



2018

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 with local initiatives at the watershed scale.

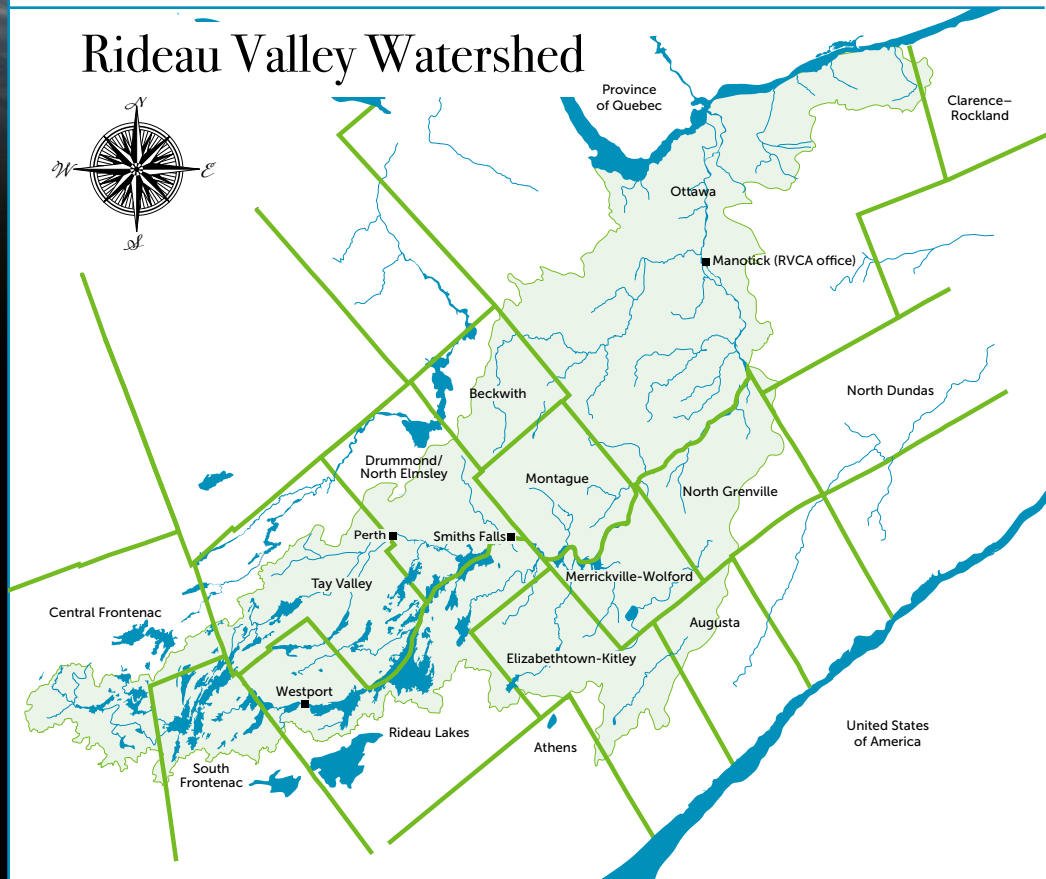
Our Vision: A thriving watershed with clean abundant water, natural shorelines, rich forests and wetlands, diverse habitat and sustainable land use that is valued and protected by all.

Our Mission: To understand, manage, protect, restore and enhance the Rideau watershed through science, stewardship, education, policy and leadership.

2018 RVCA Board of Directors

Lyle Pederson, Chair	Elizabethtown-Kitley
Pieter Leenhouts, Vice Chair	Ottawa
Andy Jozefowicz	Athens
Dale McLenaghan	Augusta
Sharon Mousseau	Beckwith
Victor Heese	Central Frontenac
Ed Hand	Ottawa
Erin Greco	Ottawa
Scott Moffatt	Ottawa
Ralph Pentland	Ottawa
Tom Scott	Ottawa
No member	Clarence-Rockland
Ray Scissons	Drummond/North Elmsley
Anne Barr	Merrickville-Wolford
Vince Carroll	Montague
Gerry Boyce	North Dundas
Barclay Cormack	North Grenville
Judy Brown	Perth
Jeff Banks	Rideau Lakes
Joe Gallipeau	Smiths Falls
Pat Barr	South Frontenac
Brian Campbell	Tay Valley
2 Mark Parliament	Westport

Rideau Valley Watershed



Message from the Chair & General Manager

As you will see in this *Annual Report, 2018* was a pivotal year for the RVCA. Many important strategic priorities were completed culminating in a corporate restructuring, new Administrative Bylaw, completed regulation policies, improved financial reporting and even an updated logo. These priorities, and more, were achieved because of a solid *2017–2020 Strategic Plan* and our Board's commitment to implementing that plan.

