



# 2019 Annual Report





# Your Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

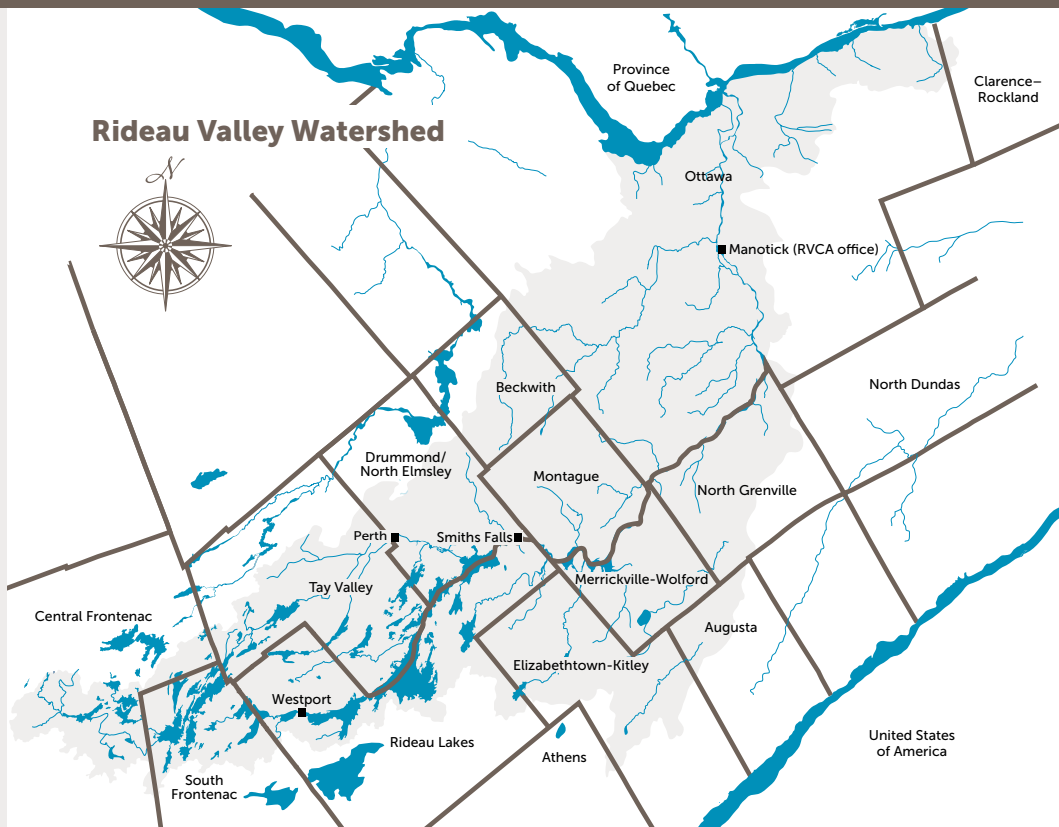
RVCA is one of Ontario's 36 conservation authorities and a member of Conservation Ontario. We work closely with municipal, provincial and federal government partners, landowners and community groups to maintain and improve natural resources in the Rideau watershed. The RVCA looks to build resilient communities by promoting an integrated watershed approach — one that balances human, environmental and economic needs. Our success is based on partnerships that accomplish local initiatives at the watershed scale.

