

Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival 2024 Year End Report



Archie Stouffer
Elementary School



Gravenhurst
Public School



Highland Hills
United Church



Macaulay
Public School

In honour of
Marcia Stephen



On-Point
Services



Pine Glen
Public School



TD Friends of the
Environment
Foundation



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About the HMK Children’s Water Festival

The *HMK Children’s Water Festival* is the flagship program of **Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL)**, a registered charity since 2003

Mission Statement

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

Land Acknowledgment:

With respect and gratitude, the Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children’s Water Festival acknowledges that we educate within Williams and Robinson-Huron Treaties First Nations territories as well as the unceded territories of the Algonquin Nation who have all stewarded local watersheds since time immemorial.

2024 Overview & Highlights

Broad Reach and Impact

- In 2024, the HMK Children's Water Festival and its programs engaged over **1,100 children**, marking significant growth in its reach and impact on youth water stewardship education.

Innovative Program Delivery

- **Mobile Programs:** Successfully expanded to new communities through partnerships with organizations like the Bancroft Stewardship Council and the Kennisis Lake Cottage Association.
- **Hybrid Programs:** Reached **41 schools** with updated resources and celebrated creativity and commitment through the Water Hero's *Big Splash Contest*.

Festival Growth

- The **2024 in-person Fall Festival** welcomed **741 young "Water Heroes,"** grades 4 to 6; more than doubling attendance from the previous year (315 participants in 2023). This represents 11 (of 40) elementary schools from the Trillium Lakelands District School Board.

Legacy of Stewardship

- Since its inception in 2005, the Festival has inspired a total of **16,800 students** to become advocates for water conservation and environmental care.

Community Collaboration

- The Festival relied on the support of **over 180 volunteers** and engaged more than **200 teachers and parents**, creating a collaborative environment for learning and growth.
- We partnered with more than **14 educational and environmental organizations** in delivering programs and **22 groups and businesses** providing resources for this.

Commitment to Youth Leadership

- **69 first year Environmental Studies students** from Trent University and **22 students and staff** from the Youth Leadership in Sustainability led interactive learning stations at the Festival. The HMK Children's Water Festival continues to foster the next generation of environmental stewards, ensuring a sustainable future for water conservation efforts.

The 2024 HMK Children's Water Festival "Fall Festival"

On October 1 & 2, 11 Schools of the Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) as well as families with Haliburton's Home School network attended the 2024 HMK Children's Water Festival at the Kinark Outdoor Centre.

In total, 741 grade 4-6 students and more than 180 supporting staff and parent volunteers soaked in fun learning at the Festival.

Kinark offered a great location for this outdoor event in a central location to the TLDSB region, experienced staff support and greater accessibility than other outdoor locations.

The Fall Festival once again actively inspired and taught elementary students about water ecology and stewardship — knowledge they can bring back to their homes, classrooms, and communities. Students had fun while engaging in experiential outdoor learning; visiting in small groups some of the 37 interactive activity stations learning about all things water!

Activity stations were animated by volunteers through the revival of partnerships with Trent University students and the Kawartha Pine Ridge Youth Leadership in Sustainability class. Also supporting in various capacities were 19 community volunteers. Twelve other partnering organizations joined us as Guest Presenters to offer activities of their relevant focus.



Festival by the Numbers

741 young Water Heroes

(From 11 schools in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) and Haliburton's Home School Network, students were inspired to better protect water.)

180+ supporting school mentors participating

(A dedicated team of parents, teachers, support staff and bus drivers attended the Festival from across the region)

12 Guest Presenters

(Partnering organizations offering specialized water-themed activities and educational sessions to expand learning opportunities)

19 community volunteers

(Providing hands-on assistance and sharing their expertise with Festival participants)

37 interactive activity stations

(Each station designed to inspire and teach students about water ecology and stewardship)

- Largely led by young adults; **Youth Leadership in Sustainability (YLS)** students (grades 11 & 12) and undergraduate students from Trent University's Environmental Studies program



Evaluation Results

From the kids:

A total of 27 children completed a survey at the Festival (of 740 students). Of those who responded:

- There is overwhelming support for outdoor learning, with 92% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing that this was a fun and good way to soak in environmentally friendly facts.
- An overwhelming majority (84%) indicated a strong interest in continuing to learn about water systems in class.
- Most participants (62%) expressed confidence that they will use what they learned at home, indicating a meaningful connection between the activities and practical application.