These accomplishments highlighted in this Annual Report are the result of the hard work and dedication of our professional staff whose passion and commitment to the Rideau watershed, its people and our purpose is inspiring – as well as 1,000+ volunteer hours from dedicated community members and the ongoing support of our 18 member municipalities.

As RVCA embarks on an ambitious work plan for 2019, we look forward to working even more closely with our Indigenous, federal, provincial, municipal, agricultural, business, environmental, community and academic partners. Our focus will be to further improve client service, program effectiveness, organizational strength and watershed resiliency.

The *Conservation Authorities Act* is an incredible piece of legislation, envied the world over. It enables programs to be tailored in each watershed to best protect natural resources and people and property from natural hazards. This important, and sometimes challenging, responsibility will continue to guide the RVCA Board and its staff. After all, 450,000 people call the Rideau watershed home and they rely on a well managed natural environment:

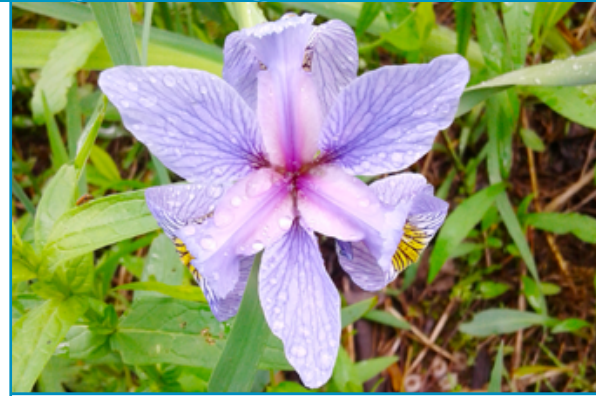
- To provide clean air, safe drinking water, green space, boating, swimming and fishing
- To support agriculture, recreation, tourism, jobs and property values
- To reduce erosion, flooding, drought and the impacts of climate change.

A healthy environment underpins a healthy economy and the RVCA will remain on a path of continuous improvement to meet the needs of our local environment, economy and society.

Yours in conservation,

Lyle Pederson
Chair

Sommer Casgrain-Robertson,
General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer



2018 Highlights

- Welcomed **200,000** visitors and **10,000** students to our conservation areas
- Acquired a new **6+** hectare property along Irish Creek
- Planted our **6 millionth** tree
- Naturalized **79** shorelines and installed a demonstration rain garden
- Funded **100** clean water projects with **\$215,000** in grants
- Issued **18** flood messages and **10** low water response messages
- Completed **88** km of new hazard mapping to guide development
- Reviewed **1,400** planning applications
- Issued **300** Section 28 permits and **830** septic permits
- Re-inspected **270** septic systems around lakes
- Sampled **39** lakes, **13** wells and **163** stream sites
- Surveyed **70** km of streams
- Created a **1,600** m² wetland embayment for fish habitat
- Replaced Heart's Desire Weir with a river-friendly rocky ramp

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.

- **\$10.2** million budget
- **70** staff plus **16** summer students
- **22** board members representing **17** of **18** member municipalities
- Undertook a corporate restructuring
- Redesigned financial Chart of Accounts
- Adopted a new Administrative Bylaw (including a Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy)
- Updated RVCA's logo and established Corporate Visual Identity Guidelines
- Developed a Corporate Culture pledge
- Installed new computer servers



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 **51** properties and manage **3,000+** hectares of conservation land (inspected and assessed annually)
- New **6+** hectare property donated along Irish Creek (includes Provincially Significant Wetland)
- 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
- Shoreline stabilization project completed at Chapman Mills Conservation Area
- Shoreline bioengineering project completed at W.A. Taylor Conservation Area
- Butterfly Garden rehabilitated at Perth Wildlife Reserve thanks to a group of dedicated volunteers
- Demonstration rain garden built at Baxter Conservation Area
- Memorial Bench installed at W.A. Taylor Conservation Area

Conservation Areas

- **11** developed conservation areas
- **200,000** visitors annually
- **42** kilometres of trails maintained for public use
- **7,452** 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
- Accessibility Reports completed for all conservation areas
- New roof and lighting installed at Foley Mountain Interpretive Centre

Outdoor Education

- **10,390** students participated in curriculum-based outdoor education programs at Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas
- Fundraising was undertaken to offset costs for low income schools
- **264** participants attended Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Area day camps
- **44** new pairs of snowshoes donated to Foley Mountain thanks to the Friends of Foley Mountain
- New Forest School drop-in program launched at Foley Mountain Conservation Area

