

# **Rideau Valley Conservation Authority** 2015 Budget and Work Plan



The Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) delivers services and programs that protect and manage water and other natural resources. These efforts are done in partnership with municipal, provincial and federal governments, local landowners and other organizations — all at a shared cost well below what they would pay on their own. The RVCA takes an integrated watershed approach to delivering programs and services — one that balances human, environmental and economic needs.

Our ongoing priorities are:

1. Improve water quality
2. Protect water supplies
3. Manage flood risk and erosion hazards
4. Restore watershed habitats
5. Increase conservation lands





# 2015 Budget

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The RVCA's total proposed budget for 2015 is \$10.7 million which is 23 percent higher than last year's budget of \$8.7 million. This 23 percent increase can be broken out into three key areas:

- 15.3 percent is a result of three Water Control Structure capital projects moving forward next year (Haggart Island Dam, Mott's Mills Dam and Britannia Flood Control Structure)
- 4.8 percent is a result of Water Control operations costs increasing (due to increased costs for Rideau River Ice Management in the City of Ottawa)
- 3.1 percent is how much our overall operational budget increased (staffing and other expenses)

Our proposed municipal levy increase for 2015 is only \$160,000 which means \$1.8 million is coming from other sources of revenue such as fundraising, the province, grants and special levies. The increased costs for Water Control Structures (both operations and capital projects) is entirely funded through special levies to benefiting municipalities and fundraised revenue. The following sections provide additional details about our proposed 2015 budget including the expenditures and revenues contained within it.

## Expenditures

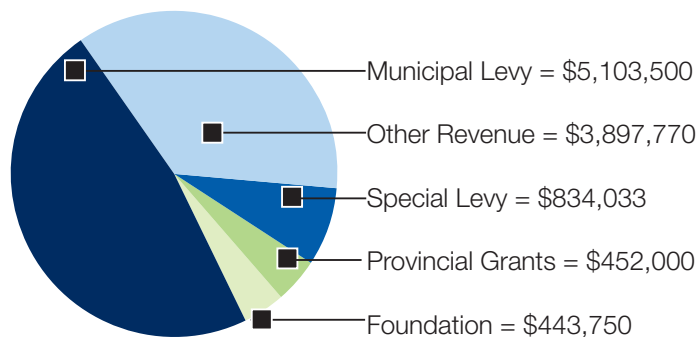
- Spending across most program areas is status quo.
- One exception is Capital Projects (Water Control Structures) which shows a significant increase in 2015. This increase is because we are anticipating works on Haggart Island Dam, Britannia Village Flood Control Project and Mott's Mills Dam. These projects are currently at various stages of planning for construction, decommissioning or rehabilitation and will be undertaken when the projects are ready to proceed.
- RVCA is also now administering Part IV of the *Clean Water Act* on behalf of 12 municipalities (acting as Risk Management Officials and Inspectors). This new program is funded with money that municipalities receive from the Province to support the implementation of Source Protection Plans.
- There is also a significant increase in expenditures for Stewardship Services as they strive to undertake more forestry and shoreline naturalization projects. These projects are financed through fundraising or special agreements with landowners and municipalities.
- This budget will also enable Corporate Services to implement two improvements – upgrading RVCA's website to improve access to our information and data as well as new financial software that will improve and modernize our budgeting and financial reporting processes.
- Like our member municipalities, salary costs increase. While OMERS contribution rates remained unchanged for 2015, payroll taxes (WSIB, EI, CPP and EHT) and benefits costs increased over last year putting additional pressure on the budget. Additionally, the RVCA historically uses the Consumer Price Index as our economic adjustment figure (this year it was 2.5 percent) and sets a salary increment increase of 1 to 2 percent for eligible staff who are still moving through their salary band. To achieve a municipal levy increase of 3.2 percent, the Board reduced the economic adjustment increase to 2 percent and the salary increment increase to 0.5 percent.

# 2015 Budget

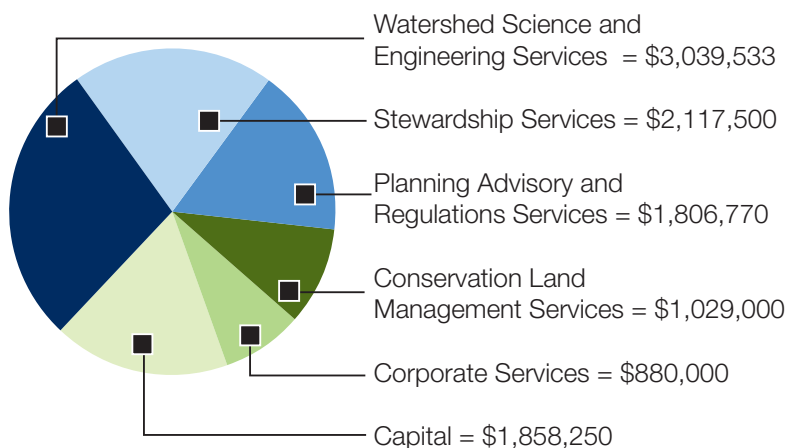
## Revenues

- Provincial Funding will decrease 10.8 percent in 2014 because the Ontario Drinking Water Source Protection Program is declining as the workload lessens. MNRF funding is expected to remain unchanged.
- Special levies will remain unchanged next year, except for a significant increase to the City of Ottawa's special levy for Rideau River Ice Management. Costs for this program have increased significantly over the past three years because of challenging ice conditions.
- Other revenue will increase 43.4 percent next year due to significant revenue being directed at three capital projects: Haggart Island Dam, Britannia Village Flood Control Project and Mott's Mills Dam. Additional revenue includes Trillium Grants, funding from the National Capital Commission, TD Bank, Eco-Action and Great Lakes Fund. Other projects will be completed through special funding from municipalities and developers to naturalize properties, maintain natural areas and undertake trail development.
- The municipal levy will increase by \$160,000 in 2015. This is a 3.2 percent increase which is the second lowest increase since 2008.
- The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation will increase revenue 72.9 percent next year. A large portion is \$344,000 that was raised to put towards the Mott's Mill Dam rehabilitation which we anticipate using in 2015 when the project gets underway.