From the teachers, parents and volunteers:

Adults (teachers, parents, and volunteers) surveyed at the Festival confirmed;

- that children learned something new about water,
- that they can see ways to draw upon the children's experience at the Festival back to your classroom,
- that the event met their curriculum expectations,
- that the outdoor learning environment at the Festival enhanced the overall education for students.

School Registrations

Twelve elementary schools in the Trillium Lakelands District School Board registered interest in bringing about 400 students before the June deadline and were accepted into the HMK Children's Water Festival. There were 3 schools who expressed interest early in the autumn but they were placed on a waiting and priority list for direct contact in 2025 and hybrid program pilot programs.

Volunteers

Volunteers are the heart of our work.

Key Stats:

- **150+ volunteers** contributed their time and expertise to HMK Children's Water Festival programs in 2024.
- **22 high school students and 69 university students** led educational activity centers at the Fall Festival.
- Over **25 parent volunteers** supported the 11 attending schools.
- **14 community volunteers** helped with Festival set-up, operation, and take-down.

Steering Committee

The HMK Children's Water Festival is led by a Steering Committee that engages in bi-monthly meetings and advises on planning and running the HMKCWF programs. This year, members included Kara Mitchell, HMK Children's Water Festival Coordinator, Stephanie Field, Board Chair and representative of Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL), Daniela Pagliaro, Administration & Logistics Coordinator for volunteer coordinating, U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research, Elisha Weiss, for Kinark Outdoor Centre, as well as regularly advising Community volunteers and program partnership contacts.

Board of Directors

The leadership and fiduciary responsibility for the HMK Children's Water Festival lies with the Board of Directors of Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL). Under the guidance of Board Chair Stephanie Field, the FEEL Board contributes key skills in financial management, event coordination, fundraising, and administrative support for the Festival. This year, the Board expanded with the addition of two new members, Mike Thorne and Iona Sutcliffe, growing to a dedicated team of six who include:

1. Stephanie Field, Chair
2. Norman Thomas, Past Chair & Founder of FEEL
3. Cheryl McCombe, Interim Treasurer
4. Ilona Sutcliffe, Secretary
5. Camille Smith
6. Mike Thorne

(Photo Caption: Norm Thomas, Founder of FEEL with his partner Joan Grant supporting bus parking at the 2024 HMK Children's Water Festival)



Learning and Activity Station Facilitators

- Activity centres were animated inspiring this year by **22 students** and supporting staff of Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board's Youth Leadership in Sustainability program, making this their fifth year of participation with us.
- **14 volunteers** helped run the Mobile Mini Children's Water Festival organized in partnership with the Kennisis Lake Property Owners Association in July.
- Trent University's 1st year Environmental and Resource Studies Program returned to partner by involving **69 of their students**. These Trent students gained credit and valuable work experience through animating activity centres with us as a part of their post pandemic revival of applied studies in community placements. Special thanks to Daniela Pagliaro from U-Links for coordinating these students' participation at the Festival.

Support Volunteers

- 14 community volunteers helped in various roles both on the Festival day as well as in set-up and take-down for the event.
- Online volunteer registration and feedback forms for volunteers were further developed and applied this year. Volunteers provided feedback which will prove particularly useful in improving and updating our activity centres and volunteer supports in the next year.
- Our list of interested volunteers grew to 43, 20 of whom took active roles. Outreach for new volunteers occurred at two different events in early 2024.



YLS Student volunteers animate our "Beaver Feaver" activity centre.

Activity-based Learning

The 2024 HMK Children's Water Festival proudly offered **37 dynamic activity centres**, designed to provide hands-on, educational experiences aligned with key learning outcomes.

