



Rideau Valley Conservation Authority
Annual Report 2009



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Acting Now for a Healthy Future

It's not easy being "green" — not even at the best of times. But add a tough economy to the mix and the challenge multiplies. Good thing we like the challenge.

The work we do is an investment in our future. The work we do now will avoid costly fixes in the future. And, despite hard economic times, we know one thing for certain; the need for locally-directed watershed protection and conservation efforts will not diminish.

Our municipalities see the value in the watershed-based approach to environmental management and continue to provide solid support. Thank you. In return, we will continue to work together, focusing on more collaborative, cost-effective and innovative program delivery.

Our sincere thanks to our Board of Directors and Advisory Boards for their leadership. It is very exciting to see our leaders looking at projects from a "watershed" perspective — respectful of municipal interests and those of our natural environment.

Special thanks to our community groups and partners who, by working together, help us achieve much more than we could working alone.

And lastly, congratulations to our staff for another outstanding year full of interesting and exciting projects. We are grateful for your ideas and strategies to improve our local environment and make things better through your daily work.

This Annual Report is but a glance at the highlights of 2009. We hope you enjoy this summary and we look forward to new opportunities to serve you as we move into 2010.

Alan Arbuckle — RVCA Chair
Dell Hallett — General Manager

What We Do

The RVCA delivers services to manage water and other natural resources. These efforts are done in partnership with municipal, provincial and federal governments, landowners and other like-minded organizations — all at a shared cost well below what they would pay on their own. The RVCA promotes an integrated watershed approach — one that balances human, environmental and economic needs.

We aim to:

- improve water quality
- protect water supplies
- reduce flood risk and erosion hazards
- improve watershed habitats
- increase conservation lands



wild bean



A Sample of our Watershed

Watershed Science Services

- **2** major reports completed: the Rideau Lakes Watershed Plan and Middle Rideau Subwatershed Report
- **5** draft Wellhead protection studies were completed in draft and presented to the public (Kemptville, Merrickville, Munster, King's Park – Richmond, Westport); Tier 1 water budget study was completed; Significant Groundwater Recharge Area study was completed
- **60** kilometres of new and updated flood risk maps for Kemptville Creek and Barnes Creek approved by RVCA Board of Directors
- **+4** kilometres of hazard mapping for Blueberry Creek (Tay River to Blueberry Marsh wetland) updated
- **+5** kilometres of flood hazard mapping for the Rideau River from Combined Locks to Poonamalie Dam (Smiths Falls) updated
- **+2** kilometres of floodplain mapping finalized for the Van Gaal Drain (Village of Richmond)
- **392** kilometres of hazard mapping updated on the Tay River from Glen Tay to Christie Lake; includes the shorelines of Otty Lake, Otter Lake, Big Rideau Lake and Lower Rideau Lake
- **448** water quality samples taken at 56 sites as part of the RVCA's Baseline Stream Water Quality Program
- **320** samples taken at 10 sites across the watershed as part of the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program — that adds up to over 14,000 samples since 1966
- **1,200** samples taken on 39 lakes through the RVCA's Watershed Watch Program — that adds up to over 5,081 samples since 2001
- **50** water samples analyzed for groundwater geo-chemistry from 15 monitoring well, daily water level measurements collected from 15 monitoring wells across the watershed
- **Over 1,525** hours from over 225 volunteers invested in Ottawa's City Stream Watch program; Billberry Creek, Mosquito Creek and Stillwater Creek re-surveyed; Barrhaven Creek and the west branch of Billberry Creek added to the program
- **100** participants at the 8th Annual Lake Links Workshop, planned and hosted in collaboration with eastern Conservation Authorities, Stewardship Councils, NGOs and Lake Associations
- **3** watershed condition bulletins and one long range outlook issued regarding spring water conditions
- **50%** grant rate to support funding for the Brewer Park Pump Station refurbishing
- aquatic habitat and bathymetric surveys of Tay River and Grants Creek reaches above Haggart Island Dam as RVCA investigates the potential impacts of dam decommissioning
- extensive development of corporate geographical information system
- reviewed and provided professional advice on numerous technical studies for land planning and development proposals, permits to take water and various private or public infrastructure projects (e.g., master drainage plans, stormwater management plans, environmental impact statements, fish habitat assessment reports)



