



2006 Annual Report
Rideau Valley Conservation Authority





Chairman's Barbecue, June 15, 2006

celebrating 40 years

of Conservation in the Rideau Valley 1966–2006

2006 was a special year for the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority. We celebrated our fortieth anniversary and forty years of hard work towards the lasting protection and improvement of our valley environment. This special anniversary allowed us to take a moment to reflect on our past achievements. It was also a wonderful time to celebrate our history with friends, colleagues and partners from our past and present. Thanks to everyone for celebrating with us.

2006 itself was another busy year. With an extensive work plan and list of deliverables, RVCA staff were busy pursuing lasting, positive watershed protection projects. Our watershed's challenge continues to be balancing the protection, preservation and enhancement of our natural environment and the needs of our growing, vibrant communities. The RVCA supports this balance through our four main program areas that undertake activities such as sampling and monitoring, planning guidance, development regulations, source water protection, septic system approvals, inspections and re-inspections, watershed planning, tree planting, stewardship programs and conservation land management.

And now that the hard work and success of our 40th year is behind us, our minds can turn to our 50th. We can continue working towards our vision for a clean, healthy environment — one that is rich in wildlife and natural diversity with safe and plentiful supplies of water and natural areas.

Thank you to our 18 municipal members. The sustained municipal support allows us to continue building our capacity and competency. By working together, we can share the cost of projects and the results. We are able to do work that we just couldn't do alone. Together we can do more.

Same goes to our many other partners — government, non-government, landowners, special interest groups, volunteers — together our efforts will cumulate in a healthy, sustainable watershed.

We are happy to share with you some highlights from 2006.

2006 Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Board of Directors

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Dell Hallett, General Manager



RVCA *by* numbers

1	of 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario serving a slice of Eastern Ontario from Newboro and the Bob's Lake area west of Perth, downstream through agricultural and historic communities like Smiths Falls, Merrickville, Kemptville and on to Ottawa	2.5	number of millions of dollars generated through fundraising, grants, fee schedules and admission charges
3,850	number of square kilometres that make up the Rideau Valley watershed	1,885	number of samples taken for surface water testing
18	number of municipalities represented by our Board of Directors and two Advisory Boards	594,000	number of dollars invested in Clean Water program stewardship projects: \$594,000 in 2006 for a total of \$1,781,238 since 2002
40	number of years of service	2,286	number of hectares protected by the RVCA and RVCF
70	number of RVCA staff	145,300	trees planted in 2006 for a total of three million trees over 23 years
7.5	number of millions of dollars in our conservation budget (including new office building)	840	number of septic applications: 770 in Ottawa, 70 in Tay Valley; 100 re-inspections in Tay Valley
		1,200	number of planning review applications
		175	number of applications processed under the new Generic Regulation



RVCA plants three millionth tree in 2006

Our Common Vision — a Healthy River Valley

People's quality of life depends in large part on the quality of the environment in which they live. We clearly understand that the RVCA plays a key role in delivering quality environmental programs in cooperation with our many river partners.

Our work and resources are aimed at achieving:

- 1 improved water quality
- 2 sustained water supply
- 3 reduced flood risk
- 4 conserved watershed habitats
- 5 managed conservation areas and programs
- 6 increased watershed information

The RVCA monitors, evaluates and reports on our watershed's existing conditions. This information allows us to deliver important environmental services and programs at a local level through site plan review, septic system approvals, flood forecasting and warning, fish and habitat protection, reforestation, landowner incentive programs and conservation land management. The science guides us and allows us to make wise resource management decisions in our Rideau Valley.

We can't do it alone. Municipalities, landowners, businesses, community groups and other public agencies are working with us to protect and enhance our watershed environment. We make progress over the long-term through small, cumulative steps.

Our long-term vision is for clean and sustainable rivers, lakes, streams, groundwater and wetlands. Our surface and ground water reserves will be protected against overuse and from threat of contamination. Our water and upland areas will support diverse and healthy ecosystems and communities by supporting domestic, industrial, commercial, recreational and tourist opportunities.