**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.

## 2019 RVCA Board of Directors

Pieter Leenhouts, <b>Chair</b>	Ottawa
Judy Brown, <b>Vice Chair</b>	Perth
Andy Jozefowicz	Athens
Dale McLenaghan	Augusta
Brian Dowdall	Beckwith
Victor Heese	Central Frontenac
Jamie Crawford	Ottawa
George Darouze	Ottawa
Julie Graveline	Ottawa
Scott Moffatt	Ottawa
Anne Robinson	Ottawa
Guy Desjardins	Clarence-Rockland
George Sachs	Drummond/North Elmsley
Rob Rothgeb	Elizabethtown-Kitley
Don Halpenny	Merrickville-Wolford
Vince Carroll	Montague
Gerry Boyce	North Dundas
Barclay Cormack	North Grenville
Carolyn Bresee	Rideau Lakes
Shawn Pankow	Smiths Falls
Pat Barr	South Frontenac
Gene Richardson	Tay Valley
Melissa Sullivan	Westport



View from Spy Rock,  
Foley Mountain Conservation Area



# Message from the Chair & General Manager



Ultimate Aquatic Workshop

We proudly serve the 450,000 people who call the Rideau watershed home. Conservation authorities have provided quality programs and services based on a watershed model that is more than 74 years old. Globally respected and praised, this Ontario innovation is uniquely ours and the envy of many. With this in mind, we will continue to bridge municipal boundaries, address environmental issues, encourage collective strategies and support informed decision-making.

We are pleased to celebrate our many accomplishments and the delivery of efficient and effective conservation programs that support our vision for a thriving watershed with clean abundant water, robust ecosystems and sustainable land use that is valued and protected by all. Our collaborative work with our Indigenous, federal, provincial, municipal, agricultural, business, environmental, community and academic partners will only grow as we continue to improve client service, program effectiveness and organizational strength, all for the benefit of our watershed's health.

Thank you to our municipalities, board members, partners and staff for their dedication and support. We are also very appreciative of the continuous, enthusiastic efforts of our volunteers.

On behalf of the RVCA Board of Directors and staff, we hope you enjoy this snapshot of 2019's accomplishments. If you would like to learn more about our conservation work, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Yours in conservation,

Pieter Leenhouts  
Chair

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson  
General Manager/Secretary Treasurer





# Corporate Services

Corporate Services supports the whole authority, allowing it to perform its functions in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The department is responsible for strategic planning, budgeting, financial reporting, business improvement, human resources, communications, GIS, member services, foundation support and administration.

- **\$10.76** million budget
- **70** staff plus **16** summer students
- **23** board members representing **18** member municipalities
- Launched RVCA Blog "The River Reed"
- Created Adhoc Policy Committee
- Hosted annual watershed tour for board members, municipalities and local MPPs
- Hosted the Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities
- Hosted the Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario

**Below:** The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, paid the RVCA a very special visit on Friday, May 31, 2019.

**Right:** RVCA Board of Directors Tour, June 27, 2019.

**Bottom right:** On March 14, 2019 the Honourable Rod Phillips, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Honourable Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities visited the RVCA head office.



# Conservation Land Management Services

The RVCA manages over 3,000 hectares of conservation land for the strategic protection of vulnerable habitats and valuable natural resources. This land includes 11 developed conservation areas that are available for public use and enjoyment — two of which offer outdoor education programs. Conservation areas provide affordable recreation, education and tourism opportunities to watershed communities.

## Land Management

- Own **2,140+** hectares of conservation lands across the watershed
- Manage **3,000+** hectares of conservation land (inspected and assessed annually)
- Forest management plans completed for 20 properties (**2,400** hectares)
- Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program plans submitted for these properties (received 10-year approval for property tax savings)
- **52** nest boxes monitored at nine conservation areas
- **6** species at risk monitoring or habitat feature projects completed at five conservation areas (bobolink, butternut, barn swallow)
- **6** conservation areas enhanced with tree planting projects
- **3** Memorial Benches installed at Baxter, Chapman Mills and W.A. Taylor Conservation Areas

## Conservation Areas

- **11** developed conservation areas
- **200,000** visitors annually
- **42** kilometres of trails maintained for public use
- **5,554** people enjoyed rental facilities at Foley Mountain and Baxter Conservation Areas (interpretive centres, group camping areas and the Baxter river cabin)
- **7** partnership agreements to provide recreational opportunities at six conservation areas

