



Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha

# children's water festival

## 2018 Final Report

*Prepared by Irene Heaven*

*Many thanks to ...*



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Environmental Learning  
"Living, Learning, Growing"



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Trillium Lakelands District School Board  
U-Links Centre for Community Research  
Water Depot

### ... Thank You



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## Overview

*The Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival is a unique approach to inspire children to become wise stewards of water and related systems through educational, fun and hands-on activities.*

### **Mission statement from HMK Children's Water Festival Strategic Plan 2011.**

The Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival (HMK Children's Water Festival or HMKCWF) has been successfully delivering free water education to our youth on an annual basis since 2005. The HMK Children's Water Festival is a fun filled educational event offered free-of-charge to students from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) area. The TLDSB covers a large geographic area, approximately 11,500 Km<sup>2</sup>, encompassing Haliburton County, the District Municipality of Muskoka and the City of Kawartha Lakes. These Districts share watersheds and waterways impressing the need for water education to ensure healthy water and environments for the communities of these areas and beyond.

At the HMK Children's Water Festival, hundreds of participating students, teachers and parent supervisors are challenged to consider the importance of water to human and environmental health as well as the role of water in economic development. The HMK Children's Water Festival brings together the expertise of educators, water quality and quantity specialists, community volunteers, Trent University students, Fleming College students, Secondary Leadership Students, conservation groups, industry and government to provide elementary students the opportunity to discover the importance and diversity of water. Each day of the festival is filled with interactive, stimulating hands-on activities which relay messages on water conservation, technology, protection and science. Attending the HMK Children's Water Festival and learning in such an interactive way not only complements classroom lessons and helps teachers fulfill Ontario's school curriculum expectations but also excites and motivates students to share information that they acquire with others, causing a ripple effect. Through this experience, participating students come to understand that their attitude towards water matters and that their actions can make a difference and that, ultimately, we are all responsible for maintaining healthy water systems for healthy living.

Although the HMK Children's Water Festival is a two day event, activities and programs initiated at the festival are aimed at expanding the learning experience beyond that day. The HMK Children's Water Festival Teacher's Resource Guide was developed and made available to teachers in 2012. The Water Hero program continues to be popular on site and the 5<sup>th</sup> "Big Splash" contest will be running until December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. The intended outcome in both cases is to increase participation in water education and to promote sharing of this information back in the classroom, within the home and in the community.

The HMK Children's Water Festival is a project of the charitable organization, Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL) and had its 13<sup>th</sup> successful annual festival on October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2018. The HMK Children's Water Festival steering committee would like to thank all our partners, financial supporters and volunteers that have been, and continue to be, vital in making this event the success that it is!

## Steering Committee

The HMK Children's Water Festival steering committee consists of representatives from supporting organizations and other interested individuals:

Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL) –Jim McHardy, [jjmchardy@sympatico.ca](mailto:jjmchardy@sympatico.ca)

– Chair Person

Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL) - Norm Thomas, [thomas75@xittel.ca](mailto:thomas75@xittel.ca)

Kinark Outdoor Centre – Ryan Mortell, [ryan.mortell@kinark.on.ca](mailto:ryan.mortell@kinark.on.ca)

– Facilities Sub-committee lead

U-links Centre for Community Based Research – Sonja Marx, [ulinks@on.aibn.com](mailto:ulinks@on.aibn.com)

– Volunteers Sub-committee lead

Township of Minden Hills – Elisha Weiss, [eweiss@mindenhills.ca](mailto:eweiss@mindenhills.ca)

Other interested individuals comprising the HMKCWF Steering Committee are:

Rick Whitteker – [richard.whitteker@flemingcollege.ca](mailto:richard.whitteker@flemingcollege.ca), Program Sub-committee lead

Tony Armstrong, [tony.armstrong@tldsb.on.ca](mailto:tony.armstrong@tldsb.on.ca), (past trustee for Trillium Lakelands District School Board)

Ron Reid – [re9id@interhop.net](mailto:re9id@interhop.net), Set up/Take down lead

Irene Heaven – [iheaven@outtolearn.ca](mailto:iheaven@outtolearn.ca), HMK Children's Water Festival coordinator.

FEEL is a registered charitable organization in Haliburton and is the parent organization for the Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival.

## The 2018 Festival

The 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival was held on Monday October 1<sup>st</sup> and Tuesday October 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Kinark Outdoor Centre. Located just west of Carnarvon, the Kinark Outdoor Centre is an ideal location for this event as it is centrally located within the Trillium Lakelands District School Board, including Haliburton County, Muskoka District and the City of Kawartha Lakes. The facility is well equipped with indoor areas, a dining hall for volunteer meals, and a spacious natural area for outdoor activity stations. Kinark's forested landscape allows access to a lake, wetlands and open areas thereby connecting the activity centres and their messages to the landscape and providing an overall enhanced experience for participants. The Kinark Outdoor Centre provides exclusive use of all its amenities to the HMK Children's Water Festival during the festival.

## Registration

A digital invitation to register for the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival was distributed to past participating teachers and all elementary schools within the Trillium Lakelands District School Board in late April/early May, 2018. Support from the TLDSB communications department ensured that all elementary schools within the TLDSB were delivered these invitations. The invitation was also uploaded to the TLDSB staff bulletin board. In addition, the invitation flyer was posted on the HMK Children's Water Festival website and Facebook page.

Due to the festival's popularity and limited space, maximum registration was reached mid-June and a waiting list for approximately 75 elementary students was established. The waiting list was utilized in September to optimize the overall festival attendance as registered classes confirmed numbers. The HMKCWF committee believe that the capacity of the festival is between 550 and 600 per day. Participation of more children each day would affect the positive learning experience individuals receive at this educational event. Furthermore, the number of busses that can be accommodated on site daily is also limited.

