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## **Welcome to the May 2023 edition of *Under the Surface***

The biggest news is our AGM on Sunday, June 11 at 2 p.m. This is our first AGM since we earned charitable status in the autumn of 2022.

Invitations are going out to members today (Tuesday), but please contact us if you were missed. Anyone is welcome to attend upon registration, but only members are eligible to vote.

In this edition of *Under the Surface*, we have some photos of our last ash drive until we collect again on Saturday, September 16, 2023. We've been out and about meeting people -- check the photos below. We are also proud to feature our first ASHMuskoka report: we have so much research that we are happy to share.

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Friends of the  
Muskoka  
Watershed

**AGM**  
Sunday, June 11  
at 2 p.m.

**Members:** Your invitation will be in your email today. Please RSVP to the link.

**Guests:** Are you thinking about joining and interested in attending our AGM?

Contact [Sandy@fotmw.org](mailto:Sandy@fotmw.org) to register.

**Only members may vote.**

**At the Muskoka Discovery Centre,  
275 Steamship Bay Road, Gravenhurst**



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## ***Road Salt is a Clear and Present Danger to the Lakes of Muskoka***

Sign up for the Road Salt Summit in Gravenhurst this Saturday



In 2001, Environment Canada released a detailed five-year study on the environmental impact of road salt. They concluded that, at the current levels being used, salt was harmful to freshwater ecosystems, as well as soil, vegetation, drinking water, and wildlife

Despite the Environment Canada study findings, the massive use of road salt to clear roads and parking lots of snow and ice, has continued and in many cases, increased.

In September of 2020, Dr. Norman Yan PhD, FRSC stated the following in his report *The Road Salt Threat to Muskoka Lakes*:  
“Road salt represents a threat to the long-term health of the Muskoka watersheds. Lake Muskoka is holding at least 12,000 tonnes of road salt in its waters, and concentrations in Muskoka Bay have risen to levels that likely threaten its aquatic life.”

### **It's time to act! Sign up for Saturday's session**

On June 3, 2023, the Gull & Silver Lakes Residents' Association is hosting a Road Salt Summit. You are invited to join us to learn of the severity of the problem from Dr. Neil Hutchinson PhD and Dr. Norman Yan PhD. These scientists are leading experts in the area of applied limnology (the study of lakes) and Directors of the Friends of the Muskoka Watershed. We are asking you to spend part of your Saturday morning to invest in protecting the health of the lakes in Muskoka.

**When:** Saturday June 3, 2023 – 10:00am to 12 Noon (with coffee & snacks)

**Where:** St Pauls Church Parish Hall - 231 Hotchkiss Street, Gravenhurst

**Who can come:** All concerned people in Muskoka

**Why:** Because we have a problem and Muskoka is worth protecting

Please RSVP (and for additional information):

Jim Davis or Joanne Smith of the Gull & Silver Lakes Residents' Association. *Due to capacity limits, registration is required.*

**Jim Davis:** (705) 220-3430 [jim.jdhome01@gmail.com](mailto:jim.jdhome01@gmail.com)

**Joanne Smith:** (647) 688-3341 [ryleigh@bell.net](mailto:ryleigh@bell.net)

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## Thanks for saving your ash!



Longtime ash donor Sharon Stahls (left) brought ash to FOTMW's April drive. Dr. Norman Yan thanks ash donor Paul Feist (right) for his donation. The next drive is September 2023.



Dr. Norman Yan (left) congratulates Jim Poirier for donating over **301** kg of wood ash to our ASHMuskoka project.



Larry McKay (centre) is one of our top all time ash donors. At our April 2 drive, he is with Dr. Norman Yan (left) and FOTMW volunteer Jim Martin (right). Larry has donated over **296** kg of wood ash.

Friends of the Muskoka Watershed

ASHMUSKOKA



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

In this newsletter, we are featuring:

*Dr. Natalie Kim's scientific paper Wood Ash Amendments as a Potential Solution to Widespread Calcium Decline in Eastern Canada Forests*

This is one of our seven ASHMuskoka reports

Dr. Natalie Kim's scientific paper *Wood Ash Amendments as a Potential Solution to Widespread Calcium Decline in Eastern Canada Forests*, co-authored by Dr. Shaun Watmough from Trent University and Dr. Norman Yan from Friends of the Muskoka Watershed (FOTMW), reviews research on impacts of calcium deficiency on forests caused by decades of acid rain. Dr. Kim reviews the benefits of calcium and wood ash additions for forest health in eastern Canada.

Adding wood ash could improve forest health. Calcium deficiency is an environmental issue in areas of the Canadian Shield with shallow soil and a history of acid rain, but the application of household wood ash is making a positive difference. Muskoka is one such area, and ash addition could improve the health of the trees and possibly other life in the forests. To read more, follow the link below.

**READ REPORT: Wood Ash as Potential Solution to Calcium Decline**

## Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations AGM on May 6



Dr. Norman Yan, director of FOTMW was a guest presenter to the Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations (CHA) and talked about the environmental impacts of calcium decline. Dr. Yan was presented with a certificate for the his adoption of an acre of the Dahl Forest, part of the Haliburton Land Trust, as a thank you gift for all of his presentations and support over the years. Contact [sandy@fotmw.org](mailto:sandy@fotmw.org) to have a representative of FOTMW speak to your group.

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IT WAS SO MUCH  
FUN TO MEET WITH  
PEOPLE (& A TURTLE)  
AT



SEEDLING DAY



FOTMW chair Peter Kelley was on hand at the MLA Seedling Day on Saturday, May 20 in Port Carling. The Muskoka Lakes Association crew were busy distributing all of native plants ordered by MLA members. FOTMW's Sandy Lockhart (communications) was hard at work talking to many attendees about everything from Citizen Science to the ratio of ash needed to restore your own property. She did find a bit of time for fun though — learning how to safely pick up a snapping turtle from our friends at The Land Between.

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**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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Friends of the Muskoka Watershed

## 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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