

Kelly Lush

From: Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations <communications@foca.on.ca>
Sent: January 27, 2023 4:17 PM
To: Kelly Lush
Subject: here are your first cottage country updates of 2023!

FOCA Eler ~ January 2023

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Make sure you see all the updates -
you're at the end when you see this image again:



FOCA Serves Lake & Road Associations

Register now:

FOCA AGM & Spring Seminar on **Saturday, March 4, 2023** - In person at the Bayview Golf & Country Club, and by webinar

image below: Andy Metelka

It's time to register! Join us for **FOCA's 60th anniversary Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Spring Seminar** for Member Associations, as we "**come out of our shells**" this year and return to more in-person events.

2023 Spring Seminar topics:

- FOCA priorities, programs, and hot topic updates
- **Land use planning** in a Bill 23 world - what it means for cottage country, by the Executive Director of the Canadian Environmental Law Association
- **Property resilience** in the face of climate change, by the Director of Flood and Wildfire Resilience of the Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation



- **FireSmart** principles for your waterfront community, by the Aviation, Forest Fire and Emergency Services branch of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- "Tick Talk" - tracking the spread of ticks that carry **Lyme disease** in Ontario, by the Canadian Lyme Disease Research Network
- **Biodiversity and resiliency**: a Call to Action for Nature, by the Chair of the Ontario Biodiversity Council.

And we will present a member Association with the **2022 FOCA Achievement Award**.

[Register now!](#)

*NOTE: in-person registration is limited and closes February 24th at noon.
Register early to avoid disappointment.*

About the AGM: The AGM will be held at 10:00am. Each current Member Association is encouraged to send a representative to vote in the AGM, either in-person or by webinar participation. Official Annual General Meeting notice will be sent by email to all Member Associations by February 2nd, 2023.

FOCA's Gold level sponsors

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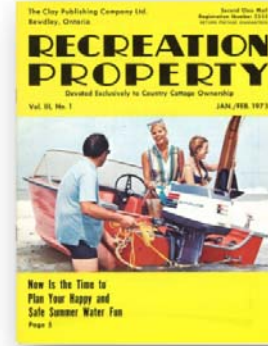
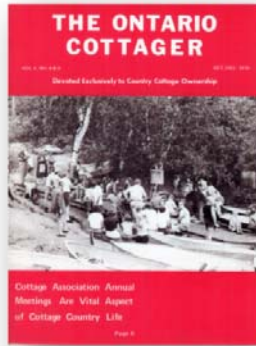


Celebrating 60 Years of FOCA!

Our Shared History

On January 7th, **1963**, 125 people representing 40 cottage associations met and decided the time was right to form a provincial association. By the spring of 1963, the organization was called "The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations"! Among the earliest issues discussed were: water quality and water safety, taxation, municipal election voter rights, land use planning and (the lack of) by-law enforcement.

Today, FOCA represents 50,000 families in more than 525 lake, road, river and residents' associations across Ontario.



Were you involved with FOCA in the 1960s, 1970s or 1980s? We have few photographs from that era of our organizational history. If you have images of past FOCA events or directors, historic pictures of your own lake Association in action through the decades, or images that capture the essence of cottage country, please share them with FOCA this year!

YOUR ROLE: Upload your photos to our community photo project: "**Ontario Cottaging through the Decades.**" Please use this link and share it with other cottage country enthusiasts: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/FOCAimages2023>

Each month throughout 2023, we'll share some of the submitted photos in the Elert!

Here's one of the first photo submissions we've received:

This picture of fishing siblings John & Margie Setta was taken on Wolfe Lake (Frontenac County) in 1979. *Image credit: John T. Setta, Sr.*



There are many ways **you** can help FOCA celebrate our **60th anniversary**:

- submit your pictures to our photo project (immediately above)
- join us at one of our 2023 events (register for the AGM & Spring Seminar at the top of this Elert)
- [make a donation](#) in support of FOCA's ongoing work on behalf of waterfront Ontario!