- Public consultations completed for Foley Mountain Conservation Area's Management Plan
- New accessible dock and observation platform installed at Chapman Mills Conservation Area
- New accessible platform installed at Rideau Ferry Yacht Club boat launch
- Partnered with Cabinscape to build a tiny cabin at Mica Mines Conservation Area to give visitors a special opportunity to experience nature
- New trail and boardwalk improvements along the Rideau Trail at Mica Mines Conservation Area

## Outdoor Education

- **11,379** students participated in curriculum-based outdoor education programs at Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas
- **\$27,900+** dollars raised in cooperation with the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation (RVCF) to offset outdoor education costs for low income schools
- **250** participants attended Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Area day camps
- **20** pairs of BOGS® boots donated to the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation for Baxter and Foley Mountain education programs
- New Forest School drop-in program launched at Foley Mountain Conservation Area





# Planning & Regulatory Services

The RVCA brings watershed science, provincial policies and individual municipal needs together to meaningfully assist municipal decision-makers in building and sustaining local communities. The RVCA is also the approval authority for development on hazard lands affected by flooding, steep slopes or unstable soil and in environmentally sensitive areas like wetlands, shorelines and watercourses. Staff also approve the construction, enlargement or alteration of septic systems in the City of Ottawa and Tay Valley Township and provide septic re-inspection services in several other municipalities.

## Planning Advisory Reviews

- **1,159** *Planning Act* applications:
  - **443** severances
  - **373** minor variances
  - **154** site plan control
  - **129** zoning by-law amendments
  - **24** Official Plan amendments
  - **18** subdivision reviews
  - **18** condominium applications
- **130** pre-consultation meetings
- **7** *Environmental Assessment Act* reviews
- **2** Aggregate Resource Reviews

## Sec. 28 Conservation Authorities Act Approvals

- **697** property inquiries
- **342** applications
- **296** permits issued
- **162** clearance letters
- **111** complaints/occurrences
- **21** violations

## Septic System Approvals

- **231** file search requests (City of Ottawa)
- **692** applications for new or replacement septic systems (**637** in Ottawa and **55** in Tay Valley)
- **86** applications for septic renovations or alterations (**74** in Ottawa and 12 in Tay Valley)
- **11** Complaints (Ottawa)
- **630** septic re-inspections completed (**304** in Rideau Lakes, **191** in Central Frontenac (Crow and Eagle Lakes), **106** in Tay Valley and **29** in North Frontenac)

## Source Water Protection Approvals

- **10** Risk Management Plans established under the *Clean Water Act*





# Stewardship Services

The RVCA works with landowners, farmers, lake associations, NGOs, businesses, government agencies and the public to undertake on-the-ground projects that directly improve the watershed. Programs such as reforestation, landowner incentive programs, shoreline restoration, wetland enhancement and species at risk habitat creation help protect and enhance the watershed's natural resources.

## Tree Planting

- **6.4** million trees planted since 1984
- **195,100** trees planted on **100** properties
- **\$250,147** fundraised to offset landowner costs
- **150** trees planted along the Jock River in the Village of Richmond at a TD Tree Day event

## Shoreline Naturalization

- **13,553** trees and shrubs planted on **73** properties
- **2.8** kilometres of shoreline naturalized
- **\$140,662** fundraised to offset landowner costs
- **1,000** trees and shrubs planted in Arlington Woods along the Graham Creek ravine following tree loss due to tornado
- **750** trees and shrubs planted along Bilberry Creek in Ottawa as part of erosion control work.
- **520** trees and shrubs planted along Mosquito Creek in partnership with the City of Ottawa and the Riverside South Community Association
- **665** potted trees, shrubs and wildflowers distributed in partnership with Otty Lake Association and Upper Rideau Lake Association through an over-the-counter sale.
- Free shoreline planting projects provided in partnership with Bobs and Crow Lake Foundations

