

About the Award:

The **FOCA Achievement Award** is presented annually at the AGM to a **Member Association** to celebrate the successes of the FOCA community, and to encourage peer sharing of best practices. The Award has been given out since 1996. It was originally named after Jerry Strickland, FOCA's first full-time Executive Director (ED). In March 2024, in honour of the 20th anniversary of FOCA's retiring ED, the Board of Directors renamed it the "**Terry Rees Achievement Award**". The **Award recipient*** is selected annually from eligible nominations received by FOCA, and FOCA reserves the right to assign an unlimited number of additional Honourable Mentions in any year. Nominations are reviewed by a sub-committee of the FOCA Board supported by FOCA staff input, based on Selection Criteria outlined below.

** We refer to the Award "recipient" rather than "winner", as we recognize and applaud all the accomplishments of all our volunteer association nominees!*

Who can be Nominated:

Any [current FOCA Member Association](#) in good standing may be nominated.

(NOTE: The Award is not open to FOCA Affiliate Organizations or Sub-Groups who do not pay per-member annual fees to FOCA, but are nevertheless our valued regional partners.)

Accomplishments should support or align with FOCA's Mission, Vision and/or Values:

Our Mission: We empower and enable our members by being the leading provider of advocacy, resources, education, programs and services for Ontario cottagers.

Our Vision: To sustain and enhance the cottage experience for generations.

Our Values:

- Member-focused
- Collaborative
- Advocate
- Responsible Leader
- Knowledgeable
- Evidence-based

Eligible Association accomplishments could include, but are not limited to the following:

- environmental stewardship, monitoring, lake planning, invasives prevention
- science, research, education
- land use planning initiatives
- boating safety initiatives
- successful advocacy/interaction with government partners at any level
- fire safety, emergency preparedness
- membership growth & engagement
- road maintenance, capital programs, planning, novel partnerships
- collaborations with local service clubs, organizations, or communities
- youth, newcomer, or indigenous partner outreach
- innovative programs, events, communications.

Large or small associations are encouraged to apply. Regional diversity among Award recipients is just one of several considerations weighed by the Selection Committee (see Selection Criteria, below). Accomplishments should be current, but can include long-standing efforts that have reached a milestone or feature a recent highlight. ***Please do not apply if you received the Award for the same or similar accomplishments in the past 5 years, or if the featured accomplishment was funded entirely by FOCA (e.g., invasives management).***

Past Award winners have demonstrated accomplishments beyond the regular scope of day-to-day volunteer Association work, by presenting new or scalable ideas, or successful efforts that set a precedent or can serve as an inspiration to fellow members across the province!

Who can Nominate a Member Association:

Nominations can be made by individuals, associations, umbrella organizations, government partners (municipal/county/provincial), conservancies, FOCA staff and Board, and any other interested parties.

How & When to Nominate a Member Association:

Complete the [Award Nomination Form](#) (PDF; 2 page fillable form), and return it with no more than **one attachment limited to a maximum of 10 pages or 2 MB size** including any photos or additional support materials, by email to info@foca.on.ca.

Nominations received by **October 30th** of the year will be considered for that year's Award.

Selection Criteria:

The criteria on the following page will be used by the **Selection Committee** to review all nominations and should be considered by prospective nominees when drafting their submission. Any nominations deemed “ineligible” in section #1 will receive follow-up from the FOCA staff by November 15th at the latest, and the Association will have 14 days to remedy the situation (for example, resolve Membership not currently in good standing) and be re-assessed for eligibility. Any nominations deemed “eligible” in section #1 will be presented in their entirety to the Award Selection Committee, with sections #1 and #2 pre-filled by FOCA staff from information already on file and/or information provided in the *Award Nomination Form*.

When the Award is Presented:

The Award recipient will be notified the following January. The Award will be presented at the next **FOCA Annual General Meeting & Spring Seminar**, traditionally held on the first Saturday of March; watch for event details in the [FOCA e-newsletter](#). A representative of the recipient Association is invited to attend the event to receive the Award plaque and make a brief statement about the accomplishment that led to the Award.

FOCA Achievement Award – Selection Criteria (ver.2025)
FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY - provided as an example to guide nomination submissions

1. Eligibility:

<i>If answer is in grey, not eligible this year</i>	Yes	No
Nominee is a full FOCA Member Association in good standing?		
Received the FOCA Award in the past? If yes, in what year? (If received 5 or fewer years ago = not eligible)		
Accomplishment is current – or, if long-term, there has been a recent milestone or highlight over the past 12-18 months?		
The featured program/accomplishment was entirely funded by FOCA? (If yes, must exclude this accomplishment from any rankings in Sections #3 & #4 below.)		

Excluded Accomplishment(s): _____

Eligible Accomplishment(s): _____

2. Demographics of the Association:

Size of Association: _____ members most recently reported, of approx. _____ properties in area

Year Formed (if known): _____ Year Joined FOCA: _____

Association's Municipality/County/Region: _____

When was the most recent FOCA Award recipient from this Region? (year) _____

3. Alignment of Eligible Accomplishment(s) with FOCA Mission, Vision, Values:

Aligned?:	Yes	No	Unclear
FOCA's Mission: empower & enable members; provide advocacy, resources, education, programs and services for Ontario cottagers.			
FOCA's Vision: To sustain and enhance the cottage experience for generations.			
FOCA's Values: member-focused, collaborative, advocate, responsible leader, knowledgeable, evidence-based			

4. Impacts & Other Considerations: (leave entries blank for any that do not apply at all)

<i>(0/1= 'no/not very'; 2/3/4= 'maybe/fairly/somewhat'; 5= 'yes/very much')</i>	Score
If required, were necessary permits obtained for this activity (e.g., plant removal)?	
How significant is the accomplishment for the size of the association, or number of volunteers involved?	
How novel/innovative is the accomplishment for this association itself?	
How rare is it that FOCA has news to share about this topic, best practice, or type of accomplishment?	
How much will it have effects beyond the immediate local community (regional or provincial implications)?	
How inspiring could this example be to others (worth sharing)?	
How 'reproducible' is it for other member groups (worth doing/able to accomplish)?	
TOTAL:	