In total, 1128 elementary students from grades 2-6 attended the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival along with more than 170 teachers, educational assistants and parent supervisors. Fifteen elementary schools from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board and 17 children and 8 parents from the Haliburton Home School Group participated in this year's event. Over the past several years, annual daily attendance has ranged from 500-620 students per day. The continued high participation this year, 564 children/day, and the need to establish a wait list indicates that the HMK Children's Water Festival is considered a meaningful and positive learning experience. Teachers value the active hands on learning environment of the festival and are able to make connections to their classroom teachings throughout the year, enriching the children's overall education.

	County of Haliburton		Muskoka District		City of Kawartha Lakes		Other (ie. Home School, Out of District, etc.)			
	Student #'s	%	Student #'s	%	Student #'s	%	Student #'s	%	Festival Total	Av./day
2005 (3days)	309	27%	76	7%	772	66%			1157	386
2006 (3days)	322	23%	350	25%	747	52%			1419	473
2007 (3days)	407	46%	300	34%	146	20%			883	294
2008 (2days)	44	10%	86	20%	300	70%			430	215
2009 (2days)	152	21%	80	12%	481	67%			713	357
2010 (2 days)	130	16%	280	34%	316	38%	108	13%	834	417
2011 (2 days)	167	18%	427	46%	338	36%			932	466
2012 (2 days)	264	29%	370	41%	269	29%	10	1%	913	457
2013 (2 days)	300	26%	620	55%	207	18%	9	1%	1136	568
2014 (2 days)	374	30%	564	45%	293	24%	13	1%	1244	622
*2015 (2 days)	330	33%	285	28%	374	37%	17	2%	1006	503
2016 (2 days)	262	21%	476	39%	472	38%	24	2%	1234	617
2017 (2 days)	211	20%	494	45%	369	34%	14	1%	1088	544
2018 (2 days)	268	24%	634	56%	209	19%	17	1%	1128	564

***\*Festival deferred to Sept. 26 & 27, 2016 due to work to rule actions by elementary school teachers. Represented here are registrations numbers prior to work to rule action in early June. Numbers are included here to indicate the interest of teachers to participate.***



While the HMK Children's Water Festival is physically located in Minden Hills, its messages reach out beyond the municipal boundaries, educating and impacting the whole of Trillium Lakelands District School Board area. This education outreach benefits Haliburton County, City of Kawartha Lakes, District of Muskoka and beyond.

## Activity Centres

In 2018, the HMK Children's Water Festival initially offered a total of 52 activity centres for participants to choose from. Thirty-eight of these educational centres are owned and maintained by the HMK Children's Water Festival committee and 2 of these were newly developed for this year. Fourteen activity centres were to be facilitated by Outside Presenters but unfortunately one organization cancelled at last minute. It was also necessary to close a few of the volunteer manned activity centres due to an unexpected shortage of student volunteers. Taking into account these closures, the HMKCWF was still able to offer attendees a total of 48 activity centres on Monday and 49 activity centres on Tuesday.

The number and diversification of activity stations is important in maintaining a high quality learning experience for participants, including returning students and teachers from previous years, as is continuously upgrading activity centre content and delivery. Also important is the ability to deliver the expected activity centres. The HMKCWF committee will be discussing a rotation system which will balance a diverse range of activity centres with a conservative expectation of volunteer participation to help ensure that all advertised activity centres will be available and properly facilitated on festival days.

Activity stations and the messages relayed from them are relevant to learning expectations of the Ontario Curriculum. To assist teachers, the activity stations are grouped into themes: Water Conservation, Water Attitudes, Water Technology, Water Protection and Water Science. It is recognized that many of the activities could belong to more than one of the five themes listed. The activity centres available to the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival participants are listed below with new centres indicated:

WC: Water Conservation WA: Water Attitudes WT: Water Technology WP: Water Protection WS: Water Science

Activity Centre	Theme	Location	Map #
Algonquin Highlands Fire Service	WC	Eagles Nest (Outside)	31
Amazing Aquifer	WP	Eagle's Nest (Inside Upper Level)	35
Beaver Fever	WP	The Challenge Course/The Pines	41
Blooming Jeopardy	WP	The Pines	45
Bugs in the Mud	WS	Waterfront (under open shelter)	10
Creeks and Critters	WP	Waterfront	13
Discovering the Water Table	WS	Waterfront	15
Earth in the Balance	WP	The Pines	48
Froggy ... You are Outta There!	WP	Baseball Diamond Field	30
Gchi-Nbi: "Sacred Water"	WA	Waterfront	16
Getting to Know the Osprey	WP	Baseball Diamond Field	27
GREAT Lakes!	WS	Waterfront	4
Haliburton Fire Crew	WC	Waterfront	8
How Clear is Your Lake?	WS	Waterfront (under open shelter)	11
How Much Water Does It Take?	WT	Waterfront	3
How Wet is Our Planet?	WS	Eagles Nest (Back Porch)	39

NEW

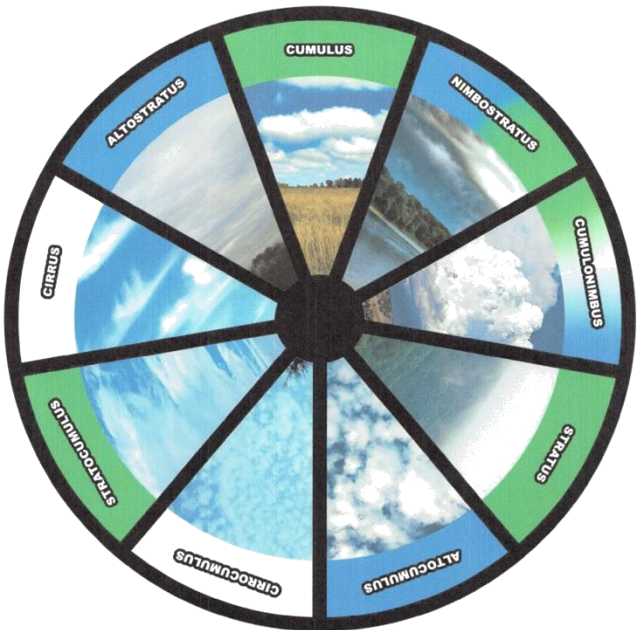
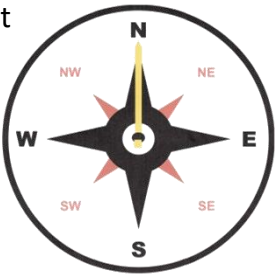
NEW