## Clean Water Projects

- **107** projects were approved through the Rideau Valley Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$182,100** in grants; these grants will support a total project value of **\$492,016**
- **38** projects were approved through the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$203,690** in grants; these grants will support a total project value of **\$459,802**
- Delivered the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program in the Mississippi watershed in partnership with Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority



Shoreline naturalization at Mosquito Creek



## Lake Planning

- **18<sup>th</sup>** Annual Lake Links Workshop attended by **100+** local lake stewards and residents

## Butternut Stewardship

- **22,832** butternut seedlings have been planted since 2006 (RVCA finds healthy Butternut trees, collects seed, grows seedlings and distributes them to landowners and other clients in Eastern Ontario)

## Habitat Enhancement

- **6** brush bundles installed on Wolfe Lake with the Wolfe Lake Association to enhance fish habitat
- Walleye spawning bed installed on Scanlan Creek in partnership with the Wolfe Lake Association





# Science & Engineering Services

The RVCA collects, monitors and analyses watershed information to understand our watershed and help us better manage and protect its resources and the people who live in it. Failure to adequately recognize and incorporate the value of natural areas into decisions about the use and management of land and water will reduce the net benefits that societies receive from watersheds.

## Source Water Protection

- Fifth year implementing the *Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan*
- Continued support provided to municipalities including policy interpretation and implementation tools
- Finalized the second *Source Protection Plan Amendment* for a new municipal drinking water system in the Municipality of North Grenville and a revision of dense non-aqueous phase liquids policies
- Completed second annual report summarizing implementation progress
- Started implementing the first work plan to update technical Assessment Reports and the Source Protection Plan

## Flood Forecasting and Warning

- **18** flood messages for the Rideau River watershed
- **17** flood messages for the Ottawa River watershed
- **3** low water messages

- **19** sites monitored for water levels
- **10** sites monitored for precipitation
- **6** sites monitored for snowpack

## Stream Characterization Monitoring

- **3,678** square metres cleared during **12** invasive species removal events on City Stream Watch watercourses.
- **1,307** hours of volunteer work was completed by **315** for the City Stream Watch Program
- **94** headwater drainage feature sample locations on Borthwick Creek, Brassils Creek, Cranberry Creek, Hunt Club Creek, Mosquito Creek, Mud Creek, Ramsay Creek, Sawmill Creek and Stevens Creek
- **34** headwater drainage feature sample locations on the Lower Rideau Rideau
- **9** headwater drainage feature sample locations on the Rideau River



Headwater sampling  
at Mud Creek



- **45** sites sampled throughout the watershed in the spring and fall for the Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network
- **20.2** kilometres of stream surveys completed on Borthwick Creek, Cranberry Creek, Hunt Club Creek and Ramsay Creek.
- **16** fish sampling sites on Borthwick Creek, Cranberry Creek, Hunt Club Creek and Ramsay Creek
- **1** invasive species workshop and 5 other training and outdoor demonstration workshops

### 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
- Continued funding partnership within the City of Ottawa to deliver the Ottawa Hydrogeological Harvested Information Geodatabase (OHHIG); OHHIG captures critical historical hydrogeological report information into a spatial referenced database for Conservation Authority and City of Ottawa decision making