## Where does the money come from?



## Where does the investment go?



## Municipal Levy

Being a municipal organization, the bottom line financially for the RVCA is the municipal levy. That said we are committed to minimizing pressure on the levy by using this investment from our member municipalities to leverage other monies. For every dollar invested through the municipal levy, the RVCA has been able to double that investment to deliver a variety of programs and services in the Rideau Watershed. Other revenue includes:

- Charging fees for education programs, conservation areas, permits and planning comments
- Getting grants for special projects, students and interns
- Fundraising through the Foundation
- Special levies for specific projects that benefit one municipality
- Joint programming and staff sharing with neighbouring conservation authorities
- Landowner contributions for services they receive
- Contracts to provide services to external organizations and sectors

## Municipal Levy Apportionment

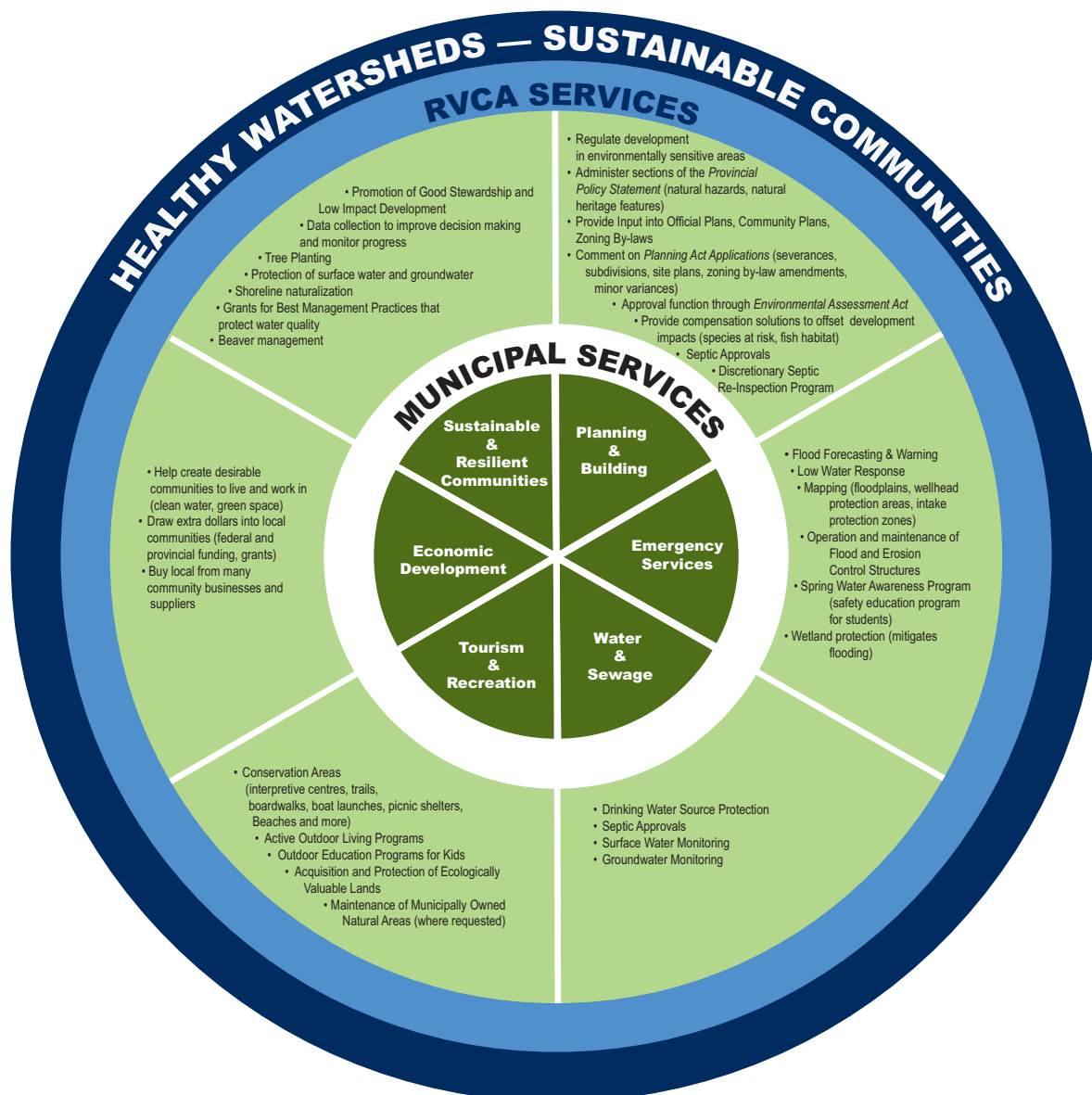
Based on assessment apportionment, the City of Ottawa will pay almost 91 percent of RVCA's levy in 2015. This amounts to \$4.6 million leaving our other 17 municipalities to share the remaining \$0.4 million. Levy costs for these municipalities range from \$1,250 to \$79,903 depending on their assessment.