It's a Trout's Life	WP	Waterfront	6
Just Dam It!	WP	The Challenge Course/The Pines	42
Lather Up!	WC	The Pines	47
Lay My Egg!	WP	Waterfront	17
Migration Headache	WP	The Pines	51
Mother Nature's Respirator	WS	Waterfront	9
No Water Off A Duck's Back	WP	Eagle's Nest (Inside Lower Level)	32
Ontario Provincial Police Marine Unit	WA	Dining Hall (Outside)	26
Osprey Survivor	WS	Dining Hall (Outside)	24
Panning for Gold	WA	Waterfront	14
Pioneer Water Race	WA	Dining Hall (Outside)	25
Poop in the City!	WT	Dining Hall (Outside)	19
Reign in Garbage! (EnviroScape® Model)	WP	Eagle's Nest (Front Porch)	40
Reservoir Rendezvous	WC	Dining Hall (Outside)	18
Riparian Repair	WP	Waterfront	1
Road Salt: the good, the bad & the salty!	WT	The Pines	46
Rolling Through the Shed	WP	Baseball Diamond (Hill Beside)	22
Round You Go, H <sub>2</sub> O!	WS	Waterfront	2
Septic Sights	WT	Dining Hall (Outside)	20
Settle Down!	WP	The Waterfront	7
Shoreline Do's & Don'ts (a display)	WP	Eagle's Nest (Inside Upper Level)	36
Somethin's Fishy Going On	WS	Waterfront (under open shelter)	12
Stream Savers	WP	Eagle's Nest (Inside Lower Level)	33
The Fish is Right	WP	Baseball Diamond Field	28
Tread Lightly	WA	The Pines	43
Turtle Trauma	WP	The Pines	49
Unwelcomed Guests	WP	Waterfront	5
Up on the Watershed	WA	Baseball Diamond Field	29
Wash Out!	WA	The Pines	44
Water Does Wonders	WP	Eagle's Nest (Inside Upper Level)	37
Water Hero Scavenger Hunt	WA	Throughout Festival Grounds, Finish at Water Hero Table	23
Water Runs Downhill	WS	Eagles Nest (Inside Upper Level)	34
What's Coming?	WS	Baseball Diamond (Hill Beside)	21
Where Are all the Turtles?	WP	The Pines	50
Why So Porous?	WS	Eagles Nest (Back Porch)	38
Wonderful Wetlands	WP	The Pines	52

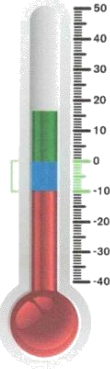


A total of 2 new activity stations were featured at the 2018 Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children’s Water Festival. Funds provided by the Ontario Wildlife Foundation (OWF) in 2018 were used by the HMK Children’s Water Festival committee to develop: "What’s Coming?" and "Road Salt: the good, the bad & the salty".

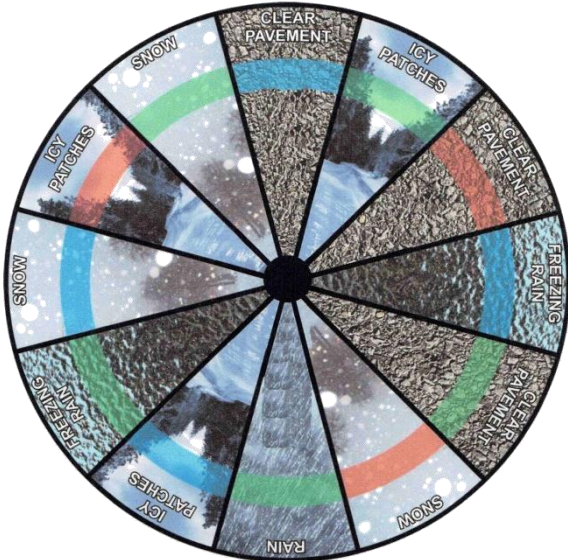
“What’s Coming?” consists of a large wheel that students spin to reveal common cloud types. Participants learn about clouds and weather patterns associated with these formations. Students learn that wind direction also has an effect on weather conditions. Using this combined knowledge, students come to understand basic interpretation and prediction of weather. Volunteers running this activity provided positive feedback with regards to the content and students were seen engaged and having fun. It was concluded that the spinner design was hampered during wet conditions and will look into a solution for next year.



"Road Salt: the good, the bad & the salty." compliments the “What’s Coming?” activity by expanding students’ knowledge of weather prediction to its impact on winter road and sidewalk safety. Salt is often used during winter time to eliminate ice but it can get into our water systems, negatively impacting water quality. Students are challenged to become responsible “road managers” by learning how different weather systems affect conditions of our travel ways and the benefits and risks of different methods used to keep our roads & sidewalks safe during winter months. This activity also uses a large spinning wheel which students seem to have a lot of fun with!



Temperature	Types of precipitation				
	Snow	Icy patches	Freezing rain	Rain	Clear pavement
Warmer than 0°C	Shovel	Let the sun melt the ice for you.	Do nothing – have fun! Higher temperatures mean the rain won't freeze.	Do nothing – have fun!	Do nothing – have fun!
0°C to -10°C	Shovel	Evenly spread small amounts of salt only on the icy areas or use sand for traction.	Evenly spread small amounts of salt to keep rain from freezing.		Do nothing – have fun!
Colder than -10°C	Shovel	Salt doesn't melt ice at these temperatures; use sand for traction instead.			Do nothing – have fun!



