

Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

2014 Annual Report

Message from our Chair & General Manager

Welcome to our 2014 Annual Report — a compilation of highlights of another productive year of conservation throughout the Rideau watershed. We are delighted to share the results of our numerous innovative programs and services.

As a conservation agency, we continue to collaborate with our member municipalities, partners and watershed residents. Our goal is to provide relevant, cost-effective, high impact programs that work towards a healthy and sustainable watershed. To all of those who have partnered with us to assist us in fulfilling our conservation mission, we cannot thank you enough. Our ongoing success is driven by our many strong, creative partnerships.

Thank you to our member municipalities and board members for your tremendous support and direction. Congratulations to our enthusiastic and dedicated staff — your accomplishments are impressive. We also wish all the best in retirement to Charles Billington and Bruce Reid — two well-respected conservation powerhouses whose combined years of service exceed seventy years. We wish them well.

And while we celebrate our many achievements — we must also acknowledge our losses.

We fondly remember John H. Miller. John's commitment to the RVCA through 25 years of active service won't be forgotten — nor will his guidance, support and friendship. He will be greatly missed throughout the watershed.

We also remember Patrick J. McManus — a passionate conservation crusader who was instrumental in the foundation of the RVCA. His 25 years serving our board and our Foundation have left a lasting legacy through RVCA conservation education and water quality programs.

Enjoy a look at our 2014 highlights — and we invite you to join us in efforts to protect our great Rideau watershed in 2015 and beyond.

Ken Graham, Chair
Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, General Manager



Cover: Misty Kilmarnock sunrise
Right: Fall colours at Nicholson's Fixed Bridge
(Photos: Simon Lunn)

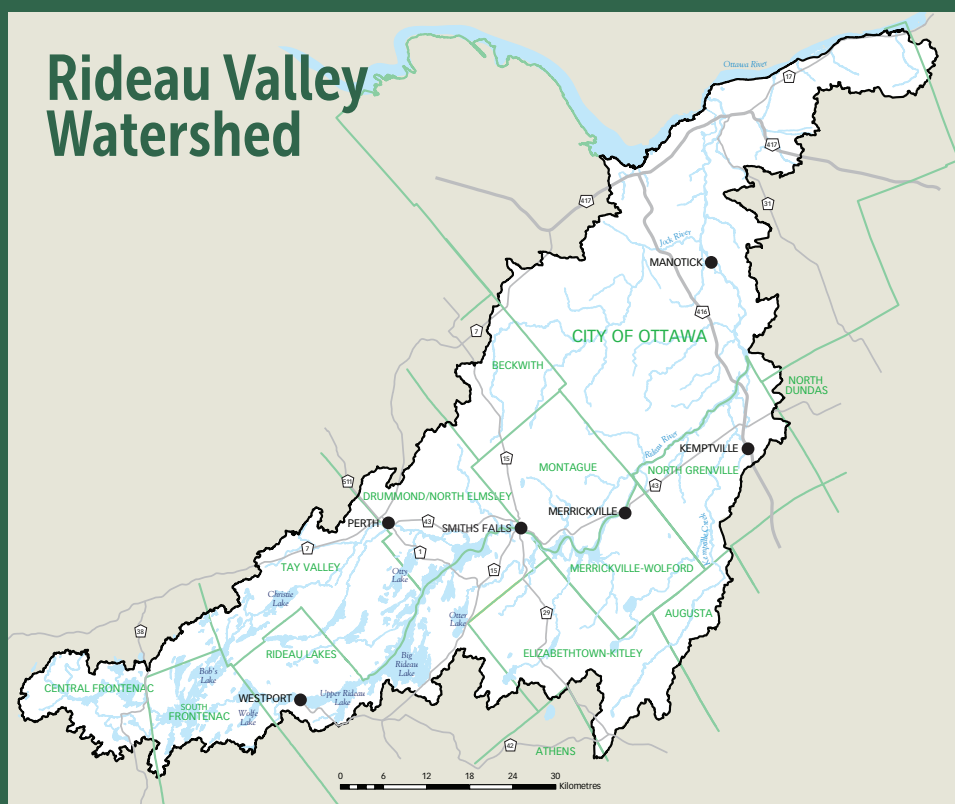


Your Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

RVCA is one of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities. We are a community based environmental protection agency that works closely with municipal, provincial and federal government partners, landowners and community groups to maintain and improve the natural resources in the Rideau watershed. The RVCA looks to build resilient communities by promoting an integrated watershed approach — one that balances human, environmental and economic needs. Our success is based on local initiative, watershed jurisdiction and partnerships in resource management.

