



2011-2014

Strategic Plan



Approved Feb 16, 2011

Executive Summary

In late 2010 the Board of Directors and staff of the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations (FOCA) reviewed FOCA's strategic direction in order to rationalize the operations of the organization, to review FOCA's program and operational needs for the next three years, and to define a plan of action to secure funding sufficient to support the goals of the organization. As part of the review process, strategic planning documents that had been prepared over the last few years were consulted and used as the base for the current plan herein. This plan is reviewed annually by the board of directors and updated as needed.

During the past 47 years FOCA has grown its membership and now includes close to 500 associations plus individual non-farm rural property owners, and has expanded its services in response to the concerns of its members.

FOCA must evolve, and deliver increasing value, while effectively balancing the available resources to do so. The purpose of this strategic planning process is to prioritize its activities and provide guidance for its operations, positioning the organization for growth and greater vitality in the future. New initiatives and significant undertakings will be conditional on alignment relative to our strategic interests and our long-term objectives.

FOCA's approach will be concentrated on supporting our community by effectively addressing priority policy issues, and by consistently speaking to, and on behalf of, Ontario's cottaging communities.

This strategic plan was developed by the management and Board of FOCA. The central theme of this strategic plan was established:

FOCA promotes sustainable waterfront communities by encouraging positive environmental stewardship, supporting strong community leadership, and through promoting fair and equitable public policy.

Four priorities were established:

1. Relevant and visible *Advocacy*
2. Topical and effective *Education and Leadership* on our key issues and subject areas
3. Effective *Communications* to, with, and on behalf of waterfront property owners
4. Solid financial management, fundraising, and infrastructure

The activity described in this plan will require a strategic focus on these three areas:

1. Strong and positive brand recognition for FOCA as a trusted source of information, and enhance public policy profile on our main issues
2. Maintain and grow our sources of funding
3. Engage more people in the conversation about waterfront issues and solutions

The following plan was reviewed by the staff and the FOCA Board of Directors on December 6, 2010. The FOCA Board of Directors and staff will continue the development and completion of the strategic plan for the period 2011 through 2014. The plan was reviewed and adopted as the interim plan on December 6, 2010.

FOCA Board of Directors 2010

Karl Fiander, President

Ted Spence, Vice President

Cliff Hatch, Vice President

Jacqueline Mackey, Treasurer

Bill Cheshire, Secretary

Anne McAuley

Ivan Battye

Malcolm Burwash

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The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations

The Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations, Inc. (FOCA) is a non-profit, member-based association operating within and throughout the Province of Ontario. Since 1963, FOCA has represented the interests of waterfront property owners on matters relevant to their continued prosperity. Incorporated in 1974, FOCA is supported primarily through membership fees, derived annually from approximately 500 member associations that collectively represent almost 50,000 individual families owning waterfront properties.

FOCA maintains an office in the City of Peterborough for the purpose of carrying on the functions of the organization, with a current staff of three full-time employees, and one part-time employee. FOCA has a volunteer Board of Directors of up to fifteen members that are elected at an Annual General Meeting held each March in Toronto. A great deal of the work accomplished by FOCA is through volunteers that act as resources on specific areas of interest to the organization. FOCA maintains relationships with a number of provincial and federal agencies in order to advance our policy interests and to accomplish our mission, particularly in the area of environmental health. FOCA maintains a small number of relationships as required and as appropriate with other not-for-profit (NGO's) and for-profit organizations with complementary objectives.

The primary roles of FOCA are those of advocacy, education and support for non-profit, volunteer-based waterfront groups and individuals, concentrated primarily in the following areas of interest: environmental quality, land use planning, fair taxation, municipal services, emergency services, rural roads, boating, and association management.

Vision

FOCA will be the pre-eminent organization that represents this interest group – on this unifying interest – *protecting the value of waterfront property and the waterfront experience, across Ontario*. FOCA will promote sustainable waterfront communities by encouraging positive environmental stewardship, supporting strong community leadership, and through promoting fair and equitable public policy.

Mission

To provide representation, assistance and leadership to and for cottagers' associations on issues affecting their interests, and to encourage good environmental stewardship on the part of every cottager.

Moving Forward

The FOCA staff is a strong team prepared to execute the strategic vision for the organization. Staff will work with the Board, committees, and partners to deliver on the vision 2011-2014. Board and staff leads on each activity described below will be noted by abbreviations.

