

2025 YEAR IN REVIEW

Message from the CEO

As we reflect on 2025, I am proud to share the continued progress of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA). This past year has been one of building—strengthening our people, programs, and partnerships to better serve Ontario's waterfront communities. Our commitment to protecting, informing, and uniting those who live seasonally and year-round on the water remains unwavering.

FOCA's membership remains stable and resilient, representing hundreds of lake, road, and waterfront associations across the province, supported by dedicated corporate partners, program funders, and our growing community of Friends of FOCA. Together, you form a powerful knowledge network, one that ensures waterfront residents have access to trusted information, practical resources, and a collective voice on the issues that matter most.

Guided by our newly launched 2025–2027 Strategic Plan, this year focused on reinforcing FOCA's foundation for the future. We rebuilt and expanded staff capacity, secured multi-year funding for cornerstone environmental programs, and maintained strong membership retention during a period of transition. These investments position FOCA for stability today and meaningful growth in the years ahead.

Environmental stewardship continues to be central to our work. The Lake Partner Program secured renewed five-year funding following strong member advocacy and support, ensuring



LESLEY LAVENDER

the continuation of vital lake health monitoring across Ontario. Additional initiatives advanced invasive species prevention, source water protection planning with partner communities, shoreline restoration, and youth engagement in environmental innovation. Together, these efforts strengthen the long-term health and resilience of Ontario's lakes and rivers.

FOCA also remained active in advocacy and government relations. A provincial election year created new opportunities to elevate waterfront priorities, while emerging issues—such as float home regulation and community emergency preparedness in remote areas—required thoughtful engagement and leadership. To deepen member involvement, we launched new Member Advisory Groups focused on environment, advocacy, and roads, ensuring your expertise directly informs FOCA's work.

Organizationally, FOCA strengthened its financial position through prudent investments and expanded its visibility with municipal and provincial leaders, partner organizations, and member communities. New and emerging partnerships across environmental, municipal, recreation, and business sectors are opening important pathways for collaboration and impact in the coming year. At the same time, we continued to enhance FOCA's communications and brand presence to better connect with members across the province.

Looking ahead, FOCA enters 2026 with a strong foundation and a clear sense of purpose. With municipal elections on the horizon, expanding partnerships, and renewed program momentum, we are well positioned to grow our impact and continue championing Ontario's waterfront communities.

Thank you for your ongoing trust, engagement, and support. Together, we are ensuring a vibrant and sustainable future for waterfront living in Ontario.

Turning member priorities into measurable impact across Ontario.



22,824

newsletter subscribers



9+

environmental programs implemented successfully



46,961

cottagers served across Ontario

Advocacy Support



2,295+

member engagement in letter writing campaigns and surveys

58 leadership engagement and representation with elected officials

3 new member advisory groups

Environmental Impact

5

year agreement confirmed for the Lake Partner Program

4

source water protection plans created for member communities

Events and Learning Opportunities

5

cottage succession webinars (+ new taxation recording for US & CA owners)

19

speaker sessions at FOCA events

1,023

participants at FOCA hosted events and learning opportunities

Community Engagement

1.1M

total views on social media (an increase of 80%)

49

member groups visited by FOCA

85%

agree the FOCA provides good value for money

41%

growth in social media following

ADVOCACY WIN

Save the Lake Partner Program (LPP)

FOCA issued an urgent call-to-action to members, science partners, supporters and all Ontario lake enthusiasts to write the Province to confirm a new 5-year LPP agreement with the Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks after the previous agreement expired on March 31, 2025 and remained unresolved as the 2025 sampling season got underway in early May.

"I want to thank our longstanding partner FOCA for their excellent delivery of the Lake Partner Program – the largest of its kind in Canada – and the hundreds of dedicated community volunteers taking water samples from their local lakes every summer. By continuing to support this vital program, we are able to monitor water quality and take action when needed to protect the health of lakes and communities across Ontario."

