

RIDEAU VALLEY CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Box 599, 3889 Rideau Valley Drive
Manotick, Ontario, K4M 1A5
(613) 692-3571, 1-800-267-3504

Hybrid meeting held in-person and electronically

APPROVED MINUTES

Board of Directors **3/23** **Thursday, April 27, 2023**

Present:	Jeff Banks	Gerry Boyce
	Barry Card	Brian Dowdall
	Mel Foster	Charlene Godfrey
	Susan Irwin	Theresa Kavanagh
	Pieter Leenhouts	Wilson Lo
	Shawn Pankow	Angela Pierman
	Anne Robinson	Kristin Strackerjan
	Gary Waterfield	Adrian Wynands

Staff:	Sommer Casgrain-Robertson	Dan Cooper
	Kathy Dallaire	Terry Davidson
	Diane Downey	Marika Livingston
	Glen McDonald	Marissa Grondin

Regrets:	Steve Fournier	Morgan Kenny
	Shawn Menard	

Guests: Ian Murphy, MNP LLP

Chair Strackerjan called the meeting to order at 6:49 p.m.

Agenda items 1.0 Roll Call and 2.0 Land Acknowledgement Statement were conducted during the Rideau Valley Source Protection Authority meeting that took place directly before the Board of Directors meeting. Attendance remained the same.

3.0 Agenda Review

Chair Strackerjan reviewed the Agenda.

4.0 Adoption of Agenda

Resolution 1-230427	Moved by:	Susan Irwin
	Seconded by:	Brian Dowdall

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority adopts the Agenda as amended.

Resolution Carried

5.0 Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

6.0 Approval of Minutes of March 23, 2023

Resolution 2-230427

Moved by:

Adrian Wynands

Seconded by:

Jeff Banks

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority approves the Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting #02/23, March 23, 2023 as circulated.

Resolution Carried

7.0 Business Arising from the Minutes

There was no business arising.

8.0 Audited Financial Statements

Kathy Dallaire, Manager of Finance introduced Ian Murphy, auditor from MNP. Mr. Murphy presented the 2022 audited financial statements and reported a clean audit. Mr. Murphy responded to questions.

In response to an inquiry from a member, Mr. Murphy confirmed the reserve balances, explained why they are in place and directed the member to page 12 of the financial statements. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson added that in addition to Mr. Murphy's report, page 37 outlines the details of the reserves, the structure of the reserves and she indicated that reserve balances had been increased in recent years through cost savings when possible, at the urging of the auditor and Board. Ms. Dallaire confirmed that the funds are held in a variety of investments.

A member added that their municipality's reserve fund is equal to their annual budget.

Resolution 3-230427

Moved by:

Brian Dowdall

Seconded by:

Shawn Pankow

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority approves the attached Draft 2022 Audited Financial Statements and receive the Report of the Auditor.

Resolution Carried

Ian Murphy left the meeting 7:07 p.m.

Marika Livingston left the meeting 7:08 p.m.

9.0 2022 Annual Report

Diane Downey, Director of Communications and Outreach and Dan Cooper, Director of Conservation Lands and Stewardship, presented the attached slide deck on the 2022 annual report and opened the floor to questions.

A member noted that only 5 municipalities participated in the septic reinspection program and asked if testing will determine if there are improvements in water quality, or differences in water quality between municipalities who participate in the program and those that do not. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that there have been improvements in water quality over the decades, but what monitoring does not capture is how much water quality might have degraded had there not been a septic reinspection program. She emphasized the important role stewardship programs play in preventing water quality problems and noted that those municipalities who typically participate in the reinspection program are those in lake county who prioritize re-inspections on waterfront properties. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson also noted that water quality is quite complex and is impacted by a number of different factors including the natural aging of lakes as well as climate change.

A member commented that one of the municipalities' biggest advantages for water quality is the rural clean water program.

Another member commended staff on the quality of the Annual Report and inquired about what steps are taken in addition to distributing the report to municipalities and other stakeholders. Ms. Downey replied that the RVCA issues a media release, schedules a social media campaign, includes it in the Around the Rideau newsletter and the General Manager requests the opportunity to make a presentation to each Council.

