

**Rideau Lakes Watershed Plan – Technical Advisory Committee Meeting 1
Friday Feb. 4, 2005 – 10:00 a.m., Portland**

Minutes

Present: Lynn Preston, RVCA Acting as Chair
Bruce Reid, RVCA
Scott Bryce, Town of Westport
Sarah Rosolen, Centre for Sustainable Watersheds
Sheldon Laidman, Township of Rideau Lakes
Mark Rowsell, Eastern Ontario Model Forest
Chris Burns, Ministry of Natural Resources, Kemptville
Mark Green, Lanark, Leeds, Grenville Health Unit
Paul Snider, Township of Drummond/North Elmsley
Alida Mitton, Ministry of the Environment, Kingston
Jeff Dean, CGIS representing Tay Valley Township
Andy Smith, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Jennifer Lamoureux, RVCA
Patrick Larson, RVCA
Asher Rizvi, RVCA
Matt Craig, RVCA

Regrets: Gordon Burns, Township of South Frontenac
County of Lanark, Tourism

1. Introduction and Welcome

Lynn Preston welcomed all to the meeting. All attendees introduced themselves. Lynn explained the purpose of the meeting was to:

- explain what a watershed plan is
- explain why one is being undertaken in the Rideau Lakes area.
- discuss agency roles in this watershed plan
- discuss what makes for a successful watershed plan
- list the issues affecting this watershed
- discuss the proposed process and the role of the TAC

2. Watershed Planning – What is it?

Lynn gave a brief slide show presentation on watershed planning. She also briefly discussed the document “RVCA Watershed Management Planning Strategy and Guidelines” (attached). She explained that the RVCA may be looking for a different way of completing watershed plans in that the budget is limited at this time (\$30,000 for 2005). In the past, watershed plans have taken a long time to complete (usually 3 years) and unfortunately often sit on shelves, are not referred to when undertaking plan input and review and are generally not implemented.

3. Success of the Watershed Plan

She then opened the floor to the question: *What in your view makes for a successful watershed plan?* The following was heard:

- They need to have quantifiable information i.e. use indicators. There must be reporting of present and improved conditions
- There must be buy-in (from councils and others) to implement
- Recommendations must come with resources to implement
- There must be money available to amend the planning documents as necessary to reflect the recommendations
- Councils must buy into the process early in the process otherwise they don't support/implement
- Some reports (e.g. Rideau Lakes Study) take years to be adopted and used. It needs updating
- Recommendations expected to be included in OP and ZBL's must be specific e.g. setbacks. Must suit the conditions in that portion of the watershed and must be quantifiable (beyond warm fuzzy planning statements)
- Plan must tie action to results i.e. if x is implemented then y results will occur (make predictions)
- Need specific description of state of resource e.g. Tay Fisheries study
- Actions must be prioritized
- Information gathered and reported must be made available in a format that is useful
- More dialogue with councils needed. Clerks and planners must be involved too
- Must make connection to bigger picture e.g. Source Protection. It will be legislated therefore councils will participate
- Plan must educate shoreline residents
- Plan must look at economic realities of the area e.g. more development means more tax base. Must balance economy with environment
- Municipal clerks do not have time for meetings. Process must keep clerks informed but not have too many meetings
- Use community to collect needed data
- "Front End Load" process with municipalities. Get them involved, committed early in process then bring technical advisors in to figure out how the goals and objectives should be reached
- must facilitate communication with councils/clerks
- plans must be completed quickly so that implementation can begin quickly
- identify how the plan and the health (especially declining health) of the watershed can impact the municipalities economically
- identify what it will cost to implement (directly, through lost tax base, etc)
- community must be involved to identify issues
- lots of discussion ensued about data management and sharing. This should be dealt with during the process or as a subcommittee during implementation
- councils must be educated on basic environmental principles

- identify implications of *not* improving/protecting watershed health
- find a case study and illustrate what *could* happen
- focus on source protection and nutrient management
- be cognizant that this project will compete with councils attention on a number of other issues
- encourage municipalities to work together
- all players must be involved including public and interest groups

4. Proposed Process

Lynn explained the attached process is what has been used in the past. See attached.

5. Issues

The following issues were suggested should be addressed in the plan:

- Lake association concerns
- Re-development (on existing lots). How much development potential is there on lakes?
- Over-development of shoreline e.g. with retaining walls, docks, etc.
- “pushing” established setbacks
- Source protection. Can lake water be used for domestic supply?
- Fish populations and health (has economic implications)
- Stress of tournaments on fish populations
- Perception that commercial fishing a problem on Upper Rideau
- Incremental loss of fish habitat
- Loud boats
- Faulty septic
- Contamination of wells
- Weeds and rate of growth
- Invasive species
- Need for tree cutting and fill by-laws
- Need for higher frontage vs. bigger setbacks
- Density of development
- Incremental wetland loss and need for wetland inventories
- Water level management
- No check up on site plans
- Grey water
- Stormwater runoff and management

6. What Information/Resources are Available? What can you contribute to this project?

The following information is available:

- MoE: is undertaking a pilot program on Charleston Lake. They have installed piezometers to evaluate behaviour/efficiencies of septic systems. MoE provided money for piezometers, did well samples, paid for analysis and will pay for soil analysis. She suggested this could be done on Big Rideau Lake too. MoE has some old groundwater studies data

- Mark reported that EOMF is looking at SOLRIS data imagery (to be completed in Nov) and will provide imagery of all Kemptville district. They also do State of the Forest reporting using Environment Canada indicators. They also have 1999 and 2000 air photos of all of Kemptville district
- Chris reported that MNR has spatial data of that area of the watershed in Lanark County. They have stream flow and water level data, fish habitat reports, creel reports, public land maps and policies, etc. This year they will be doing littoral zone indices, and near shore indices. They have data on water quality, wetland evaluations, OFAH reports on invasives and some information on species composition of watershed.
- In municipalities, they have groundwater studies and well head protection studies (Westport). They also have their OP's and ZBL's at disposal. Westport is updating their OP
- CSW has: State of the Lake Report which needs some analysis to be completed; water quality reports; littoral zone inventories in the Upper and Big Rideaus. They have Stormwater reports for Portland and some biodiversity inventories. They have shoal assessments, creel, lake trout tracking data, loon monitoring data and young of the year information (35 sites)
- It was speculated that Parks Canada could provide information on water fowl staging and boat lockages

7. Role of the TAC

Lynn referred the group to the attached. She mentioned that the next meeting for the TAC likely wouldn't be until the review of the State of the Watershed report. After that, the TAC will have a larger role in helping set goals and objectives and attaching actions to those that will allow objectives to be met.

8. Next Steps

Lynn suggested that the RVCA must decide how to proceed with this project based on the information heard today. The next thing planned is a public meeting to ask the larger watershed community their views on what should be in the plan and what issues should be addressed. The next meeting will be at the call of the chair.