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**Welcome to the June 2023 edition of *Under the Surface***

We had a great turnout for our AGM on June 11 and have big plans for the future (see more information below). We are also proud to feature our second ASHMuskoka report: in the circle of life, you won't be surprised to learn that calcium decline impacts crustaceans and that could hurt birds. Hey, self-spreaders, we want to hear from you. We've been out presenting our reports and information at a salt summit and in the near north. We hope to see you at a future event.

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Members, volunteers, supporters, politicians, partners and friends joined Friends of the Muskoka Watershed for our 2023 AGM at the Muskoka Steamships Discovery Centre on Sunday, June 11. Presentations were made by Trent University and board members following a successful business meeting.

A new board was elected. Peter Kelley will remain as chair, working with vice-chair Lenore Inniss, treasurer Gord Miller, secretary Norman Yan and directors Neil Hutchinson and Andrew Wagner-Chazalon. A warm welcome to new board directors Michelle de Meel and Jim Davis.

## FROM THE AGM: FOTMW FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

After much study, we at Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW) have selected our project plans for the next five years.

With input from advisors, the board, local experts and using published literature, we determined seven plans for our focus for

trend, current government actions, and potential for local community action to help resolve the threat.

1. Calcium decline has damaged Muskoka forests. We plan to involve the community in restoration using wood ash.
2. Calcium decline has reduced forest carbon capture. Working with university researchers, we will determine what impact healthier forests could have on climate change. How much more carbon will forests capture after ash additions?
3. Calcium decline in forests may increase the risk of spring floods. We will determine if an increase in calcium will increase forest transpiration, reducing the severity of spring floods.
4. Road salt is damaging many Muskoka lakes. We are identifying the source and raising awareness of the issue
5. Hazardous algal blooms are on the rise. We plan to study their causes so we can better predict occurrences and investigate solutions.
6. Novel toxic chemicals may be damaging our lakes. We will determine if aquatic life is threatened and action is needed.
7. Public will and action are needed to protect the environment. Through Citizen Science and other projects, we will motivate, educate and provide opportunities for the community to participate in protecting Muskoka.

**Learn more about FOTMWs seven objectives**

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# ATTN: CITIZEN SCIENTISTS

You have submitted your final data from the first stage of our ASHMuskoka Citizen Science project. Thank you!

Please do not add ash to your control tree! Our intent is to continue to collect more data from your trees.

Trees respond on their own schedule so second year results often show much more benefit from the ash addition.

We need to fundraise so we can continue the program.



## ARE YOU SPREADING ASH ON YOUR OWN PROPERTY?



**We've tested and discovered the ratio of home wood ash needed to restore your own backyard. It's about one large yogurt container per square metre.**

Thank you to those who have contacted us and let us know they are spreading calcium rich ash on their own property.

Email [spencer@fotmw.org](mailto:spencer@fotmw.org) to let us know

Already more than 30 people have reached out to us, letting us know they are hard at work restoring their own backyards. Adding clean wood ash helps make our trees healthier — more resistant to things like drought, heat, disease and windstorms.

If you want the fact sheet on spreading ash on your own property or let us know what you are doing to restore your forests, please contact [spencer@fotmw.org](mailto:spencer@fotmw.org)

We want to track the impact of our ash work and find out who is a



And remember, just one single dose is all you need to replace the  
the calcium lost to decades of acid rain!

[Spencer@fotmw.org](mailto:Spencer@fotmw.org)

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Friends of the Muskoka Watershed

ASHMUSKOKA



## WE'VE RESEARCHED, TESTED, STUDIED & GATHERED DATA

In this newsletter, we are featuring:

*Andrea Smith's literature review: Effects of Chronic Calcium Decline and Soil Acidification on Terrestrial Forest Crustaceans and Molluscs*

This is one of our seven ASHMuskoka reports

While there has been little research, the studies make it clear that snails and isopods respond negatively to acidification of soil and positively to enriched calcium – both through natural calcium-rich soil and experimental addition of lime. Calcium rich soil or litter results in a greater number, distribution and more species of snails and isopods.