Levy Rates Over the Years				
Year	Municipal Levy	Levy Increase	Current Value Assessment (modified)	Levy Rate*
2015	\$5,103,500	3.2 percent	\$97,988,860,174	\$5.21
2014	\$4,943,500	3.6 percent	\$96,748,734,271	\$5.11
2013	\$4,770,000	3.9 percent	\$77,361,085,801	\$6.17
2012	\$4,589,000	4.6 percent	\$75,788,933,931	\$6.05
2011	\$4,387,000	4.7 percent	\$74,808,601, 824	\$5.86
2010	\$4,190,000	2.7 percent	\$73,149,679,467	\$5.75
2009	\$4,081,000	5.6 percent	\$60,589,220,174	\$6.75
2008	\$3,865,000	5.4 percent	\$59,616,317,415	\$6.48

\* Levy/\$100,000 of current value assessment (modified)

## Serving our Municipalities

RVCA staff are working closer than ever with municipal staff because our work has become so interconnected. It's hard to find a municipal service that our programs don't support either directly or indirectly. Often we provide this support at a fraction of the cost because our staff are shared among our 18 municipalities and sometimes our neighbouring Conservation Authorities. This saves money and avoids duplication. RVCA's programs also serve a wide range of public interests and needs benefiting our local watershed residents from lake country to urban communities. Below is a graphic that summarizes our programs that support key municipal services. More details about these programs are provided in the following pages.



## Protecting our Natural Capital

Much of the work done through the Conservation Authority looks to protect our natural capital. Natural capital builds on the notion that Mother Nature does for free what we would otherwise have to pay millions of dollars to do through technology and infrastructure. Making wise decisions to preserve and protect natural capital will save us from costly man-made alternatives. If we compromise these valuable ecological services, that lost value is ultimately borne by taxpayers. By accounting for natural capital we can start to align economic growth with environmental protection — allowing future generations the same benefits from nature we enjoy. This is the foundation of sustainability.

## Value of Natural Capital

Land Cover	Upland Forest	Riparian Forest	Wetland	Water	Urban Forest	Meadows	Agriculture	Total
<b>Ecological Services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• atmospheric regulation</li> <li>• climate regulation</li> <li>• disturbance avoidance</li> <li>• water regulation</li> <li>• water supply</li> <li>• pollination</li> <li>• habitat</li> <li>• recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• atmospheric regulation</li> <li>• climate regulation</li> <li>• water supply</li> <li>• waste treatment</li> <li>• pollination</li> <li>• biological control</li> <li>• habitat</li> <li>• biodiversity</li> <li>• recreation</li> <li>• culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• climate regulation</li> <li>• water regulation</li> <li>• water supply</li> <li>• soil formation</li> <li>• nutrient cycling</li> <li>• waste treatment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• water regulation</li> <li>• water supply</li> <li>• soil formation</li> <li>• waste treatment</li> <li>• habitat</li> <li>• biodiversity</li> <li>• recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• atmospheric regulation</li> <li>• climate regulation</li> <li>• water regulation</li> <li>• water supply</li> <li>• recreation</li> <li>• culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• climate regulation</li> <li>• pollination</li> <li>• habitat</li> <li>• recreation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• climate regulation</li> <li>• pollination</li> <li>• habitat</li> </ul>	
<b>Estimated value (\$) per capita per year</b>	94	67	247	19	25	10	28	<b>490</b>
<b>Estimated annual value (\$ millions)</b>	70.9	51.0	186.8	14.5	18.7	7.8	21.4	<b>371.1</b>

*Estimating the Value of Natural Capital in the Credit River Watershed*



# Watershed Science and Engineering

A watershed approach is the most effective framework to address today's water resource challenges. For Conservation Authorities, the management of land and the management of water go hand-in-hand. This is the basis of the ecosystem approach to natural resource management. 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'S Watershed Science and Engineering team collects, monitors and analyses watershed information. Understanding our watershed helps us to better manage and protect our resources. 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.