Annually there is general maintenance required for all HMKCWF owned activities. This year, two HMKCWF committee meetings were dedicated to reviewing several targeted activity centres: “No Water Off a Duck’s Back”, “The Great Lakes”, “Unwelcomed Guests”, “Blooming Jeopardy”, “Septic Sights” and “Municipal Waste Water”. From this detailed review, additional material needs were identified, updates were made to activity descriptions and outlines of the activity centres were revised. Funds from the Ontario Wildlife Foundation and

RBC Foundation enabled materials to be purchased that were necessary for general upkeep and maintenance of the 34 HMKCWF owned activity centres.

TD Friends of the Environment provided necessary funds to continue the Water Hero Scavenger Hunt activity. This activity was introduced in 2012 and has been an anticipated on-site activity ever since. Upon arrival at the festival, students are given challenge sheets and must work together in small groups to find hidden water facts throughout the festival grounds. This scavenger hunt helps disperse larger numbers of participating students as well as provides a fun group oriented activity. The Water Hero Scavenger Hunt also creates excitement in students about being water stewards and encourages them to continue being good "water heroes" beyond the festival day. Once completed, students are given "Water Hero" bracelets, tattoos and stickers as fun keepsakes. These also act as reminders to students that they are water heroes and to encourage them to continue being good water ambassadors in their classrooms, homes and the broader community.



Stickers



Tattoo

**water hero challenge**

Search the festival for the answers to the questions below. Work as a group to remember the answers (or you can use this handy cheat sheet)

- Where does Canada rank in regards to water use per person world-wide?
- What percentage of municipalities in Canada have experienced water shortages?
- Where do one third of Canadians draw the water for use in their homes?
- Water is unique as it is lighter as a solid than as a liquid. What is this form called?
- This lake in the Northwest Territories is the deepest lake in Canada at 614 meters.
- How much oil makes 95 litres of water unfit for drinking?
- You can survive up to a month without food but how long can you last without water?
- Most of Canadians just turn on a tap for water. On average how far do women have to walk in Africa and Asia to fetch water?
- How many Canadians rely on the Great Lakes for their household water?
- How many litres does it take to flush the average toilet?

If your group is ready for the "Water Hero Challenge", Come to "Hero Headquarters" and show us your smarts!

With thanks to:

Share your water heroics: [waterheroes.ca](http://waterheroes.ca) | #H2Ofestival



The Big Splash Award Contest encourages students to enter their water saving ideas through the Water Hero website ([www.waterheroes.ca](http://www.waterheroes.ca)) after the festival. The school which has the most water saving ideas entered is presented with the Big Splash Award which is hosted at the school until the following HMK Children's Water Festival. It is with the help of TD FEF that this contest and award is possible. Funds provided by TD FEF will allow for another base to be attached to the Big Splash Award providing the necessary room for additional plaques engraved with school names.



In total, eleven organizations and individuals (Outside Presenters) donated time, resources and 46 person days, to provide demonstrations for thirteen activity stations at the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival. Listed below are those Outside Presenters who were at the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival and have been valuable partners in the past:

1. **"Bugs in the Mud"** activity borrowed from the Dorset Environmental Science Centre, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
2. **"Creeks and Critters"** activity borrowed from Bancroft Stewardship Council
3. **"Discovering the Water Table"** presented by Larry Dyke
4. **"Gchi-Nbi: Sacred Water"** presented by TRACKS Youth Program

5. **“Haliburton Fire Crew”** presented by Haliburton Fire Centre, Ministry of Natural Resources
6. **“How Clear is Your Lake?”** presented by the Dorset Environmental Science Centre, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
7. **“OPP Marine Unit”** presented by Ontario Provincial Police
8. **“Panning for Gold”** presented by Gillian Carswell
9. **“Shoreline Do's & Don'ts”** model borrowed from Bancroft Stewardship Council
10. **“Stanhope Fire Rescue”** presented by the Township of Algonquin Highlands Fire Service
11. **“Wash Out!”** presented by Muskoka Watershed Council
12. **“Where are all the Turtles?”** presented by Kawartha Turtle Trauma Centre (Peterborough)
13. **“Wonderful Wetlands”** presented by Kawartha Conservation

The Haliburton County Emergency Medical Services has been a long-time supporter of the HMK Children's Water Festival by providing on-site first aid for the two day event. The Haliburton County EMS continues to be a critical component in providing a safe experience for all participants.

Barry "Bazza" Hayward has been a valuable part of the HMK Children's Water Festival for many years and once again provided an interactive drumming circle for participants over the lunch hour, between 11:30am and 12:30pm. This activity has always been, and continues to be, very popular.

Members of the Bahai of Haliburton have been participating in the HMK Children's Water Festival as Outside Presenters for many years. They created and facilitated two models which taught students about waste water and its treatment in both rural and urban areas: “Septic Sights” and “Municipal Waste Water Treatment”. Due to health issues, members of the group were unable to participate in last year's festival and have since donated the two activity centres to the HMK Children's Water Festival. Members of the Bahai of Haliburton worked with the HMK Children's Water Festival committee during the 2018 year to update these activities. As well, they mentored HMKCWF committee members in the facilitation of these models so that descriptions could be developed and written. In an effort to create a more “kid-fun” name, “Municipal Waste Water Treatment” was renamed “Poop in the City”. Both of these activity centres were facilitated by volunteers at the 2018 festival with great success.

The goal of the HMK Children's Water Festival committee is to maintain a range of topics and have a diverse repertoire of activity stations at the festivals. Through the participation of Outside Presenters, donations of activity centres and funds for activity development, this goal will continue to be met.