Our ongoing priorities:

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



2014 RVCA Board of Directors

Athens	Andy Jozefowicz	Elizabethtown-Kitley	Lyle Pederson
Augusta	Lee Armstrong	Merrickville-Wolford	Jim Anderton
Beckwith	Sharon Mousseau	Montague	Vince Carroll
Central Frontenac	Tom Dewey	North Dundas	Gerry Boyce
City of Ottawa	David Chernushenko	North Grenville	Barclay Cormack
	Steve Curtis	Perth	Jim Boldt
	Ed Hand, Vice-Chair	Rideau Lakes	Rob Dunfield
	Rick Henderson	Smiths Falls	Ken Graham, Chair
	Magda Kubasiewicz	South Frontenac	Pat Barr
	Scott Moffatt	Tay Valley	John H. Miller
Clarence-Rockland	No member	Westport	Bradley Wing
Drummond/North Elmsley	Ray Scissons		



For a more detailed picture of our work, including a list of staff, partners, programs and services, visit www.rvca.ca. Like us on facebook or follow us on Twitter (RideauValleyCA).



Fragrant water lilies at Beveridges Marsh (Photo: Simon Lunn)



Late summer wild asters abound at Chapman Mills Conservation Area (Photo: Simon Lunn)



Conservation Land Services

The RVCA manages over 2,700 hectares of conservation lands for strategic protection of vulnerable habitats and valuable natural resources. This includes nine developed conservation areas which are available for public use and enjoyment — providing local communities with affordable passive recreation, conservation education and tourism opportunities.

Land Management

- **\$85,000** in donations raised in partnership with RVCF to offset land acquisition, conservation area development and stewardship activities
- **2,760** hectares of conservation land protected in the Rideau watershed
- **34** natural areas
- **12** management agreements operated, maintained and serviced
- **1,200** trees planted in one conservation area
- **50** wildlife habitat features (duck boxes) installed at five conservation areas
- New comprehensive risk management process instituted

Conservation Areas

- **9** developed conservation areas
- **60,000** visitors
- **5,000** people enjoyed rental facilities at Foley Mountain and Baxter Conservation Areas' Interpretive Centres, Baxter River cabin and group camping areas (more than double since 2012)
- **42** kilometres of trails maintained for public access

- **3** kilometres of new trail design and upgrades
- **7** new visitor features (benches/maps/interpretive signs) added to three conservation areas
- **1** new accessible washroom facility at the Silversides Outdoor Learning Centre (Foley Mountain)
- **1** new accessible privy at Baxter
- **300+** hazardous trees removed in public areas
- **2** new docking facilities developed and installed (Richmond and Perth Wildlife Reserve)
- Relocation of utilities at Mill Pond to decrease energy use and expenses

Education

- **5,000+** students enjoyed Baxter's Outdoor Education Programs
- **3,000+** people experienced Foley Mountain's year-round education and summer programs
- **300** children participated in Summer Day Camps at Baxter and Foley Mountain



Canoeing at Mill Pond Conservation Area



Entrance at Portland Bay Conservation Area



Pond study at Baxter Conservation Area



Scenic log cabin at Mill Pond Conservation Area



Wooded trail at Foley Mountain Conservation Area

Planning Advisory & Regulatory Services

The RVCA believes that sound planning is a critical part of protecting our land and water. Our staff bring watershed science, provincial policies and guidelines and individual municipal needs together to meaningfully assist municipal decision-makers in building and sustaining local communities. The RVCA also acts as an approval authority for development on hazard lands affected by flood, steep slopes or unstable soil. We regulate construction in environmentally sensitive areas such as in and around wetlands and along shorelines and waterways. Experienced and well-trained RVCA staff also approves the construction, enlargement or alteration of septic systems throughout the City of Ottawa and Tay Valley Township. Septic re-inspection services are also performed in several “lake country” municipalities.

