Association came loose and damaged a passing watercraft.

Many FOCA member groups are involved in the use and/or maintenance of rural roads. There are special risk management considerations for Road Associations.

#### **SAMPLE CLAIMS:**

- Guest of cottage owner is injured from falling while jogging on the road due to alleged improper grading and maintenance.
- An individual suffers serious injury on a winter road and sues the Association, alleging failure to maintain the road properly.

Many Associations also choose to carry Directors and Officers Liability (D&O) insurance, to protect the Association and its Directors & Officers for claims brought against them for an alleged 'wrongful act' in the organizational governance of the organization leading to financial loss. This might include alleged misleading statements, neglect or breach of duty, mismanagement of funds, or breach of contract. Volunteers and employees are covered while acting at the direction of the Board. Under the FOCA program, Associations can add D&O coverage to CGL at a small extra cost in exchange for a great deal more peace of mind. Currently, over 75% of the policies in the FOCA program include some D&O coverage.

#### **SAMPLE CLAIMS:**

- Members of a Lake Association collectively sue the Board of the Association based on allegations of financial mismanagement.
- A summer student is hired to provide services at the lake. The Association fires the student before the end of the contract and the student sues for wrongful dismissal.

### *How much insurance coverage does the average FOCA member Association carry?*

It depends upon a number of factors, including the size of the Association and range of activities it carries out. As a rough average, two-thirds of the FOCA member Association policies we wrote last year carried a \$3,000,000 CGL limit, while some carry \$5,000,000 or higher. Your annual premium will depend upon the limit you choose and the work you do.

#### *As FOCA members, can we get a discount?*

Yes! If your Association is a FOCA member in good standing, you can get up to a 15% discount on your Association insurance coverage through Cade Associates Insurance Brokers, FOCA's exclusive insurance program partner.

#### *QU: How do we get a quote?*

Call Cade to get started, and remember to identify yourself as a member of FOCA: 1-844-223-3178 or go online [www.cadeinsurance.com/foca](http://www.cadeinsurance.com/foca) to complete the quote request forms.

*FOCA encourages all our member associations to take steps to protect their volunteers. Understanding your risks and using the appropriate tools to reduce them are important steps in defining your insurance coverage requirements.*

## **Volunteer Accident Coverage**

An update from **Cade Associates**, just before we went to press:

We are excited to announce the launch of Volunteer Accident Coverage, coming later this summer! Even when you have taken appropriate safety measures to prevent accidents, there's always the chance of a volunteer getting hurt while assisting the Association with their activities. **Volunteer Accident Coverage** will provide immediate financial support for your volunteers when they are injured during their work on your behalf, assisting with medical and out-of-pocket expenses typically incurred. In the event of accidental death, dismemberment, permanent disability or medical or dental injuries to your volunteers, financial reimbursement is provided quickly. This coverage is available to cover volunteers up to 70 years of age, and will be easy to add to your policy for a very low cost. Details will follow soon from Cade Associates.

# Cyber Safety for Lake Associations

by Michelle Lewin

FOCA Communications & Development Coordinator, FOCA

*Like an increasing number of organizations with an online presence, FOCA experienced a cyber threat in the early part of 2018.*

The FOCA website was updated a few years ago using a WordPress platform, and included a number of 'plug-in' applications to run features such as our embedded list of 500+ Member Associations, search and 'Related Posts' tools, and more. The FOCA site is SSL encrypted, and all payment transactions take place in a secure third-party environment (Bambora, the online payment platform formerly known as Beanstream).

However, in February 2018, we discovered that some older 'apps' used within the FOCA site were enough to leave gaps that criminals might leverage to gain access to the backend, where names and emails lingered in an archive of past purchasers of FOCA event registrations, renewals or products. While we have no evidence that this information was accessed, we do know some malicious code was imbedded in a page of the FOCA website, that was ultimately linked to an overseas PayPal phishing scam. (To clarify: the FOCA website does not use PayPal for any transactions. You will never see a valid email from FOCA telling you to log in to your PayPal account to complete any FOCA transaction!)

*This experience was eye-opening for us. Who would hack FOCA?!?* We took immediate steps to communicate with our web domain provider, Nexicom, as well as our website developer. We also contacted each person whose contact information was stored in the back end of the site, to alert them to be vigilant about any odd PayPal enquiries.

