

# Municipal Information Sheet Smiths Falls 2017

**R**VCA is one of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. Since our formation in 1966, we have partnered with our local municipalities, residents, businesses, service clubs, schools, environmental and lake associations, community groups and provincial and federal governments to deliver programs and services that protect and manage the natural resources we all value and count on in the Rideau watershed.

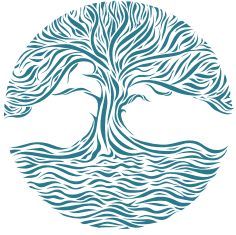
As one of our 18 member municipalities, the Town of Smiths Falls is a valued partner. We thank you for supporting 50 years of conservation in the Rideau watershed and look forward to working with council and residents on the next 50.

## Our Vision

A thriving watershed with clean abundant water, natural shorelines, rich forests and wetlands, diverse habitat and sustainable land use that is valued and protected by all.

## Our Mission

To understand, manage, protect, restore and enhance the Rideau watershed through science, stewardship, education, policy and leadership.



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## Watershed Science and Engineering Services

- *Middle Rideau Subwatershed Report* released in 2016 along with detailed data sheets for its ten catchments.
- *Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan* came into effect on January 1, 2015. The plan, required under Ontario's *Clean Water Act*, focuses on policies to protect municipal sources of drinking water. We provided policy interpretation, implementation tools and other support to municipal staff to ensure legally binding policies were well understood and implemented to meet compliance deadlines. In addition, at the request of the municipality, we provided a specially trained Risk Management Official and Inspectors that are required to enforce the *Clean Water Act* Part IV policies within the municipality. Smiths Falls received provincial Source Protection Municipal Implementation Funding to

cover most costs associated with source protection plan implementation.

- 1 square kilometre of hazard mapping (floodplain, steep slopes, unstable soils, wetlands, shorelines and valley lands) completed in Smiths Falls. This mapping is used by municipalities and the RVCA to ensure sound development that protects people, property and the environment.
- RVCA monitors and forecasts flood or drought conditions allowing municipalities to respond to watershed conditions and implement emergency response plans.



**Science-based information is critical for long-term watershed management. It must be the basis of decision-making, program development and policies.**

**By sharing RVCA technical staff (engineers, biologists, geoscientists), planning advice costs are much lower than if municipalities were to retain these services individually.**

**Flood Forecasting protects public safety and helps minimize damage while Low Water Response ensures optimal management of scarce resources.**



## Planning Advisory and Regulatory Services

- 2 *Conservation Authorities Act* applications received in Smiths Falls in 2016 — 287 applications received watershed-wide in 2016. Under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, the RVCA is required to regulate development on hazard lands (floodplains, steep slopes, unstable soil) and in environmentally sensitive areas (wetlands, shorelines, valley lands). Over 90 percent of applicants receive approval each year.
- 13 property inquiries for properties in Smiths Falls — 962 property inquiries and 133 clearance letters issued watershed-wide in 2016.
- 8 *Planning Act* reviews were undertaken in 2016 in Smiths Falls — 1,332 undertaken watershed-wide in 2016 (including zoning by-law amendments, occurrences/complaints, severances, minor

variances, subdivision and site plan control). The Province requires RVCA to provide advice to municipalities on *Planning Act* applications that pertain to regulated areas (hazard lands and environmentally sensitive areas). We also review applications for the protection of natural heritage features and water. Our input includes policy advice and technical reviews of site-specific studies looking at stormwater management, environmental impact, setbacks and aquatic habitat.

- RVCA provides a simplified approvals process for municipal drain maintenance and repairs under the provincial DART protocol established by MNRF and OMAFRA for municipal drain maintenance and repairs.

- RVCA reviews and approves private septic systems under Part VIII of the *Ontario Building Code* at no cost to municipalities. RVCA currently provides this service to the City of Ottawa and Tay Valley Township in partnership with MVCA and SNC. We also provide septic re-inspection services which are currently used by Central Frontenac, Drummond/North Elmsley, North Frontenac, Rideau Lakes and Tay Valley.

**RVCA staff adhere to professional standards and provincially approved procedures.**

**Sound, professional planning and regulations services avoid expensive fixes and costly liability that can result from bad decision-making.**





## Stewardship Services

- Stewardship staff use RVCA monitoring results to guide targeted stewardship activities for maximum impact.
- 5 Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program projects approved in the Smiths Falls Intake Protection Zone while the program was active between 2007 and 2014 — \$21,000 allocated to projects valued at \$41,500; overall 109 Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program projects approved in the Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region between 2007 and 2014 — \$521,000 allocated to projects valued at \$853,770.
- 1,295 Rural Clean Water projects approved watershed-wide between 2002 and 2016 — \$2,116,649 allocated to projects valued at \$10,202,390.
- 5.68 million trees planted watershed-wide on public and private land since 1984; 225,865 trees planted watershed-wide in 2016.
- 62,801 native tree and shrub seedlings and potted stock planted along 20.8 kilometres of watershed shoreline through the Shoreline Naturalization Program since 2009; 300+ landowners/partners and 1,200+ volunteers; total project value: \$687,628.
- 100+ participants from 20 different lake associations attended the Annual Lake Links Workshop.
- 70 butternut seedlings planted in Smiths Falls. In total, over 20,000 butternut seedlings planted in eastern Ontario. RVCA

collects seeds each year from healthy butternut trees that are endangered because of the butternut canker disease. The seedlings are also supplied to clients who have compensation requirements under permits to harm or kill butternut trees.

- 30+ landowners contact RVCA annually to register their concern and ask for advice on best management practices relating to nuisance beavers. Staff provide information packages and can produce imagery maps to help landowners identify beaver dam locations and property ownership in program areas. RVCA may be able to assist municipalities with beaver dam surveys in difficult access areas if it is unclear where the problem dams are and who owns the land.

**Stewardship staff use RVCA monitoring results to pursue targeted stewardship activities on key areas for maximum impact.**

**Grant programs and stewardship advice help property owners, businesses and municipalities restore and improve the health of our watershed.**

## Conservation Land Management Services

- Approximately 3,000 hectares of sensitive natural areas maintained and protected, including 11 developed conservation areas that are open to the public.
- Nearby developed conservation areas include:
  - Mill Pond Conservation Area (544.65 hectares) — six kilometres of wilderness trails, covered picnic shelter and boat launch (car top only).
  - Perth Wildlife Reserve (122.6 hectares) — specifically geared to wildlife management, the

area has 2.5 kilometres trails for walking, skiing or snowshoeing.

- Rideau Ferry (4.3 hectares) — shoreline property providing a public day use recreation area with access to Lower Rideau Lake that includes a public beach, boat launch, and picnic area at this popular summer park.
- 10,000 students enjoy conservation education programs annually at Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas.
- 10 annual passes donated to the Library MAPsack Program at libraries including Smiths Falls and Perth.

- All areas operate in accordance with site-specific management plans, which include input from the public, development plans, annual maintenance and capital responsibilities.

**Management of conservation areas protects vulnerable habitats and valuable natural resources.**

**RVCA provides high quality curriculum-based environmental education programs to children — building the future guardians of our watershed.**

# Smiths Falls Levy 2017: **\$49,071.93**

For every levy dollar our municipalities invest, the RVCA provides two dollars worth of service. We are able to double this municipal investment by maximizing other sources of funding enabling us to do more work in the watershed.