Curriculum-Connected Learning

Our activity centres align with Ontario's Grade 4-6 curriculum, focusing on themes like Water Conservation, Water Technology, and Water Science. To support educators, we provide comprehensive Teachers Guides and online resources that link each activity to relevant curriculum standards, ensuring that the Festival delivers both educational value and community impact.

Donor Impact

A significant portion of the activity centres we draw from, 25 this year, are developed and maintained by FEEL. Funds from the Ontario Wildlife Foundation, the TD Friends of Environment Fund and other donors, helped to develop, improve, and maintain these centres in preparation for the Festival.



The U-Links led activity centre, "Bugs in the Mud"

Ongoing Partnerships

Twelve additional activity centres were provided by valued guest presenters, many of whom have partnered with us for several years. Notable contributors included **TRACKS Youth Program** who led "River Race". Trent Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Science (TRACKS) facilitates dynamic, land-based youth programming that braids multiple scientific approaches by centring Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Travel costs for TRACKS facilitators were gratefully sponsored by Ontario Power Generation.



TRACKS students with the "River Race" activity centre

Water Festival Presenters

Listed below are all 12 Guest Presenters, many of whom have been valuable partners for many years:

1. **Bancroft Stewardship Council**
“Creeks and Critters” activity & “Shoreline Do’s & Don’ts”
2. **Haliburton County Emergency Medical Services**
Providing on-site first aid
3. **Haliburton Fire Management Centre (OMNRF)**
“Haliburton Forest Fire Crew”
4. **Kawartha Conservation**
“Wonderful Wetlands”
5. **Muskoka Watershed Council**
“Wash Out!” on flood management
6. **Ontario Federation of Anglers & Hunters**
“Atlantic Salmon Loss and Restoration”
7. **Township of Algonquin Highlands Fire Services**
“Algonquin Highlands Fire Trucks”
8. **TRACKS Youth Program**
“River Race”
9. **Turtle Guardians**
Introducing wild turtles of the region and their habitat and conservation needs
10. **U-Links Centre for Community Research**
“Bugs in the Mud” through their Woodlands and Waterways project
11. **Federation of Ontario Cottagers’ Association (FOCA)**
Lake Partner Program “What’s in the Water?”
12. **Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA)**
“I Don’t Flush “

The activity centres available to the 2024 HMK Children’s Water Festival participants are listed [here with our map](#).

FEEL currently owns 50 activity-based learning centres for kids to learn about water stewardship. These are available for taking to school yards, public events and ‘mini’ water Festivals in the future.



“Haliburton Forest Fire Crew” station led by the Haliburton Fire Management Centre

Hybrid Programs with Schools

Big Splash Awards

Our Big Splash Awards recognize students who enter “water saving” ideas to our Water Hero Challenge. Our 2024 winners of the Trophy for most entries from a school were the At Last Forest School in Haliburton.



At Last Forest School students and staff accept Trophy (June) for completing many learning activities such as [How wet is our planet / Water on Earth?](#)

Special Mention was also earned by a group of seven grade 7 & 8 students, of K.P. Manson Public School who led an Earth Day clean-up of spots affecting Kahshe Lake.

Students explore — through the knowledge they've 'soaked up' at the HMK Children's Water Festival or at school, ways we can protect and conserve water, then send in these ideas to the Steering Committee. Students, in follow-up activities, are encouraged to pledge to make a specific change in their actions to conserve or protect water.



Water Hero Challenge (cont.)

Children who haven't attended the Fall Festival also engage in our annual Water Hero Challenge. This is a way for all students of the region to celebrate what they've learned about water system health and what they've been inspired to do differently as a result.

This Big Splash contest runs from our in-person Fall Festival to a promotional period in the spring during which we support teachers and mentors with resources for relevant activities. The promotional period starts on World Water Day in March and ends with the end of Earth Week in April. The contest is open to all elementary age students of the region.

This year, prizes for our 'Water Hero' winners included coupons donated by Kawartha Dairy, reusable water bottles from Algonquin Outfitters and cloth bags from Ontario Power Generation.