The FOCA site was offline until we were certain any malicious code had been removed. Within a day, we had re-uploaded the whole site from backup files (thank goodness for our backup protocol!) and removed unnecessary plug-ins, which has limited some site functions. For example: when you apply for your FOCA website Login to access Members-only materials, the response is no longer automated or instantaneous; now you must wait until the staff at the FOCA office can confirm you as a member and send you the Login code, by reply email during business hours.

Pay attention to the information you post in the public domain; does your Association website include a list of your Board members and their email addresses?

Do you really want this information in the public domain, or would a single contact email (info@ourlake.ca) suffice?

We also confirmed that our anti-virus software was up-to-date on every computer station in the FOCA office, and ran full scans to check for any related malware. We changed every administrative password to secure and complex new combinations. We installed new software to send us notifications whenever anyone adds any new code or updates to the FOCA website, or logs in as an administrator. We have reviewed our policy for retaining contact information from past online transactions, and have taken the step to delete all historical information in the digital 'store'.

*This kept us quite busy, during a usually-quiet time of year for our office!* And we're not the only ones vulnerable or subject to cyber-attacks. Earlier this year in an e-Newsletter to customers, Nexicom—FOCA's internet and web domain provider—wrote the following in their general e-news:

*A new phishing scam is targeting PayPal users. Remember that "phishing" is what scammers do when they're "fishing" for personal information that could enable them to steal your identity. This particular phishing expedition starts with an email that looks surprisingly genuine. It includes the PayPal logo and comes from the email address service@paypal.com. It informs you that PayPal is unable to verify a transaction, and includes a reference number and link to a phony site which asks for information that could be used against you such as your name, birthdate, address, mother's maiden name, and credit card number.*

*The request for all this information is a red flag, as is the fact that the phony website includes no help or settings icons and doesn't require you to log in. Despite the authors' best efforts to make it look legitimate, the email itself may contain grammar errors or other elements that seem "off." (source: Nexicom, "Safeguarding our Customers," in February 2018 e-Newsletter)*

## Here are some additional email "red flags" to watch out for:

- You hover your mouse over a hyperlink that's displayed in an email message, but the link to the address is for a different site. (This is a huge warning sign. Don't click!)
- You received an email that only has long hyperlinks with no other information and the rest of the email is completely blank.



- You were not expecting the email attachment the sender included or the attachment does not make sense within the context of the email message. (And the sender doesn't ordinarily send you these types of attachments.)
- The email has bad grammar or spelling errors or seems out of the ordinary.

Cybercrime is a significant issue, and huge numbers of people are still not taking online security seriously, leaving them vulnerable to hackers. The easiest thing you can do to protect yourself is to use different, and strong, passwords for the various sites and services you use. A "password manager" is designed to take the stress out of juggling multiple passwords, by remembering which login details you're using for which sites, so you don't have to.

**What if your Association has a website where you collect personal information?** Could this kind of cyber-attack happen to you? Perhaps.

No one is immune to criminal threat, but you can reduce your risks by taking precautions. Don't use default usernames (like "admin") for your primary administrative accounts; there are programs out there that can probe for common user names and likely password combinations. Keep your computers, smartphones, software and apps up-to-date.

Ensure your association executives are using anti-virus software on their devices. "Avast" is one freeware option. Keep track of who has access to your website backend, and review this article with them. If you do accept payments on your website, ensure you have paid to be SSL encrypted. (You'll know you're in an SSL environment when you see the green "lock" icon and the term "Secure" to the left of the URL—internet address—in your browser.)