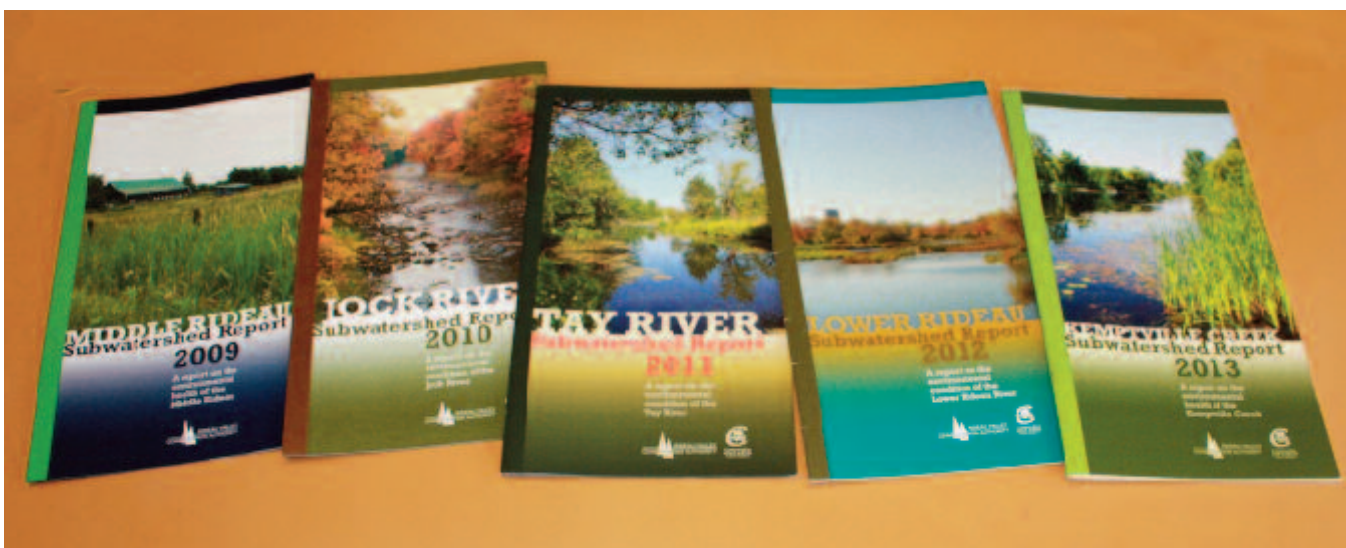
## Watershed Reporting

- Accurately report on environmental conditions at the subwatershed and catchment geographic scales to member municipalities, watershed residents, RVCA staff, NGO's and government agencies
- Help understand the effects of human activity on our water resources
- Track environmental change to surface water resources (quality/quantity), fisheries resources (aquatic/instream habitat) and terrestrial resources (wetland/woodland/riparian cover) over time
- Focus watershed management actions where they are needed the most

### What it means for your municipality?

Watershed reports help municipal staff and council make informed decisions on:

- Managing existing land uses
- Protecting surface and groundwater resources
- Developing environmental protection policies for Official Plans and Zoning By-laws
- Targeting of stewardship initiatives
- Applying best management practices along lakes and streams
- Reviewing requirements for site specific land development (*Planning Act* and RVCA Regulation)
- Implementing resource management policies and programs





## Drinking Water Source Protection

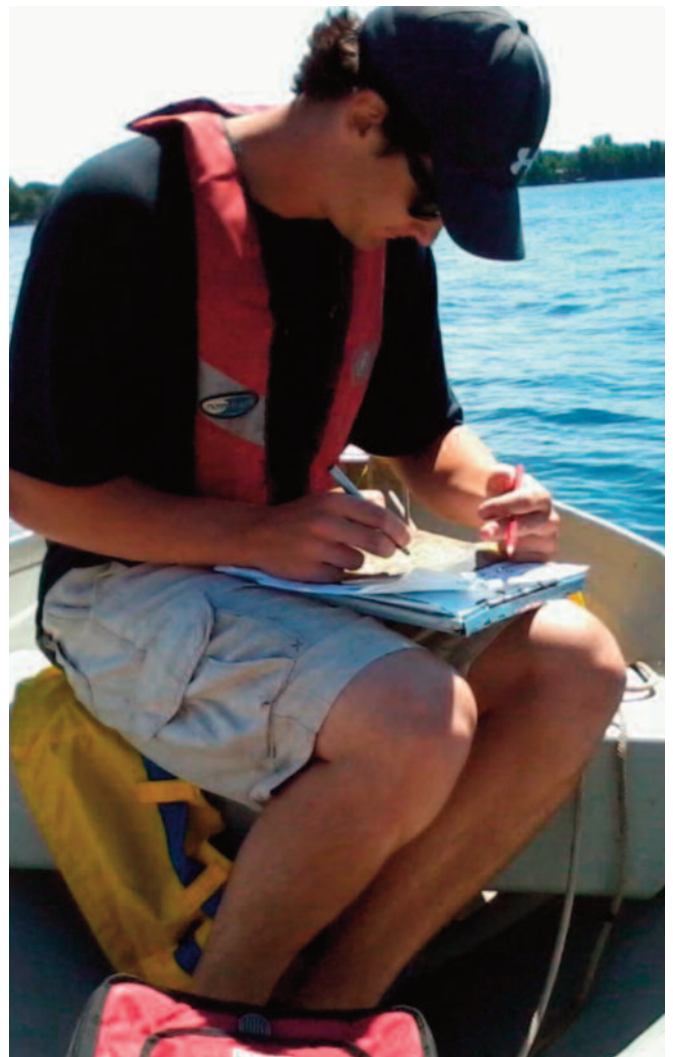
- Administer the province's Drinking Water Source Protection Program in the Mississippi and Rideau watersheds
- Prepare municipalities and others for implementation of the 2014 approved *Source Protection Plan*

## Surface Water Quality Monitoring

- Provide a consistent baseline dataset that can give a general indication of water quality in the watershed
- Assess the contribution of tributary streams to loadings in the Rideau River and upper watershed lakes
- Monitor ambient water quality conditions at locations on major tributary streams and watershed lakes
- Involve and provide training to lake residents to develop consistent monitoring methods to ensure data integrity and to increase the extent of monitoring activities
- Sample bottom dwelling bugs (benthic invertebrates) to determine water quality and habitat conditions using a biological method which compliments water chemistry sampling programs