Chapman Mills Conservation Area



Opposite Page

Left: Foley Mountain Kindergarten Forest School

Top Right: Pond study at Baxter Conservation Area

Bottom Right: Baxter Pond Rehabilitation Celebration and interpretive sign unveiling

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

- **1,366** *Planning Act* applications:
 - **524** severances
 - **491** minor variances
 - **164** site plan control
 - **138** zoning by-law amendments
 - **20** subdivision reviews
 - **16** condominium applications
 - **13** Official Plan amendments
- **54** pre-consultation meetings
- **6** *Environmental Assessment Act* reviews
- Updated Planning MOA with the City of Ottawa
- Migrated planning files into RVCA's information management database
- Redesigned fee schedule to make it more user friendly

Section 28 Conservation Authorities Act

- **706** property inquiries
- **186** clearance letters
- **327** applications
- **297** permits issued
- **106** complaints/occurrences
- **14** violations

- Completed policies for development in or adjacent to wetlands
- Developed policies for spill areas and areas of shallow flooding
- Redesigned fee schedule to make it more user friendly

Septic System Approvals

- **251** file search requests (City of Ottawa)
- **740** applications for new or replacement septic systems (**681** in Ottawa and **59** in Tay Valley)
- **97** applications for septic renovations or alterations (**77** in Ottawa and **20** in Tay Valley)
- **270** septic re-inspections completed (**131** in Rideau Lakes, **137** in Tay Valley and **2** on Bob's Lake)

Source Water Protection Approvals

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



Congratulations to RVCA's Regulations Enforcement Officer, Shelley MacPherson, recipient of a 2018 Latonnell Leadership Award. The award recognizes individuals for innovation, leadership and dedication to conservation. Shelley's outstanding work ethic for the past 29 years, knowledge and mentorship to conservation staff locally and across the province is greatly appreciated.

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

- **270,900** trees planted on **52** properties
- **81.6** hectares of new forest created
- **\$350,664** fundraised to offset landowner costs
- **6.2** million trees planted since 1984
- **3** community tree plants hosted (Cumberland, Drummond North-Elmsley and Richmond)
- **3,800** parasitoid wasps released at Baxter Conservation Area in partnership with Natural Resources Canada and the Canadian Institute of Forestry

Shoreline Naturalization

- **11,433** trees and shrubs planted on **79** properties
- **2.9** kilometres of shoreline naturalized
- **\$113,205** fundraised to offset landowner costs
- Shoreline naturalization along Greens Creek at the new Cyrville Road Fire Station in partnership with the City of Ottawa
- Shoreline planting partnership with the Town of Smiths Falls
- Shoreline restoration plans completed for private and public lands affected by Heart's Desire Weir decommissioning

Clean Water Projects

- **105** projects were approved through the Rideau Valley Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$220,460** in grants. These grants will support a total project value of **\$703,131**
- **54** projects were approved through the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, allocating **\$179,442** in grants. These grants will support a total project value of \$374,731

Community tree planting event



Greens Creek shoreline naturalization planting day



- Delivered the *Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program* in the Mississippi watershed in partnership with Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority

Lake Planning

- 17th Annual Lake Links Workshop attended by **100+** local lake stewards and residents
- Partnership with Bobs & Crow Lake Foundation and Association to promote shoreline property best management practices and stewardship funding top-ups for select projects

Butternut Stewardship

- **26,000+** 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)

- New Butternut Crown Release Program launched to enhance seed collection

Habitat Enhancement

- **1,600** square metres of spawning, nursery, rearing and feeding habitat created for **20** species of fish that live in Jebbs Creek, including Northern Pike. This series of small wetland embayments along Jebbs Creek in the Perth Wildlife Reserve Conservation Area will also provide habitat for breeding birds, amphibians and turtles. These embayments were created in partnership with MNRF and Otty Lake Association.
- **12** wood structures installed on Otter Lake in participation with Otter Lake Land Owners Association to enhance fish and wildlife habitat

Otter Lake wood structure installation



Jebbs Creek Wetland Embayment Creation Project



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

- Fourth year of implementing the *Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan*
- Continued support provided to municipalities including policy interpretation and implementation tools
- Completed first Annual Report summarizing implementation progress
- Submitted first Source Protection Plan Amendment for a new municipal drinking water system in the Village of Richmond
- Finalized the first work plan to update technical Assessment Reports and the *Source Protection Plan*

Hazard Mapping

- **88** kilometres of new hazard mapping completed in collaboration with the City of Ottawa: Becketts Creek (**25** km), Flowing Creek (**33** km), Hobbs Drain (**13** km) and Nichols Creek (**17** km)