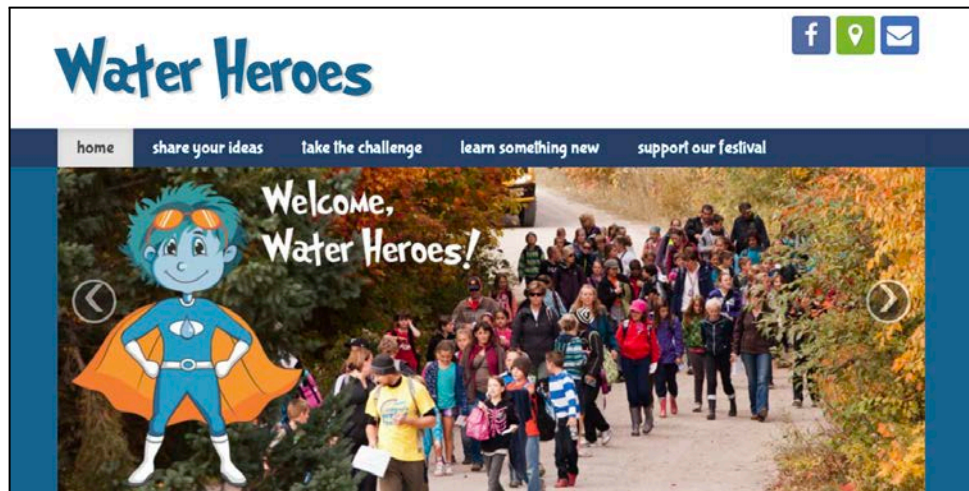
Waters around Kahshe Lake are protected by Earth Day clean up team.



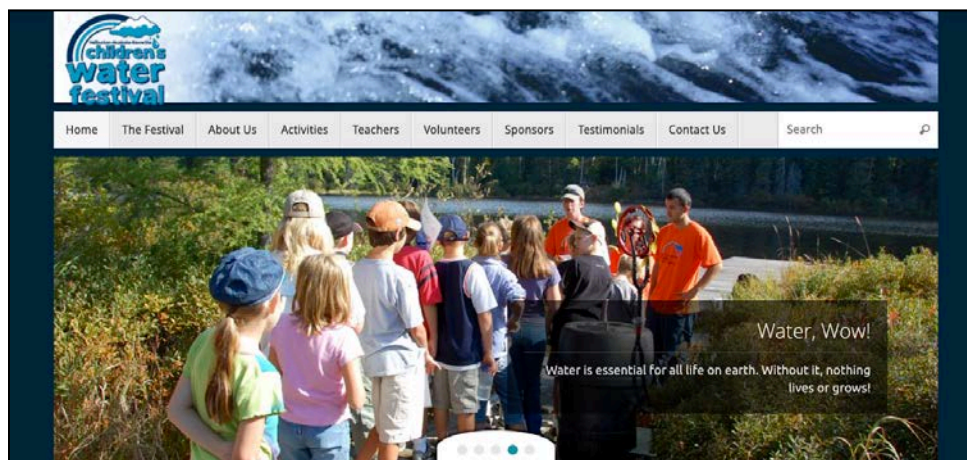
Online Education

Websites

Teachers are supported with resource guides that have been developed over the 19-year history of the Festival and updated each year. These resource guides offer tools for including water as an essential topic in curriculum-linked activities and multiple subjects. These guides and resources are available on our two websites: www.hmkwaterFestival.ca and www.waterheroes.ca.



The waterheroes.ca site offers additional family or student-led activities. It sees an average of 2.8K visitors per year. The “Share Your Ideas” page is the most visited, and “Take the Challenge” is second.



In 2024, we updated our domain for the hmkwaterFestival.ca site which sees an average of 5.9K unique visitors per year.

Social Media

In 2024, we increased our outreach on Social Media via our Facebook page (@H20Festival) and Instagram account (feel education outdoors). The HMKCWF Facebook page is active throughout the year — averaging a few posts per month from January to May, and picking up speed throughout the summer to a few posts per week leading up to the Festival. Post Festival there is an average of a post per week. Many posts are about the Water Festival itself, and many are educational. The top content by reach in 2024 was about the Water Hero campaign, and a call to volunteer. The top content by likes were posts about donors and supporters.