### Special for 2015

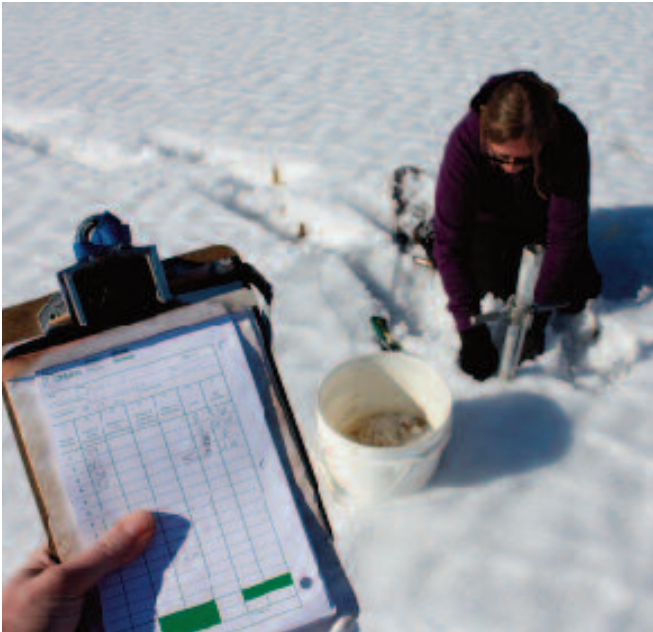
- Continue into year two of a two year project funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation to study excessive algae and aquatic plant growth — research findings will be completed along with educational workshops, information and a manual to help watershed residents improve lake and river conditions
- Publish surface water chemistry data on RVCA website for internal and external use



# Watershed Science and Engineering

## Hydrometric Monitoring & Forecasting

- Collect, manage, analyse and disseminate data and information about the abundance or scarcity of surface water resources within the watershed



### What it means for your municipality?

- Effective flood forecasting services help to minimize damage and public safety risks during flood events
- Low Water Response enables communication amongst water management agencies and water consumers and facilitates optimal management of scarce resources
- Accumulated data enables numerical analysis of watershed hydrology – extreme events, and water budget analysis



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## Flood, Erosion & Drought Studies

- Identify hazard lands as delegated by MNRF
- Provide defensible estimates of 1:100 year flood levels on watercourses and inland lakes for effective administration and enforcement of regulations under Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*
- Support municipalities with up-to-date mapping of hazardous lands for Official Plan and Zoning By-law schedules
- Refine numerical watershed modeling system for use in floodplain hydrology and hydraulic analyses for ungauged watersheds and for investigating the potential impacts of land use and climate change on a watershed scale
- Maintain RVCA flood hazard knowledge base by amending flood lines and associated data sets as changes on the ground are brought to RVCA's attention and as floodplain modeling is refined and improved over time

### Products for 2015

- Rideau River flood mapping (Kars to Rideau Falls)
- Flowing Creek flood mapping
- Kings Creek flood mapping
- Otter-Hutton flood mapping

## Groundwater Monitoring

- Fulfill RVCA's obligations under the Memorandum of Agreement with Ontario respecting the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN)
- Work in the field and office to download data, perform data correction and QA/QC tasks, and perform basic maintenance at existing PGMN monitoring wells
- Develop and populate a groundwater information database, and develop tools to enable the creation of conceptual models (visualizations) of hydrogeological conditions at scales that are relevant to watershed management planning and environmental impact assessment activities

### Special for 2015

- Continue leadership role in the Thin Soils Working Group. This group, made up of academics, MOECC, health units, public health Ontario, City of Ottawa staff and neighbouring CAs discusses concerns related to new/existing private well and septic system developments in eastern Ontario where soil thicknesses are typically thin and underlain by bedrock aquifers
- Assist City of Ottawa staff with development of new City of Ottawa Hydrogeological Guideline



## Aquatic & Terrestrial Habitat Monitoring

- Undertake Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol — characterizing the amount of water, sediment transport and storage capacity within headwater drainage features
- Implement Municipal Drain Classification (MDC) System to streamline the review and approval process related to impacts of drain maintenance activities on fish habitat
- Observe and catalogue the natural and human-made features of shoreline properties through the RVCA Shoreline Classification Project
- Collect information on the physical and biological attributes of surveyed streams (habitat surveys, fish sampling, thermal regime) through the Macro Stream Assessment program
- Inventory detailed land cover information to help facilitate planning/regulations, ecosystem management and conservation objectives for the conservation authority and member municipalities
- Obtain, record, and manage valuable information on the physical and biological characteristics of creeks and streams in the City of Ottawa, while ensuring that they are respected and valued natural features of the communities through which they flow
- Collect field survey information to assist landowners and municipalities when attempting to understand flooding issues as a result of beaver dam activity
- Collect information on headwater drainage features through a rapid assessment method characterizing

the amount of water, sediment transport, and storage capacity within headwater drainage features

### Special for 2015

- Monitor recent fish habitat creation/enhancement projects: Otty Lake, Brewer Park and Richmond Conservation Area



## Watershed Information System

- Provide access to electronic information
- Produce maps and data summaries for Subwatershed Reports and Data Catchment Sheet
- Support monitoring efforts with maps, data models (place to store data), provide mobile tools for data entry
- Support floodplain mapping projects
- Develop RVCA's Electronic Content Management System
- Produce data used on a daily basis by RVCA staff to help watershed residents
- Manage and maintain GIS for RVCA staff, who use it in their day to day decision making process

- Support the effective and efficient use of staff time through readily available authoritative data
- Safeguard RVCA's accumulating watershed information against loss while supporting its reliability

### Special for 2015

- Further mobile data entry development
- WISKI-SODA data dissemination project
- Mobile data Access project