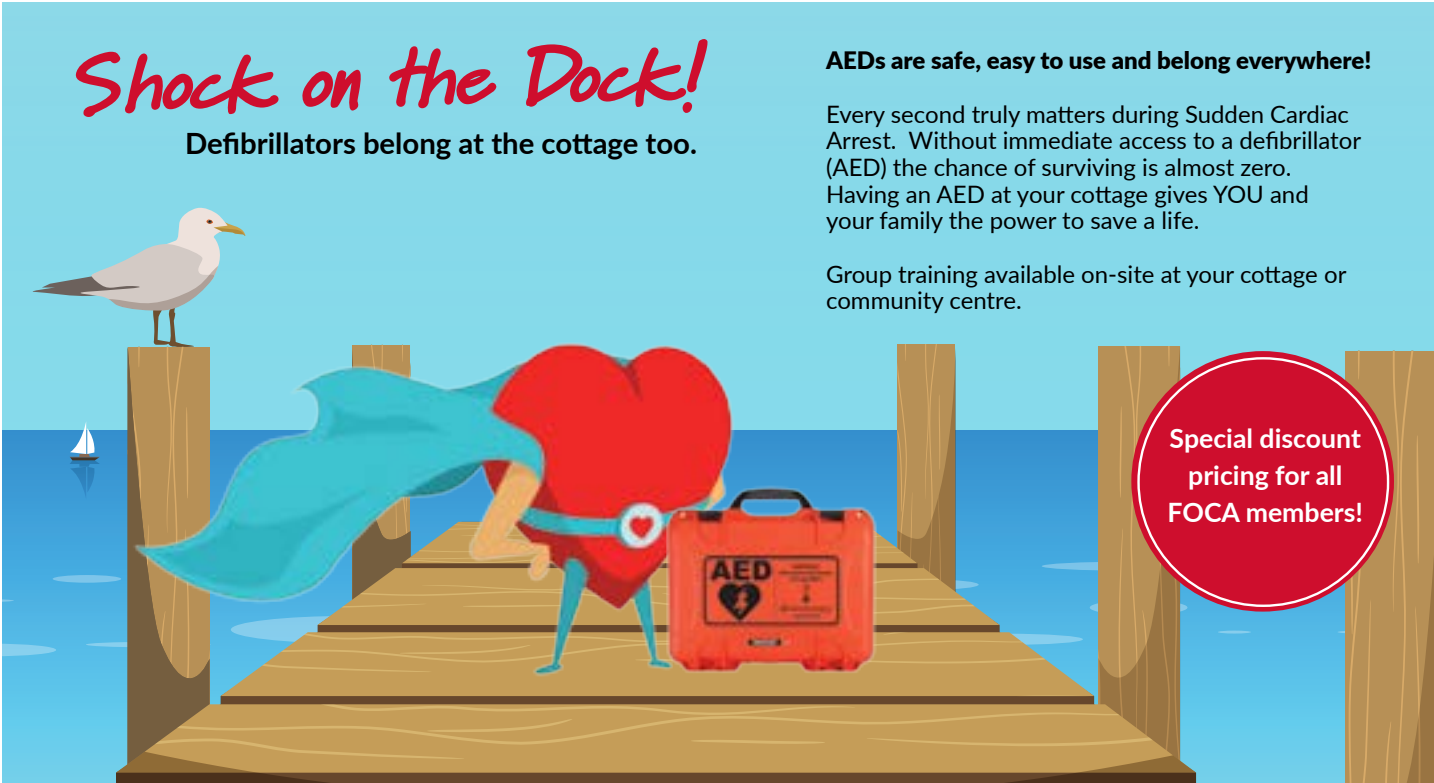
Here are some final thoughts, from Matthew Scholl of the Computer Security Division of the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology. At a recent virtual conference, referenced by our colleagues at Water Canada, Scholl said:

*You may think you're not on threat radar, but there are threats that are specifically designed just for small, non-IT focused, but heavily IT-dependent organizations that are highly transactional. [quoted in: <https://www.watercanada.net/feature/evaluating-digital-risk-in-a-world-of-cyber-threats/>]*

FOCA is committed to respecting your privacy and protecting your interests. Our top priority is to retain your confidence in dealing with FOCA. We have policies in place regulating what information we collect, and how it is used and stored. You can review FOCA's Privacy Policy online, as part of the organization's information posted on this webpage: <https://foca.on.ca/about/our-work/>.

## Shock on the Dock!

Defibrillators belong at the cottage too.




**AEDs are safe, easy to use and belong everywhere!**

Every second truly matters during Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Without immediate access to a defibrillator (AED) the chance of surviving is almost zero. Having an AED at your cottage gives YOU and your family the power to save a life.

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# Tools for Managing Lake Trout Lakes

Canada's Lake Trout lakes are a rare and valuable natural resource, both in ecological and economic terms. However, Lake Trout populations are increasingly threatened by multiple environmental stressors. Concerns are growing that oxygen depletion is degrading habitat quality in the deep waters of many Lake Trout lakes.



