

## RVCA Work In

# Tay Valley

**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 the natural environment 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 planning proposals within or adjacent to natural hazards and environmentally sensitive 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 re-inspection 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 Tay Valley

- *Tay Valley Subwatershed Report* released in 2018 along with detailed reports for its **14** catchments; this is the second reporting cycle for the Tay Valley following the 2011 report.
- Policy interpretation, implementation tools and other support was provided to Tay Valley 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 provide specially trained Risk Management Officials and Inspectors to implement the *Clean Water Act* Part IV policies within Tay Valley Township. Source Protection staff collaborated with Tay Valley Township to finalize a Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report amendment to revise the Dense Non-Aqueous Phase Liquids policies.
- **68.3** square kilometres of hazard mapping (floodplain, steep slopes, unstable soils, wetlands, shorelines and valley lands) completed in Tay Valley.
- **18** flood forecasting messages for the Rideau River watershed and **17** flood messages for the Ottawa River watershed were issued in 2019; **3** low water response messages were issued; **19** sites monitored for water levels, **10** monitored for precipitation and **6** sites monitored for snowpack.
- **106** septic re-inspections completed in Tay Valley in 2019.
- **55** applications for new or replacement septic systems; **12** septic renovation applications in Tay Valley in 2019.
- **21** severances, **5** site plan control, **14** minor variances, **25** pre-consultations, **8** zoning by-law amendments and **2** *Environmental Assessment Act* reviews completed in 2019 under Conservation Authority *Planning Act* responsibilities.
- **17** lakes sampled for water quality through the Watershed Watch Program.
- **14** stream water quality sites sampled annually as part of RVCA baseline monitoring and one stream water quality site sampled annual as part of the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network.
- **6** sites sampled (Blueberry Creek, Eagle Creek, Grant's Creek, Rusdale Creek, Tay River (**2**)) in the spring and fall for the Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network.
- **5** conservation properties owned and protected in Tay Valley including Mica Mines (**442.27** hectares), Bula (**24** hectares), McAlpine (island), Wiseman (**6.88** hectares) and Haire (**0.4** hectares).

## 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 and summer day camps to watershed children — creating our future watershed guardians
- **Conservation areas** — offer 11 developed conservation areas for public use and enjoyment; inexpensive, outdoor, 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 property-specific information regarding natural hazards and environmentally sensitive areas; provide peace-of-mind through septic approvals and re-inspections that systems are constructed and working properly

## What it means in Tay Valley

- Residents have access to outdoor recreation and education programs at nearby developed conservation areas including Mill Pond, Rideau Ferry, Perth Wildlife Reserve and Foley Mountain.
- New trail and boardwalk improvements along the Rideau Trail at Mica Mines Conservation Area.
- **1,500** campers visited the Whispering Pines Scout Camp at Mica Mines Conservation Area.
- Partnership with Cabinscape to build a tiny cabin at Mica Mines Conservation Area to welcome tourists to the area.
- **24** property inquiries, **24** applications, **9** complaints and **2** clearance letters processed regarding Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* in 2019.
- **11,800** trees planted in Tay Valley in 2019 with fundraised dollars totaling **\$11,673** for total project value of **\$21,231**; **454,680** trees planted since 1984.
- **470** butternut seedlings planted in Tay Valley through the Butternut Recovery Program since 2007.
- **26** Rural Clean Water projects approved in Tay Valley in 2019 — **\$48,764** allocated to a project valued at **\$111,614**; **165** Rural Clean Water projects approved since 2002 — **\$240,638** allocated to projects valued at **\$951,059**.
- **11** Shoreline Naturalization Program projects completed in 2019 — **1,005** trees and shrubs planted totaling **138** metres of new buffer with **\$8,072** of funding towards a project value of **\$9,997**; **74** projects completed since 2009 — **6,818** trees and shrubs planted totaling **1,542** metres of new buffer with **\$71,210** of funding towards a project value of **\$86,683**.
- Partnership with Bobs and Crow Lake Foundation to provide free shoreline planting projects.
- Partnership with Otty Lake Association to distribute **264** potted trees, shrubs and wildflowers through an over-the-counter plant sale.
- Effectiveness monitoring continued in 2019 on the Otty Lake Bass Enhancement Project (spawning beds and wood installation)
- Targeted stewardship outreach in 2018–2019 for landowners in Tay Valley Subwatershed.

## Dollars and Cents

The RVCA's 2020 budget is \$10.74 million. Levy requests amount to just over half of our revenue meaning another \$4.7 million is coming from other sources such as fundraising, grants, user fees, the province and special levies.

This means at the RVCA, every \$1 from our member municipalities translates into \$2 being invested into the Rideau

watershed for all. The RVCA is able to maximize valuable watershed programs and services through diverse funding sources and creative partnerships — work that could not be achieved without our many important partners.

**Tay Valley 2020 levy = \$46,603.11**

**Questions?** Sommer Casgrain-Robertson,  
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