## Water Control Operations

- Safe and effective operation and maintenance of existing RVCA flood and erosion control structures to protect property and people against losses and risks associated with flooding and erosion, or to manage water levels for aquatic habitat management purposes
- Includes Rideau River Ice Management – to prevent ice jam induced flooding at break-up on the lower Rideau River (Hog's Back Falls to Rideau Falls)
- Inspection, operation and routine upkeep in accordance with established procedures
- City of Ottawa provides operations and maintenance services for stormwater pump stations associated with Brewer Park and Windsor Park flood control dykes in Old Ottawa South and Rideau River ice management operations

### Special for 2015

- Modernize records management using the electronic content management system
- Expenditures incurred in the planning and development of a number of needed capital projects for the decommissioning or betterment of existing assets will be recorded against this program (operations) until such time a Capital Project for each is identified and the means of financing it has been approved:
  - Prepare a decommissioning and river restoration plan for the Hearts Desire Weir
  - Collaborate with Town of Perth on the planning and design of a river restoration plan for the Tay River at and above the site of the Haggart Island dams
  - Negotiate land requirements and seek funding to support Motts Mills Dam replacement



# Planning Advisory and Regulatory Services

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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 and 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 oversee the review and approval functions under the *Ontario Building Code* for the construction, enlargement or alteration of septic systems throughout the City of Ottawa as well as in Tay Valley Township. Septic re-inspection services are also offered in several municipalities especially in “lake country”.

Working in the best interests of the watershed an expert team of staff (experienced in water resources engineering, biology, ground water science, municipal planning and stewardship of our natural resources) strive to ensure clean water, natural shorelines and sustainable land use will continue to exist and thrive throughout the watershed. We provide cost-effective solutions, ensure consistent delivery, avoid expensive fixes and reduce municipal liability associated with decision-making responsibilities.

## Plan Input and Plan Review

This activity occurs on two levels – one being providing input to high level municipal planning exercises such as in the preparation of official plans, community plans and zoning by-laws and the other involving the review of specific development proposals on individual lots or for lot creation. Provincial requirements stipulate that we be involved. In such endeavours we:

- Emphasize pre-consultation to ensure that applicants submit appropriate information at the time of the filing of development applications to maximize cost savings throughout the application process
- Provide proponents with guidance on provincially established requirements and watershed specific needs — to assist, a series of checklists has been developed for more complex application types such as subdivisions
- Beyond addressing hazard issues (for which we have a provincial MOU) our input is based on MOU's established with upper tier approval authorities (Lanark and Leeds & Grenville counties as well as the single tier City of Ottawa); these agreements address roles and responsibilities as well as accountability considerations
- Municipal review and approval timelines are respected

### What it means for your municipality?

- Brings both professional expertise and provincial policies and standards on environmental matters into the municipal decision-making process
- Our knowledge helps municipalities meet statutorily established review timelines
- Our municipalities benefit from the pooling and sharing of specialist staff expertise — resulting in lower cost service delivery than most member municipalities would be able to undertake were they to retain these services themselves
- Implementation costs to the municipality are minimized
- Provide support to municipalities when other review or approval functions are involved which relate to the watershed (examples would include the *Environmental Assessment Act* process for new roads, bridges, pipes and other infrastructure, permits to take water, source water protection, etc.). Our involvement flags watershed constraints and regulatory requirements which some projects may need to address before proceeding; the earlier this happens in the planning process the better
- Bringing provincial requirements and watershed needs into larger scale community development planning such as community design plans, environmental management plans and neighbourhood plans



## S. 28 Conservation Authorities Act Regulation

Conservation Authorities are the lead for ensuring the provincial interest is addressed with respect to development on potentially hazardous sites. To assist us in undertaking this role the Conservation Authority identifies areas in the watershed vulnerable to natural hazards such as flooding as well as on or adjacent to unstable slopes and soils. These susceptible areas are then, in most cases, identified on detailed maps so that municipal officials, real estate professionals, property owners / prospective purchasers and others can easily understand the extent of the hazard on specific properties. At-risk-areas are mapped along the stretch of the Ottawa River at the northern extent of our watershed as well as along the full length of the Rideau River and several of its tributaries including the Jock River, Stevens Creek, Kemptville Creek and the Tay River. Flood levels have been identified on six lakes (and will be mapped in the next year or so). Wetland areas are also mapped. We are working in a co-ordinated manner to identify hazard

susceptible zones in other areas of our watershed. With this mandate the authority has accepted responsibility to administer an Ontario Regulation (*O. Reg. 174/06*) referenced as the “Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses” regulation. Based on the regulatory requirements, where landowners wish to fill, grade or undertake construction within the established regulation limits or to interfere with a watercourse or a wetland the Conservation Authority’s written approval is required.

### What it means for your municipality?

- We provide effective and fair delivery of S. 28 regulations in a manner which dovetails with municipal planning responsibilities
- Delivery of the program is based on Board of Directors approved local policies for administration of the regulation
- Regulation limits and flood hazards are identified in a way such that the information can be transferred seamlessly to municipal official plan and zoning schedules; and owners can thus easily identify how the regulation affects their lands
- We provide prompt response times (generally more quickly than suggested provincial minimums)
- Approximately three hundred applications are reviewed annually — applicants are guided, where possible, to approvable solutions where applications present authorization challenges; as such, over 95 percent of applications are approved
- Applicants have an opportunity for a hearing before the authority’s Executive Committee (appointed from the Board of Directors) when differences cannot be resolved at a staff level
- Information allows for municipal emergency response planning
- Controlling development reduces municipal liability when severe weather events occur



# Planning Advisory and Regulatory Services



## S. 35 Fisheries

Conservation Authorities have been providing fish habitat protection services for more than a dozen years under agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). Fish are a resource that provide value not only to the natural environment but also to several economic sectors including commercial and recreational fisheries, outdoor education and leisure as well as tourism. The Government of Canada made changes to the *Canada Fisheries Act* last year that ended our formal

agreements with DFO. However, fish remain an important component of a healthy watershed and we will continue to provide advice to our member municipalities and others on the protection and management of aquatic habitat consistent with our mandate.