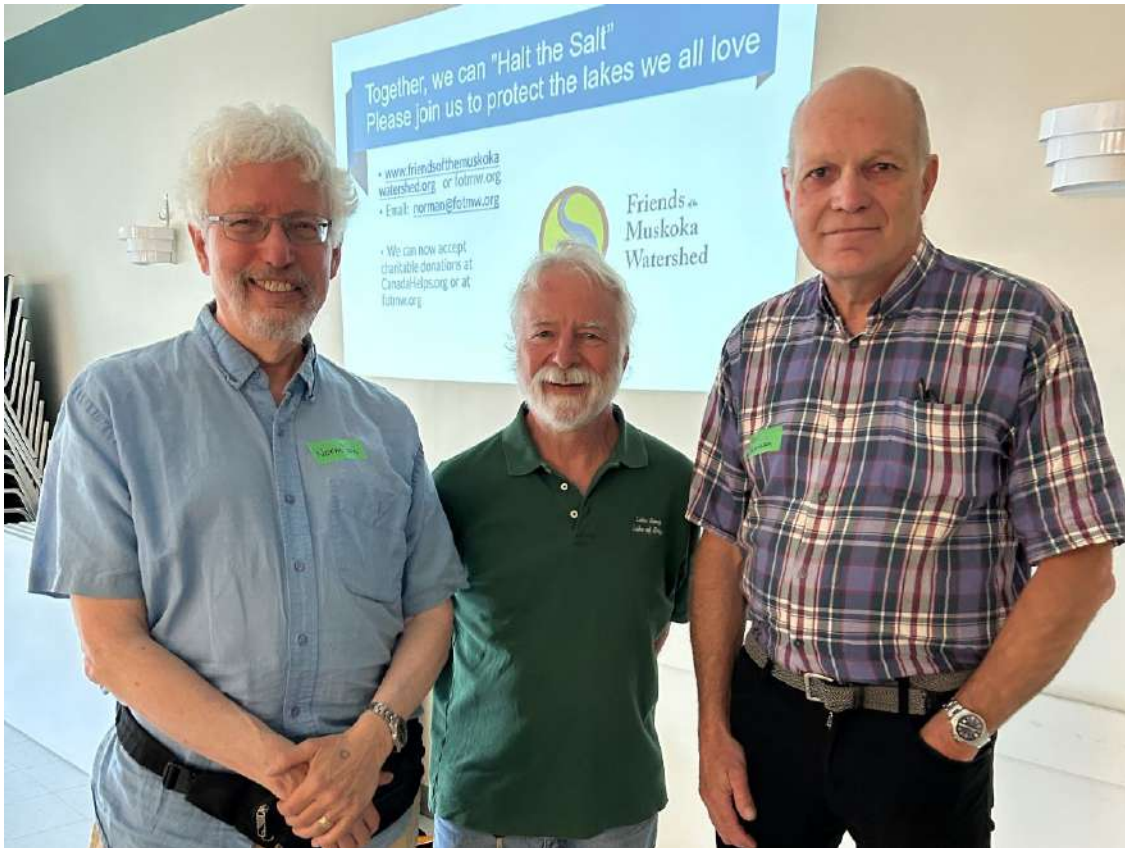
Calcium depletion can be harmful to birds with impacts such as negative effects on eggshell formation.

Environmental Services, follow the link below.

**READ REPORT: Effects of Chronic Calcium Decline**

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***FOTMW directors present***  
at the Gull & Silver Lake Residents Association  
Road Salt Summit



Friends of the Muskoka Watershed directors and scientists Dr. Norman Yan (left) and Dr. Neil Hutchinson (right) presented some of the latest research on road salt impacts on the Muskoka watersheds. Jim Davis (centre) was a coordinator of the Road Salt Summit on June 3 in Gravenhurst. It was open to lake associations from across Muskoka and hosted by the Gull & Silver Lake Residents Association.

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## Do you want to know more about Friends of the Muskoka Watershed?

Bring your questions about our new charity status, ASHMuskoka, road salt, algal blooms and more



We will be at the Port Carling Farmers' Market  
40 Bailey Street,  
on  
Thursday, July 20  
from  
9 a.m. to 2p.m.

## *FOTMW travels to the Near North*





Jocelyn Palm (left) thanks Dr. Norman Yan for sharing FOTMW research and information about calcium decline, algal blooms and other environmental concerns to a full house in Sundridge on June 10.



**Friends** of the  
**Muskoka**  
**Watershed**

**Save the dates for our  
ASHMusoka drives 2023-24**

Saturday, September 16  
Saturday, October 21  
Saturday, November 18  
Saturday, Jan 20  
Saturday, Feb 17  
Saturday, March 16  
Saturday, April 20

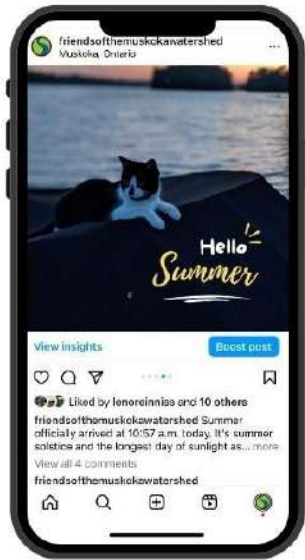
*from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at  
the Bracebridge transfer site*



**To see what we've learned  
visit [fotmw.org/ashmuskoka-  
final-research-reports/](https://fotmw.org/ashmuskoka-final-research-reports/)**



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of the  
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Watershed

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## Friends of the Muskoka Watershed is working to protect our Muskoka Watersheds forever.

Interested in supporting us? We welcome new members, donors, volunteers and supporters. A membership is just \$50 per person, \$90 per family and \$250 for a business. We are a charity and can offer receipts for tax purposes.

Be the change you want to see in the world.

Help us to make a difference.

Contact [sandy@fotmw.org](mailto:sandy@fotmw.org) if you want to know more.

**JOIN as a MEMBER**



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***Turning science into community-wide action  
to protect your Muskoka watershed.***

***Proactively identifying environmental threats and proposing solutions so your piece  
of paradise is preserved for future generations.***

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