*John Smol's Trout Lakes talk at MSE*

FOCA has been a proud supporter of research on Lake Trout lakes recently completed by the Paleoecological Environmental Assessment and Research Lab (PEARL) at Queen's University. Co-directed by Professors John Smol and Brian Cumming, PEARL is a group of about 30 research scientists, post-doctoral fellows and graduate and undergraduate students, working to reconstruct the long-term history of lake systems.

## **Predicting dissolved oxygen concentrations in Lake Trout lakes: Developing new tools for a multiple-stressor world**

This latest Lake Trout lake research effort has been a collaboration between researchers at Queen's and York universities, scientists from Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC), FOCA and the Lake of Woods Water Sustainability Foundation, to provide state-of-the-art tools to better manage Lake Trout habitat, provide guidance on mitigation strategies and ensure sustainable management.

The project aims to model, hindcast and forecast deepwater dissolved oxygen (DO) concentrations in Ontario Lake Trout lakes.

*FOCA shares the highlights of slides from a recent presentation by John Smol about the project:*

## **Why study Lake Trout?**

- Lake Trout lakes are a rare and valuable resource
- Ontario is home to 20-25% of the global supply (~2200 lakes)
- Lake Trout are a cold water fish, vulnerable to a wide variety of environmental stressors
- Many southern lake trout populations live within narrow temperature and oxygen boundaries
- Climate warming a "threat multiplier"
- Concerns that Lake Trout habitat may be impacted by reduced ice cover and increased strength of lake stratification.

## **Theme approaches included:**

### **Understanding the Past:**

- Infer past DO concentrations in study lakes using invertebrate communities preserved in lake sediments.

### **Modeling the Present:**

- Reevaluate/update existing end-of-summer DO profile model for small inland lakes with 1990-2013 monitoring data.

### **Forecasting the Future:**

- Develop a DO model to embed within broader climate models to allow forecasting of future DO conditions in Canadian lakes.

The findings from this research are of interest to FOCA (and other partners) particularly as the Province implements its Climate Change Action Plan. As temperatures rise, current levels of protection may be insufficient for Lake Trout habitat, and Lake Trout lakes.

Based on this, the research team recommends that the project results be considered as part of the decision-making process regarding land-use planning. The MOECC reports that the tools and data generated by the project are now under consideration for inclusion in the revised Lakeshore Capacity Assessment Handbook.

*For more information on this project, visit:*

<http://post.queensu.ca/~pearl/laketrout/index.html>

# Time for a Tick Talk: Let's Fight Lyme Disease

by Richard Ovcharovich

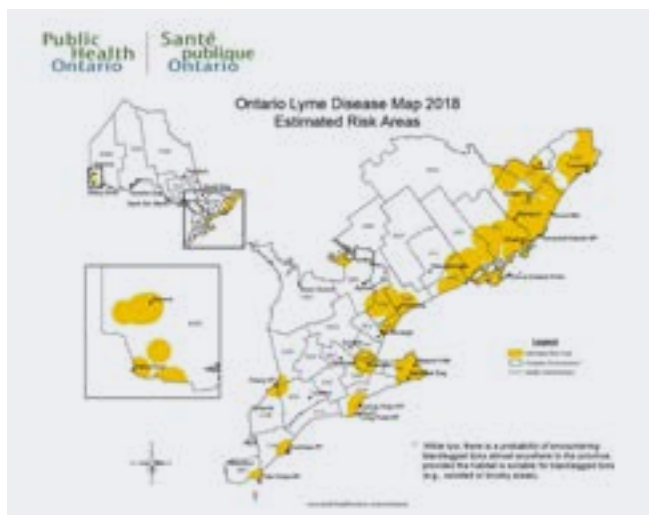
Manager of Environmental Health at the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit

While mosquitoes and blackflies may be the more common pests affecting people in cottage country, there is another risk slowly making its way across Ontario.

On its own, the blacklegged tick – or deer tick – looks tiny and relatively harmless, no bigger than one to five millimetres in length. However, some of these ticks carry the bacteria (known as *Borrelia burgdorferi*) that may cause Lyme disease. A blacklegged tick carrying the bacteria can spread Lyme disease to a person – especially if the tick has bitten (or been feeding) for more than 24 hours.

As temperatures warm up, blacklegged ticks are spreading to more parts of Ontario; not surprisingly, the number of human cases of Lyme disease has also increased in recent years. In the early 1990s, there was only one known Lyme disease 'risk area' at Long Point Provincial Park on the north shore of Lake Erie. Since then, Ontario has seen the population of blacklegged ticks expand along the entire north shore of the St. Lawrence River, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario, and pockets of north western Ontario.