## Volunteers

Volunteers are essential to the success of the HMK Children's Water Festival. Over its two day run, there were 198 volunteers leading activity centres, registering schools, parking busses and ensuring an overall positive experience for all participants of the festival. These enthusiastic volunteers included HMKCWF steering committee members, FEEL Board members, Outside Presenters, 11 members from the community (mainly from Haliburton Highlands), 34 Trent University students, 68 students from Fleming College (Lindsay), 21 students from the Kawartha Pine Ridge Youth Leadership in Sustainability class and 8 students from Haliburton Highlands Secondary School Leadership class.

Through a partnership with Trent University and facilitation by U-Links for Community Based Research, students from the first year Environmental and Resource Studies Program can volunteer at the HMKCWF for



part of their course. This year we had a total of 34 students from this program which is significantly lower than previous years. New this year were the 21 students from the Youth Leadership in Sustainability class in Peterborough who participated alongside Trent students jointly facilitating activity centres to attending elementary students. This new partnership was a welcomed addition and will be pursued for future years.

A similar partnership to that with Trent University was initiated with Fleming College two years ago. This year both first and second year students from the Outdoor Instructional Skills Course volunteered at the HMK Children's Water Festival as part of their course. A total of 68 students provided exceptional effort in facilitating important water based messages to younger students while gaining an invaluable learning experience.

Another new relationship was initiated this year with the participation of Haliburton Highlands Secondary School students. Eight students from the newly developed Leadership class helped facilitate activity stations and lead elementary students throughout the festival. It is the intent of the HMKCWF committee to pursue this relationship over the upcoming year with the hope that a partnership similar to that of Trent and Fleming will take root.

Developing partnerships at the secondary level in combination with the existing post-secondary partnerships is exciting and has potential to extend the breadth of valuable experiential learning that can occur at the HMK Children's Water Festival for these students through mentorship opportunities. It also creates an environment of integrated learning by multiple academic levels: elementary, secondary and post-secondary.

## **Budget & Supporters**

The total operating budget for the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival is \$85,610.00 (See Appendix 1). The In-Kind support for the HMK Children's Water Festival contributes to approximately 62 percent of the operating budget, bringing the actual fiscal cost of the 2018 festival down to \$32,140.00. Without In-Kind support, the overall costs of the HMK Children Water Festival would be significantly higher, emphasising the importance of volunteers and in-kind contributions towards delivering this successful, high quality educational event.

The HMK Children's Water Festival involves a year of organization and therefore has necessary associated costs throughout the entire year. It is through the continued support from traditional supporters as well as the dedication of Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning and the HMK Children's Water Festival committee that this year's financial requirements were met. The outcome of this funding and dedication is the delivery of quality water education in an outdoor environment, free of charge to elementary students of the Trillium Lakelands District School Board. The 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival had a total of fourteen financial supporters.

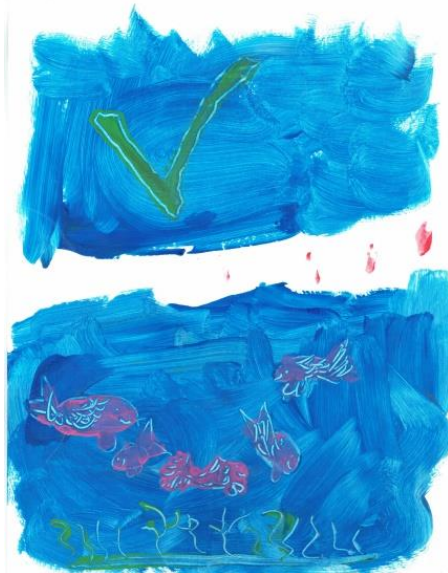
Directed funds from the Ontario Wildlife Foundation and TD Friends of the Environment Foundation made it possible for the HMK Children's Water Festival committee to develop new activity stations, provide materials for the Water Hero Challenge and enhance many existing centres. Non-directed funds from financial supporters enabled the HMKCWF committee to upgrade volunteer activity centre folders, provide volunteer meals and some transportation, and contributed to the overall successful organization and delivery of the 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival.

Although the 2018 budget was met through generous financial contributions from HMK Children's Water Festival supporters, fundraising for general operational and delivery costs continues to be challenging for the steering committee. The steering committee will continue to promote involvement for financial support from municipal governments and organizations in those areas that benefit from water education stemming from the festival but are outside of the Haliburton area; District Municipality of Muskoka and City of Kawartha Lakes. Promotion within Haliburton County will also continue to maintain interest in the event and to increase contributions from businesses. It is necessary for the HMK Children's Water Festival to maintain current fundraising and increase sustainable annual funds to ensure that the quality of this event remains and continues to be free to students. Establishing new funding partners while maintaining already existing financial supporters is essential in furthering a long-term sustainable funding strategy vital to the continued success of this important educational event.

Supporters of the HMK Children's Water Festival were acknowledged in many ways including thank you letters, posting of logos and/or names on the HMK Children's Water Festival website ([www.hmwaterfestival.ca](http://www.hmwaterfestival.ca)), logos and/or names listed on various manuals and publications as well as displayed on a festival on-site sponsor board.

### Additional Highlights

Water education at the HMK Children's Water Festival is working! General feedback and comments provide the committee with annual anecdotal evidence that students who attend the HMKCWF are enjoying themselves while learning about the importance of water and the need for them to become involved and stewards of it. This year, a student from a Haliburton County school came to the water festival with the below paintings and presented them to the coordinator. This is a positive indication that children are anticipating and looking forward to the HMK Children's Water Festival and that messages of water conservation are being learned and retained.



*Clean water, clean lakes = happy fish*



*Polluted water, dirty lakes = unhappy fish*

The coordinator continued to use these pictures as a discussion tool during the welcoming of other schools throughout the rest of the festival. The context, "Is polluted/unhealthy water only bad for fish? No, it is bad for all living things including us! Whose responsibility is it to take care of our water? It is ours!", "Is it good

enough to be a water hero just here at the festival? Is it good enough for a few days, months or even years? No, it is important for us to be water hero's all the time and forever!"