Section 28 Conservation Authorities Act

- **840** property inquiries, **111** pre-consultations, **129** clearance letter completed by LandOwner Resource Centre
- **277** Section 28 applications — **245** approved, **4** denied and the remaining withdrawn, on hold or pending
- **103** applications related to “development” on hazard lands, **163** related to “alteration to waterway” and **11** applications related to “wetland Interference”
- **61** percent of applications within the City of Ottawa (**30** percent within Nepean Ward, **23** percent within Rideau Ward, **19** percent in Gloucester Ward and **12** percent in Cumberland Ward)
- **52** Complaint/Occurrence reports filed
- **14** violations resolved
- **2** charged under Section 28 which resulted in restoration orders
- Continued streamlined review and approval of municipal drain maintenance and repair
- Preliminary review of Energy East proposal as it relates to regulatory function and lands owned by the Conservation Authority
- Ongoing review and monitoring of major municipal projects (Hurdman Bridge, Vimy Bridge completion, Rideau River Pedestrian Crossing, drainage improvements and maintenance, culverts and utility crossings, etc.)

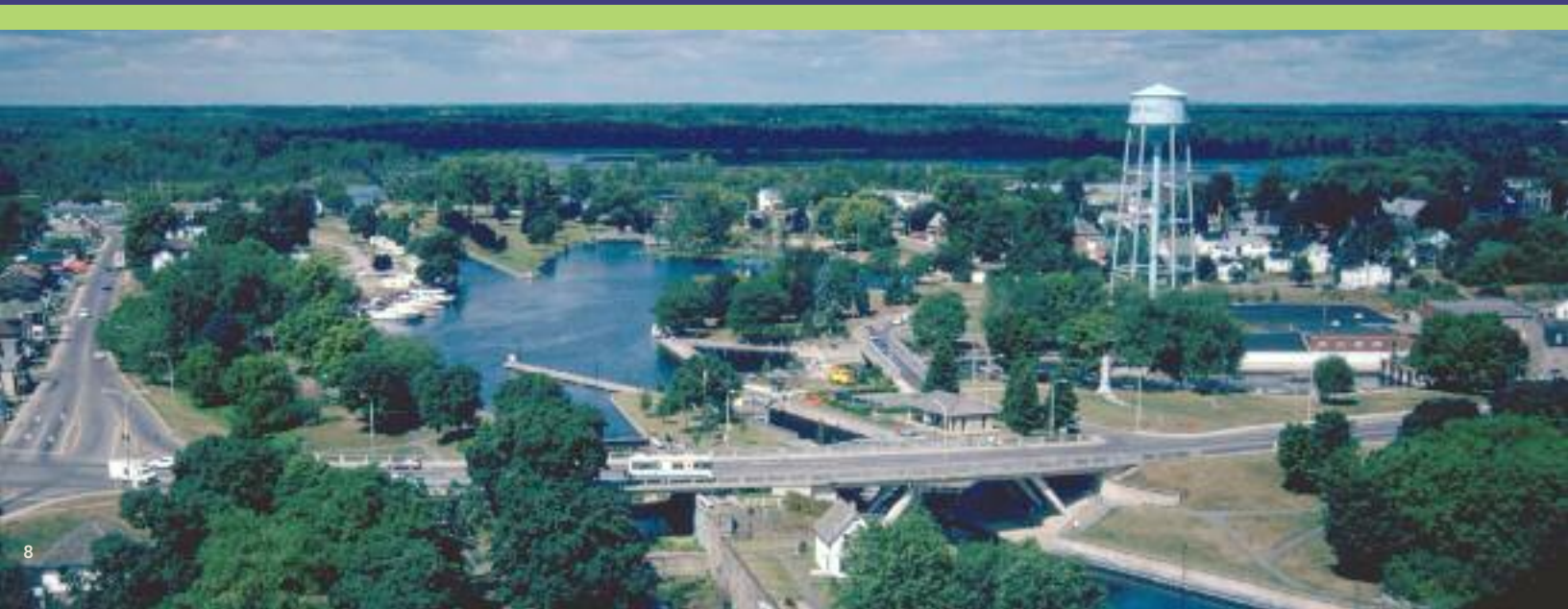
Planning Advisory Reviews

- **1,167** *Planning Act* applications
 - **491** consent to sever
 - **426** minor variances
 - **101** site plan control applications
 - **93** zoning by-law amendments
 - **26** condominium applications
 - **14** subdivision applications
 - **13** official plan amendments
 - **8** input to municipal official plans
 - **1** comprehensive zoning by-law
- **18** environmental assessments for MOE Permits to Take Water
- **12** *Environmental Assessment Act* Technical Advisory Committee input