Watershed Planning, Monitoring & Reporting



- The *Clean Water Act* becomes law on October 19, 2006. The Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region dives into action and delivers two impressive reports. The Watershed Characterization Report and Water Budget. These valuable tools help us understand our existing conditions (natural features, land uses, water quality and quantity, threats and vulnerable areas)
- The Mississippi-Rideau Source Water Protection team receives \$169,500 funding for technical study to look at municipal wellhead protection in the municipality of North Grenville and the Village of Merrickville-Wolford. This important work will give us a better understanding of the local hydrogeology in these two areas and will allow us to map the vulnerable areas around these two wells.
- The Lower Rideau Watershed Strategy seeks endorsement from its partners and looks towards implementation in 2007.
- The Lake Management Program completes its first year with the draft *State of the Ottawa Lakeshed Report*.
- The *Tay Watershed Times*, highlighting the Tay Watershed Planning process, was produced and distributed with help of our partner Friends of the Tay Watershed.
- Kemptville Creek Watershed Plan underwent its first update as part of the watershed planning process.
- Over 1,200 water quality samples were taken and analyzed for several different parameters.
- Watershed Watch moves into its fifth year with over 685 samples taken on over 40 lakes.
- Benthic invertebrate sampling continues as part of the Ontario Benthic Biodiversity Network with samples taken at 33 stream sites and 13 lake sites.
- Water and flow levels are monitored as part of flood forecasting and warning and low water response. Three new stream gauges were put into operation in 2006 (Graham Creek, Beckett's Creek and Steven Creek) to monitor surface water quantity and baseflow.
- Topographic mapping was completed for Kemptville Creek.
- The RVCA built hydraulic models of over 330 kilometres of river and over 100 kilometres of sub-watershed.
- The City Stream Watch program continued along Becketts Creek (Cumberland/Ottawa), Brassils Creek (Montague) and Pinecrest Creek (Ottawa).
- Fish spawning surveys were completed along the Rideau River's Ottawa Reach in cooperation with the City of Ottawa's Water Environment Protection Division.
- Macro stream surveys were completed along the Jock River, Nichols Creek and Kings Creek in cooperation with Friends of the Jock River.
- The RVCA continued monitoring 15 wells as part of the Provincial Ground Monitoring Network.
- Completed major repairs to channel linings on Graham Creek in the Qualicum neighbourhood of Ottawa.
- Replaced the operating deck at the Bellamy Pond Dam.
- Prepared a final design and cost estimates for the re-construction of the Haggart Island Dams on the Tay River in Perth.
- Updated the preliminary design and the cost-benefit analysis for an enhanced flood protection system for a portion of Britannia Village, in Ottawa.
- Secured provincial transfer payments in support of Rideau River Ice Management Operations in Ottawa.

Stewardship Services

- 145,300 trees were planted in 2006 through the RVCA's Trees for Tomorrow Program and the City of Ottawa's Green Acres Program. That totals over three million trees over 23 years! Trees are planted for erosion protection, stream and riverbank rehabilitation, forest cover on idle or marginal land and reconnection of fragmented forests.
- The RVCA takes the lead role in Eastern Ontario's Butternut Recovery Program thanks to generous funding from the Ontario



Trillium Foundation and the Habitat Stewardship Fund. Two thousand butternut seedlings were planted in hopes of re-establishing the species. The project also searches for trees and maps any trees that exhibit signs of resistance and seeds are collected from these trees as well.

- The LandOwner Resource Centre, RVCA's front-end customer service centre, continues after 13 years to provide clients accurate, impartial, user-friendly information.
- The Beaver Management project on Kemptville Creek and North Branch continued with trapping and problem dam removal. Survey work was also done on dams along Otter Creek. A new implementation strategy is planned for 2007 with a focus on landowner information and RVCA involvement only in unique cases.
- The RVCA and Ottawa Rural Clean Water Programs approved 102 projects in 2006 with grants totalling over \$123,740. Since 2002 over \$458,815 of grant money has been distributed for 377 projects. Total on-the-ground efforts amount to over \$1,780,000.