### Surface Water Quality Monitoring

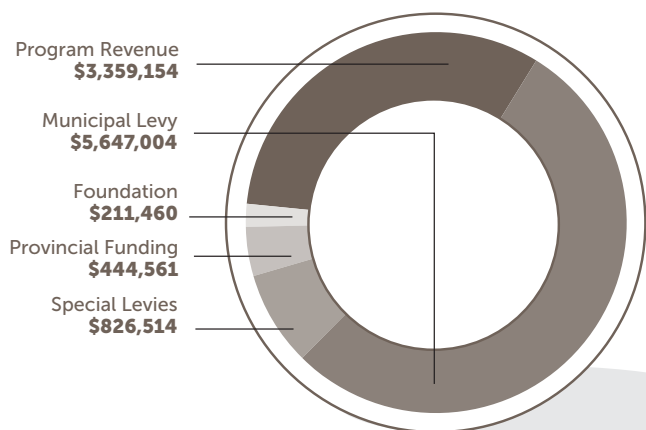
- **246** hours donated by **15** lake steward volunteers to help monitor and sample Watershed Watch lakes sampled for water quality conditions
- **29** participants facilitated lake sampling by offering lake access and/or on-water transportation
- **39** lakes sampled from May to November to monitor levels of nutrients, *E. coli* and other chemical parameters through the Watershed Watch Program
- **96** hours donated by **8** stream steward volunteers to help monitor and sample streams in the Rideau Valley for water quality conditions
- **117** sites sampled for the RVCA Baseline Monitoring Program, City Baseline Monitoring Program and Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program which monitors the water chemistry of major rivers and tributaries from April to November
- **51** water quality parameters are monitored annually

### Watershed Reporting

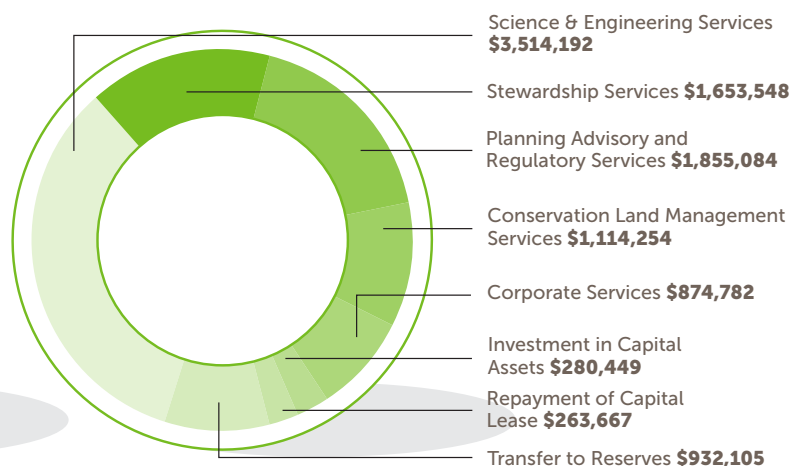
- All **6** subwatershed and **66** catchment reports available online at [watersheds.rvca.ca](http://watersheds.rvca.ca). Subwatershed reports are a compilation of water quality, forest cover, wetland cover and riparian cover data that looks to show the health of the subwatershed and if its health is improving or declining. Municipalities and RVCA use these reports to make policy and program decisions and to focus resource management and stewardship actions where they are needed the most.

## Financing Conservation

### 2019 Revenues \$10,488,693



### 2019 Expenditures \$10,488,081







The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation is proud to be your local, accountable, registered environmental charity dedicated to supporting on-the-ground conservation work in the Rideau River valley. Thanks to your generosity, we continue to improve our watershed and its many communities by valuing, sustaining and protecting the natural environment. We do this by planting trees, naturalizing shorelines, conserving natural spaces, protecting species at risk, educating our youth and much, much more.

We are delighted and inspired by the continuing confidence of our many partners and donors — thank you. In 2019 we launched our 2020 Conservation Campaign as we look to raise funds to keep our natural areas in public hands forever. We are already delighted about the interest in and investment towards the protection of our forests, wetlands and shorelines. Thank you for making your local natural environment a priority.

The Foundation Board of Directors would also like to thank the staff and Board of the Conservation Authority for their dedication and support in 2019. We look forward to continued success in 2020.