We also increased the collaborative posts and shares with other regional environmental conservation and educational organizations, including 'GuestPresenters' at our Fall Festival.



Media Coverage

We were happy to get more media coverage in 2024 than in the previous few years and built relations and experience in expanding this form of outreach in the future. Here are samples:



Kids take part in the water festival on Kennisis. Submitted.

Kennisis Lake hosts children's water festival

By Lisa Gervais

The Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners' Association (KLCOA) hosted a children's water festival July 13, attended by lake residents and community members. It was run in partnership with the Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival, which has, for more than 15 years, been an outdoor fall event that informs and inspires regional elementary school students to become water stewards in their homes, classrooms and communities. Dysart et al lake associations were invited to have families from their communities join KLCOA members to explore lake health. Children attending the event had some fun visiting a variety of hands-on activity stations where they learned about all things water, while making ecological connections to the natural world around them. For this festival, some of the stations included 'bugs in mud', 'stream savers' and 'stow-away guardians.' While completing the activities, children learned about how invertebrate (benthic) critters in lakes signal lake health, how natural shorelines keep lakes and rivers

clean, and why it is important to clean, drain and dry boats to avoid transporting invasive species to lakes.

Kara Mitchell, coordinator of the festival, said, "it was rejuvenating to share these learning activities with lake association families, thanks to dedicated KLCOA volunteers. There were plenty of connections grown between folk who care about the health of local lakes and shoreline ecosystems and ways we can give back to the waters that sustain us. We look forward to more of such partnerships in the future."

Representatives from the U-Links Centre for Community Based Research and the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Association (FOCA) supported two of the activity stations with equipment and expertise about water quality monitoring with hands-on activities for the kids and information for the parents and caregivers.

Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival programs have been offered to the local school boards and now with community organizations, thanks to the generosity of volunteers, partner programs and sponsors.

Contact Mitchell at info@waterheroes.ca for more information or to get involved.

THEHIGHLANDER.CA

July 18, 2024

Highlander environment 11

Bringing the water festival on the road

By Lisa Gervais

Provincial funding is allowing the Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL) to bring a version of its Children's Water Festival on the road - to reach more children and youth across Haliburton, Muskoka and Kawartha Lakes.

On July 10, MPP Laurie Scott joined a team of volunteers with FEEL to celebrate the launch of its mobile Children's Water Festival program. Last week's event was largely thanks to two grants, totaling \$79,000, from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). The first was a six-month, \$13,000 capital grant awarded last fall, and the second is a two-year, \$66,000 resilient communities fund grant that started this spring.

"Our government is proud to help Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning extend these important water care experiences to even more regional families, schools, and communities in the years to come," said Scott. MPP for Haliburton-Kawartha Lakes-Brock "Together, we are building a future where children and communities understand, appreciate, and protect our precious water resources."

With the OTF capital grant, FEEL purchased a trailer that will store and transport some of its Children's Water Festival activity centres to public and partner events. With the resilient communities fund grant, over the next two years, FEEL will



MPP Laurie Scott, Stephanie Field and Kara Mitchell of FEEL. Photo by Lisa Gervais.

build its resiliency and sustainability through strategic planning, updating its fundraising strategies, and adapting its Children's Water Festival programs to reach more children and youth across Haliburton, Muskoka and Kawartha Lakes, FEEL's Kara Mitchell and Stephanie Field said. For more than 15 years, FEEL has delivered an annual outdoor Children's Water Festival, a fun day camp about water stewardship, for more than 1,000 elementary school children of the Trillium Lakeshore District School

Board region. Through the pandemic, they needed to adapt funding and program approaches. Initial trials of offering a few of their hands-on activities at public events, and in partnerships with local libraries and the Kusbog Lake Association, went well. Mitchell and Field said the trailer, additional staff time, and fundraising involved in the OTF investment promise to carry important water care-inspiring experiences to more regional families, schools, cottages and

regional communities in the seasons and years to come. FEEL's mission is to advance the public's awareness, understanding and appreciation of ecosystems through education. Their volunteers from within regional communities, secondary and post-secondary programs enjoy learning exchanges and connections in giving back to water that gives life. To get involved, find them online or contact info@waterheroes.ca.