In response to a member inquiry about the Rural Clean Water program's most popular project type, Mr. Cooper informed them that manure storage, livestock fencing, wells and land retirement are popular projects.

A member asked if there are other agencies that monitor water quality and Glen McDonald replied that conservation authorities are really the only ones monitoring water quality aside from municipalities who monitor stormwater outlets.

A member commented that they are pleased to bring this report back to municipal council to highlight the work of the RVCA.

A member commented on the popularity of the County of Lanark's tree giveaway and Mr. Cooper added that the RVCA welcomes opportunities to partner with municipalities on tree giveaways or other events that help promote RVCA's stewardship programs. Mr. Cooper added that some municipalities have included information about RVCA's stewardship programs with their tax bills or partnered on mail outs to eligible properties like waterfront or larger rural properties. He noted that if municipalities are interested in this type of partnership, he can provide more information.

In response to a member inquiry about the number of trees planted per municipality, Mr. Cooper explained that the chart in the Annual Report is a one-year snapshot just capturing trees planted in 2022, it does not reflect trees that may have been planted in a municipality in previous years.

A member inquired if the RVCA is responsible for planting all the trees in the City of Ottawa. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that the RVCA plants trees in the Mississippi and Rideau watersheds while South Nation Conservation plants trees in their portion of the City of Ottawa. Mr. Cooper added that the City has other tree planting programs focused on street trees and other smaller planting projects, but conservation authorities are responsible for reforestation in the City of Ottawa through the City's Green Acres program and our own reforestation program.

A member asked for clarity on the land retirement grant available through the rural clean water program and if it is possible to retire farmland. Mr. Cooper explained that landowners typically chose to retire idyllic or marginal land as opposed to productive farmland, which is what the RVCA encourages, but that the RVCA does not restrict what land property owners can retire.

Resolution 4-230427

Moved by:

Pieter Leenhouts

Seconded by:

Angela Pierman

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority approves RVCA's 2022 Annual Report.

Resolution Carried

10.0 Category 3 Cost-Appportioning Agreements

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, General Manager presented a staff report on Category 3 programs and services and a proposed approach to Cost Appportioning agreements.

A member indicated that they participated in South Nation Conservation's recent Municipal Information Day and finds it useful to have municipal engagement sessions. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson agreed with the value of such a session and indicated that RVCA held an initial municipal information

session last spring and is now contemplating another joint session or one-on-one or group sessions.

In response to a member inquiry regarding agreements for municipalities that are located within two or more Conservation Authority's jurisdiction, Ms. Casgrain-Robertson confirmed that municipalities will need to have separate agreements with each Conservation Authority, but that they will be similar in structure and content aside from program details which will vary.

A member inquired if they could receive what their municipality's apportionment would be for category 3 programs to bring back to council. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson indicated that those numbers are just being finalized and that the business case being brought to the Board in May will have a chart showing Category 3 costs apportioned across all municipalities.

A member inquired how this category fits within the watershed strategy being worked on by staff. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson explained that with so many legislative changes in recent years it has been difficult to complete that and other projects. It is anticipated that additional regulations, including an amended Section 28 regulation, will be released by the summer which will enable staff to have a clearer picture of programs and services moving forward and projects like policies and the watershed strategy can resume and be completed. A watershed-based resource management strategy must be completed by all conservation authorities by the end of 2024.

Resolution 5-230427

Moved by:

Adrian Wynands

Seconded by:

Brian Dowdall

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority directs staff to prepare a Category 3 programs and services business case and draft cost-apportioning agreement to seek municipal support to continue to fund these programs and services with 20% of RVCA's general levy.

Resolution Carried

11.0 2023 Meeting Schedule

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson, General Manager, reviewed the results from the member survey regarding the start time of Board meetings and opened the floor to questions. There were no questions.

Resolution 6-230427

Moved by:

Gary Waterfield

Seconded by:

Charlene Godfrey

THAT the Board of Directors of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority directs staff to prepare a report for the July 2026 Board meeting to re-examine the start time of Board of Director meetings.