Septic System Approvals

- **577** applications for new or replacement septic systems, **522** in Ottawa, **55** in Tay Valley
- **50** Part 10 Renovation applications in Ottawa, **20** in Tay Valley
- **324** septic re-inspections completed (**6** in Drummond/North Elmsley, **24** in Central Frontenac, **37** in North Frontenac, **77** in Rideau Lakes and **180** in Tay Valley Township)
- **42** Part 11 Occurrence Reports in Ottawa and **3** in Tay Valley
- **236** file search requests in Ottawa

Aerial view of Smiths Falls (Photo: Simon Lunn)



Stewardship Services

RVCA strives to protect and enhance the Rideau Valley watershed's natural resources. We undertake environmental protection programs that will leave a healthy and sustainable environment for future generations. Programs such as reforestation, environmental farm incentive programs, landowner information services, shoreline restoration, wetland enhancement and species at risk help us achieve this goal. We are delighted to work with private landowners, lake associations, NGOs, Friends of groups, businesses, government agencies and the general public to make direct improvements to the health of the watershed. Working with others, we divide the task and double the success!

Tree Planting

- **306,571** trees planted with a total project value of **\$748,891.86**
- **\$496,788.17** were fundraised to offset planting costs for landowners

Butternut Stewardship

- **20,000+** butternut seedlings have been planted since 2006

Shoreline Naturalization Program

- **53** shoreline naturalization projects completed, including **4** bioengineering (shoreline restoration) projects on private and municipal lands with a total project value of **\$112,262** and **\$45,350** fundraised
- **7,153** native trees, shrubs and wildflowers planted
- **1.76** kilometres of shoreline naturalized and restored
- **122** volunteer hours provided by **50** volunteers

Clean Water

- **92** projects were approved through the Rideau Valley Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$164,000**; **55** of these approved projects were completed, and the remaining are expected to be completed in early 2015; total grants of **\$81,500** were delivered to projects valued at **\$388,000**
- **43** projects were approved through the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$176,000**; **23** of these approved projects were completed, and the remaining are expected to be completed in 2015; total grants of **\$89,500** were delivered to projects valued at **\$176,000**
- **33** projects were approved through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program in the Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region from 2012 to 2014, allocating **\$142,000**; **29** of these approved projects were completed; total grants of **\$74,000** were delivered to projects valued at **\$206,500**

Habitat

- **Brewer Park Pond Restoration Project** — **16,000** square metres of new habitat connected to the Rideau River; provides spawning, nursery, rearing and feeding habitat for the local fish community; includes in-water and shoreline plantings, breeding bird habitat, amphibian habitat, turtle nesting beds and basking logs

- **Jock River Fish Habitat Embayment Creation Project** — created **1,000** square metres of new spawning, nursery, rearing, and feeding habitat to support the **40** species of fish that reside in the Jock River at the Richmond Conservation Area
- **Otty Lake Fish Habitat Enhancement Project** — installed **83** spawning beds for smallmouth bass, **85** sunken wood clusters to provide shelter and feeding habitat, **58** cornerstones at various nests to provide cover for guarding males; includes **240** volunteer hours
- **Mill Pond Fish Habitat Enhancement Project** — installed **50** sunken wood structures, **4** loon nesting platforms and **15** turtle basking logs to enhance habitat for fish and wildlife

Beaver Management

- Continued partnership with landowners to manage beavers and dams on North Branch of Kemptville Creek and at the outlet of Otter Lake
- Beaver and dam removal at Motts Mill to protect the water control structure, Jebbs Creek at Perth Wildlife Reserve to help maintain flow out of Otty Lake, Montague wetlands north-east of the Ontario Hospital Municipal Drain, Mica Mines, Foley Mountain, Otter Lake, and Meisel Woods to protect road and trails
- **9** beaver dam surveys were completed on **9** creeks



Installing one of the 50 wooden structures used in the Mill Pond Fish Habitat Enhancement Project



One of the watershed's many beaver dams
(Photo: Simon Lunn)

Watershed Science & Engineering Services

RVCA collects, monitors and analyses watershed information. Understanding our watershed helps us to better manage and protect our resources. Failure to adequately recognize and incorporate the value of our natural services into decisions about the use and management of watershed resources will reduce the net benefits that societies receive from watersheds. RVCA provides these services watershed-wide for its member municipalities at a shared cost. It avoids duplication and allows for effective, efficient and expert products for municipalities.

