



Rideau Valley  
Conservation  
Authority

RVCA Work In

# Smiths Falls

**T**he strength and resiliency of our local communities rely on the Rideau River and its surrounding watershed. Without lakes, rivers, streams, forests, wetlands, floodplains, natural shorelines and groundwater aquifers we wouldn't have air to breathe, water to drink, places to boat, swim and fish, water and soil to support agriculture and industry or green spaces to explore and relax in. Simply put, natural areas sustain life. They also support economic development and property values, reduce flood, erosion and drought impacts and they are the best defense against climate change.

Since people and nature are interconnected and interdependent, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) works closely with local municipalities, residents and other partners to deliver programs and services that protect, restore and enhance the Rideau watershed. RVCA's work also protects people and property from natural hazards like flooding and erosion.



## Serving your Municipality

It's hard to find a municipal service that RVCA's programs don't support either directly or indirectly. We provide watershed knowledge and expertise that guides municipal decision-making, assists with emergency management and ensures sustainable development. Our programs also support local economic development, tourism and recreation and we provide these programs in a consistent cost-effective manner across the watershed.

- **Source water protection** — develop and implement local policies to protect sources of municipal drinking water and regional groundwater
- **Flood protection and warning** — reduce the threat of loss of life and property damage, helping municipalities prepare and deal with potential flooding and flood emergencies
- **Low water response** — enable communication amongst water management agencies and water consumers and facilitate optimal management when resources are scarce
- **Development regulations** — regulate development on hazard lands (floodplains, steep slopes, unstable soil) and in environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, shorelines and valley lands) under *Ontario Regulation 174/06 — Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation*
- **Planning services** — provide professional, technical review of development proposals within or adjacent to natural areas for member municipalities regarding official plan amendments, zoning by-law amendments, plans of subdivision, site plans, consents/severances and minor variances
- **Septic approvals and re-inspections** — provide inspection and approval services for new or replacement septic systems under the *Ontario Building Code* and provide reinspection services for existing septic systems to ensure they function properly, especially around lakes
- **Watershed monitoring** — collect data to better understand watershed health and pursue targeted remediation efforts for maximum benefit
- **Subwatershed and catchment reporting** — present municipalities with science-based information that allows for the adoption and implementation of policies and programs that ensure the health of watersheds and the achievement of long-term watershed management goals
- **Conservation lands** — manage 3,000+ hectares of sensitive, natural land for strategic protection of vulnerable habitats and valuable local resources

### What it means in Smiths Falls

- *Middle Rideau Subwatershed* Report released in 2016 along with detailed reports for its ten catchments; this is the second reporting cycle for the Middle Rideau following the 2009 report.
- Policy interpretation, implementation tools and other support was provided to municipal staff regarding the *Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan*, which focuses on policies to protect municipal sources of drinking water and is required under the *Clean Water Act*. We provided specially trained Risk Management Officials and Inspectors to implement the *Clean Water Act* Part IV policies within the Town of Smiths Falls. Smiths Falls received Provincial Source Protection Municipal Implementation Funding to cover costs associated with Source Protection implementation.
- 18 flood forecasting and 10 low water response messages were issued in 2018; 16 sites monitored for water levels, 6 monitored for precipitation and 6 sites monitored for snowpack.
- 2 minor variances, 2 pre-consultations, 1 site plan control, 1 zoning by-law amendment and 1 *Environmental Assessment Act* Technical Advisory Committee input completed in 2018 under Conservation Authority *Planning Act* responsibilities.
- 1 square kilometre of hazard mapping (floodplain, steep slopes, unstable soils, wetlands, shorelines and valley lands) completed in Smiths Falls.
- 1 stream water quality site sampled as part of RVCA baseline monitoring.

### Serving your Residents

RVCA works closely with watershed residents to provide friendly, technical guidance and support to help landowners develop their property in a sustainable manner. We also provide support and financial assistance to help property owners undertake stewardship projects that benefit the watershed. At our popular conservation areas, the RVCA also provides outdoor recreation opportunities and looks to educate the next generation of conservationists. By investing in our watershed — the land and the people — we are creating healthy, resilient communities.

- **Stewardship programs** — work with landowners to restore and improve our watershed through tree planting and shoreline naturalization projects; provide technical advice and assistance for on-the-ground efforts
- **Grant programs** — help landowners complete projects that improve water quality, wildlife habitat and overall ecosystem health
- **Education programs** — provide high quality curriculum-based environmental education programs to watershed children — building our future watershed guardians
- **Conservation areas** — offer 11 developed conservation areas for public use and enjoyment; inexpensive, recreational experiences including trails, boat launches, beaches, picnic shelters, education programs for schools and community groups and summer day camps
- **Property & environmental information and resources** — create and distribute environmental information; support real estate transactions with site-specific information regarding setbacks from natural hazards; provide peace-of-mind through septic approvals and re-inspections that systems are constructed and working properly

### What it means in Smiths Falls

- Residents have access to outdoor recreation at nearby developed conservation areas including Mill Pond Conservation Area, Perth Wildlife Reserve and Rideau Ferry.
- 500 trees planted in Smiths Falls since 1984 with fundraised dollars totaling \$800 for projects valued at \$1,150.
- 70 butternut seedlings planted in Smiths Falls through the Butternut Recovery Program since 2007.
- 10 annual passes donated to the Library MAPsack Program at libraries including Smiths Falls and Perth.
- 2 Shoreline Naturalization Program projects completed in 2018 — 135 trees and shrubs planted totaling 53 metres of new buffer with \$2,383 funding towards a project value of \$2,383.
- 2 applications, 2 permits issued, 1 complaint, 1 clearance letter and 1 property inquiry processed regarding Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* in 2018.
- Assisted with shoreline planting project in Lower Reach Park.

## Dollars and Cents

The RVCA's 2019 budget is \$10.76 million. Levy request amounts to just over half of our revenue meaning another 4.5 million is coming from other sources such as fundraising, the province, grants and special levies.

At the RVCA, every \$1 from our member municipality translates into \$2 being invested into the Rideau watershed.

The RVCA is able to maximize services through alternative funding sources. Impressive value-added efforts are being achieved — work that could not be achieved working alone. It is our creative partnerships that make us stronger — finding creative ways to support valuable watershed programs and services.

**Smiths Falls 2019 levy = \$48,643.01**

### Questions?

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