8 Minden Times • WEDNESDAY, JULY 24, 2024

Grants fill FEEL's bucket for children's programs

by VIVIAN COLLINGS
Times Staff

The Haliburton - Muskoka - Kawartha Lakes Children's Water Festival has gone mobile thanks to Ontario government grants. Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning (FEEL) has received two grants totaling \$79,000 for the purchase of a covered trailer and to begin new strategic planning.

The first was a \$13,000 Capital Ontario Trillium Foundation grant awarded over six months beginning last fall, and the second is a two-year \$66,000 Resilient Communities Grant that began this spring.

Haliburton - Kawartha Lakes - Brock MPP Laurie Scott joined members of FEEL and Children's Water Festival volunteers on Wednesday, July 10 in Head Lake Park in Haliburton to check out the new trailer and celebrate the beginning of going mobile.

"Our government is proud to help Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning extend these important water care experiences to even more regional families, schools, and communities in the years to come," Scott said. "Together, we are building a future where children and communities understand, appreciate, and protect our precious water resources."

The Children's Water Festival has been running for the past 15 years as an event to encourage elementary school children from Trillium Lakeshore District School Board to become water stewards.

The festival consists of hands-on activities to learn about water and the natural



Volunteers of the Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning stop for a photo in front of FEEL's new trailer to make the Children's Water Festival mobile thanks to Ontario Trillium Foundation grants. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

world around them. "Whether it's helping people learn new things, connect with their community, or simply have fun, organizations like the Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning deliver experiences that make a difference," said Stan Cho, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming. "That's why grant support through the Ontario Trillium Foundation is so important. This funding will help ensure that it remains at the heart of the community for decades to come."

It is held at Kinark Outdoor Centre ev-

ery fall, but now, this event can be brought around the county.

"Initial trials of offering a few of their hands-on activities at public events and in partnerships with local libraries and the Kusbog Lake Association went well. The trailer, additional staff time and fundraising plan involved in the OTF investment promise to carry important water care inspiring experiences to more regional families, schools, cottages and regional communities in the seasons and years to come," said a FEEL press release.

With the second grant, they plan to begin a strategic plan and update fundraising strategies. "FEEL's mission is to advance the public's awareness, understanding and appreciation of ecosystems through education. Their volunteers from within regional communities, secondary and post-secondary programs enjoy learning exchanges and connections in giving back to water that gives life."

Visit www.ecoenvirolearn.org or contact info@waterheroes.ca to learn more.



Top left: Catherine Dyer, Stephanie Field and Norman Thomas pose for a photo. Top right: A group of students fight 'forest fires.' Above left: Cheryl McCombe speaks with another volunteer. Above middle: Dion Grosbeck gets the kids to run/swim upriver. Above right: Rachel Gilham quizzes the kids on bodies of water. Inset: Super Lena is ready for action. Photos by Justin Belanger.

Water festival doubles up on education

By Lisa Gervais

On Oct. 1-2, more than 850 Grade 4-6 students, with their teachers and parent volunteers, gathered at the Kinark Outdoor Centre to take part in the 19th annual Haliburton-Muskoka-Kawartha Children's Water Festival, more than doubling last year's participation.

Children engaged in hands-on fun at 36 activity-based learning stations set up across the site. Elementary schools from across the Trillium Lakelands District School Board and families of local homeschooling networks

were involved.

More than 150 volunteers helped children explore the vital connections between water health, ecosystems, and personal and community well-being through motivational experiences.

The festival, a flagship program of the Haliburton-based charity FEEL (Friends of Ecological and Environmental Learning), is organized in partnership with U-Links Centre for Community-Based Research and the Kinark Outdoor Centre. Significant volunteer support came from high school students in the Kawartha Youth Leadership

in Sustainability (YLS) program and Trent University students from the School of the Environment.

This year, 12 community partners, such as Turtle Guardians, Muskoka Watershed Council, TRACKS (Trent Aboriginal Cultural Knowledge and Science) and the Algonquin Highlands and Haliburton fire crews enriched the programming through their hands-on activities.