Source Water Protection

- The Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan received provincial approval on August 27, 2014 and takes effect January 1, 2015

Mapping

- RVCA, in cooperation with the City of Ottawa, is updating old mapping and creating new hazard mapping:
 - 60 kilometres of Ottawa River hazard mapping
 - 15 kilometres of Rideau River hazard mapping (Hogs Back to Rideau Falls)
 - 11 kilometres of new hazard mapping on Cardinal Creek
 - 28 kilometres of new hazard mapping on Flowing Creek
 - 10.8 kilometres of new hazard mapping on Hobbs Drain

Flood Forecasting and Warning

- 18 flood warnings were issued in spring 2014 to warn municipalities and residents about rising waters and where local flooding may occur
- 16 sites monitored for water levels
- 6 sites monitored for precipitation
- 6 sites monitored for snow pack

Stream Characterization Monitoring

- 1,116 hours of volunteer work by 288 volunteers for the City Stream Watch program
- 335 stream surveys were completed on Sawmill Creek, Black Rapids Creek, Cardinal Creek and Mud Creek as part of the City Stream Watch Program
- 729 stream surveys completed and 86 fish sampling events on Middle Rideau streams
- 95 headwater drainage feature assessments on City Stream watch streams and 211 headwater sampling sites in the Middle Rideau watershed
- 60 fish sampling sites on Sawmill Creek, Black Rapids Creek, Cardinal Creek and Mud Creek as part of the City Stream Watch Program
- 6 garbage cleanups completed on Sawmill Creek and 6 invasive species removals completed on Mud Creek, Black Rapids Creek, Graham Creek, Pinecrest Creek, Nepean Creek and Hunt Club Creek as part of the City Stream Watch Stewardship projects in 2014

Ground Water Monitoring

- 16 provincial groundwater monitoring network (PGMN) wells maintained at 13 locations — groundwater levels and temperature are recorded hourly; manual groundwater levels are measured quarterly; approximately 50 groundwater quality parameters are analysed annually; 3 locations measure barometric pressure and air temperature hourly; 2 locations record rainfall hourly

Surface Water Quality Monitoring

- 360 hours donated by 25+ lake steward volunteers to help monitor and sample Watershed Watch Lakes
- 45 stream sites (spring and fall) and 2 lake sites (spring) sampled for water quality conditions using the Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network methodology (biology)
- 39 lakes monitored four times each from May to November to sample nutrients, *E. coli* and key physical parameters through the Watershed Watch Program
- 55 sites sampled for the RVCA Baseline Monitoring Program and Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program which monitors the water chemistry on major tributary streams each month from April to November
- 30 water quality parameters are analysed annually
- Additional sampling taken in response to algae blooms

Watershed Reporting

- 6 Kemptville Creek Catchment Reports completed
- 1 Kemptville Creek Subwatershed Report completed

Partnerships/Outreach

- In partnership with Friends of the Tay, The People, Aquatic Plants and Healthy Lakes Project participated in the Stewart Park Music Festival, Tay Watershed Discovery Day, Bobs Lake Flotilla and Lake Links
- 8 lake/property owner associations annual general meetings attended
- Assisted with sediment cores on approximately 30 lakes led by Dr. Vermaire at Carleton University; work was a joint effort between Watershed Watch and The People, Aquatic Plants and Healthy Lakes Project collaborative group and Dr. Vermaire's students