Each year, Public Health Ontario publishes a map that shows 'Lyme Disease Estimated Risk Areas.' (see below) The map tracks locations in the province where populations of blacklegged ticks are known to live, and each year, the yellow 'risk area' on the map increases slightly in size. But the fact remains that it's possible to encounter an infected blacklegged tick almost anywhere in Ontario.



*Let's be clear: the risk of getting Lyme disease from an infected blacklegged tick is still very low. However, as ticks expand their territory due to climate change, it's important to take precautions by knowing the bug, knowing the bite, and knowing what to do!*



## Know the Bug

- **Lyme disease** is a serious illness that can be spread by the bite of an infected blacklegged tick. Symptoms of Lyme include: fever, headache, tiredness, muscle and joint pains, and skin rashes. If detected early, most cases of Lyme can be treated successfully with antibiotics. If left untreated, Lyme disease can last years and lead to recurring arthritis and neurological problems, numbness, paralysis and, in rare cases, death.
- Some blacklegged ticks can carry the bacteria that causes Lyme disease. Typically, these ticks live in forests, tall grasses and bushes, and thrive in wet environments.
- Blacklegged ticks are like hitchhikers, settling on tall grasses and bushes until they can attach to a 'host' (either a person or animal). Once attached, ticks 'bite' – or dig into the host's skin – becoming engorged as they feed on the host's blood. If the blacklegged tick is infected with the bacteria that causes Lyme disease, it can pass the disease onto a person – especially if the tick has been feeding for more than 24 hours. If bitten by a tick, properly and completely remove the tick as soon as possible. If the tick is engorged, attached for more than 24 hours (or an unknown amount of time), or you experience symptoms of Lyme disease, seek medical attention as soon as possible.



## Know the Bite

- Most tick bites are painless, so people may not realize they have been bitten.
- In many cases, a circular rash will develop in the area of the tick bite (often in the shape of a bull's-eye). Other Lyme disease symptoms can also occur.

## Know What to Do

### PREVENT BITES BEFORE THEY HAPPEN:

- **Cover up.** Use clothing as a layer of protection. If walking along trails or through tall grass, wear light-coloured clothing to make ticks easier to spot and remove before they bite. Wear closed footwear and socks and, when possible, wear long pants and a long-sleeved shirt. Tuck your pants into your socks, especially if you are walking in long grass.
- **Use insect repellent** or bug spray containing DEET on clothes and exposed skin (follow manufacturer's directions).
- **Check yourself for ticks.** After being outdoors (especially in areas where blacklegged ticks are known to live), get into the habit of checking your body for ticks. Pay close attention to your scalp, ankles, armpits, groin, naval and behind ears and knees. A mirror can be useful to check your back, or ask someone else to check for you. Check children for ticks too.
- **Wash and dry.** After an outdoor activity, you may want to put your clothes into a dryer on high heat for at least an hour to kill any possible ticks. Consider taking a shower as soon as you can to wash off a tick that may not have attached itself through a bite.
- **Protect your pets.** Dogs, cats and other pets can carry ticks that spread Lyme disease. While you cannot be infected directly by a dog or cat, pets can carry ticks into your home or yard putting you at risk. It's best to put tick and flea collars on pets and from time-to-time check dogs and cats for the presence of ticks. Speak to your veterinarian if you have concerns.
- **Maintain your property, especially near a woodland area.** Keep your grass mowed short, and trim bushes/tree branches to let in sunlight (ticks avoid hot, dry locations). If situated next to a woodland or area with tall grass, create a border of gravel or woodchips one metre or wider around your yard. Move children's swings, playground equipment and sandboxes away from wooded areas, and consider placing equipment on a woodchip or mulch foundation.
- **Go online for more preventing tips.** Visit the Ontario government ([www.ontario.ca/Lyme](http://www.ontario.ca/Lyme)) or Public Health Agency of Canada ([www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/lyme-disease.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/lyme-disease.html)) websites.