"Students soak in messages on water conservation, technology, protection and science and come to understand that their attitudes towards water matter and that their

actions can and will make a difference," coordinator Kara Mitchell said.

She added through the waterheroes.ca website, students can continue their water stewardship journey. Flowing from the festival until the end of April, students, as well as their families, friends and classmates, can enter the Big Splash contest by sending in water-friendly actions they pledge to do in the year ahead. Donated prizes will be awarded to individuals, classes and schools making inspiring positive impacts on local water systems through their 'Water Hero' actions, Mitchell added.

Mobile Programs/Public Education

On June 6, we helped to educate 303 Grade 2-5 students in partnership with the 'Wonders of Wetlands' event organized by the Bancroft Stewardship Council. We loaned 7 activity centres and provided facilitators' guides to this growing bi-annual event, bringing quality water stewardship education to a wider audience.

Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners Association's (KLCOA) Children's Water Festival

On July 13 at the Kennisis Lake Marina, we hosted our 2nd “mini” Children’s Water Festival. At this event we ran 6 different activity-based learning centres in partnership with KLCOA volunteers. Two partners, U-Links and the Federation of Ontario Cottagers' Associations' Lake Partner Program joined us. U-Links led “Bugs in the Mud” and FOCA led a “What’s in the Water?” station.



About 40 children as well as accompanying adult family members and volunteers participated in this half-day event. Much was learned in preparation and running of this pilot program that we look forward to applying to future lake association partnerships.

“The Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners' Association was delighted to be a host for a local version of the Children's Water Festival in 2024. It was a wonderful opportunity for the children of the Kennisis Lakes area to have a fun outdoor experience while learning about the importance of our watersheds and our natural environment. Our children are the lake stewards of tomorrow. Thanks to CWF staff for bringing the Children's Water Festival to the Kennisis Lakes. Highly recommended.”

— Jim Prince



In June, thanks to funds from Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canadian Tire Minden and corporate sponsors of \$500 or more in 2023, we secured a cargo trailer. This has improved both our storage of program equipment (providing a more 'critter proof' space), and the expansion of our mobile programs.

Budget & Supporters

Together we are making a rippling splash!

The budget for the HMK Children's Water Festival programs was \$142,000 in total. About 57%, \$ 81,700, were in-kind contributions.

While the Trillium Lakelands District School Board (TLDSB) could not provide any direct funding at the board level this year, some of the schools in attendance were able to contribute just over \$1,000 collectively in a 'pay what you can' approach. This compares to up to \$10,000 of TLDSB's annual contributions in past years.

With the support of funds from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), FEEL began strategic planning for growth and hired consultants Catherine Dyer & Associates to enhance the fundraising capacity of the HMK Children's Water Festival. New communications and marketing tools have been developed since September. This includes a successful year-end fundraising campaign that raised over \$2,600, a pilot that can be built on for greater returns in years to come.

There were 14 organizations and corporate sponsors in 2024 providing funds for the HMK Children's Water Festival programs and another 10 providing significant in-kind contributions.

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](#), social media announcements, as well as logos and/or names listed on various guides and publications distributed to teachers and volunteers, and displayed on signage at all our events.

Since 2005, the HMK Children's Water Festival has been successfully bringing free water education to elementary students from the TLDSB area.

We have set financial goals for 2025, our 20th Anniversary year, of raising the resources required to run a 2-day Fall Festival at Kinark, expand our mobile programs with at least 2 new connections in Kawartha Lakes and Muskoka locations and to plan for sustainably providing HMKCWF Coordinators contract wages in years ahead. We look forward to gathering the support needed to reach and inspire rippling water stewardship actions with more children and families throughout the watersheds of this beautiful region.



Staff, volunteers and donors at the 2024 HMK Children's Water Festival

Supporters

Thanks to Our 2024 Funding Partners!