Resolution Carried

12.0 Meetings

- a) Eastern Ontario General Managers Meeting: March 27, 2023
- b) Conservation Ontario Council Annual General Meeting: April 3, 2023
 - Ms. Casgrain-Robertson informed the Board of the newly elected Conservation Ontario Board of Directors:
 - Chair, Chris White (Chair of Grand River CA)
 - Vice-Chair, Pierre Leroux (Chair of South Nation CA)
 - Vice-Chair, Robert Rock (Chair of Kawartha CA)
 - Director, Rob Baldwin (CAO of Lake Simcoe Region CA)
 - Director, Chandra Sharma (CAO of Niagara Peninsula CA)
 - Director, Linda Laliberte (CAO of Ganaraska Region CA)
- c) North Grenville Sustainability Fair (presentation and booth): April 16, 2023
 - Chair Strackerjan thanked Ms. Casgrain-Robertson for her presentation on Bill 23 and thanked Myra Van Die and Amanda Lange for their interactive display promoting RVCA's monitoring and stewardship programs.
- d) RVCA Audit Committee Meeting: April 19, 2023

Upcoming

- e) RVCA Summer Student Orientation Session: May 1, 2023
- f) AMCTO Training (Rules of Parliamentary Procedure): May 3, 2023
- g) RVCA 7 Millionth Tree Celebration: May 13, 2023
 - Formal invitation to be circulated to all board members and municipal Mayors
- h) Rescheduled Stillwater Creek Wetland Restoration Celebration: May 24, 2023
- i) RVCA Watershed Tour: June 22, 2023 (full day at Foley Mountain)
 - Details and save the date to be circulated shortly
- j) Conservation Ontario Council Meeting: June 26, 2023
- k) General Managers Meeting: June 27 & 28, 2023

13.0 Member Inquiries

Charlene Godfrey inquired if invasive Eurasian Milfoil is being monitored and removed from lakes. Mr. McDonald indicated that monitoring staff will take note of communities of invasive species and that the RVCA does some limited invasive species removal work but that it is more difficult to remove invasive species from lakes than smaller watercourses.


Wilson Lo requested follow up to his email inquiry regarding Chapman Mills Conservation Area. Ms. Casgrain-Robertson confirmed that she will follow up shortly.

14.0 New Business

Gary Waterfield informed members of a conference he attended in Toronto where he had the opportunity to tour the Don River restoration site. He noted that it was a very inspiring project and encouraged members and staff to visit.

15.0 Adjournment

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:37 p.m. on a resolution by Wilson Lo which was seconded by Mel Foster.



Kristin Strackerjan
Chair



Marissa Grondin
Recording Secretary



Sommer Casgrain-Robertson
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

\$11.64M

budget for 2022

69

staff plus 16
summer students

23

board members

- Welcomed a new board member appointed by the Province to represent the agricultural sector and assisted municipalities with their appointment of board members for 2023-2026
- Launched an online payment portal to enable clients to pay online for services (will expand to more program areas in 2023)
- Updated land cover data and received final LiDAR elevation data for the entire watershed which will support numerous municipal and RVCA programs
- Reopened the office to the public and implemented hybrid board meeting and return-to-work models
- Hosted annual watershed tour for board members and municipalities at the Rideau Ferry Yacht Club where staff showcased RVCA's programs and services
- Created a conservation education and demonstration tent at the International Flowing Match in Kemptville
- Reviewed Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act) and worked with municipalities and other partners to prepare written comments and submissions



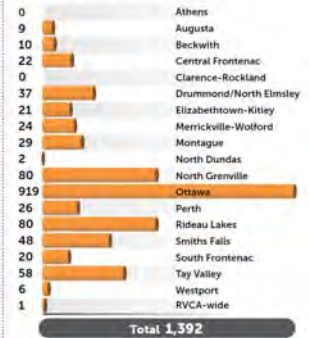
PLANNING AND REGULATIONS staff bring watershed science, provincial policies and individual municipal needs together to help build safe, sustainable communities.