FOCA Advocates for Responsive Government

Underused Housing Tax

The **Underused Housing Tax** was implemented by the federal Finance Department effective January 1st, 2022, and is payable at tax time in 2023. FOCA asked that seasonal

owners be excluded from this tax, and the government did bring forward an exemption for Canadian owners of vacation or recreational properties, with certain conditions. Nevertheless, cottage owners who are neither Canadian citizens nor permanent residents may still be affected. [Get information on our webpage.](#)

FOCA at ROMA

FOCA joined 1600 delegates at the annual **Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA)** conference. This year's theme was *Breaking New Ground*, and included the opportunity to meet and hear from Ontario's Cabinet, along with elected municipal officials and senior staffers.

Important issues discussed at **ROMA 2023** included land use planning, rural health care, electricity planning, affordable housing and more. FOCA met with our colleagues at Conservation Ontario, Hydro One, MPAC, Good Roads, Emergency Management Ontario and others, and we presented to a full room on the topic of short term rentals (STR) in rural Ontario. Learn more in FOCA's recent STR report, posted to our webpage: <https://foca.on.ca/rental/>. (image below: the crowd at the STR session at ROMA 2023)



FOCA Champions Safe & Affordable Rural Living

Ice Trends & Ice Safety

Ice cover on **Lake Superior** was less than 5% in mid-January, and researchers say that's the new normal. The long-term trend suggests a decline in ice cover of nearly 3% per decade. [Read the CBC News story.](#)

In related news, see daily ice cover status for each of the Great Lakes, on the [Great lakes Ice Tracker](#) (image at the side).

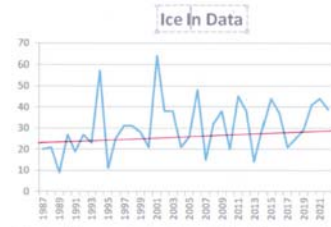


Member Spotlight: Mary Lake Ice Data

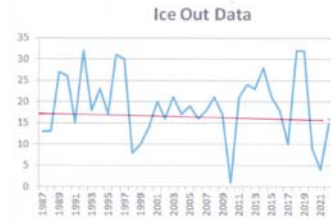
FOCA recently received a summary of **ice-in and ice-out data** collected since 1987 by **Patch Laferriere**, a member of the Mary Lake Association. His notes clarify that the latest freeze-up was on February 2nd in 2002. (We wonder if this year might break the record?)

This type of long data set is helpful not only when planning outdoor activities at the lake, but provides valuable information about changes over time. [See a copy of the data and graphs](#) (PDF, 2 pages) showing a trend toward later ice-on and earlier ice-off.

Hooray for citizen scientists! Thank you, Patch for your efforts. And thank you, Mary Lake Association, for sharing them with all of us. **We invite all of you to "borrow" this idea, and start your own local tracking efforts.**



The base line for the Ice In graph is December 1 and the base line for the Ice Out date is April 1. The days after those dates appear on the left side of the graphs.



No Ice Is 100% Safe

Snowmobile Safety Week (January 14-22, 2023) has just ended, but tragically another death was reported on **Six Mile Lake** earlier this week. The Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) Underwater Search and Recovery Unit and the Georgian Bay Township Fire Service were [on-scene on Sunday](#), searching for a missing snowmobiler who had fallen through the ice. One person was rescued from the lake, but unfortunately the body of another man was recovered the following day.

(image: @OPP_CR tweet)



More Snowmobile Safety

The OPP said that over the past 10 years close to 40% of investigated snowmobile fatalities occurred on frozen lakes or rivers.

The **Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs (OFSC)** added that the majority of its 30,000 kilometres of OFSC Prescribed Snowmobile Trails were identified as being "Unavailable" to ride earlier this week, due to recent weather conditions. [Learn about OFSC trails and permits](#) (source of the image used).