The HMKCWF committee was also sent a set of class assignments from another school which demonstrates that teachers are using the positive learning experience from the water festival to continue with curriculum delivery in the classroom after their visit. These are included in *Appendix 2: Class Assignment Examples*

The 2018 Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival was covered in various media from Haliburton County, and is listed in *Appendix 3: 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival Media Listings*.

## Recommendations

Since 2005, the HMK Children's Water Festival has been successfully bringing free water education to elementary students from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board area. During this time, there have been some consistent financial supporters but there is a need to expand this list of reliable financial supporters.

The Friends of Ecological and Environmental board and HMK Children's Water Festival committee needs to enhance awareness of the festival, highlighting the importance and significance of youth education, to increase involvement and financial support from all municipal governments whose children participate in the HMK Children's Water Festival.

- **It is recommended to maintain existing financial partnerships and stress the need for their continued support;**
- **It is recommended to enhance awareness of the HMK Children's Water Festival within Haliburton County and to increase financial support from corporations and businesses within the County;**
- **It is recommended to emphasise an aggressive campaign reaching out to the District of Muskoka and the City of Kawartha Lakes increasing awareness, involvement and financial support of the HMK Children's Water Festival;**
- **It is recommended that a long term sustainable fund raising strategy is further developed and implemented using existing documentation as a guide. This should be accomplished in collaboration with the HMK Children's Water Festival parent organization, Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning.**

The HMK Children's Water Festival has successfully increased the number of activity stations with a broad range of topics. Developing new activity stations continues to enrich the festival experience and provides a more diverse year-to-year repertoire of stations, sustaining a continued interest with returning students. This strategy also gives opportunity for temporary "retirement" of select activity stations to undergo detailed maintenance.

Facilitation of activity centres is dependent on volunteer participation. Recruitment of community volunteers is year-round but confirmation of student volunteers from Trent, Fleming and secondary leadership classes cannot occur until mid-September after the school year begins. The number of activity centres is provisional on the number of secured volunteers. In 2018, some last minute closures of activity centres were necessary due to decreased numbers of expected student volunteers.



The HMK Children's Water Festival has been successful in establishing and maintaining relationships with organizations that provide Outside Presenters. These partnerships strengthen the educational component of the festival by increasing the overall diversity of water related messages while accommodating larger numbers of participants. By establishing more partnerships outside of Haliburton County will increase awareness and involvement within other districts included within the Trillium Lakelands District School Board area.

- **It is recommended to have a predetermined number of HMKCWF committee owned activity centre offerings for each festival which can consistently be facilitated by at least 2 volunteers;**
- **It is recommended to develop a yearly rotation schedule for activity stations;**
- **It is recommended to continue developing and constructing new activity centres thereby increasing the variety of overall learning stations;**
- **It is recommended that further partnerships with organizations are pursued for donations of new activity centres to the HMK Children's Water Festival;**
- **It is recommended to prioritize existing activity stations to undergo detailed maintenance;**
- **It is recommended that further establishment of partnerships with organizations within the District of Muskoka and City of Kawartha Lakes areas to participate as Outside Presenters at the HMK Children's Water Festival;**
- **It is recommended to actively maintain and regularly update the newly designed Water Hero website to promote continued engagement of teachers, students and parents;**

The HMK Children's Water Festival has developed an important partnership with Trent University through U-Links for Community Based Research. This partnership not only provides essential volunteers to deliver activity centres and help the festival run smoothly but it also provides university students a chance to work with community members while receiving hands-on opportunities in environmental education. A similar partnership was initiated with Fleming College in 2016 which increased post-secondary student participation at the HMKCWF. In 2018 specialized leadership classes from Haliburton Highlands Secondary School (Trillium Lakelands District School Board) and the Youth Leadership in Sustainability Class (Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board) also participated in the HMK Children's Water Festival by facilitating activity centres and providing leadership for small elementary student groups. Working with post-secondary and secondary institutions increases the overall value of the water festival by involving various levels of education in delivering important water stewardship messages. The Haliburton Community has much to offer in terms of volunteers but a "volunteer fatigue" has been experienced for the water festival over the last several years. It is the committee's hope that community member numbers will again increase. With the addition of secondary student involvement there is increased opportunity for post-secondary and secondary students to work alongside each other as well as community members. Providing this unique mentoring opportunity adds another dimension and benefit to the HMK Children's Water Festival.

- **It is recommended that the partnership with Trent University be continued;**
- **It is recommended that a strategy be discussed with Trent University professor(s) to enhance participation of students;**
- **It is recommended that the partnership with Fleming College be continued;**
- **It is recommended to discuss participation of additional classes with Fleming instructors;**
- **It is recommended that other such partnerships be explored with other educational institutions such as Georgian College and Nippissing University in Bracebridge;**
- **It is recommended to nurture and maintain the new partnerships with Kawartha Pine Ridge Leadership in Sustainability Class and Haliburton Highlands Secondary School Leadership Class;**

- **It is recommended to continue building a relationship with the Haliburton Community to maintain and increase volunteer support for future Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festivals;**
- **It is also recommended to continue reaching out to the Muskoka District and City of Kawartha Lakes in order to increase volunteer participation from these areas for future Haliburton-Muskoka Children's Water Festivals.**

It is important to continue advancing educational outreach while maintaining a successful children's water festival as a celebration of water and water education. The Water Hero program initiated in 2012 expands the outreach capacity of the HMK Children's Water Festival water education experience and the Water Hero website ( [www.waterheroes.ca](http://www.waterheroes.ca) ) is a valuable tool for making water education accessible beyond the festival.

