

# Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Watershed Conditions Bulletin

## 2009 RIDEAU RIVER SPRING RUNOFF — Long Range Outlook

*The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority issues the Long Range Outlook bulletin at the beginning of March each year to provide an indication of the potential for flooding when the spring freshet occurs. Historically, freshet occurs between mid-March and mid-April in the Rideau Valley.*

March 5, 2009, RIDEAU VALLEY WATERSHED — Based on present snow conditions on the Rideau Watershed and the assumption that there will be normal precipitation amounts over the next several weeks, the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority is presently expecting below average spring flow conditions this year in the Rideau River watershed.

The Conservation Authority snow measurements were most recently completed on Monday, March 2nd when it was found that the overall watershed water equivalent of the snowpack was less than 50% of the long-term average. This winter started off a lot like last year with snow starting to accumulate in November and continuing through December. However, two thaws in February have almost eliminated the snowcover in the southern parts of the Rideau watershed and what is left in the Jock and Tay River sub-watersheds will be further depleted through this weekend with above freezing temperatures and rain forecast. There is still the potential for higher flows as spring fully arrives depending on how much further accumulation of snow there is and the weather that induces the freshet.

The RVCA is now in the daily planning cycle of its flood forecasting and warning program – weather forecasts and river flows and water levels are being routinely monitored. Flood advisory or warning messages will be issued as required based on those forecasts.

The RVCA recommends at this time each year that everyone living near a watercourse should inform themselves of the flood risks in their area and should review their own plans for minimizing flood-related property damages and inconveniences. Municipal officials should review their flood response plans at this time and the usual preparations should be made to respond to emergency situations as required. The role of the Conservation Authority in the delivery of flood response services is to provide early warning of a developing flood situation and continuous monitoring and analysis throughout the event, with a view to providing timely and useful information to municipal and provincial emergency response personnel on the expected severity and duration of the event.

Recent cold temperatures will have caused ice cover to become thicker throughout the watershed but, with the warmer temperatures over the next few days and also as spring progresses, everyone is advised to be cautious around watercourses and parents particularly need to supervise their children and make them aware of the danger of unstable ice and increasing flows.

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More Information:

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

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Rideau Valley Conservation Authority is a partnership of municipalities within the Rideau Valley watershed created under the Conservation Authorities Act to deliver a range of programs in watershed management and natural resource conservation. The RVCA Flood Forecasting and Warning Program is done under a delegated responsibility from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and in conjunction with the Parks Canada-Rideau Canal for the residents and municipalities of the watershed.