Firewood Considerations

It's cold outside, and that fire sounds delightful! However, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) reminds all Canadians who might be stocking their woodshed at home or at the cottage:

Buy local, burn local: Don't move firewood. You could inadvertently carry invasive species like the emerald ash borer, brown spruce longhorn beetle, and the LDD moth in wood that you might transport hundreds of kilometres away. [Get important woodpile tips, and more information from CFIA here](#) (source of the image used).



Wildfire Preparedness Funding

Your association can apply for a **\$500 award** to help pay for tools, brush disposal, print materials, or even a BBQ related to holding a **Wildfire Community Preparedness Day** any time between May and October 2023. Get details from [FireSmart Canada](#) (source of the image used) and apply **by January 31st!**



Boating Safety Developments

FOCA participated earlier this week in meetings of the **Ontario Recreational Boating Advisory Council**, held at the ongoing [Toronto International Boat Show](#).



At these meetings, **Transport Canada (TC)** discussed draft regulations pertaining to wake surfing, and the proposal to make the wearing of personal flotation devices (PFDs) mandatory which is due to come up for public consultation this Spring. The **Ontario Provincial Police (OPP)** shared statistics: of the 289 deaths on Ontario's waterways in the last 12 years, 87.6% were NOT wearing a PFD. We also discussed the ongoing concerns around floating accommodations on Ontario waters.

FOCA will continue to post updates on these issues as they become available, on our website. For an overview from TC, and related information, visit: <https://foca.on.ca/boating-overview/>

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FOCA Promotes Healthy Lands, Lakes & Rivers

Salt Responsibly

There are many impacts from the use of road salt and other winter maintenance chemicals. Conservation Ontario (CO) has a **Drinking Water Source Protection - Salt Responsibly** story map webpage that provides information, science and actions the public can take to improve our current salty situation. By salting responsibly we can balance human safety on our roads, walkways and parking lots with keeping our environment and drinking water sources healthy.



In related news, a recent article on **salt in freshwater lakes** has been published by our colleague Dr. Stephanie Melles and others. They found increasing salinity (saltiness) to be linked with reductions in species and lower zooplankton abundance, and conclude that impacts will be compounded by changes in climate. Get a link to this article, CO's Salt Responsibly webpage and related resources, here: <https://foca.on.ca/salt-in-our-freshwater-systems/>

(image: Conservation Ontario's Salt Responsibly webpage)

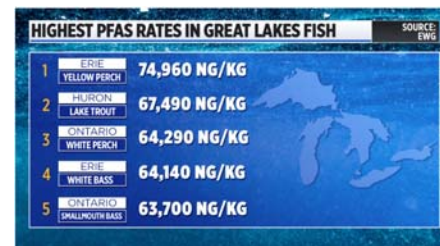
Lake Partner Program 2021 data

For our water sampling volunteers and others interested in the data: the **2021 Lake Partner Program water sampling data** is available online via the **Ontario Data Catalogue**. Lake Stewards are encouraged to access it from the first link on FOCA's Lake Partner Program webpage: <https://foca.on.ca/lake-partner-program/>

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|-------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 2015 - 2021 | CSV Chloride Last Updated: December 29, 2022 English | Preview Download |
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| 2002 - 2021 | CSV Total phosphorus Last Updated: December 29, 2022 English | Preview Download |
| 1980 - 2021 | CSV Water transparency Last Updated: December 29, 2022 English | Preview Download |

Contaminated Fish

A new study has found that freshwater fish, including those pulled from the Great Lakes, contain 'staggering' amounts of **PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances)**. [Read the news coverage](#) (from WoodTV.com, source of the image used).