Through the U-Links Centre for Community Based Research program, the HMK Children's Water Festival has had several projects completed by students from Trent University. In 2018, Trent students conducted a review of the Water Hero website and provided recommendations to update and improve its usage and relevance.

- **It is recommended that the suggested changes to the Water Hero website be implemented;**
- **It is recommended that the partnership with U-Links Centre for Community Based Research and Trent University be continued and future projects completed, benefiting students of Trent University and the HMK Children's Water Festival as well as its participants.**

It is important for the HMK Children's Water Festival steering committee to outline a more directive strategy to continue with the festival's success, remain viable and achieve sustainability. A strategic and funding plan was drafted in 2011/2012 outlining goals. It is necessary for these to be reviewed and further developed to parallel the overall mandate of the HMK Children's Water Festival and their charitable organization, Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning.

- **It is recommended to review the goals and actions provided within the 2011 HMK Children's Water Festival strategic plan and the 2012 HMK Children's Water Festival funding strategy and formulate an immediate action plan for future festivals;**
- **It is recommended to develop a long term action plan to ensure continued success and growth of the HMK Children's Water Festival and the water education it provides.**

## Conclusion

Since its inception in 2005, the HMK Children's Water Festival has grown and is a valued and well attended water educational event which now accommodates 1100-1200 elementary children over its 2 day run. This festival delivers high quality water education annually to hundreds of elementary students from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board area. Children learn about water in a fun experiential way, in a natural outdoor setting within a relatively short period of time. It is important that the HMK Children's Water Festival continues its water education and strives to reach beyond the two day event and its participants. Communities need to be aware of the importance of water stewardship and the benefit in working alongside our youth in protecting this essential natural resource.

Water education outreach for the HMK Children's Water Festival was initiated in 2011/2012 with the development, production and distribution of the Teacher's Resource Guide. The Water Hero program continues to motivate students beyond the festival through the on-site Water Hero Challenge and the Big Splash contest. Evident is that the Water Hero website has the potential to reach even further:

**Robin Sharkey.**

*June 14, 2017.*

"Greetings from New York! I just wanted to reach out and say thank you... one of the students in my tutoring group was working on a water project yesterday and she ended up on your 'learn something new' web page (this one <http://waterheroes.ca/learn-something-new>) She thought you would like to know that we found excellent info for her project, so she says thank you:) "

**Kate Jackson.**

*December 9, 2017.*

"Good morning, my name is Kate from San Diego, CA. I have been looking all over the web at environmental and water conservation information since I've always been concerned about the environment, and my concern has grown in recent years with all the talk about environmental concerns. In fact, my daughter, Suka and I have been both working hard to incorporate sustainability into our everyday lives.

Recently, Suka came across your page (<http://waterheroes.ca/learn-something-new/>) and told me how helpful and funny your page was. As a mother, I just wanted to thank you for making it and your help in encouraging my daughter with your resources.

"Thanks again for your effort to help educate children as well as raise awareness on this important topic. I am hoping that, because of caring people like you all that the next generation will produce more responsible people. Keep up the great work!"

The Water Hero website has an important role in advancing important educational outreach but needs to be relevant and easy to use, therefore should be a priority going forward into 2019.

Two new activity stations at the 2018 festival supported the committee's goal to provide participants with continual program enrichment. Efforts will continue, however the 2018/2019 year will also focus on developing a method of balancing number of available activity centres with secured volunteer involvement and proper message facilitation.

There is still a need to address the challenges of raising funds, revitalizing committee members and securing overall sustainability. Developing and strengthening long term financial partnerships are necessary in ensuring that the HMK Children's Water Festival continues to provide free, high quality water education to our children through fun and interactive learning experiences. In doing so, the festival will continue fostering awareness of the importance of water and healthy water systems and in the long run, will better our communities and help us live healthier lives.

## Appendix 1: 2018 Final Operating Budget for HMK Children's Water Festival

2018 Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival Final Operating Budget	
Expenses	
Item	Cost
<b>Salaries &amp; Benefits</b>	
Festival Coordinator (\$15,600.00 ~ 1.5 days per week at \$25.00/hr; \$200.00/day)	\$15,600.00
2018 March 31, 2013 - \$3900.00	
June 30, 2013 - \$3900.00	
Sept. 30, 2013. - \$3900.00	
Dec. 31, 2013. - \$3900.00	
Total = \$15,600.00	
<b>Administration/Management</b>	
Steering Committee (task management and project delivery)	\$5,400.00
Meeting Place	\$900.00
Insurance Coverage	
Event Planner	\$605.00
Event	\$910.00
Photocopying/Printing	\$200.00
Mailings	\$50.00
<b>Program Costs</b>	
Activity Centres:	
Development & Construction of New Activity Centres	\$1,100.00
Upgrade & Maintenance of Activity Centres (general)	\$400.00
Storage of Activity Centres	\$1,500.00
Additional Programming	\$300.00
Water Hero Activity Products:	
New Water Hero challenge sheets (1000 sheets = \$250.00)	
Water Hero stickers (2000 = \$500.00)	
Water Hero tatoos (2000 = \$500.00)	
Water Hero Rubber Bracelets (2000=\$750.00)	
Total	\$1,900.00
Water Hero Contest/Big Splash Award (School posters, plaque engraving, base addition)	\$100.00
Volunteer Folder updates	\$50.00
<b>Web Site</b>	
HMKCWF Web Site Maintenance	\$500.00
Water Hero webpage management	\$500.00

