

PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION



RIDEAU VALLEY
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

RVCA Work in CITY OF OTTAWA

The 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 our programs don't support either directly or indirectly. RVCA supports informed municipal decision-making, provides cost-effective solutions, ensures consistent delivery and reduces municipal liability. Often we provide this support at a fraction of the cost as our staff are shared among our 18 watershed municipalities. We are here to help you achieve your environmental requirements and initiatives.

- **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*
- **Environmental 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 Part 8 approval and re-inspection services
- **Water quality 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 2,300 hectares of sensitive, natural land for strategic protection of vulnerable habitats and valuable local resources

Watershed Science and Engineering Services

- Policy interpretation, implementation tools and other support 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*.
- The Britannia Village Flood Control Project, serving the flood vulnerable area of the Britannia Village Community, was completed in 2017.
- RVCA continues operation and maintenance of erosion control works at various locations on Graham Creek, Stillwater Creek, Sawmill Creek and Bilberry Creek.
- RVCA, in cooperation with the City of Ottawa, has updated old mapping and created new hazard mapping: 64 kilometres of Rideau River hazard mapping (Hogs Back to Burritts Rapids) and 23 kilometres of new hazard mapping on Kings Creek.
- Decommissioning plan for the 40-year-old Heart's Desire Weir is in place — weir decommissioning and rocky ramp construction is scheduled for spring 2018.
- The *Middle Rideau Subwatershed Report* was released in 2016 along with detailed data reports for the 10 catchments that flow into the river.
- The *Lower Rideau River Subwatershed Report* was released in 2012 along with detailed reports for the 16 catchments that flow into the river.
- The *Jock River Subwatershed Report* was released in 2017 along with detailed reports for the 12 catchments that flow into the river. This report follows as an update to the first Jock River report that was released in 2011.
- All subwatershed and catchment reports are available online at watersheds.rvca.ca.
- RVCA monitors 11 wells at eight locations in Ottawa as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN). Groundwater level and temperature are recorded hourly in each well. Barometric pressure is recorded hourly at two locations. Manual groundwater level measurements are recorded 3 periodically. Groundwater quality analyses are available for all monitoring wells. Approximately 50 groundwater quality parameters, including general chemistry, metals and nutrients are analysed regularly at nine monitoring wells.

Serving your Residents

RVCA works closely with your watershed residents to help them develop their property sustainability. RVCA looks to provide friendly, technical guidance and services that help your residents complete environmental projects on their property. We also support healthy, outdoor family experiences and look to educate and inspire the next generation of conservationists. By investing in our watershed — the land and the people — we are one step closer to a healthy, resilient community worth calling home.

- The City Stream Watch Program samples 25 streams in the Rideau watershed on a six-year cycle. Since 2003, the partnership program has involved 2,997 volunteers that have provided 14,644 hours of time completing 4000 stream sections surveyed, 588 fish sampling events, 74 stream garbage clean-ups, 52 invasive species removals and planting 5,237 trees and shrubs.
- In 2017 the City Stream Watch program surveyed Becketts Creek, Pinecrest Creek and Stevens Creek and the Ottawa West tributaries. Stream clean-ups, invasive species removals and shoreline plantings took place at various locations across the City.
- Using the Headwater Drainage Features Sampling Protocol, staff and volunteers sampled 419 sites in Ottawa since 2011 to characterize the amount of water, sediment transport and storage capacity within valuable headwater drainage features.
- RVCA samples 17 stream sites annually in the spring and fall for the Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network (Barrhaven Creek, Black Rapids Creek, Cranberry Creek, Jock River (four sites), Kings Creek, Nichols Creek, Hobbs Drain, Flowing Creek, Mud Creek, Nepean Creek, Mosquito Creek, Sawmill Creek, Brassils Creek and Stevens Creek).
- Five water quality monitoring sites are tested in Ottawa as part of the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network and one water quality site is tested as part of RVCA baseline monitoring.
- Baxter Pond Wetland Restoration Project was completed in September of 2017.

Planning and Advisory Service

- 345 severances, 340 minor variances, 113 site plan control reviews, 81 zoning by-law amendments, 30 pre-consultations, 18 subdivision reviews, 10 Permit to Take Water reviews, 4 condominium reviews, 3 Official Plan amendments and 2 *Environmental Assessment Act* reviews.

Conservation Land Management Services

- RVCA protects 16 natural areas (158 hectares) in Ottawa; species at risk monitoring occurring at two of these areas, fish habitat enhancement occurring in one area and capital improvements occurring at three of these conservation areas.

- **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

Conservation Areas

- Ottawa residents have access to outdoor recreation and education programs at developed conservation areas including:
 - Chapman Mills (8.44 hectares) — picnic shelter, scenic lookouts, walkways and boardwalks, interpretive signs, habitat features including a new structure for barn swallows (a species at risk).
 - Baxter (+70 hectares) — offers year-round education programs, trails, rental facilities, picnic area and beach. In 2017, education programs were offered to over 5,000 children.
 - Richmond — picnic area, dock to launch canoes and kayaks.
 - W.A. Taylor (6.5 hectares) — boat launch, picnic tables.
- RVCA continues with extensive trail enhancements at Chapman Mills Conservation Area to improve accessibility for users.
- RVCA has annual management agreements to maintain two City of Ottawa parks.

Planning and Advisory Services

- 554 property inquiries, 188 files, 102 clearance letters and 50 complaints processed regarding Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* in 2017.
- 568 applications for new or replacement septic systems were inspected and approved in Ottawa through the Ottawa Septic System Office (partnership between Mississippi, Rideau and South Nation Conservation Authorities); 247 file search requests for septic systems in Ottawa; 75 septic renovation and alteration applications; 39 community complaints.

Stewardship Services

- 3+ million trees were planted under the City of Ottawa's Green Acres Program with partners at Mississippi Valley and South Nation Conservation since 2000; in 2017, Green Acres planted 64,900 trees, 40 projects — \$79,110 fundraised and \$121,295 in project value.
- 3,578 butternut seedlings planted in Ottawa through the Butternut Recovery Program since 2007.
- 162 Shoreline Naturalization projects have been completed in Ottawa since 2008. More than 45,673 native trees and shrubs have been planted along over 15.9 kilometres of Ottawa creeks and rivers with a total project value of \$627,565; in 2017, 4,812 trees and shrubs were planted along 1.5 kilometres of shoreline with \$140,351 fundraised dollars and \$146,284 in project value.
- 106 Rural Clean Water projects were approved outside the City of Ottawa in 2017 — \$212,238 was allocated to projects valued at \$321,646; from 2002-2017 there have been 850 projects approved outside Ottawa — \$1,234,017 has been allocated to projects valued at \$4580,054. Although these projects are outside of Ottawa, they are located upstream and aid in protecting the City's water quality.
- 46 Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program projects were approved in 2017 — \$132,750 was allocated to projects valued at \$180,721; from 2005-2017, 570 projects have been approved — \$1,120,648 has been allocated to projects valued at \$6,103,337.

Dollars and Cents

The RVCA's proposed 2018 budget is \$10.19 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.

Ottawa 2018 levy = \$5,129,792.79

Questions?

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