Conservation Land Management



- The RVCA operates, maintains and services over 2,286 hectares (5,550 acres) including 10 developed Conservation Areas.
- The RVCA and Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation accepted a 37 acre parcel of land donated by Dr. Ron Curtis and family. The Curtis Conservation Area is a huge piece of sensitive land including natural marshlands, forest, meadows, one kilometre of natural shoreline and a four-acre island.
- Baxter Conservation Area opens its newest boardwalk as part of the "Healthy Wetlands . . . Healthy Communities" Project (Ducks Unlimited and the Ministry of Natural Resources). New teaching platforms were also constructed thanks to Manotick Kiwanis Club and Ontario Trillium Foundation funding.
- Over 6,600 students enjoy Baxter's outdoor education programs that include school programs, day, canoe and leadership camps and the Children's Water Festival.
- Everyone can enjoy Foley Mountain with the opening of its new "barrier free" trail. The new 291 metres (955 feet) of trail allows those with walkers, wheelchairs and strollers a loop through Foley forest up to a scenic view of Upper Rideau Lake. Thanks to Friends of Foley Mountain and family memorials for supporting this project.



Planning & Regulations

- Ontario Regulation 174/06 — Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses replaced the *The Fill, Construction and Alteration to Waterways Regulation* on May 1, 2006. Over 175 applications were processed in 2006 under this new regulation.
- RVCA continues to ensure that development on the Rideau does not harm, alter, destroy or disturb fish habitat under Section 35 of the federal *Fisheries Act*.
- Staff provide technical advice to municipal decision-makers on land use planning and development services in technical disciplines including hydrogeology, stormwater management and the review of environmental impact statements associated with development near water.
- Over 1,200 planning applications were reviewed in 2006. These are done on a cost recover basis.
- The RVCA, in partnership with other local Conservation Authorities, acts as the municipal approval authority for private sewage systems for the City of Ottawa and Tay Valley Township. Over 770 applications were reviewed in Ottawa and 70 in the Tay.
- The Tay Septic System Office continues to perform re-inspection of older septic systems along lake shores with over 100 re-inspections completed in 2006.

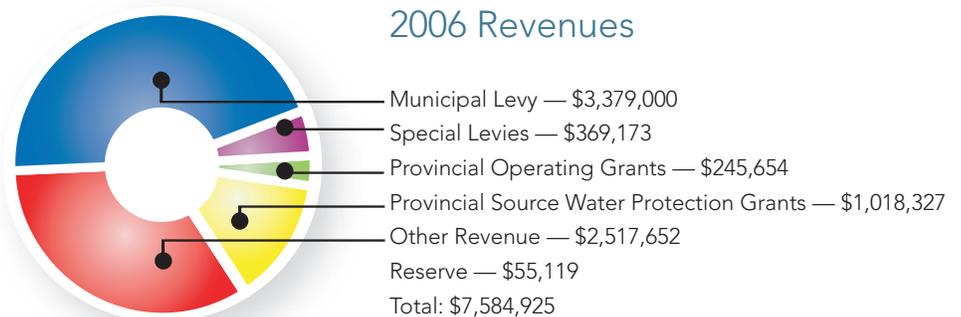


Financing Conservation

2006 Expenditures



2006 Revenues



Conservation Foundation

The Conservation Foundation had a busy 2006 year assisting the Authority with the 40th anniversary celebrations and raising over \$46,000 for conservation programs in the valley. This is a considerable investment by the people and businesses of the valley in the future health of our watershed. We remain very grateful to you all. Of particular note was the continued generosity of our corporate partners as well as participants in the Foundation's first-ever "Silent Auction" as part of the Anniversary Reunion at the Baxter Conservation Area in June.

We continue to find the Rideau Valley community to be very interested in our environmental programs and very willing to get involved. Because of the good people of the valley, the Foundation's contribution to our environmental well being is large and growing. We are pleased that an Endowment Fund has now been established to provide perpetual support for two program areas: water research and monitoring (the Williams Water Endowment Fund), and conservation land management (the Conservation Land Endowment Fund). Once fully endowed through donations over the years, the Fund will offer stability and opportunity without the need to rely as heavily on municipal levies for program area support.

Sincere thanks to all our supporters in 2006. We really appreciate it!



Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation Board of Directors

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Mary Surtees

Charles Billington —

Executive Director



RVCA new office —
Sod Turning
Ceremony, Beryl
Gaffney Park,
December 15, 2006.



How to Reach Us

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