<b>Advertisement/Promotion</b>	
Sponsor Information Package Printing	\$50.00
Brochure Printing	\$75.00
<b>Festival</b>	
Personnel for Set Up of Festival (Tents & Activities)	\$1,800.00
Personnel for Festival	\$25,600.00
Outside Presenters	\$7,700.00
Kinark Staff for Festival (included in site use)	
<b>Tents</b>	
Township of Minden Hills ( 2, 10X10)	\$500.00
Minden Agriculture Association (30X60)	\$1,000.00
Abbey North (2, 20X20)	\$1,000.00
Picnic Tables: Township of Algonquin Highlands	\$500.00
Tables and Chairs: Township of Minden Hills	\$500.00
Building Permits for Tents (\$250.00/tent over 20X20)	\$250.00
<b>Volunteers</b>	
U-Links administration and organization of volunteers	\$5,000.00
Water (Water Depot)	\$70.00
Snacks for Volunteers (Todd's Independent Grocery Store)	\$150.00
Volunteer breakfasts (\$4.50/ea )( Kinark)	\$550.00
Volunteer lunches (\$4.50/ea )(Kinark )	\$850.00
Transportation (bussing for Trent Students)	\$1,100.00
Transportation (bussing for Fleming College students)	\$800.00
<b>Facility</b>	
Site use for 2 days ( Kinark includes 100 hours (4 hrs prep + 2, 8-hr days for 5 staff) + 2 maintenance x 2 days + 'day of' coordination)	\$5,200.00
Portable Toilet & Hand Washing Station Rental	\$2,500.00
<b>Capital</b>	
Signage	\$400.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$85,610.00</b>



## Appendix 2: Class Assignment Examples

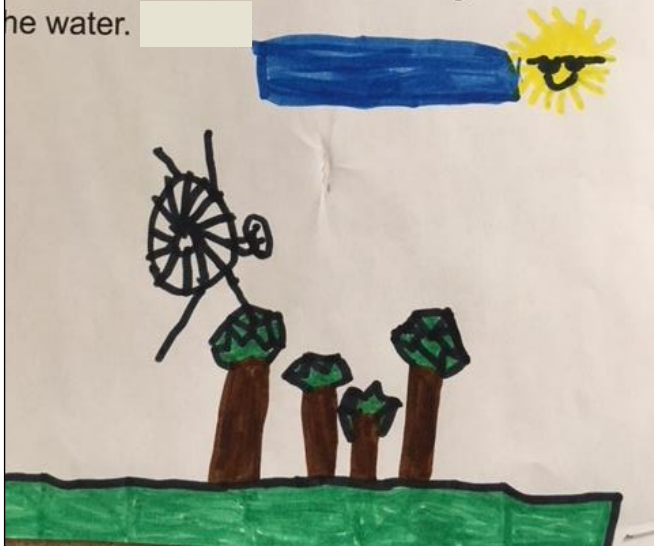
I went to the water festival at Kinark. My favourite activity was to carry a bucket of water over my shoulders. It was showing me how some kids had to carry water a long way. I learned about turtles. I learned the turtle's name was Rusty. He lost his front legs when a raccoon attacked him. Tara



I went to the water festival at kinark. My favorite activity was filling the buckets with water. We learned that some kids had to carry buckets from the lake to their house. I learned about turtles. Some turtles can get hurt by cars and trucks and raccoons.



I went to the water festival at Kinark. My favourite activity was the finding the water hero maps and clues. They were hard to find but it was fun looking for them with my friends. When we had all the clues we got a Water Festival bracelet. I learned about a wood turtle. Wood turtles live in grass near the water.



Water festival

I went to the water festival at kinark. My favourite activity was seeing a turtle without any front legs. I learned that when a bird goes in oil it can't fly because the wings are drippy. Boats have to be careful to not leak any oil.





I liked the water festival at kinark. We get to learn to be a water hero by learning to save water. My favourite activity showing me how waterproof wood works. The wood stops the water from flooding houses.



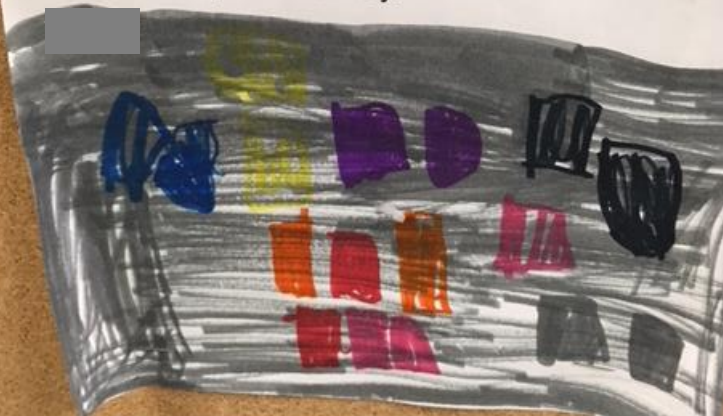
I went to the Water Festival at Kinark. My favourite activity was going in the showers. When I was in the showers it showed me that we can save water with special shower heads. I learned about a wood turtle. the wood turtles name was Rusty. I learned how to tell if a turtle is a female or a male.



I went to the Water Festival at Kinark. My favourite activity was watching the turtles because the turtles were cool. One of the turtles could walk even though he didn't have front legs. I learned that a long time ago that when they had no wells the kids got pails and they went to the lake and got water. Sometimes the water was far away.



I went to the water festival at kinark. My favourite activity was being a water hero. It was fun to roll down the hill and catch the pads that were on the ground. The pads were different things we find in water. I had fun with Kendall, Sophia, Tessa, Cheyenne and Oakley. I learned that turtle lost his legs and now can only crawl slowly.



I went to the water festival at Kinark. My favourite activity was the shower because I got wet. I also got to wear a camouflage raincoat. I saw a turtle and I saw some frogs. I learned that some turtles don't have a bottom shell.



I went to the water festival at Kinark. My favourite thing was the turtles because one didn't have legs. I learned about water and that it is very important to keep it clean.



## **Appendix 3: 2018 HMK Children's Water Festival Media Listings**

### **Learning about water**

Minden Times (pg3), October 4, 2018.

### **A thirst for knowledge**

The Haliburton County Echo (pg3), October 9, 2018.

### **Getting their feet wet**

County Life (pg13), October 1, 2018.