## Pt. VIII Building Code Act

- Provide Part VIII review and approval of private septic systems within the City of Ottawa on behalf of the Mississippi Valley, the Rideau Valley and South Nation Conservation Authorities
- Provide review and approval functions in Tay Valley Township — a partnership with Tay Valley Township and the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority



### What it means for participating municipalities?

- Cost-effective, not-for-profit, cost recovery service available to your municipality
- Access to experienced, well-trained, accountable staff who are designated Provincial Offenses Officers and have professional accreditations
- Consistent application of standards within and between geographical areas — a level playing-field is important to contractors, landowners and municipalities
- Benefit from fast turnaround of inspections and approvals — reducing *Ontario Building Code* inspection timelines by 50 percent
- Integrate approvals and inspections with other environmental regulations and land use planning processes — one site inspection can serve two or more purposes
- Emphasis on public information and education
- Minimized municipalities' exposure to risk and liability
- Committed to providing responsive, knowledgeable and courteous customer service
- Address complaints for applicants or other landowners
- Provide centralized file retention of septic approvals

## Septic Re-Inspection Program

- Delivery of Mandatory Inspection Programs and Discretionary Programs as per the *Building Code (Ontario Regulations 350/06)* which was recently amended by *Ontario Regulation 315/10* to establish and govern mandatory on-site sewage system maintenance inspection programs at a municipal level

## Pt. IV Clean Water Act

- Provide Risk Management Officials and Inspectors to administer Part IV of the *Clean Water Act* on behalf of 12 of our watershed municipalities.

### What it means for participating municipalities?

- Protection of water quality
- Education and promotion of the importance of maintaining a healthy septic system
- Increase of property values due to protected lake environments
- Information provided to municipal planners assists in determining growth potential for existing settlement areas
- Access to experienced, well-trained, accountable staff





# Corporate Services

## Management & Members, Finance & Human Resources

Encompasses the overall management of the RVCA which includes work planning, budgeting, financial reporting, policy development, issues management, municipal relations, partnership development, employee management, payroll and serving the needs of the Board of Directors (training, watershed tour, agendas, minutes).

### Special for 2015

- Orientation session for new and returning Board members
- New software to modernize our budgeting and financial reporting process
- Improvements to our website to make it easier for visitors to access our information and data



## Communications

- Increase awareness, knowledge, and understanding of RVCA services, programs and initiatives
- Focus on consistent, time-sensitive, transparent, accurate exchange of information
- Build and maintain effective relationships with the RVCA Board of Directors and elected officials/bodies at the municipal, provincial and federal levels
- Strive to maintain the RVCA's positive, proactive relationship with watershed media to ensure a high level of accurate, comprehensive regional media coverage
- Provide communication support through communication planning, media relations, plain language services
- Distribute corporate information through annual reports, *Watershed Briefs* (municipal newsletter), *Around the Rideau* (general corporate newsletter), municipal information sheets, program brochures, displays, media releases, website, social media (Facebook and Twitter) and public events/workshops

## Foundation

- Increase fundraised revenue by 10 percent per year with the goal of long term sustainability of donors (we have exceeded our revenue targets in the last three years)
- Seek new unallocated funds as much as possible for use on urgent or high priority RVCA conservation projects
- Develop a sustainable Environmental Land Fund to finance acquisition of lands gifted to the Foundation
- Encourage more contributions to the Steve Simmering Fund to support the annual maintenance costs associated with each donation of property

### Special for 2015

- Create a central list of environmental projects and help RVCA staff complete them as funds become available
- Create a business plan for a newly acquired property to include long term support and maintenance



# Conservation Land Management

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The RVCA manages conservation areas for strategic protection of vulnerable habitats and valuable natural resources. Over 2,300 hectares of sensitive natural environments, including nine developed conservation areas, are available for public use and enjoyment — providing local communities with affordable recreation, education and tourism opportunities.

## Land Donation

- Seek funding and support for acquisition and protection of ecologically significant and/or vulnerable lands
- Offset land acquisition activities i.e. surveys, severance, legal fees
- Complete acquisition of the Lions Club Property and donation of property adjacent to Baxter Conservation Area

## Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas

- Provide high quality, curriculum based education programs, day camps and group programs
- Provide nature-based passive recreation and visitor experiences
- Maintain quality facilities in terms of resource management and visitor use



### What it means for your municipality?

- Affordable, attractive and well-maintained sites and facilities
- Safe swimming and beach area with good water quality
- Year-round use — hiking, snowshoeing, swimming, picnicking, group camping
- Habitat and biodiversity conservation
- Self-guided accessible trails for municipal residents or tourists
- Environmental education for local students

### Special for 2015

- Continue trail upgrades at several conservation areas including Foley Mountain, Baxter, Richmond, Meisel, Rideau Ferry & Mill Pond
- Introduce GPS equipment and program to Baxter Conservation Area
- Implement new entrance signs at major conservation areas with Conservation Ontario branding, activity icons and logos
- Complete Natural Areas Management Plans



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## Other Conservation Lands

- General operations, maintenance and visitor use of the more developed conservation areas that are not permanently staffed
- Provide resource management of ecological features of the more natural areas that require maintenance and limited management and only have local use or are for natural preservation only
- Continued development of property management plans for strategic land-use planning and efficient use of resources



# Stewardship Services

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RVCA strives to protect and enhance the Rideau Valley watershed's natural resources. Our goal is to undertake environmental protection programs that will leave a healthy and sustainable environment for future generations.