### WHAT TO DO IF BITTEN:

- **Promptly and properly remove a tick from your body to prevent infection.** Using finely-tipped tweezers, grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible. Pull it straight out, gently but firmly being sure to remove the entire tick (head and all). Thoroughly clean the bite site with rubbing alcohol and/or soap and water.
- **Never burn the tick or paint the tick with nail polish or petroleum jelly** (like Vaseline) to detach from your skin. This could cause the Lyme bacteria to pass through your skin and into your bloodstream.
- **If possible after removing the tick, place it in a secure container** (like a screw-top bottle) and take it to your health care provider or local health unit for testing. If appropriate, the tick may be sent for identification to help track the tick population in Ontario.
- **Seek medical attention as soon as possible** if the tick was attached for more than 24 hours (or an unknown amount of time), or you experience symptoms of Lyme disease.

# Policy Update: OMB No More

FOCA Elert readers will already have heard that on April 3rd, 2018, the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)—the quasi-judicial body that dealt with land development proposal appeals—became the **Local Planning Appeal Tribunal** (LPAT). All the members of the OMB remain members of the LPAT, but their powers have changed.

The new format reduces the number and types of matters that can be appealed to the LPAT—now limited to planning decisions that do not conform or are inconsistent with provincial or local plans such as Official Plans (OPs)—limits the grounds of appeal, eliminates the introduction of new information at the hearings, and limits who can participate.



Municipalities are responsible for aligning their local land use planning and OPs to provincial policy. The LPAT only has the authority to overturn a municipal decision if it does not follow provincial policies or municipal plans. (Whereas the OMB could overturn a decision if it found the municipality did not reach the “best” planning decision.)

Notably, any LPAT planning appeal will be based **only** on the information considered in the original planning decision. FOCA advises that this will require proactive diligence by community members to ensure they participate in local planning decision processes and provide their input into Official Planning processes, as these decisions will have key significance for our lakes and our properties.

Follow this topic here: <https://foca.on.ca/omb-ontario-municipal-board-changes/>.

*Not yet receiving the FOCA Elert (e-news) in your Inbox each month? Subscribe now on the FOCA website!*

# Moving Rural Ontario into the Digital Age

The CRTC recently designated both mobile and fixed broadband as basic services for all Canadians. Under the banner of “Connecting Canadians,” the Government of Canada has published a searchable map of Internet service providers by area, (visit <http://www.ic.gc.ca/app/sitt/bbmap/hm.html?lang=eng>); however, FOCA members report that local coverage is still incomplete.

## Eastern Ontario Update

On April 23, 2018, the Province announced a \$71-million commitment in support of the project to tackle cellular dead zones across eastern Ontario. According to the **Eastern Ontario Regional Network** (EORN), which was created to address the need for better reach and quality of cellular data services in the region, these cellular improvements will create jobs, spur new businesses, improve safety, and meet the needs of expanding growth.

According to a study commissioned by EORN, about one quarter of the area where there are homes, businesses or major roads in the region currently cannot access any cellular services. The EORN project covers an area of more than 50,000 square kilometres where nearly one million people live and work. For more information, visit: <https://www.eorn.ca/>.

## Southwestern Ontario Update

Meanwhile, SWIFT (**SouthWestern Integrated Fibre Technology**) is a not-for-profit, collective broadband initiative funding the construction of an affordable, open-access, ultra-high-speed fibre-optic regional broadband network across southwestern Ontario, Caledon and the Niagara Region. To overcome the region’s broadband infrastructure gaps, SWIFT has developed a long-term plan to help more than 3.5 million Ontarians connect and keep pace in a changing digital world.

SWIFT partners with the University of Guelph’s **Regional and Rural Broadband Project** (R2B2), to assess internet user experiences, and to test performance at a range of locations, including waterfront properties. Residents can run an internet speed test and then report your results through the online survey tool: <http://swiftnetwork.ca/survey/>. Regular updates on the build-out of the broadband network in southwestern Ontario will be posted to SWIFT’s website: <http://swiftnetwork.ca/>.





# A New FOCA Report: WPO & Rural Economic Development

FOCA knows that waterfront property owners (WPO), both seasonal and permanent, are a significant force in Ontario. The property taxes alone on the estimated \$75-billion of privately-owned residential cottage real estate is over \$800-million annually, directly supporting local governance, programs, and infrastructure in more than 200 rural Ontario municipalities. "Cottage"-related household expenditures in rural communities amount to considerably more than that each year.

