



A NEWSLETTER FOR MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS
April 2010

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Getting Information to Decision-Makers

RVCA invests a lot of time studying the details of how our watershed works. . .how much water do we have, where does it come from, how can we protect it for future use, what are the characteristics of our watershed that could degrade or deplete water supplies?

Data and information is collected by the Watershed Sciences & Engineering staff. RVCA's GIS personnel make beautiful maps. The Communications staff makes it readable. And it all comes out as the most up-to-date environmental information for decision-makers in our area whether the topic is lakes, shorelines or fish habitat.

Much of it would be useful background information for your council or committee discussions on land use or zoning approvals, updates to your Official Plan, staff recommendations on development proposals on or near the local watercourses or updates on the local municipal wellhead protection areas or intake protection zones. Recent, expert information produced by the technical specialists at RVCA can help you make good decisions for the benefit of your residents.

Here are a number of key pieces of local, high-quality, environmental information that RVCA makes available for your municipal use. . .some come out regularly and others are one-of-a-kind reports.

At a minimum, you should bookmark the RVCA website (www.rvca.ca) and regularly receive numbers four and five on the below list which will give you full access to all the rest as needed.

1. Watershed Reports

RVCA is committed to compiling and distributing regular Watershed Report cards on the major subwatersheds within the Rideau Valley. They identify current conditions, areas of concern and future management priorities. The Middle Rideau Subwatershed Report came out in Feb 2010; the Jock River Subwatershed Report is expected in Feb 2011; the four other major subwatersheds will follow on an annual basis and then the rotation will start again. Get the most current information on the local catchments in your municipality.

2. Drinking Water Source Protection

RVCA is currently working with our partners at Mississippi Valley Conservation and the MOE to develop science-based plans to protect all sources of municipal drinking water in the Mississippi and Rideau valley areas. Regular updates and news releases about events, open houses and meetings are available from Sommer Casgrain-Robertson at sommer.robertson@mrsourcewater.ca.

3. Flood Forecasting & Warning

One of RVCA's key jobs is Flood Forecasting and Warning throughout the valley. This can only be effective if it is done with enough forewarning to give people the time to react to potential weather and rising water conditions. Municipalities have identified key personnel on their staff who will deal with the municipal responsibilities if a flooding

situation could develop. Individuals who know they are at risk living either on the flood plain or very close to the flood plain could benefit from receiving their own timely copy of all RVCA flood warning bulletins. Please advise any residents who live by the water to send a message to Diane Downey at diane.downey@rvca.ca and ask to go on the Flood Forecasting list.

4. Watershed Briefs

RVCA produces a monthly summary of highlights and activities of prime importance to the municipalities in the Rideau Valley. Topics will include flooding expectations each year, the tree plant numbers by municipality, the levy apportionment by municipality, important program decisions affecting municipal councils, explanations of RVCA policies and processes, opportunities to have RVCA staff report to your council, grant programs for your municipal residents, progress towards municipal drinking water protection in your area, appropriate low water response measures, announcements of recent research results, flood plain mapping or environmental analyses, and other seasonal subjects. If your colleagues aren't getting their copy, encourage them to write to Michelle Paton at michelle.paton@rvca.ca and get on the list.

5. Around the Rideau

RVCA also distributes a newsletter for the general public every two months full of bite-sized information items about environmental events or situations in the watershed. You can review past issues on the RVCA website (www.rvca.ca) and you can receive them regularly right at your own computer by sending a brief note to Michelle Paton at michelle.paton@rvca.ca.

6. LandOwner Resource Centre

RVCA's LandOwner Resource Centre offers personalized technical information and support to residents of the watershed for specific projects (building a dock, shoreline protection) or specific properties (am I in the flood plain?). You and your residents are invited to call 613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504 ext 1128 or 1132 or info@lrconline.com for one-stop answers to your land/water/septic system questions.

7. City Stream Watch Report 2009

City Stream Watch, a consortium of six community groups headed by RVCA, monitors and improves the conditions on 22 of Ottawa's smaller urban and rural tributaries of the Rideau and Ottawa Rivers. Under the supervision of an experienced biologist, hundreds of citizen scientists survey the water and shoreline characteristics. Municipal and RVCA planners value this information for land use and development decisions because it is often the only information ever collected on these small watercourses. Report 2009 covers Barrhaven, Bilberry, Mosquito and Stillwater Creeks and is on the RVCA website. The most recent information on the other streams is also there in previous reports.

Please use this information and share these sources with your municipal colleagues and interested residents of your municipality. Good information makes good decisions.



Kemptville Creek at the Oxford Mills Dam.

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