**TODD MCCARTHY, MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT,
CONSERVATION AND PARKS (JUNE 20, 2025)**



9

new resources for members, including ask the expert series and Understanding Aquatic Plants

642

active Lake Partner volunteers, sampling 550 lakes at 931 individual sites across Ontario

283k+

e-newsletters delivered (65% open rate)



**Championing
local advocacy by
sourcing
information for
cottage
associations**

PROVINCIAL ADVOCACY EFFORTS IN 2025

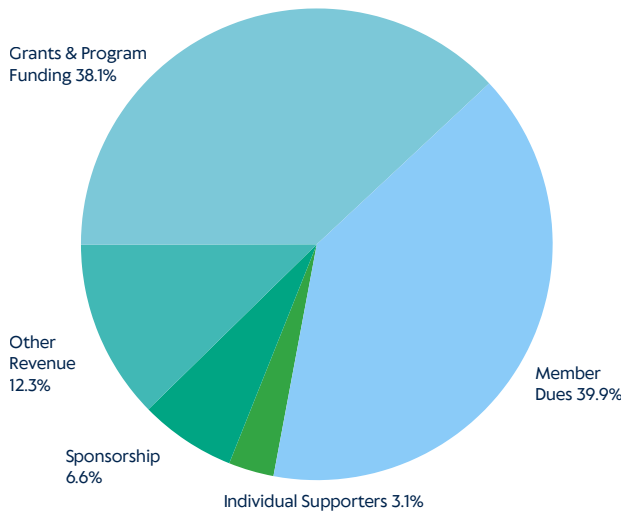
Through submitted comments; joint letters with partners; calls-to-action to members; template resources for members; meetings, emails and phone calls:

- Bill 5: Unleashing Our Economy (May/25)
- Drinking Water Protections (May/25, Oct/25)
- Conservation Authorities (Nov/25)
- Regulatory Amendments: Species Conservation Act (Nov/25)
- Species Conservation Act to replace Species at Risk Protections (Nov/25)
- Special Economic Zones Criteria (Nov/25)
- Regulatory Changes re: Drinking Water Protections (Dec/25)

Chair's Message

2025 REVENUE AT A GLANCE

FOCA's financial position remained strong in 2025, supported by careful oversight from the Board Finance Committee. Grant revenue increased this year, enabling the expansion of key environmental and program initiatives; however, we recognize this funding can be variable. FOCA therefore continues to prioritize prudent financial management, sustainable planning, and membership growth as we navigate rising costs, support a growing waterfront community, and protect Ontario's lakes from multiple stressors.



Serving as Chair has been an honour. I am continually inspired by the knowledge, commitment, and generosity of those who give their time and expertise to FOCA. Our strength truly comes from our members and the volunteer leaders who step forward to guide this organization.

As we look ahead, FOCA's future depends on continued leadership. I warmly encourage members who are passionate about waterfront issues and collaborative governance to consider serving on the Board of Directors. Your voice and experience can help shape the next chapter of FOCA's work.

Thank you for your trust, your service, and your unwavering support.

146.8%
Increase in Grants & Program Funding

12.3 %
Net Profit Margin

Membership remains both our primary responsibility and our most consistent source of income, contributing nearly half of total revenues. In return, we deliver year-round member benefits, advocacy, trusted communications, and practical resources—while remaining deeply grateful for the continued generosity of our Friends of FOCA and donors.

Additional revenues from corporate sponsorships, program funding, and event participation further strengthen this balanced financial approach. Guided by the Board and its Finance Committee, FOCA remains focused on thoughtful investment, long-term sustainability, and ensuring the organization's financial resilience for the years ahead.

As my term on the Board of Directors of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations comes to a close, I want to express my sincere gratitude to our members, volunteers, partners, and fellow directors for the privilege of serving this remarkable community.

This past year has been one of meaningful progress for FOCA. Together, we strengthened our organization, advanced environmental stewardship, deepened advocacy on issues affecting waterfront communities, and continued to build the partnerships that make our work possible. These accomplishments reflect not only a successful year, but the collective dedication of people across Ontario who care deeply about protecting and sustaining waterfront living.

DEBORAH MARTIN-DOWNS
MUSKOKA LAKES ASSOCIATION