

Priority Goals (2018-2020)



1. FOCA will Strengthen Lake Associations by:

- Expanding FOCA's role as the "go-to" resource for waterfront issues and "help desk" for member questions
- Planning, developing and coordinating regional training and citizen awareness programs
- Enhancing FOCA's member resources and communications to all waterfront enthusiasts
- Communicating clear and valued member benefits and services
- Sharing lake associations benchmark statistics, peer-sharing best management practices



2. FOCA will Maintain Effective Government Relations by:

- Developing a "policy-binder" of FOCA's clearly-articulated policy/file positions
- Researching Lake Capacity "2.0" (beyond phosphorus)
- Articulating municipal affordability, tax benchmarking
- Ongoing liaison with government officials and partners on key and emerging issues



3. FOCA will Advance Science into Action by:

- Supporting the interests of our extended community by advancing the understanding and application of topical information on pressing environmental concerns through communications, citizen science, working with academia, government and NGO partners, sharing best practices, and supporting local programming where appropriate
- Advancing FOCA's broad areas of interest—including water quality, invasive species, and climate change—while responding to emerging issues



4. FOCA will Bridge Gaps in our Rural Communities by:

- Articulating the economic impact of WPO in rural Ontario through continued research initiatives and partnerships, in order to expand the evidence and data used to inform our members and policy makers
- Creating a new "Municipal Primer: A Guide to Building Constructive Municipal Relationships" for lake associations
- Advancing the need for emergency preparedness and community planning in rural waterfront communities



5. FOCA will Enhance Organizational Capacity by:

- Pursuing new and ongoing partnerships across the public sector, private sector, research organizations and like-minded NGOs
- Enhancing FOCA's position as a thought-leader in traditional and digital media
- Extending FOCA's reach and impact to new audiences
- Engaging members as volunteers within FOCA's governance structure
- Turning followers into supporters by leveraging new contacts from social media and other outreach

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Preface

Working together with our 500+ member associations across the province and like-minded partners will ensure that Ontario's waterfronts are thriving and sustainable for current and future generations.

This FOCA Strategic Framework, 2018-2020, is based on an in-depth survey with our members, the experience we have accumulated since our founding in 1963, and our ongoing dialogue with program partners, supporters and policy makers.

This three year period will see FOCA expand its outreach to:

- raise greater awareness of waterfront issues facing all Ontarians
- strengthen our member associations so they can expand their roles as stewards of waterfronts and their surrounding watersheds
- support citizen science and evidence-based decision-making, and
- strengthen partnerships with non-waterfront and rural residents concerned and affected by waterfront and related environmental factors.

As part of our inclusive approach, we describe our community using the terms "waterfront property owners", "waterfront communities", "residents", "waterfront enthusiasts", and "lake associations".

As with our 2014-2017 framework, FOCA strives to remain current in understanding the issues that need to be addressed, and aware of prevailing and anticipated environmental impacts on waterfronts. FOCA follows a cyclical three-year planning process to ensure its strategies are reviewed and—where necessary—renewed to clearly express FOCA's vision, mission, strategic objectives, and the actions that will be undertaken to achieve its goals.

This framework will be the driving force of FOCA, and thus, the leading reference point for others wishing to join together to support healthy waterfronts.



Marlin Horst
Board President



Terry Rees
Executive Director

Challenges and Opportunities

FOCA recognizes that waterfront communities across Ontario are diverse, and are being affected by significant challenges and opportunities, including:



Changes in the regulatory and policy landscape

FOCA is an experience- and evidence-based voice of communities on waterfront issues, articulating policy positions, and monitoring developments at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, on issues of significance to the future of our lakes and rivers.

Extreme weather and other impacts of a changing climate

FOCA has an important role to play in helping waterfront property owners (WPO) prepare for extreme and emergency conditions in waterfront Ontario, and to adapt and respond to changes on their own waterfronts and throughout the watersheds that support healthy lakes and rivers.



Changing demographics and usage

FOCA observes shifts in rural populations and waterfront usage, including intergenerational transfer of ownership, trends toward permanent residency, and economic impacts of WPO in their rural municipalities, all a part of the “cottage country” experience.

Volunteerism

FOCA members appreciate the important and historic role of volunteers in their communities, highlighting the need to preserve and enhance volunteerism at the community level.



Expanding our reach

FOCA remains the go-to organization for relevant and focused waterfront resources. FOCA mobilizes supporters to achieve our vision, while expanding our outreach to the broader audience of waterfront stakeholders.

Working with partners

FOCA builds partnerships with other civil society groups, non-government organizations (NGO), academic and research organizations, and private sector partners to act collectively to achieve our vision.



Strategic Objectives

FOCA determines where to focus its efforts and resources in response to the needs and knowledge of its Ontario-wide membership.

From this base, FOCA's 2018-2020 strategic objectives are to:

- 1. Strengthen lake associations**
through the delivery of programs and services including tools, networking, events and training.
- 2. Maintain effective government relations**
through enhanced liaison between policy makers and waterfront property owners (WPO), with a focus on environmental and “pocket-book” issues affecting Ontario waterfront communities, by ensuring that FOCA is at the table for important policy decisions, and that citizens are adequately informed and involved.
- 3. Advance informed science**
on waterfront issues to residents and decision-makers, seeing science put into action by connecting citizen scientists and community leaders along with academic and science partners for the well-being of the environment, towards evidence-based public policy, and activated and informed stewardship.
- 4. Articulate the importance of WPOs**
to rural economies by working to bridge gaps and achieve outcomes that balance the diversity of needs within rural communities, for the overall benefit of local communities.
- 5. Strengthen FOCA's organizational capacity**
and recognition as thought-leaders, through enhanced partnerships, branding, funding and overall capacity.

VISION

FOCA envisions thriving and sustainable waterfronts across Ontario, now and for future generations.

MISSION

As the pre-eminent Ontario organization, FOCA serves and represents lake associations, waterfront property owners (WPO) and waterfront communities through education, communication and government advocacy.

MANDATE

FOCA advocates for healthy lakes and rivers and is the voice for Ontario's 250,000+ waterfront property owners.

