



# RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY WATERSHED BRIEFS

July 2014

A newsletter for municipal councillors

## 2014 Board of Directors

Andy Jozefowicz *Athens*

Lee Armstrong *Augusta*

Sharon Mousseau *Beckwith*

Tom Dewey *Central Frontenac*

No appointment *Clarence-*

*Rockland*

Ray Scissons *Drummond/North*

*Elmsley*

Lyle Pederson *Elizabethtown-*

*Kitley*

Jim Anderton *Merrickville-*

*Wolford*

Vince Carroll *Montague*

Gerry Boyce *North Dundas*

Barclay Cormack *North Grenville*

Jim Boldt *Perth*

Rob Dunfield *Rideau Lakes*

Ken Graham, RVCA Chair

*Smiths Falls*

Brian Campbell *Tay Valley*

Bradley Wing *Westport*

## City of Ottawa

David Chernushenko

Steve Curtis

Ed Hand, RVCA Vice Chair

Magda Kubasiewicz

Scott Moffatt

## Conservation Authorities on the Frontlines Managing Impacts from Increased Flooding Due to Extreme Weather

Conservation Authorities are encouraged by a report released by the Environmental Commissioner of Ontario which highlights the need for additional investment in Conservation Authority flood programs. The report, entitled *Looking for Leadership: The Costs of Climate Inaction*, points out that not taking action today to reduce carbon emissions and manage the flooding impacts from extreme weather will be even more expensive to manage in the future, creating significant public safety, environmental and economic implications.

"We're very pleased that the Commissioner draws attention to areas within Conservation Authority flood management programs that need to be immediately addressed in order to continue to protect people and property," said Kim Gavine, General Manager of Conservation Ontario, the association that represents Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities.

Conservation Authority programs help the Province meet its climate change adaptation objectives, specifically in areas such as flood management, stormwater runoff and water quality improvement. However, Conservation Authority flood management programs require significant attention in order to continue to be effective against more frequent and greater flood events.

"Conservation Authorities are on the frontlines in dealing with the consequences of extreme weather across the province," said Ms. Gavine. "As the Commissioner points out in this report, outdated floodplain mapping, aging infrastructure, and stressed operations hinder the Conservation Authorities' ability to continue to protect people and property from the impacts of extreme weather."

To flag their concerns around Conservation Authority flood management programs, Conservation Ontario worked with its members to develop a Flood Business Case (*Dodging the Perfect Storm, September 2013*). A number of immediate and long term targets are identified:

- Update floodplain mapping;
- Invest in Conservation Authority flood operations including monitoring programs;
- Address aging infrastructure - particularly in rural areas (Conservation Authorities operate 900 dams, dykes, channels and erosion control structures along rivers and shorelines with a replacement value of \$2.9 billion);
- Develop an asset management strategy;
- Support ongoing investments in programs such as green infrastructure, watershed management, and stewardship to build local resiliency against stormwater impacts.


Flood management is a shared provincial and local government responsibility in Ontario with Conservation Authorities playing a significant role in protecting people and property from flooding.


**Upcoming Board of Director's Meetings**


Thursday, July 24, 2013  
7:00 p.m. at the RVCA  
Conservation Centre  
in Manotick


*"Conservation Authorities are unique to Ontario and in addition to flood protection bring added benefits through watershed planning, watershed stewardship, promotion of green infrastructure and many other programs. They enable the Province and municipalities to use a cost effective and streamlined approach to flood management and as climate change impacts continue to increase, these efforts will become even more critical."*


Kim Gavine,  
General Manager of  
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Conservation Authorities are partners in the Provincial Flood Forecasting and Warning program and provide services such as flood monitoring, forecasting, and warning, and regulation of building in floodplains and other hazardous areas.

Conservation Authorities also contribute to municipal emergency planning and preparedness activities, provide planning support and advice to municipalities to minimize flood impacts, and inform the public about flood safety. In addition, they work to develop and implement many projects and programs that contribute to climate change adaptation efforts in Ontario. These programs include flood management, source protection, watershed stewardship, watershed management, monitoring and reporting.

This work contributes to build resiliency within Ontario's watersheds and has the added benefit of improving conditions in the Great Lakes which are also feeling the impacts of climate change. You can view Conservation Ontario's *2013 Flood Business Case* and learn about Conservation Authority flood management programs at [www.conservationontario.ca](http://www.conservationontario.ca) or contact Kim Gavine, General Manager, Conservation Ontario at [kgavine@conservationontario.ca](mailto:kgavine@conservationontario.ca).

## RVCA Supports Municipal Interests — 2014 Work Plan

RVCA continues to deliver local services and programs that protect and manage water and other natural resources. The RVCA takes an integrated watershed approach — one that balances human, environmental and economic needs. Our 2014 priorities continue to be:

- |  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. IMPROVE water quality                 | 4. RESTORE watershed habitats  |
| 2. PROTECT water supplies                | 5. INCREASE conservation lands |
| 3. MANAGE flood risk and erosion hazards |                                |

Being a municipal organization, RVCA staff are working closer than ever with municipal staff because our work has become so interconnected. It's hard to find a municipal service that our programs don't support either directly or indirectly. Often we provide this support at a fraction of the cost because our staff are shared among our 18 municipalities and sometimes our neighbouring Conservation Authorities. This saves money and avoids duplication. RVCA's programs also serve a wide range of public interests — tailored to suit our local needs.

We are committed to minimizing pressure on the levy by using this investment from our member municipalities to leverage other monies. For every dollar invested through the municipal levy, the RVCA has been able to double that investment to deliver additional programs or enhance existing programs throughout the watershed. Other revenue includes:

- Charging fees for education programs, conservation areas, permits, and planning comments
- Getting grants for special projects, students and interns
- Fundraising through the Foundation
- Special levies for specific projects that benefit one municipality
- Joint programming and staff sharing with neighbouring conservation authorities
- Landowner contributions for services they receive
- Contracts to provide services to external organizations and sectors

To learn more about the work being done in our watershed in 2014 and how it is being financed, download a copy of our *2014 Budget and Workplan* at [www.rvca.ca/workplan2014](http://www.rvca.ca/workplan2014) or contact Sommer at [sommer.casgrain-robertson@rvca.ca](mailto:sommer.casgrain-robertson@rvca.ca).