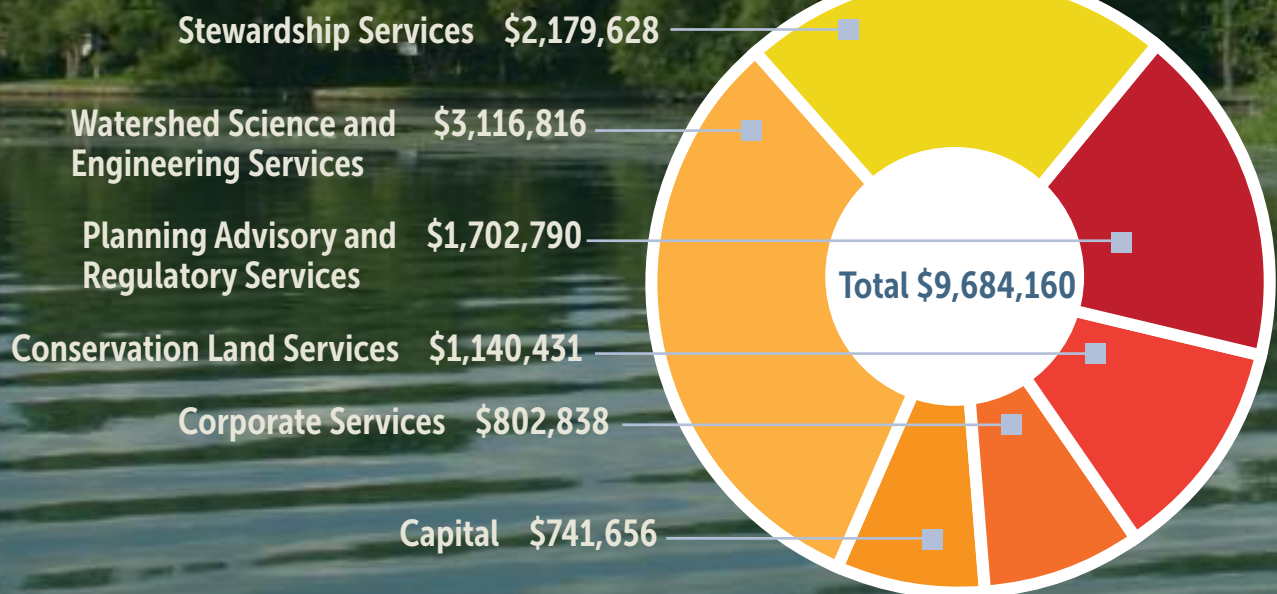
From top to bottom: Jock River Fish Habitat Embayment Creation Project; taking snow survey measurements; measuring water clarity with a secchi disk; *Kemptville Creek Subwatershed Report* and catchment sheets, sampling fish communities by electrofishing; early work on the Brewer Park Pond Restoration Project, water quality monitoring using a YSI sensor

Right: Black Creek (Photo: Simon Lunn)