1,392
planning reviews



Planning Activities by Municipality, 2022



353
permit applications

Section 28 Applications by Municipality, 2022



RVCA issued **99%** of Section 28 permits within provincial timelines:

Permits Issued Within Provincial Timelines		Permits Issued Outside Provincial Timelines	
Major Permits (90 days)	Minor Permits (30 days)	Major Permits (90 days)	Minor Permits (30 days)
31	282	1	1



Septic System Services

- Expanded septic approval services in partnership with Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority to seven new municipalities previously served by the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit.
- 173 file search requests
- 822 applications for new or replacement septic systems
- 172 applications for septic renovations or alterations
- 24 complaints
- 733 septic re-inspections
- 3 virtual sessions of the Ontario Building Code Part B Installers Course delivered, welcoming 63 participants
- Distributed educational material to landowners about the care and maintenance of their septic system
- Published a new edition of *Septic Smart*, providing homeowners with information about the different types of septic systems and how to maintain them

Septic Applications by Municipality, 2022
New, replacement or renovation



RVCA issues most septic permits within half the time prescribed by the *Ontario Building Code*:

Building Code Requirement	Building Code Timeline	RVCA Timeline
New Sewage System Permit	10 days	5 days
Clay Seal Inspection	5 days	48 hours
Scarification Inspection	5 days	48 hours
Installation Inspection	5 days	48 hours
Final Grading Inspection	5 days	48 hours

Septic Re-Inspections by Municipality, 2022



CONSERVATION LANDS staff manage more than **3,300** hectares of conservation land for the strategic protection of natural hazards, critical natural resources and vulnerable habitats.



11
Conservation Areas



Land Management

- 2,210 hectares of conservation land owned across the watershed
- 3,300+ hectares inspected and assessed annually
- 3 new properties totalling 127 hectares donated to our Foundation
- 52 nest boxes monitored at nine conservation areas
- 23 Species at Risk projects maintained at six conservation areas in support of bobolink, butternut and barn swallows

Conservation Areas

- 11 public conservation areas maintained for public enjoyment
- 317,000 visitors in 2022 (up from 200,000 annually pre-pandemic)
- 42 kilometres of trails and 3 beaches maintained
- Replaced the boat launch ramps at W.A. Taylor Conservation Area
- Started construction on a replacement pedestrian bridge and learning platforms over the marsh at Baxter Conservation Area that will be accessible for people with varying mobility
- Began construction on a replacement accessible pedestrian bridge at Chapman Mills Conservation Area



317,000
conservation area
visitors





Outdoor Education



6,783
children participated
in outdoor education
and summer camps

Outdoor Education

Baxter Conservation Area:

- **3,697** students from 62 schools, five school boards and numerous community groups participated in in-person outdoor education programs
- **145** students attended weekly in-person Forest School in spring and fall (Winter Forest School was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions)
- **144** children participated in Summer Day Camps

Foley Mountain Conservation Area:

- **2,671** students participated in in-person outdoor education programs, including Forest School sessions in spring and fall (Winter Forest School was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions)
- **29** schools from across three school boards came for field trips
- **126** children participated in Summer Day Camps



STEWARDSHIP staff work with landowners, farmers, lake associations, businesses, government agencies and the public to undertake on-the-ground projects that improve the health and resilience of the watershed. Programs such as tree planting, shoreline restoration, clean water incentives, wetland enhancement and habitat creation help reduce flooding, erosion and droughts, protect water quality and reduce the impacts of climate change and development.