Watershed (\$4000+)

- Friends of Ecological & Environmental Learning (FEEL)
- [Kawartha Conservation](#)
- [Ontario Power Generation](#)
- [The Ontario Trillium Foundation](#)
- [TD Friends of the Environment Foundation](#)

Lake (\$1,000 – \$3,999)

- [Kawartha Credit Union](#)
- Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners Association
- [Muskoka Event Services](#)
- On Point Catering Services
- [Ontario Wildlife Foundation](#)

River (\$500 – \$999)

- [Algonquin Outfitters](#)
- [Canadian Tire – Minden](#)
- [Haliburton & District Lions Club](#)
- [Haliburton Rotary Club](#)

Stream (up to \$499)

- Archie Stouffer Elementary School
- Bass Pro Shops / Cabella's
- Gravenhurst Public School
- Kawartha Dairy
- Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
- MacCaulay Public School
- Pine Glen Public School
- Trent University

Additional In-Kind Contributors

- Kinark Outdoor Centre
- Highland Hills United Church
- Minden's Water Depot
- Outward Bound Canada

Financial Reporting

Income

2024 Sources of Cash Funding	Contribution
Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) — Resiliency Grant (program portion)	\$20,405.00
OTF — Capital Grant (for trailer)	\$13,000.00
Kawartha Conservation Foundation	\$7,000.00
Ontario Power Generation	\$4,500.00
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation	\$4,000.00
Individual Donations (CanadaHelps, e-transfers..)	\$2,883.00
Kawartha Credit Union	\$2,000.00
Ontario Wildlife Foundation	\$1,600.00
Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners Association	\$1,515.00
TLDSB Schools	\$1,053.00
Haliburton Rotary	\$500.00
Haliburton Lions	\$500.00
Algonquin Outfitters	\$500.00
Canadian Tire Minden	\$500.00
Cabella's / Bass Pro Shops	\$300.00
Kawartha Dairy	\$100.00
Kawartha Ridge School Board — YLS bussing	\$300.00
Trent University — volunteer bussing	\$600
TOTAL	\$61,256.00

Expenses

Item	HMK CWF Program Costs	In-Kind Contributions
HR – Contract Costs		
Festival Coordinator	\$22,400	
Contract Public event Support/Assistant	\$450	\$5,000
Administration/Management		
Steering Committee (task management and project delivery)		\$5,400
Bookkeeping, FEEL Treasurer & Chair Admin time	\$400	\$3,000
Meeting Platform/Spaces	\$146	\$1,500
Insurance	\$1,550	
Program Costs		
Supplies – General & Activity Centres		
Trailer & Trailer Supplies	\$13,500	
Storage of Activity Centres	\$1,200	\$2,400
Activity Centre Maintenance & Development Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,000
Water Hero Program costs (Big Splash Contest)		
Certificates, rewards, posters, Trophy plaque engraving	\$100	\$600
Web Site & On-line Communications		
HMKCWF & Water Hero website Maintenance & Upgrades	\$1,500	\$400
Communication Software	\$800	\$200
Advertisement/Promotion		
Volunteer Recruitment	\$220	\$500
Information Package & Poster Distribution	\$200	\$200
Mobile program promotions	\$175	
Mobile Programs		
Staff & Volunteer Travel / Mileage	\$700	\$2,800

<i>In-person Fall Festival</i>		
Personnel for Set Up of Festival (Tents & Activities)	\$600	\$1,800
Personnel for Festival	\$898	\$27,200
Guest Presenters: TRACKS +	\$1,770	\$12,000
Staff accommodations	\$501	\$500
Tents		
Tents for Student Lunches & Activity Centres	\$150	\$10,000
Extra Tables and Chairs		\$1,500
Volunteers		
U-Links administration and organization of volunteers		\$5,000
Water (Water Depot)		\$140
Snacks for Volunteers (@ Festival & recognition event)	\$500	\$150
Volunteer breakfasts & Lunches (On-Point Catering)	\$2,407	
Transportation (bussing for volunteer Students)	\$1,162	
Facility		
Site use for 2 days + set up (Kinark)	\$5,169	
Portable Toilet & Hand Washing Station Rental	\$1,752	\$200
Updating event signage	\$1,000	\$200
TOTAL	\$60,250	\$81,690



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