Water Control Infrastructure

- Hearts Desire Weir replaced with a rocky ramp that promotes improved water quality and enables fish passage

Flood Forecasting and Warning

- **18** flood messages and **10** low water response messages issued
- **16** sites monitored for water levels
- **6** sites monitored for precipitation
- **6** sites monitored for snow pack

Stream Characterization Monitoring

- **579** hours of volunteer work by **193** volunteers for the City Stream Watch Program
- **439** headwater drainage feature sample locations on the Lower River catchments (**279**), Kemptville Creek catchments (**134**) and City Stream Watch Ottawa sites (**26**) in 2018
- **151** stream surveys completed on Ottawa's City Stream Watch catchments — Mud Creek (east), Nepean Creek, Taylor Creek and Ottawa Tributary East

Invasive species removal



- **49** sites sampled throughout the watershed in the spring and fall for the Ontario Benthic Biomonitoring Network; includes **15** volunteer days
- **42** km of Kemptville Creek, **7.7** km of North Branch and **5.6** km of Barnes Creek surveyed as part of RVCA stream characterization efforts; this includes **16** temperature probes installed, **14** fish netting sites and **8** electrofishing fish sampling sites
- **1** invasive species workshop

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

- **236** hours donated by **15** lake steward volunteers to help monitor and sample Watershed Watch lakes sampled for water quality conditions

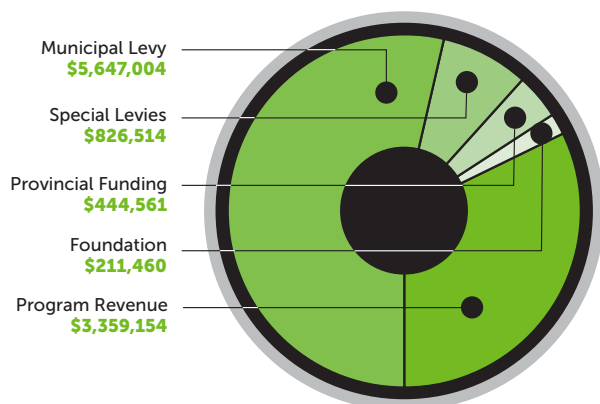
- **29** participants facilitated lake sampling by offering lake access and/or on-water transportation
- **39** lakes sampled from May to November to monitor levels of nutrients, *E. coli* and other chemical parameters through the Watershed Watch Program
- **135** hours donated by **8** stream steward volunteers to help monitor and sample streams in the Rideau Valley for water quality conditions
- **114** sites sampled for the RVCA 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

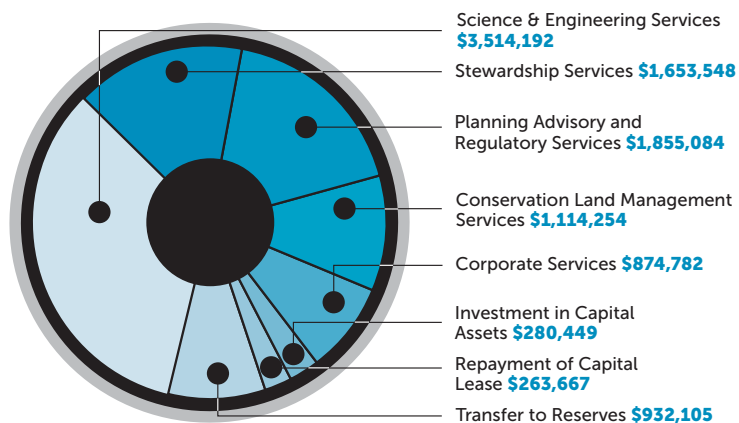
- *Tay River Subwatershed Report* completed along with detailed reports for each of its **14** catchments. The report is a compilation of water quality, forest cover, wetland cover and riparian cover data that looks to show the health of the subwatershed and if its health is improving or declining. Municipalities 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.
- All **6** subwatershed and **66** catchment reports available online at watersheds.rvca.ca

Financing Conservation

2018 Revenues \$10,488,693



2018 Expenditures \$10,488,081



Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation

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 help, we continue to have a big impact on the land — planting trees, naturalizing shorelines, conserving natural spaces, protecting species at risk and much, much more. We are delighted and inspired by the continuing confidence of our many partners and donors — thank you.

The Foundation Board of Directors would also like to thank the staff and Board of the Conservation Authority for their support and encouragement in 2018. We look forward to continued success in 2019.