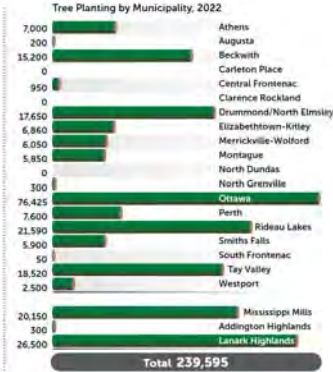


7M
trees planted since 1984
239,595
trees planted in 2022



Tree Planting

- **239,595** trees planted in the Rideau and Mississippi watersheds (**76,425** in the City of Ottawa through the Green Acres program)
- **\$323,091** fundraised to help offset landowner costs



Shoreline Naturalization Program

- **10,127** trees and shrubs planted on 69 properties
- **800 metres** of shoreline naturalized
- **1,000** trees and shrubs distributed to lake residents through over-the-counter plant sales through Upper Rideau Lake Association and Otty Lake Association
- **12** free shoreline planting projects provided to Bobs and Crow Lake residents thanks to top-up partnerships with Bobs and Crow Lake Association Foundation
- **130** native pollinator-friendly perennials distributed to landowners through over-the-counter sale

10,127

trees and shrubs planted on 69 properties

800m

of shoreline naturalization

Stewardship Services

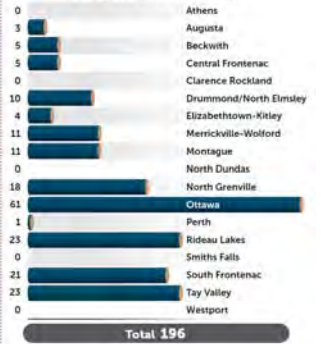


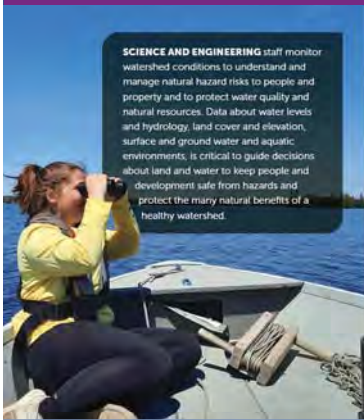
Rural Clean Water Programs

- **135** projects approved through the Rideau Valley Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$265,167** in grants with landowner contributions totaling **\$1,076,185**
- **61** projects approved through the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$284,916** in grants with landowner contributions totaling **\$615,297**



Clean Water Projects by Municipality, 2022





SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING staff monitor watershed conditions to understand and manage natural hazard risks to people and property and to protect water quality and natural resources. Data about water levels and hydrology, land cover and elevation, surface and ground water and aquatic environments, is critical to guide decisions about land and water to keep people and development safe from hazards and protect the many natural benefits of a healthy watershed.

Science & Engineering

- Surface water quality monitoring
- Groundwater monitoring
- Aquatic and terrestrial habitat monitoring
- Hydrometric monitoring and forecasting
- Flood, erosion and drought studies
- Flood forecasting and warning
- Low water response
- Water control structures
- Watershed planning
- Watershed report cards
- Ecological land classification
- Climate change
- Source water protection



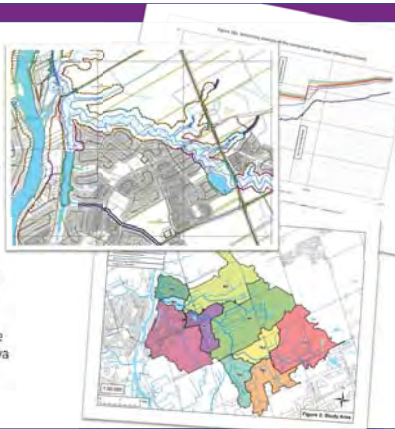
Flood Forecasting & Warning

- 10 flood messages issued for the Rideau River
- 2 flood messages issued for the Ottawa River
- 0 low water messages issued
- 24 sites monitored for water levels and flow
- 7 Parks Canada water level gauges monitored by staff through public info-net site
- 24 sites monitored for precipitation, including 11 new RVCA Weather Stations installed in 2021
- 6 sites monitored for snowpack
- Hosted the Annual Flood Forecasting and Warning Meeting in February for all municipalities and partner agencies



Natural Hazard Mapping

- Completed new or updated mapping for Mosquito Creek and Upper Jock River
- Consulted on draft mapping for Stevens Creek
- Continued work on mapping for Middle Rideau River and Wolf/Sand Lake System



Source Water Protection

- 8th year implementing the Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan
- Updated Source Protection Plan and technical Assessment Reports to reflect updated rules from the Province, a new municipal intake in the City of Ottawa and a new well in the Town of Kemptville