Board Nominating Committee - BNC	Executive Director - ED	Partner – P (name of partner)
Board - B	Programs and Membership Coordinator - PMC	Volunteer – V (name)
Board Committee - BC	Communications & Development Coordinator - CDC	

Priority 1: Relevant and visible *Advocacy*

FOCA presents a unified voice advocating for the core interests of rural waterfront residents, and specifically FOCA association and individual members. FOCA is the only organization with Province-wide representation of this group. FOCA will focus our advocacy efforts on the opportunities with Province-wide impacts, and to make best use of our strategic presence within government, NGO's and the private sector. FOCA will periodically conduct surveys to identify major issues affecting the membership in general, and will address these concerns actively by providing information and research to members and decision-makers, and by lobbying government, businesses and others on behalf of its members. FOCA will seek out best practices for major issues, and will encourage interaction amongst our members on common concerns and interests. Where deemed useful FOCA will liaise with other organizations whose objectives are complementary to and consistent with those of FOCA.

1.1 Advocacy and Leadership

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
<p>FOCA has an enhanced, regular, and influential presence with government on matters related to the future of waterfront living.</p>	<p>Maintain or enhance our core presence and profile within the most important committees and consultations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FOCA Presence at key committees • Regular reporting on our advocacy 	<p>(Provincial/Federal)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support for the FOCA membership on effective Provincial election participation ○ WRAFT influence and property taxation profile leading up to the 2011 Provincial election ○ Stewardship Network of Ontario ○ Ontario Biodiversity Council ○ Mining Reforms ○ Ontario Energy Board ○ Water Guardians Network ○ MNR Southern Region Advisory Committee ○ Great Lakes (Annex) Agreement Advisory Panel (AAP) 	<p>ED, CDC</p> <p>BC (WRAFT Board), ED</p> <p>ED, P (SNO)</p> <p>ED, P (OBC)</p> <p>V (T. Spence),ED</p> <p>V (J. McGee),ED</p> <p>ED</p> <p>V (S.Cushing), ED</p> <p>ED</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ O. Building Code Pt 8 reform ○ Land Use Planning with MMAH ○ Water Conservation Coalition ○ Lake Simcoe Act implementation ○ Sturgeon Lake Management Plan ○ Fisheries Management Zone 17 ○ Fisheries Management Zone 10 	<p>ED, (Bill) BC</p> <p>ED, BC (Ted, Anne, Bill)</p> <p>ED</p> <p>PMC</p> <p>ED</p> <p>V (J. Platt)</p> <p>V (E. Pilon)</p>
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Priority 2: Topical and effective education and leadership on our key issues

FOCA will rely increasingly on corporate and other partnerships to continue to deliver our education programs. To attract and maintain successful corporate partnerships we must enhance our profile and work more effectively to communicate with the community of members, users and supporters to whom we regularly provide information and services. The overall goal for FOCA’s education and outreach is to develop a sustainable suite of programs that support the FOCA membership and waterfront property owners generally, and also support FOCA financially.

FOCA’s membership is at the core of this organization, but to be competitive and to remain relevant to our members we must expand our profile as a provincial authority for trusted waterfront living, and related information. FOCA will expand its educational mandate to and beyond the existing membership.

2.1 Support for Local and Regional Associations, Individuals

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
FOCA members have access to and knowledge of enhanced FOCA membership value. Members regularly seek out, support and engage in FOCA programs	Core suite of FOCA programs will be in demand and operating sustainably by year end	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct Roads survey, summarize to the Membership ○ Partner with MOE DESC Lake Partner Program on communications through direct mail, special event(s), and featuring MOE at FOCA events ○ Partner with MNR Bearwise with various print and digital communications. Build FOCA Bearwise web pages. 	CDC, PMC PMC, CDC PMC, CDC

	Financially contributing and highly valued FOCA branded events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct 2 member events (Spring, and Fall) 	
	Strong FOCA brand and involvement at regional events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support and participate in Lakeland Conference (Kawarthas/Haliburton) ○ Support and participate in Lake Links (Rideau) ○ Participate in two other regional events (Algoma/Lake Simcoe/Muskoka/Lake of the Woods) 	<p>PMC, CDC</p> <p>PMC, CDC</p> <p>PMC, CDC</p>
	Recommendation for a member to member sharing protocol and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research effective peer to peer online sharing options as part of Communications Plan 	CDC
	Recommendation for a member to member sharing protocol and tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research effective peer to peer online sharing options as part of Communications Plan 	CDC
	Attend 3 strategic (large) association meetings, 10 total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Select and solicit invitations to attend/present (LOBA, LOWDPOA, MLA, Chandos, 	PMC, ED

