



RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY WATERSHED BRIEFS

October 2013

A newsletter for municipal councillors

2013 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

Pat Barr *South Frontenac*

John H. Miller *Tay Valley*

Bradley Wing *Westport*

City of Ottawa

Alan Arbuckle, RVCA Past Chair

David Chernushenko

Steve Curtis

Ed Hand, RVCA Vice Chair

Magda Kubasiewicz

Scott Moffatt

Hearts Desire Wier

The Hearts Desire Wier, located in the Jock River in the City of Ottawa, continues to be considered for decommissioning as it continues to have adverse environmental impacts and present public and worker safety risks. The weir's localized benefits are not related to the RVCA's mandate of clean water, healthy shorelines and sustainable landuse. As directed by the Authority's Board of Directors at the September Board Meeting, staff will compile the necessary information needed to better understand the future conditions of the Jock River should the weir be removed. These efforts include drawings that will illustrate how the site will look and operate in the future once the weir's migration barriers and safety hazards are removed. Detailed drawings showing proposed streambank stabilization and habitat improvement measures will also be prepared along with a cost estimate and proposed schedule for implementation. The RVCA will not permanently remove the weir until a full review is complete.

Q It has been suggested that the environment in the headpond is rare in the Jock River and worth preserving. Is this true?

A *RVCA aquatic habitat experts respectfully disagree, having undertaken extensive stream assessment work (using a Provincial protocol) on the Jock River and many other local streams, and after consulting with other experts including government officials, university based researchers, independent consultants and conservation minded NGOs.*

Q Opponents to the decommissioning concept continue to be of the view that there has not been enough study of the situation to support moving in that direction.

A *Staff opinion is that there is sufficient science, given that the general philosophy in watershed and aquatic habitat management in 2013 is to remove artificial barriers that serve no important watershed function, or to upgrade those that do, to conform to present day dam safety standards and regulations, including those that govern water taking.*

Q Could the structure and its operation be brought into compliance with present day standards and regulations?

A *It might be possible, but we have not undertaken the necessary investigations to determine how much investment it would take. This would require the City of Ottawa to provide the required funding through a Special Levy.*

Q Will property values decrease after the weir is taken out of service?

A *We've done a limited literature search to see what has happened elsewhere; the papers we've found show that in other places where old dams were decommissioned and their headponds rehabilitated, nearby property values increased. These will continue to be riverfront properties, but instead of being located beside a headpond that is dewatered for seven months of the year, they will be beside a free flowing stream with healthy riparian vegetation for 12 months of the year. Having said that, much depends on the details of what the restoration plan calls for and how well it is executed. Until the plans are done, any effort to assess the effect on property values is purely speculative.*

Upcoming Board of Director's Meetings

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

Healthy environment, healthy economy, healthy communities!

Enjoy Your Roots — Plant Some Trees

RVCA provides a quality tree planting program to all our watershed municipalities! Help spread the word and let your residents know about this exceptional service at a very reasonable rate! Learn more at www.rvca.ca/programs/forestry/index.html (dan.cooper@rvca.ca)

Cash for Conservation Continues

The Rideau Valley Rural Clean Water Program continues to have excellent participation from rural landowners. Now in its eleventh year, the program provides technical advice and financial support to rural farm and non-farm landowners looking to protect surface and groundwater quality. Buffers, milkhouse wastewater control, nutrient management plans, erosion control, septic systems and livestock fencing are just some of the projects happening in Rideau Valley. So far in 2013, over 40 applications were received with a total of \$90,614 in grants being allocated for various projects that help preserve and protect water quality (derek.matheson@rvca.ca).

Done! Otty Lake Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Thanks to our great team of volunteers and staff, the final numbers for the Otty Lake Fish Habitat Enhancement Project are in with 92 bass nests and 150 underwater wood clusters installed as new habitat for small and largemouth bass. This exceeded initial plans! See volunteers and staff in action at <http://www.rvca.ca/otty.html>. Watch for more news on this story in 2014 after staff and volunteers monitor the project. Spawning beds will be investigated in May 2014 to see which are actively being used. In July 2014, staff will use underwater cameras to inspect the use of the sunken trees (jennifer.lamoureux@rvca.ca).

Busy, Productive Summer Thanks to Enthusiastic Students

RVCA once again benefited from the infusion of 25 enthusiastic summer staff. Supported by special federal and provincial funding, the RVCA is able to complete core and special projects thanks to their assistance. Students participated in anything from water sampling to planning to outdoor education to conservation land maintenance — gaining valuable work experience while providing quality support to the RVCA (rosie.maclean@rvca.ca).

Motts Mills Dam and Wetland Restoration Project Continues

RVCA continues to work towards the restoration of the Motts Mills Dam and wetland. Only once the land easements are secured and all the funding is in place, will the RVCA and its partners be in a position to start work. In the meantime, work will be done to further investigate design and construction options in partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada (bruce.reid@rvca.ca).

Awesome Year Round Outdoor Programing

It's up to us to protect the environment for future generations and to teach our children about its protection. Thanks to the RVCA's exceptional outdoor education programs, children in the Rideau watershed have the opportunity — year round — to experience and connect with the natural world. We are growing the next generation of those who believe in and are willing to build a sustainable future. We are delighted to see all four seasons of programs growing in popularity at Baxter and Foley Mountain. Teachers and campers are booking early to ensure access to Rebecca and Andrea, our exceptional environmental education staff (rebecca.whitman@rvca.ca).



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