Work in 2009

Planning and Regulations Services

- **279** applications processed under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (Ontario Regulation 174/06 – Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses) — 233 applications approved
- **1,200** planning applications (minor variances, official plan amendments, zoning bylaw amendments, subdivision, etc.) reviewed and advice given to municipal approval authorities in 2009
- **10** years working in partnership with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to protect fish habitat
- **540** property inquiries through the LandOwner Resource Centre by prospective purchasers seeking information on development constraints and environmental conditions of residential properties
- **702** applications at the Ottawa Septic System Office for new or replacement septic systems
- **320** file searches for septic system information
- **450** septic re-inspections completed by the Mississippi-Rideau Septic Office in Rideau Lakes Township (100), North Frontenac Township (100), Tay Valley Township (200) and Drummond North Elmsley (50)
- **59** applications at the Mississippi-Rideau Septic Office for new or replacement septic systems
- **44** site visits, watershed-wide, in response to community concerns regarding private septic systems

Conservation Land Services

- **2,322** hectares of public land and nine developed Conservation Areas are operated, maintained and serviced
- **55,000** visitors to Rideau Valley Conservation Areas
- **6,200** students enjoyed Baxter's Outdoor Education Programs
- **2,200** children (14 schools) enjoyed our second year of free, in-school Spring Water Awareness Programming
- **158** children enjoyed Baxter's Summer Day Camp
- **700** people (primarily Scouting/Guiding groups) spent the night at Baxter's interpretive centre or the River Cabin and group camping areas
- **3,600** children enjoyed Foley Mountain's year-round education and summer programs
- **275** children participated in Baxter's and Foley Mountain's Children's Water Festivals — all you want to know about H₂O!
- **0.8** acre island acquired in Upper Rideau Lake
- **9.65** acre floodplain/shoreline property acquired in the City of Ottawa along the Rideau River
- **3,055** metres of over 35 km of hiking trails upgraded at five conservation areas
- **264** square feet of docking facilities replaced or extended
- **5** buildings refurbished as part of ongoing capital infrastructure improvements



Stewardship Services

- **16** years of excellent customer service through the LandOwner Resource Centre
- **99,120** trees planted through the Trees for Tomorrow Program worth \$187,479 — \$96,152 of fund raised money, \$89,208 in project delivery value, \$14,686 in landowner cash and \$5,792 in landowner in-kind services
- **52,300** trees planted in the City of Ottawa under the Green Acres Program worth \$117,630 — \$59,127 of fund raised money, \$47,070 in project delivery value, \$10,175 in landowner cash and \$9,210 in landowner in-kind services
- **\$89,500** grant dollars distributed to 70 landowners for projects through the Rideau Valley Clean Water Program — when combined with landowners' contributions, amounts to \$368,000 invested in water protection projects
- **\$70,000** grant dollars distributed to 53 landowners for projects through the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program — when combined with landowner contributions, it amounts to \$297,000 invested in water protection projects
- **11** stewardship projects approved through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program with approximately \$25,000 in grant dollars distributed to area landowners
- **\$4,000** of grant money distributed to landowners as part of the RVCA's new Shoreline Naturalization Project. Over two kilometres of shoreline naturalized with 3,250 bareroot native shrubs being planted by over 45 volunteers.
- **1,950** butternut seedlings planted by volunteer landowners throughout eastern Ontario for the RVCA Butternut Recovery Program in 2009 — this brings the total number of butternut seedlings planted in our program to 8,757 over 611 sites since the program began in 2006
- **150** butternut scions from five potentially resistant parent trees were grafted onto black walnut rootstock in 2009
- **89** properties visited by the Butternut Recovery Technician to search for butternut trees showing signs of resistance; 644 sites have been visited since the program began in 2006
- **465** healthy seed source butternut trees identified in the RVCA geo database, 70 are showing the promise of resistance
- **25** information kits distributed to landowners about nuisance beaver management
- **4** watercourses (Otter Creek, Jebbs Creek, the outflow creek from Little Silver Lake, and Jock River from Franktown to Ashton) surveyed for beaver dams