		<p>GBA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Apply for student funding for FOCA roadshow staffing (1 or 2 students)	<p>ED</p>
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2.2 FOCA Public Education and programming

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
FOCA is the go-to place for information and support for challenges in local communities	FOCA will be able to effectively handle most one-off enquiries through fact sheets, website referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consolidate the FOCA library onto server for easy electronic access 	PMC, CDC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partner with MNR FireSmart with various print and electronic communications. Get regional TV airplay for campfire PSA 	PMC, CDC
	Host a Cottage Succession series of Events to inform cottagers about financial and family issues related to their cottage assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish relationship with financial expert(s) as sponsor ○ Plan and coordinate the event series (6 events, or more), in conjunction with member associations 	ED, CDC PMC, CDC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 	
	Expand presence in cottage country, and exposure to non-traditional audiences in our geographical area of interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launch digital education channel (Up North TV) on 50 screens displaying FOCA messaging, partner ads by summer 2011 	ED, CDC, P (Redstone Media Group)

	<p>New Cottage Insurance Programming for Members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Soft Launch in November 2010 at CL Show ○ New designated FOCA web pages ○ Direct mail campaign in early 2011 	<p>CDC, ED</p> <p>CDC, ED</p> <p>CDC</p>
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Priority 3: Effective communications to, with, and on behalf of waterfront property owners

FOCA has been involved in waterfront issues and supporting waterfront property owners since 1963. The leadership role that the association has played over several decades has led to our current role as a key source of information for community groups (lake and road associations), and interested individuals on a variety of topics – largely skewed to environmental protection and sustainability.

With a membership spread across Ontario and beyond, FOCA’s communications to members, stakeholders and the public are of critical importance. FOCA plays an important role in its areas of influence, and must ensure the effective dissemination of relevant information and research. FOCA has historically relied on traditional methods of communication with its membership and stakeholders such as the printed materials and direct mail. FOCA will enhance electronic communications by improving its contact list and website, and will expand its use of emerging mechanisms where appropriate, including e-newsletters, social media, and inter-member communications.

FOCA will formalize its communications processes and activities. In the upcoming year, we will utilize the services of an in-house full-time communications support position. FOCA’s membership is at the core of this organization, but to be competitive and to remain relevant to our members we must expand our profile as a provincial authority for trusted waterfront living, and related information. FOCA will expand its reach and thus its membership through corporate and partner organization members/sponsorship. FOCA will create and deliver an ever-expanding presence online; via our website, e-newsletters and social media profiles. We will provide communication materials that appeal to a broader segment of the general public and draw public support for FOCA, utilizing mainstream and special interest media.

3.1 FOCA Member and General Communications

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
FOCA maintains ongoing communications with over 10000 individuals. The FOCA membership is increasing.	An email list of 5000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appeal for individual subscriptions through the FOCA association members 	CDC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular appeals in Elerts 	CDC
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Appeal in Cottage Life 	CDC

		<p>Magazine/website/blog</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Share, swap or buy at least 1 distribution list 	
<p>FOCA is broadly regarded by the membership, the public, regulators and our partners as the most credible source of information on key waterfront issues</p>	<p>Communications plan will be developed and we will establish regular and effective communications with different audiences. Track success and regularly report on FOCA online and other communications for the board, members and corporate partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hire a full time Communications Coordinator ○ Complete a strategic communications plan ○ (2) Report to Membership newsletters, circulated to partners in print and electronic formats. ○ (1) Lake Stewards Newsletter, circulated to partners in print and electronic formats ○ FOCA website review and update ○ Conduct general member survey, report to Board, summarize to the membership ○ Explore producing a ``Year in Review`` report 	<p>ED</p> <p>CDC, ED, B</p> <p>CDC</p> <p>CDC</p> <p>CDC, PMC</p> <p>CDC, PMC</p> <p>CDC, PMC</p> <p>CDC</p>