Stream Characterization Monitoring

- 44 sites sampled across the watershed in spring and fall for the Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network (OBBN)
- City Stream Watch Program resumed after a two-year COVID-19 hiatus, monitoring four creeks in the City of Ottawa: Sawmill Creek, Barrhaven Creek, Black Rapids Creek and Cardinal Creek
 - 187 volunteers for a total of 580 volunteer hours
 - 253 stream survey sections completed
 - 14 temperature loggers installed
 - 18 fish sampling sites monitored
 - 9 stream cleanups completed
 - 3 invasive species removals completed
- Catchment level watershed conditions were classified across the watershed by aquatic score, benthic community score, fish community score and thermal classification



Surface Water Quality Monitoring



117

sites sampled for baseline monitoring and the Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Program, which monitors the water chemistry of major rivers and tributaries.

Monitoring Cardinal Creek, 2022.



Water Quality Monitoring in the Rideau Valley

- Ontario Benthos Biomonitoring Network
- Provincial Water Quality Monitoring Network
- Baseline Monitoring Program
- Watershed Watch



Wetland Restoration Post-Effectiveness Monitoring

- Continued restoration and enhancement of Stillwater Wetland Complex in Nepean
- Post-effectiveness monitoring at Jebbs Creek Wetland Embayment (Year 4)
- Continued restoration of the Hutton Marsh in Motts Mills with the excavation of several more ponds and channels to create more open water and encourage biodiversity)



Stillwater Wetland



Financing Conservation

Science & Engineering Services	\$3,391,379
Planning Advisory and Regulatory Services	\$2,641,947
Stewardship Services	\$1,636,843
Conservation Land Management Services	\$1,306,689
Corporate Services	\$1,273,740
Transfer to Reserves	\$747,660
Investment in Capital Assets	\$473,035
Repayment of Capital Lease	\$202,704



Municipal Levy	\$6,461,296
Program Revenue	\$3,605,502
Special Levies	\$1,124,970
Provincial Funding	\$336,626
Foundation	\$145,603





Mission

The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation is a registered environmental charity working to help protect and conserve the lands and waters of the valley of the Rideau River in Eastern Ontario.



2023 RVCF Board of Directors

- Andrew Harkness, Chair
- Tom Scott, Vice Chair
- Jason W. M. Kelly, Immediate Past Chair
- Kathy Dallaire, Secretary-Treasurer
- John Batson, Director
- Allison Gibbons, Director
- Gary Howard, Director
- Mark Mortimer, Director
- Jake Rice, Director
- R.E. Smith, Director
- Kathy Thomas, Director

In 2022, the RVCF was generously supported by



600
individuals and families



11
corporate partners



3
not-for-profits



3
government partners



8
in-kind donors



8
directors



RVCF has raised
\$7.9M
 for conservation since 1994.

Focus Areas

The Foundation raises funds and in-kind gifts for three major areas of conservation work:

Land Care — land protection and conservation, tree planting, erosion control, landowner information, trail building and maintenance, outdoor signage, picnic tables, benches, boardwalks.

River Care — water quality monitoring, biodiversity monitoring, wetland inventories, invasive species and garbage removal, clean water projects.

Conservation Education — outdoor learning and experiences, accessible programs and services, onsite landowner visits, research projects, public events.



- Celebrated \$429,000 in grants from Canada's Community Revitalization Fund in support of two major accessibility infrastructure projects:

- Baxter Conservation Area Accessible Bridge Boardwalk Project
- Chapman Mills Conservation Area Accessible Bridge



- Honoured year two of our partnership with Modern Niagara, which will provide \$300,000 over five years to help acquire and protect vulnerable land in the watershed



- Raised \$134,000 in support for Phase 2 of the restoration of Hutton Marsh

Made possible thanks to a dedicated group of local stakeholders and funders:

- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Leeds Grenville Stewardship Council
- Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Zone F
- United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (UCLG)
- Wildlife Habitat Canada
- Ontario Land Trust Alliance
- Rideau Valley Conservation Authority