2009 RVCF Board of Directors

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Bryan Baker

Stephen Bird

Mary A. Bryden — Chair

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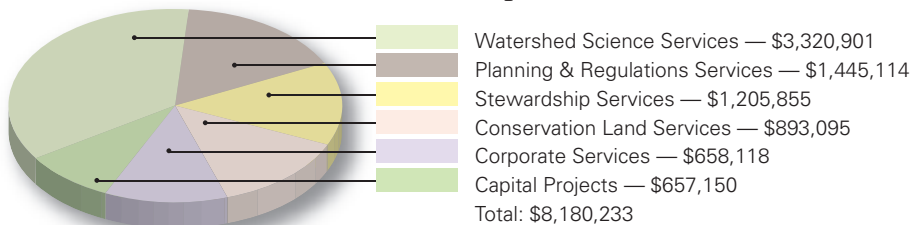
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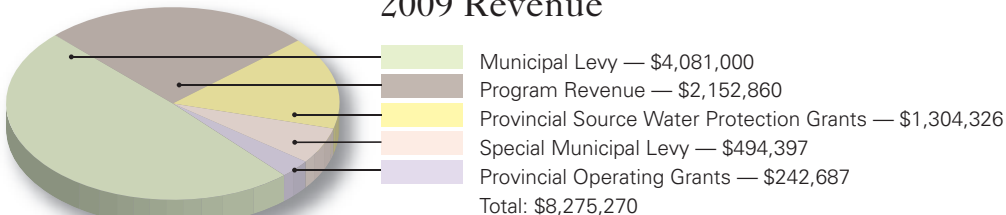
Charles Billington — Executive Director

Financing Conservation

2009 Expenses



2009 Revenue



Milkweed flower

Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation

Ordinary people doing extraordinary things for the environment.

The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation (RVCF) is a registered environmental charity that raises funds and accepts gifts to support conservation in the Rideau River watershed. Over the past 16 years, RVCF has raised over \$1.9 million in cash and in-kind services for the education programs, boardwalks and trails, biodiversity monitoring and the acquisition of key environmental properties in the valley. The Foundation also takes care of 13 key environmental properties donated by thoughtful families and individuals. All of this is possible because of the many generous and committed conservation-minded people and businesses in and outside our watershed who believe in our programs and agree that we can make a difference.

In 2009, the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation raised over \$121,000 for conservation programs in the valley.

Highlights for 2009






- Baxter Conservation Area grew by seven acres thanks to the community-minded work of TransCanada PipeLines, the EJLB Foundation, the Helen McCrea Peacock Foundation at the Toronto Community Foundation, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, the City of Ottawa and the goodwill of the Baxter family; this important piece of adjacent environmental property on the Rideau River in the City of Ottawa was purchased for future use as conservation land
- the legendary McGarry Family's "Memorial Tree Planting Program" planted a tree in the valley on behalf of each person whose funeral is in their care
- Perth and District Community Foundation made a key gift to purchase the very useful solar water pump for the Perth Wildlife Reserve Butterfly Garden
- a group of community-minded businesses led by Pratt & Whitney Canada helped plant another 150,000 new trees in the watershed
- a gift from RBC Dominion Securities will assist with the water quality monitoring program on the Rideau and tributaries in the years to come
- a new, longer public floating dock is now in place at the popular Rideau Ferry Conservation Area courtesy of the good people at Fendor Glass and Aluminum
- Monarch Homes made another major gift to the RVCF Environmental Land Fund helping bring donated land into public ownership
- Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion, Scouts Canada, Faber Snowshoes and TD Friends of the Environment Foundation helped purchase outdoor education equipment for Baxter and Foley programs
- ongoing support of the Ottawa Children's Water Festival from Harold Crabtree Foundation, City of Ottawa and Source Water Protection
- Adobe Canada made a major gift allowing an energy retrofit and demonstration of the Baxter River Cabin for school children and the general public
- the 2009 Tri-Valley Conservation Awards Gala featured the achievements of environmental leaders in the Mississippi, Rideau and South Nation watersheds at a Gala held in Almonte Old Town Hall in October
- grants from the RBC Blue Water Fund and TD Friends of the Environment Foundation gave the City Stream Watch program a big boost allowing the purchase of a valuable stream monitor
- 31 generous private sector sponsors helped pay for the LEED components of the new Rideau Valley Conservation Centre with large gifts of cash, in-kind services and products
- and a generous gift from the Audette Foundation will allow us to improve the handicap visitor accessibility to Conservation Areas in 2010 and beyond.


We offer sincere appreciation to the many, many kind people who assist in any number of ways to make the environment of our watershed better now and in the future. Thank you all very much! Together, we can continue to make a difference right here at home in the valley of the Rideau River. . .

To learn more about the RVCF, visit www.rvca.ca/foundation.



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 Printed on recycled paper

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