	FOCA will issue quarterly/seasonal public education releases and be positioned to respond to ongoing freshwater and waterfront issues in the media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Establish relationship with media/communications group to ensure that we are positioned to take advantage of soft advocacy/public education opportunities. ○ Enhance communications relationship through TV PSA's, or regular features in regional / local media (newspapers) 	<p>CDC, ED</p> <p>CDC, ED</p>
FOCA is the leader in waterfront issues and a regular contributor to the commentary on key waterfront issues	FOCA is on the radar of relevant media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular media hits on key issues 	CDC
	FOCA participates in key cottage events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Booths at Spring Cottage Life Show, Fall Cottage Life Show, Ottawa Cottage Show 	CDC, PGM, V
	FOCA has an increased presence at relevant trade shows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ FOCA invited to speak at relevant shows 	CDC, ED

Priority 4: Solid financial management, fundraising and infrastructure

FOCA's core operating revenue is provided by membership fees. Membership fee revenue can be increased through growth in the membership and/or by increasing the level of fees. Association membership has virtually plateaued therefore greater focus will be given to individual membership particularly where there are no existing associations, recognizing that a balance of interests must be managed.

Public sector: FOCA has enjoyed success in attracting public sector grants in support of its environmental and advocacy activities. While public funds are key to certain FOCA functions, public sector funding opportunities will be scrutinized closely to ensure additional projects are consistent with the Strategic Plan and adequate resources, funding, and management time are available.

Private sector: Private sector fundraising through corporate partnerships/sponsorships and other activities is an underdeveloped area of activity for FOCA. The organization will undertake private sector fundraising.

Sufficient financial planning and oversight will ensure there is a sufficient organizational infrastructure to support growth in every aspect of FOCA's operations, from communications with the members to educational programs to human resources policies and procedures.

3.1 Funding and Financial Support

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
FOCA has over 500 individual members, 500 association members and 20 corporate members. The FOCA membership is increasing.	FOCA individual membership grows from 200 to 400, associations from 450 to 475, and to meet the private sector funding goal (see budget).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Develop membership message and integrate it into all FOCA outreach. ○ Individual member appeals (2) ○ Lapsed association appeal ○ WRAFT membership cross marketing appeal ○ New association "cold call" prospecting 	<p>PMC, ED, CDC</p> <p>CDC, PMC</p> <p>PMC</p> <p>ED, PMC</p> <p>PMC, CDC, ED, B</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Regular sponsor communications ○ Regular and diligent A/R management 	ED, CDC PMC
	FOCA attracts and maintains one major new sponsor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Relationship building and prospecting 	ED, B, CDC
	FOCA begins to attract sponsorships / support from individuals beyond our membership base.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enhance public donation opportunities via website and social media, public shows and events. 	CDC
FOCA has strategic alignment and public sector funding	MOE (Lake Partner), MNR (Firesmart, Bearwise) funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negotiate, sign and implement on contractual terms (see Education for details) 	ED, PMC

4.2 FOCA Governance and Oversight

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
FOCA has modern governance structure that address needs of the organization.	Renewed (or at least reviewed) Corporate Objects presented to the FOCA membership for approval at the 2012 AGM.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Board will discuss the corporate objects and approve a final draft for approval by members at the 2011 AGM. 	BNC, ED
	Clean financial audit to present to the 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engage an auditor and 	ED

	AGM	conduct financial audit	
	Employee Policies approved by the board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOCA board will be presented with a draft Employee Policy in early 2011. 	ED, BNC
Consistent messaging and brand awareness	Clear and effective media and communications protocols ; branding strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FOCA board will be presented with a draft protocol in early 2011. 	ED, CDC

4.3 Board Renewal

2014 Vision	2011 Expected Outcomes	2011 Activity	Lead
The FOCA Board of Directors is a balanced complement of individuals with the skills required to assist FOCA in achieving its strategic plan.	The board nominating committee will put forward a complement of board members for approval at the 2011 AGM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2011 Board will include 5 new individuals, including representation from the Kawarthas, Haliburton, Geo. Bay, E. Ont., LOWDPOA will be increased , representing our key areas Current board members will be contacted regarding their future participation. Revise the Board manual Build and implement a webinar capacity for Board meetings. 	BNC, ED President PMC, B

Appendix – Committees and advocacy to be completed

WRAFT influence and property taxation profile leading up to the 2011 Provincial election

Stewardship Network of Ontario

Ontario Biodiversity Council

Mining Reforms

Ontario Energy Board

Water Guardians Network

MNR Southern Region Advisory Committee

Great Lakes (Annex) Agreement Advisory Panel (AAP)

O. Building Code Pt 8 reform

Land Use Planning with MMAH

Water Conservation Coalition

Lake Simcoe Act implementation

Sturgeon Lake Management Plan

Fisheries Management Zone 17

Fisheries Management Zone 10