We use information from RVCA science and monitoring to address local issues and pursue targeted educational and outreach efforts to encourage community-based water protection and habitat restoration projects. Programs such as reforestation, landowner incentive programs, landowner information services, shoreline restoration, wetland enhancement and species at risk support 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!

## **What it means for your municipality?**

- Direct changes on the landscape for cleaner water, healthier habitats and more resilient watersheds
- Technical advice and financial assistance to you and your municipal residents
- Promotion, education and implementation of stewardship programs on private and municipal properties

## **Special for 2015**

- Deliver projects in the Kemptville Creek watershed resulting from targeted *Kemptville Creek Subwatershed Report 2013* efforts
- Undertake outreach and promotion of programs in Rideau Lakes subwatershed stemming from distribution of the *Rideau Lakes Subwatershed Report 2014*

## **LandOwner Resource Centre Storefront and Production Centre**

- Provide front counter service for all RVCA programs and “one-stop shopping” for members of the public interested in finding out about environmental information, programs or legislation of a variety of agencies
- Maintain publications for distribution — meeting various MOUs
- Produce high quality environmental products for a wide range of internal and external clients





## Private Land Forestry Assistance

- Provide a quality, cost-effective tree planting program
- Plant 200,000 trees on private land in 2015 — exceeding our target for 180,000 trees annually
- Fundraise for more tree-planting in 2016 — MNRF's 50 Million Program will continue to provide \$1.35 per tree and we expect to raise about \$400,000 from other sources to support this effort
- Continue with targeted tree planting efforts in Elizabethtown-Kitley as part of our Adirondack to Algonquin partnership
- Provide species at risk compensation projects that assist municipalities and private contractors in meeting their permit requirements



### What it means for your municipality?

- Experienced, cost-effective, subsidized tree planting services for municipal residents
- Ability to attract tree planting sponsorship from federal and provincial governments, NGOs, environmental charities, and the private sector
- Professional staff available to provide advice regarding species at risk compensation projects

### What it means for residents?

- Provide full-service tree planting at an average savings of over 90 percent
- Access \$300,000 for land owners' subsidies that they aren't eligible for individually
- Provide forestry services beyond tree planting (MFTIP information, contractor contacts)



## Butternut Recovery Stewardship

- Increase the number of healthy native pure trees available for seed and scion collection
- Plant seedlings using volunteer landowners
- Grow 2,000 seedlings for out planting in 2016
- Generate revenue from the sale of seedlings to *Endangered Species Act* permit holders

## Clean Water Program

- Provide financial and technical assistance to farmers and rural landowners undertaking projects to protect and improve water quality in the watershed
- Support a large number of best management practices that address both surface and groundwater issues



### Special for 2015

- Distribute \$226,000 in grants to qualifying projects
- Increase the uptake of projects in categories that have a direct benefit to water quality, habitat improvement and farm projects that are not supported through the Canada Ontario Farm Stewardship Program
- Promote 2014 program additions which include Manure Storage/Treatment, Cover Crops, Land Retirement and Controlled Tile Drainage.
- Continue to develop a partnership with NCC — working with NCC staff, NCC agricultural properties are being assessed to identify where they may benefit from the implementation of best management practices
- Continue to develop a partnership with Ducks Unlimited — working together we may be able to share the project costs, allowing both to stretch grant dollars further
- Assist landowners affected by Source Protection Plans — Source Protection Plan implementation will require some landowners to implement best management practices in order to meet the requirements of their Risk Management Plans; work with some of these landowners, and assist with the costs associated with implementation

## Beaver Management

- Working to balance flooding and property damage concerns with the benefits to the aquatic ecosystem created by beavers
- Track nuisance beaver calls, distribute the Beaver Management package to landowners and municipalities and assist with advice on managing beavers and dams

### Special for 2015

- Manage contracts with trappers for Perth Wildlife Reserve, Mica Mines CA, Kemptville Creek and Motts Mills
- Continue our beaver management partnership with Otter Lake and Drain Wolford landowners at their request



## Shoreline Stewardship Program

- Work for clean water, natural shorelines and sustainable land use throughout the watershed
- Provide incentive grants, on-site visits, project planning and management support (planting plans, types/sources of native, local plants, planting advice/assistance)
- Present shoreline naturalization workshops, talks and project assistance for community or lake groups



### Special for 2015

- Assist in the development of the Heart's Desire Weir Decommissioning and Riparian Restoration Plan
- Fundraise and pursue shoreline restoration projects (including bioengineering and fish habitat enhancements) on public lands in partnership with internal staff and external partners
- Complete Kemptville Creek subwatershed shoreline projects and target shoreline naturalization projects in Rideau Lakes subwatershed

## Lake Planning

- Provide information, resources, templates, fundraising information, contacts etc. to support lake planning efforts
- Review and technical vetting of lake planning related documents or reports by RVCA staff





## Questions?

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RVCA is dedicated to  
**accessible**  
design and communication

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### Your Rideau Valley Conservation Authority

Environmental expertise • Watershed knowledge • Professional integrity • Advice and service municipalities and residents can count on!