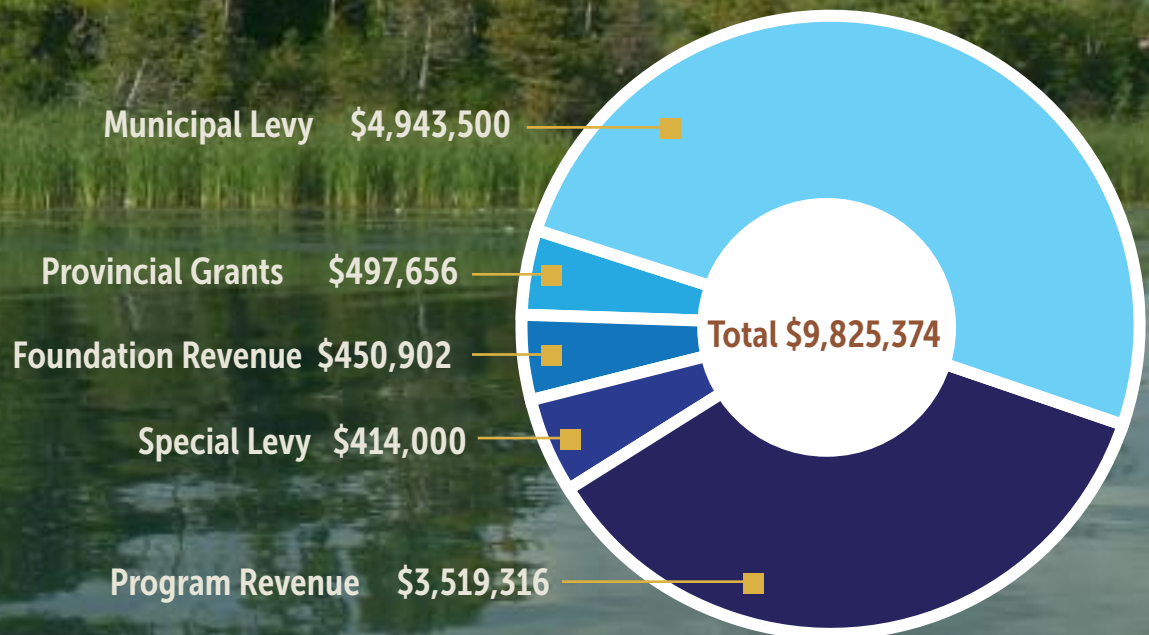


Financing Conservation *(unaudited)*

2014 Expenses



2014 Revenues



Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation



Carbon Neutral Program partnership agreement being signed



RVCF supports tree planting



RVCF works to restore public land



RVCF supports the City Stream Watch Program



A few of the 300,000 trees planted in the Rideau Valley in 2014



RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

We are a local, accountable, registered environmental charity dedicated to supporting on-the-ground conservation projects right here in the Rideau River valley. For the comfort and confidence of our many donors, the Conservation Foundation is a proud and practicing member of Imagine Canada and the Ontario and Canada Land Trust Alliances. These respected philanthropic groups provide training, guidance and certification in fair accounting, fundraising and land acquisition practices.

It is a pleasure to acknowledge and thank the many hundreds of generous and community-minded people who made a gift to conservation in 2014. We sincerely appreciate your continuing confidence in our conservation programs.

Highlights for 2014

- We are very excited to welcome the Lucuik family who has made their household/family activities carbon neutral as part of our Foundation program.
- We are pleased to welcome Jimmy Cox Realty, Little Ray's Reptiles and The Tea Room at Queen's University as these three important corporate citizens made parts of their local operations "carbon neutral" in 2014 through tree planting
- We are grateful to the many staff and family who contribute to our Carbon Neutral Program.
- We continue to enjoy the confidence of several land development companies who use the Foundation's Species at Risk Compensation Program services to compensate for the unavoidable loss of Butternut or Bobolink during their business activities. We are currently managing 27 projects.
- We are fortunate to have the continuing support of over 25 local businesses all of whom are recognized on our famous Partners in Conservation wall in our Manotick office.
- Rain barrels were big business in 2014 with a successful sale in the Riverside South area. Special thanks to the Riverside South Community Association for being our local conservation partners at this sale.
- We were proud to join our planting and funding partners to help put over 300,000 young new trees in the ground throughout the valley last year.
- We are equally proud to join our Shoreline Naturalization partners to help plant over 7,100 trees and shrubs on 49 planting sites.
- Foundation endowment funds continue to grow providing some very welcome revenue streams for land and water conservation work throughout the valley.
- We are proud to report that Foundation Chair, Ottawa businessman and philanthropist Jason Kelly was appointed to Imagine Canada's Advisory Council, the national charitable organization which supports and strengthens charities across Canada.
- We were delighted to work with Mattamy Homes and the City of Ottawa to complete a Creekside naturalization project in western Ottawa and look forward to other cost-effective conservation work in and around Ottawa.
- The Foundation Board of Directors would like to thank the staff and Board of the Conservation Authority for all of their generous support and encouragement in 2014; we are honoured to recognize the RVCA as our biggest supporter and our major conservation partner.
- And thanks to the generosity of the people of the Rideau Valley, the Foundation again surpassed our fundraising goal in 2014!

2014 RVCF Board of Directors

- Bryan Baker
- Mary A. Bryden (Past Chair)
- Angela Deguire (Secretary Treasurer)
- Andrew Harkness (Vice Chair)
- Dorothy Hearty (to August 2014)
- Lynn Kaplansky (to August 2014)
- Jason W.M. Kelly (Chair)
- Mike Lascelles (to August 2014)
- Anne Simmering
- R.E. (Bob) Smith
- Katherine Thomas
- Donrey Anne Tirado (to August 2014)
- Rich Wilson

Love this beautiful old valley like we do? We would be pleased to talk to you about a gift to conservation whether of property, funds or in-kind services ... please call or write for confidential advice and opportunities. We can match your gift objectives with some very meaningful and long lasting conservation projects that all will enjoy.

Contact us

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