Yours in conservation,  
Jason W. M. Kelly, RVCF Chair

## 2019 RVCF Board of Directors

- Charles Billington
- Mary A. Bryden,  
Past Chair
- Andrew Harkness,  
Vice Chair
- Jason W.M. Kelly, Chair
- Anne Simmering
- R.E. (Bob) Smith
- Katherine Thomas
- Sarah Wayne,  
Secretary-Treasurer
- Rich Wilson

## 2019 Highlights

- Launched the 2020: Conservation Campaign to raise funds to protect our conservation lands through the Steve Simmering Land Endowment Fund and gratefully accepted donations including a Gold Level \$25,000 donation from the Laidlaw Foundation, a corporate donation from Enbridge Gas and other valued private donors.
- Celebrated and acknowledged the continuing support of over 330 watershed businesses and private donors who are recognized on our "Partners in Conservation" wall at our office in Manotick.
- Raised funds to welcome classes (approximately 1,440 students) to students to participate in outdoor education programs at Foley and Baxter Conservation Areas by reducing or eliminating bus and registration fees. Thank you to the Ottawa Community Tree Foundation Community Grants Program, The North Face Canada Explore Fund, Starbucks Foundation Green Apron Grant, BOGS° Outdoor Fund for their support.
- Partnered with One Tree Planted to plant 70,000 tree seedlings in spring 2020.
- Planted trees thanks to Hulse, Playfair and McGarry who have support tree planting in the watershed since 2003.
- Welcomed new and returning Carbon Neutral individuals, businesses and events including LIVE 88.5 and Ottawa Greek Fest.
- Installed a new, accessible dock and viewing platform at Chapman Mills Conservation Area with the support of the Cabela Canada Outdoor Fund.
- Supported fish habitat restoration on Wolfe Lake with support from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation.
- Prepared for restoration of the Hutton Marsh thanks to the dedicated group of local stakeholders and funders who made this project possible including Ducks Unlimited Canada, Leeds and Grenville Stewardship Council, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Zone F, the United Counties of Leeds





### Love this beautiful 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!

and Grenville (UCLG), Wildlife Habitat Canada, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and the RVCF.

- Invested in volunteer work along city streams to remove invasive species and litter thanks to TD Fiends of the Environment Foundation funding.
- Participated on the Nature for All Committee as we look to increase accessibility features at Baxter Conservation Area. Thank you to the City of Ottawa Rural Community Funding Grant, the Gosling Foundation, and Jackman Foundation for their support.
- Enjoyed the continued confidence of several land development companies who use the Foundation's Species at Risk Compensation Program to compensate for unavoidable loss of butternut, barn swallow habitat or bobolink habitat during their business activities.

We are currently managing 53 projects.

- Continued delivery of Memorial Tree and Memorial Bench Programs.
- Supported the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 314 Manotick by accepting donations directed to maintaining Remembrance Park's Memory Gardens.
- Continued efforts to accept land donations of ecologically sensitive lands from willing landowners.
- Remained a proud and practicing member of both the Ontario and Canada Land Trust Alliances.
- Launched new website thanks to the support of Probase Web Creative Solutions.
- Supported donors through CanadaHelps.com for safe and easy acceptance of donations to RVCF's special programs and services.
- Modernized the Foundation's logo.
- Maintained accreditation from Imagine Canada's Standards Program — providing public confidence in the RVCF that has demonstrated excellence in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, ethical fundraising, staff management and volunteer involvement.

### Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation

Box 988, 3889 Rideau Valley Drive, Manotick, ON K4M 1A8  
613-692-6823 | [info@rvcf.ca](mailto:info@rvcf.ca) | [www.rvcf.ca](http://www.rvcf.ca)



The RVCF is proudly accredited under Imagine Canada's Standards Program having demonstrated excellence in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, ethical fundraising, staff management and volunteer involvement.

### How to Reach Us

3889 Rideau Valley Drive, P.O. Box 599, Manotick ON K4M 1A5  
T 613-692-3571 | 1-800-267-3504 F 613-692-0831  
[info@rvca.ca](mailto:info@rvca.ca) | [www.rvca.ca](http://www.rvca.ca)



RideauValleyCA



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