



# Sprucedale & District Horticultural Society

“Just one Dose” (how Wood Ash can restore soil damaged by decades of acid rain) was the topic of Sprucedale & District Horticultural Society’s July meeting.

Sandy Lockhart, Communications Director from Friends of the Muskoka Watershed shared with our group a comprehensive presentation based on information provided by their team of scientists. Little did we know how using wood ash can enhance and help to balance the ecosystem of gardens and forests.

Friends of the Muskoka Watershed are a registered charity that work with scientists, university students and citizens on a variety of environmental improvement projects.



Marian MacLeod (Programs), Lynn McIntosh (President), Sandy Lockhart (Communications Director-Friends of the Muskoka Watershed, Jodi Thibeault (Meetings)

**Friends of the Muskoka Watershed**

**PROTECTING MUSKOKA WATERSHEDS FOREVER**

- We monitor threats to Muskoka watersheds.
- Identify severe ones that no one else is working on.
- Research and find a science-based plan to solve or lessen the threat.
- Offer hope with a planned solution and inspire the will to change.
- Involve the community in the plan
- Make a difference.

**Our focus is science-based, community-wide action.**

Join Friends of the Muskoka Watershed  
[www.fotmw.org](http://www.fotmw.org)

One of these projects is the ASHMuskoka program. Research found that there is a lowered calcium decline in lakes as well as in the forest soil. A kind of environmental osteoporosis.

The ASHMuskoka program includes over 1000 volunteers who have donated and helped to spread tons of wood ash. Since 2019, 25,000 kg of wood ash has been donated by citizens and then spread over a research forest and three maple sugar bushes.

Early studies indicated that household wood ash added to the forest soil assisted in replacing all the calcium lost to years of acid rain. If the trees are healthier, they could capture more carbon, impacting climate change. There could also be enhanced transpiration and the potential to reduce the risk of flooding.

Just think that one 750 gram yogurt container of ash will restore the calcium lost in one square meter.

Check page 2 to learn how to spread your own ash in your forest or garden.

If you wish to donate your ash to the ASHMuskoka program, it can only be accepted at the Rosewarne Transfer Station on Ash Drive days.

For more information visit [www.fotmw.org](http://www.fotmw.org). The website is full of useful information on all of their science-based, community-wide action programs.

As a registered charity, Friends of the Muskoka Watershed welcome donations. Visit [www.fotmw.org/donate](http://www.fotmw.org/donate)

## HOW TO SPREAD YOUR OWN ASH?

The Friends of the Muskoka Watershed shared these tips so that you can also spread your own ash and help to restore your forest and gardens.

- Only use clean ash. Do not burn metallic foil, plastic products, pressure-treated wood, construction waste or wood that may contain chemical preservatives, insecticides, glue, nails, staples, other metals or paint.
- Allow your wood ash to cool completely - for several days before using. Hot ash is a real fire risk to homes, property and forests.
- Rake your cold ash to ensure there are non-ash items.
- Keep your ash dry until you are ready to spread it.
- Wear a mask, gloves and long clothing when spreading ash.
- Spread it in a location that you can keep people and pets away for a couple of days.
- Sprinkle the ash thinly, about 750 gm plastic container over one square metre.
- Only apply ash to each location ONCE. Research suggests that one application is strength to replace 50 years of calcium depletion caused by acid rain.
- Avoid spreading ash over the snow, on a steep slope, or one near surface water.

## **VOLUNTEERS** *NEEDED*

We are hosting the District 18 Annual General Meeting next year in May.

We need volunteers to help make it a great success. Planning is starting now. If you are able to help in any way please contact:  
**Lori Sild at:**  
[lor35ain@hotmail.com](mailto:lor35ain@hotmail.com)

### Sprucedale & District Horticultural Society **AUGUST MEETING**

**When:** Monday, August 21, 2023  
**Time:** 7:00 pm - doors open at 6:30  
**Place:** Novar Community Centre  
25 Laurie St, Novar



**PROGRAM :**  
**SHORELINE RESTORATION**  
Shoreline restoration involves creating a new shoreline vegetative buffer zone and creating and maintaining water smart shoreline structures.

**Refreshments too**  
**Save the Environment**  
**Bring your own Mug**

**Membership Dues:**  
**\$7.00/year**

**Please think about volunteering**

MEET...LEARN...SHARE...GROW...SMILE