

Purpose of the Watershed Plan

The Kemptville Creek Watershed Plan was initiated in 1993 by the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and its member municipalities. The planning process adopted a multi-stakeholder approach, involving people from all facets of the watershed community. The planning process encouraged and solicited the input from the watershed community.

The purpose of the plan was to:

- outline goals, objectives and methods for the rehabilitation, protection, and enhancement of the natural features and functions and health of the Kemptville Creek watershed
- devise and outline a watershed management strategy based on the “ecosystem approach” to resource management and land use planning
- address a number of unresolved issues afflicting the watershed

Use of the Watershed Plan

The Kemptville Creek Watershed Plan can be used to:

- assist decision makers in land use planning by providing the necessary background information needed to make sound land management decisions
- indicate the step by step strategies necessary for the improvement of the local natural environment
- identify ways in which the general public, interest groups, schools, etc. can perform “hands-on” stewardship activities to achieve the goals and objectives of the plan
- determine the resource management and conservation service programs in which resource management and planning agencies and interest groups can engage in the upcoming years

Issues

Issues as identified by the watershed community include, beaver management, water quality, recreation, water levels, dam operation, and wildlife habitat.

Watershed Objectives

The following objectives were established through an assessment of the issues and stakeholder consultation:

Water Quality

- reduce nutrient loading in Barnes Creek and in and downstream of Kemptville on Kemptville Creek to meet Provincial Water Quality Objectives
- reduce bacteria loading in Barnes Creek and within and below Kemptville on Kemptville Creek to meet Provincial Water Quality Objectives (allowing safe, casual, water-based recreation)
- maintain and improve water quality aesthetics throughout the watershed
- maintain and improve ground-water quality

Wildlife/Naturalization

- encourage and enhance appropriate biodiversity throughout the watershed
- enhance fisheries populations and habitat throughout the watershed
- protect and enhance ecological linkages
- maintain baseflows (for aquatic health purposes)

Socio-Economic

- develop and enhance recreation in and around Kemptville Creek
- increase tourism (ecotourism)
- preserve the rural character of the watershed
- protect agricultural viability within the watershed
- provide stakeholders with educational material on all facets of the natural environment

Executive Summary

Water Quantity

- resolve conflicts between beaver activity and land drainage
- resolve conflicts between the operation of the Oxford Mills dam, upstream drainage and water levels
- maintain and protect groundwater resources
- maintain baseflows (for continuous streamflow all year round)
- avoid increases in flood damage potential and ensure flood risks are not over-estimated

Watershed Management Strategies/Recommendations

Some of the key actions identified to achieve the watershed objectives include:

- Educate all watershed stakeholders re: the importance of and ways to achieve a healthy local environment
- Complete a subwatershed plan on Barnes Creek to address the problems of water quality and water levels
- Implement Land Use planning policies to address many of the identified issues through the land use planning process. Long term planning is required in order to protect existing significant watershed health features and functions

- Create a Citizen Action Group to implement many of the action items in order to achieve the objectives. As well, all facets of the watershed community must support and become involved in order to achieve these objectives
- Obtain information to develop a better understanding of the natural processes at work within the watershed
- Monitor ecosystem features to assess the effectiveness of the proposed actions in improving ecological health.

A list of ways in which watershed residents, local politicians, landowners, etc. can improve the health of the local environment is included for quick reference.