Jason W. M. Kelly, RVCF Chair

2018 RVCF Board of Directors

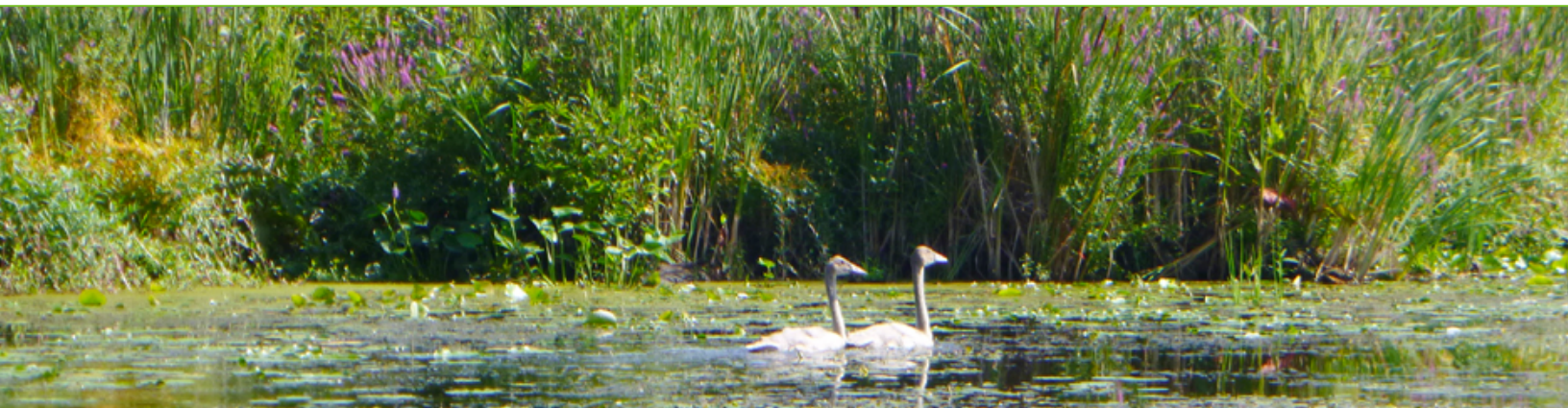
- Bryan Baker
- Charles Billington
- Mary A. Bryden, Vice Chair
- Leann Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer
- Andrew Harkness
- Jason W. M. Kelly, Chair
- Anne Simmering
- R.E. Smith
- Richmond Wilson
- Kathy Thomas

2018 Highlights

- Celebrated the restoration of Baxter Conservation Area's ASL Pond thanks to funding from partners including ASL Agrodrain, the Canadian Armed Forces Fish and Game Club, Canon Canada, City of Ottawa, Don Maciver Memorial Fund, Kiwanis Club of Manotick, Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters Zone F, TD Friends of the Environment and the RVCA.
- Worked with Canon Canada volunteers who donated time and money to complete tree planting on Rideau Valley conservation lands.
- Supported the Royal Canadian Legion Branch 314 Manotick by accepting donations directed to maintaining Remembrance Park's Memory Gardens.
- Embarked on the Give Where You Live Campaign — thank you Chris Napior and to all who donated to our new program.
- Continued donor support through CanadaHelps.com for safe and easy acceptance of donations to RVCF's special programs and services.
- Participated on the Nature for All Committee as we look to increase accessibility features at Baxter Conservation Area.
- Welcomed returning Carbon Neutral partners Carleton Refrigeration, Heating and Air Conditioning, Little Ray's Reptile Zoo, LIVE 88.5, Meeting Partners International — Ottawa Chapter, and Queen's University Tea Room. Thank you to our Carbon neutral companies and those who host carbon neutral events.
- Continued delivery of Memorial Tree and Memorial Bench Programs.
- 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 45 projects.
- Acknowledged the continuing support of over 245 watershed businesses and private donors who are recognized on our "Partners in Conservation" wall at our Manotick office
- Accepted a new land donation on Irish Creek — a beautiful 6+ hectare property with natural shoreline and Provincially Significant Wetland.
- Accepted Mattamy Homes' major donation to the RVCF's Environmental Land Fund that helps pay the costs associated with land donations to the Foundation including legal fees, appraisals and surveys. It is instrumental in securing sensitive environmental land for future conservation use by the people of the Rideau watershed.



- Welcomed strong growth of the Foundation's endowment funds that provide important support for land and water conservation work throughout the valley. Thank you to our endowment fund supporters.
- Continued 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.
- Remained a proud and practicing member of both the Ontario and Canada Land Trust Alliances.
- Saluted Foundation Chair Jason Kelly whose service to Canada and the community was recognized with the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers.



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!

Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation

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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.



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