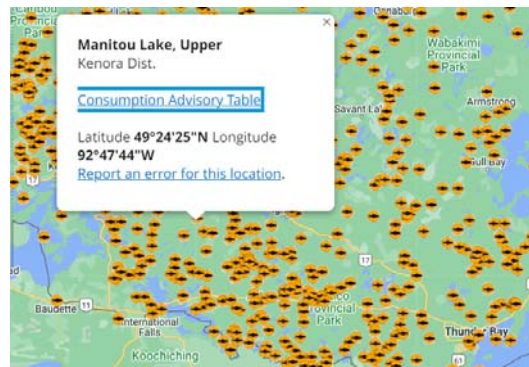


PFAS are chemical compounds used in a variety of products since the 1940s. In 2005, PFAS were identified as a pollutant and labeled a major health risk by the U.S. Environmental Protections Agency. For more about PFAS, read the posting by the Canadian Environmental Law Association: <https://cela.ca/pfas-the-forever-chemicals/>

Ontario Fishing Resources

The 2023 edition of the annual [Ontario Recreational Fishing Regulations Summary](#) guide was released earlier this week. It contains information about fishing licences, open seasons and catch limits, as well as up-to-date fishing regulations for each fisheries management zone.

Another important resource is the [Guide to Eating Ontario Fish](#), an online searchable map tool that provides consumption advisory tables based on the level of contaminants found in fish according to their location, species, and length. *(source of the image used)*



Grass Carp

Although there are no known established populations, a handful of invasive Grass Carp have been captured in the Great Lakes - all except Lake Superior. Analysis of some of the captured fish found that survival and over-wintering occurred in areas close to the Great Lakes. [See a map of the Canadian Grass Carp captures](#), from our partners at Asian Carp Canada.



Partner Updates & Regional Notices

Funding for Kawartha Environmental Projects

Property owners, non-profit organizations and community groups in the **Kawartha Conservation watershed** can apply for funding and technical assistance in support of a future environmental project that has the potential to positively impact water quality or ecosystem health.

Learn more about the [2023 Water Fund](#) and apply by April 30, 2023.



Muskoka Second Home Survey

The District Municipality of Muskoka is seeking input from community members with second homes for their Second Home Survey. Respond by **February 27, 2023**. Find details and a link to the survey [on the District website](#).



Hike Haliburton

February 4-5, 2023 - Experience natural beauty during the Hike Haliburton winter festival in the Haliburton Highlands. This outdoor enthusiast festival offers free guided hikes, paid adventure experiences, and more. In the words of an organizer, *"It's local residents and others — cottagers or people who spend a lot of time here — taking a group of folks out and telling them the story of one of their favourite places."* Read more and get a link to register, from the story posted [by KawarthaNOW.com](https://www.kawarthaNOW.com)



Gravenhurst Short-term Rental By-laws

As of January 1, 2023 the **Town of Gravenhurst's** short-term rental (STR) accommodation program by-laws are in effect; all STRs require a license from the town to legally operate. There are related rules outlined for parking, posting a renter's Code of Conduct document, noise, garbage, and more. The annual license fee is \$750, and penalties for not following the rules start at \$1,000 and up. Get a link to this, and other municipal STR news from FOCA's webpage: <https://foca.on.ca/rental/>



Early Bird TSW Lockage Permits

If you boat through the locks of the **Trent Severn Waterways**, you'll want to access reduced pricing on your [2023 seasonal lockage permit](#) - purchase by March 31st!



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Final Thoughts

Electricity & Extreme Weather

Hydro One crews were busy over the Christmas holidays, and have their hands full whenever severe winter weather knocks out power. Here are some images posted to Facebook by Hydro One, over the holidays:



Hydro One reminds everyone to stay clear of fallen power lines; keep at least 10 metres back, even if the line doesn't appear to be live. Report it to 911 and call Hydro One (1-800-434-1235). To track active outages, visit the [Hydro One Stormcentre interactive map](#).

FOCA is the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations,
the voice of the waterfront for the past 60 years.

Connect with our channels:



Find out more about **YOUR ROLE**, today.
info@foca.on.ca | 705-749-3622 | https://foca.on.ca



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