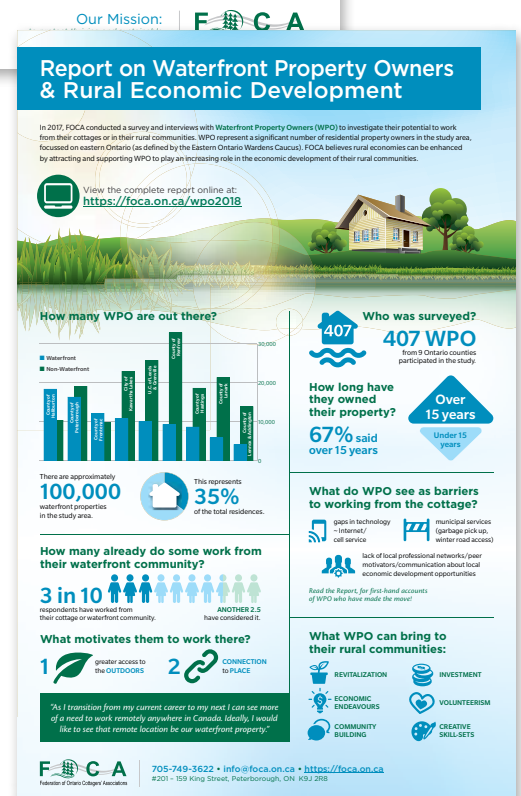
**Despite this significant footprint, there has never been a comprehensive review of this sector**, nor any strategic planning related to the how this part of our rural population could be more thoughtfully embedded into local economic development.

**In 2017-18, FOCA undertook a study** to articulate the significance of WPO as vital economic contributors to rural communities in Ontario. In partnership with the University of Guelph, and graduate student Katherine Howes, FOCA conducted a literature review, and an extensive survey as well as interviews with WPO and economic development partners.

The results speak to the opportunity of having WPO contribute to and support the local economy beyond their role as "consumers."

We discovered that more than half of those surveyed either worked from their waterfront community, or have considered doing so. They are motivated by greater access to the outdoors, and a strong connection to place at the waterfront. Half of respondents have owned their cottage or waterfront property for over 25 years! Respondents identified primary barriers to working from cottage country as: gaps in technology (internet, cell service) or municipal services (garbage pick-up, winter road access), and a lack of professional networks or peer motivators.

Read first-hand accounts from your peers who have already made the shift to working from their cottage community, and download the full report from FOCA here: <https://foca.on.ca/wpo2018/>.



**EORN's proposed public-private partnership would improve cellular data services across the region.**

Learn more at [www.eorn.ca](http://www.eorn.ca)



# Top 10 Tips for Building Community

**SOCIAL CAPITAL** is the connections between individuals, built up through the big and small actions people take each day. *Corporate Knights* (“the Magazine for Clean Capitalism”) predicts that a “more sustainable future will only come about through the dedication of **an informed and active citizenry.**”

## FOCA encourages YOU to implement some of these ideas in your community, over the coming year:

- 1 Welcome a new neighbour, either with a dock drop-by, or leave a hand-written note on the doorstep inviting them to the next association social gathering.
- 2 Buy local! Support the merchants in your cottage community.
- 3 Devote an hour this summer for a coffee chat with one of the eldest members of your cottage community. Record their recollections of the lake in the earlier days, and share the results on social media or in your association newsletter.
- 4 Advertise an annual road or shoreline “clean-up” day, and gather at the end for a cool or warm drink, depending upon the season!
- 5 Vote in your waterfront community in the Municipal Election on October 22nd, 2018.



- 6 Find a volunteer with specific nature knowledge (owls? fish? butterflies? trees?) and plan an outdoor summer discovery hour for kids in the community.
- 7 Establish a tool-share among association members. Or, start a “fix-it” group willing to help senior members of the community with maintenance tasks.
- 8 Volunteer to be part of a small team (2 or 3) who will take turns attending municipal meetings to connect with local politicians and keep abreast of issues.
- 9 Send a “thank you” letter to your local paper, about a person at the lake who helped build community.
- 10 Organize a canned food drive at the end of the cottage season when it is time to clear out the cupboards before cottage closing time, and donate the proceeds to the local community food bank.

Adapted from: <http://www.corporateknights.com/channels/leadership/civic-bond-15081192/>.



Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations

705-749-3622 • [info@foca.on.ca](mailto:info@foca.on.ca)  
<https://foca.on.ca>