

# Around the Rideau

Environmental Information For Municipalities In The Rideau Valley

May | June 2009

## Freshet 2009 In Review

The peak flow on the Rideau River this spring was 222 cubic metres per second (cms) recorded at the Carleton University gauge on April 7. This is the sixth lowest peak flow in 35 years of record. It caused only minor flooding. No property damage was reported. This past winter, the snow and cold weather we had in December/January had disappeared by early March. Each winter is a whole new ball game and each winter has the potential to cause big problems for riverside residents.

Traditionally, the Ottawa River peaks later than the Rideau. Ottawa River watchers can log on to [www.ottawariver.ca](http://www.ottawariver.ca) for the latest information. RVCA keeps close watch on approaching weather conditions year-round and

Peak Spring Flows	In 2009	Ever on Record
Ottawa River	3600 cms	5060 cms (1979)
Rideau River	222 cms	597 cms (1976)
Jock River	47 cms	148 cms (1978)
Kemptville Creek	28 cms	82 cms (1972)
Tay River	23 cms	53 cms (1998)

continues with detailed monthly monitoring of flow gauges on the Rideau and its tributaries. Need more? Call PATRICK ext 1110 or [patrick.larson@rvca.ca](mailto:patrick.larson@rvca.ca).

## Queen's Research Near Perth

RVCA is cooperating with Queen's University in a unique civil engineering research project to assess groundwater movement in a fractured bedrock environment. There are two field sites being used, one off the Christie Lake Road and the other near Portland. Professor Novakowski and his students are using state-of-the-art investigative techniques (tracer tests, isotope analysis) to help understand the dynamics of groundwater in the complicated geology of the Upper Rideau Valley area. They hope to answer some basic questions of how contaminants move in fractured media and how much groundwater recharge occurs in shallow bedrock situations. The research will help us understand the hydrogeology of a large portion of the Rideau watershed. More information from Dr. Novakowski at 613-533-6417 or [kent@civil.queensu.ca](mailto:kent@civil.queensu.ca).

## DRAPE

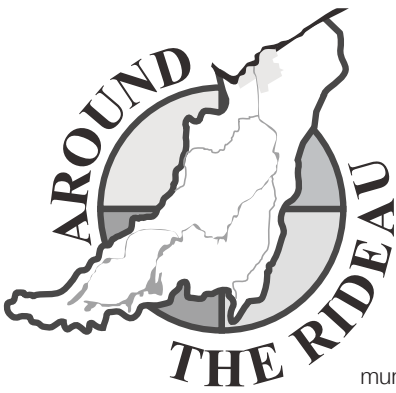
A big cost for land planning and land management agencies is up-to-date air photos for the area. The DRAPE project (don't worry what it stands for) brought together 50 partners including CAs, counties, municipalities, provincial ministries and NGOs to share the cost of new digital air photos for 53,000 km<sup>2</sup> of Eastern Ontario. OMNR, through Mike Robertson of the Land Information Branch, quarterbacked the project and paid almost 60 percent of the costs. It was an excellent, cost-effective way to update our basic land management tools. "Good quality, modern, digital maps of the watershed is the starting point of every CA project whether it is Source Water Protection, plan review, shoreline management or conservation land," said RVCA GIS Coordinator Ewan Hardie. "We are already using this new product on several projects." EWAN for more at ext 1130 or [ewan.hardie@rvca.ca](mailto:ewan.hardie@rvca.ca).



## City Stream Watch 2009

The popular City Stream Watch program is starting another exciting year of community-based stream care with a second volunteer training session on May 23 (the May 9 session was completely full!). The featured streams for 2009 are Barrhaven Creek, Bilberry Creek, Mosquito Creek and Stillwater Creek. The training sessions are held from 9 am to noon in the small park at the mouth of Sawmill Creek about 100 metres east of Billings Bridge Shopping Centre (Bank and Riverside Drive). All necessary equipment and instruction is provided. There is no cost to volunteers. People can choose which of the four streams they wish to work on (in teams) over the summer. More information from JULIA at [citystreamwatch@rvca.ca](mailto:citystreamwatch@rvca.ca).

Huge tip of the conservation hat to the Monterey Inn Resort & Conference Centre on Prince of Wales Drive for their generous and loyal support for the City Stream Watch program since 2005!



