
RVCA News Release

VETERANS INSTRUMENTAL IN EARLY CONSERVATION EFFORTS

MANOTICK, NOVEMBER 7, 2005 — During Veterans Week – November 5th to 11th, 2005 — the community reflects upon the valuable contribution by our Veterans to the quality of life enjoyed by Canadians. The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority asks members of the watershed community to remember as well the instrumental role of Veterans in restoring Ontario's natural resources and the conservation movement.

In his book, *Conservation by the People — The History of the Conservation Movement in Ontario to 1970*, Dr. A.H. Richardson describes the unhealthy state of Ontario's natural resources in the 1930's and 1940's. Desiccation, floods, erosion, pollution of waters are among words Richardson uses to describe the state of natural resources in the province. In 1941, the Guelph Conference, concerned with an economic slump following the war and the need to provide useful employment for individuals returning from active service, developed an ambitious program of conservation. The Ontario Conservation and Reforestation Association, the Canadian Institute of Forestry, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, and the Royal Canadian Legion were among the member organizations of the Guelph Conference.

The Guelph Conference agreed that "to arrest the degradation of natural resources and to restore in some measure their lost productivity involves replacing the unplanned exploitation by planned management based on knowledge and recognizing public as well as private interest." The outcome of negotiations and the conservation efforts of our Veterans lead to the creation of the Conservation Authorities Act in 1946.

Since that time, 36 Conservation Authorities have been established through a partnership between local municipalities and the provincial government. Many veterans have been and continue to be members of Ontario's Conservation Authorities.

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