## RVCA Carbon Neutral Program

Want to make your next business event, municipal meeting or golf tournament a little greener? RVCA offers a Carbon Neutral Program for our friends, municipal partners and watershed residents. We calculate the amount of carbon emissions caused by participant travel to and from your event and then calculate the number of trees needed to be planted to absorb that amount of carbon over their 80 year lifespan. We then plant those trees on your behalf in the Rideau watershed the following spring at a total cost of \$2.25 per tree.

The best way to help control climate change is to reduce carbon emissions at their source. It is difficult for many Canadians to eliminate these emissions so the RVCA Carbon Neutral Program gives another option in the right direction. You should still work on reducing your carbon emissions but in the meantime, planting trees will help offset the carbon that you do produce. DAN can help you with the details at [dan.cooper@rvca.ca](mailto:dan.cooper@rvca.ca) or ext 1124.

## Wetlands & Flooding

Do wetlands in the Rideau Valley really reduce flooding? The answer, according to research by RVCA hydrologists, is that wetlands in the watershed reduce the 1:100 year flood by about 10 percent! Wetlands reduce floods by storing water after a period of heavy rain or snowmelt and releasing it slowly over the following weeks. The loss of small, seemingly-insignificant wetlands in the watershed is expected to have the cumulative effect of increasing flood levels and increasing the size of floodplains downstream.

Wildlife habitat, recreation opportunities, water cleaning service, water recharge to aquifers and now local scientific evidence of flood reduction in the Rideau Valley — it is becoming very clear that the 15 percent of the watershed still in wetland provides some major, cost-effective services for the people and municipalities of the valley. Contact FERDOUS for more at [ferdous.ahmed@rvca.ca](mailto:ferdous.ahmed@rvca.ca).

## Please Don't Move Firewood!

Emerald Ash Borers are destructive invasive insects munching their way through the ash trees of northeastern North America without an effective way to stop them anywhere in sight. The City of Ottawa discovered its first infestation site in 2008 and quickly brought together a Task Force of agencies to try and slow down the spread of this little green bug. Defensive measures include proactive planting of other species, removal of heavily-infested trees from city land, innovative research with pesticide injections and biological predators, and an information campaign telling people of the importance of not moving Ash material. Ash makes up about 25 percent of the forests in Ottawa including woodlots and hedgerows in rural Ottawa and along many residential streets in the urban area. The eventual loss of millions of ash trees (as is happening in Windsor) would have huge economic, social and environmental effects in the watershed.

The federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, the Honourable Gerry Ritz, signed a Ministerial Order on April 27, prohibiting the transport of ash and ash products from within a large portion of the cities of Ottawa and Gatineau to areas outside the restricted zone.

Transport of firewood to campgrounds and cottages has been identified as the major source of new infested sites.

You can get more information from the website of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at [www.inspection.gc.ca](http://www.inspection.gc.ca), the City of Ottawa at [www.ottawa.ca/eabn](http://www.ottawa.ca/eabn) or call RUDY for local details at [rudy.dyck@rvca.ca](mailto:rudy.dyck@rvca.ca) or ext 1135.

Please do not move firewood from within Ottawa/Gatineau to areas outside the cities!



Emerald Ash Borer — photo Courtesy of Tree Canada

## 150K Trees for Manotick's 150<sup>th</sup>

RVCA is currently hard at work planting another 150,000 trees in the valley this spring. Final tallies will come in June but we are very pleased to announce this milestone number of new trees in 2009 during the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the village of Manotick where RVCA established its office in 1970. Sincere thanks to our many sponsors who are helping to make the Rideau Valley the greenest watershed in Eastern Ontario. The municipalities receiving the greatest number of trees in 2009 are City of Ottawa (West Carleton), North Elmsley, Merrickville-Wolford and Elizabethtown-Kitley.

### 2009 tree planting sponsors:

Highland Boy Scouts, Carleton Place High School, Perth & District High School, Montague Public School, Churchill Elementary School, Lanark Leeds and Ottawa Stewardship Councils, City of Ottawa, Municipality of North Grenville, Trees Ontario, Monterey Inn Resort & Conference Centre, Pratt & Whitney Canada, McGarry Family Chapels, RVCA staff, Hydro Ottawa, Ducks Unlimited and Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation.



## Around the Rideau

**Rideau Valley Conservation Authority**  
**Office de protection de la nature de la**  
**vallée de la rivière Rideau**

Box 599, 3889 Rideau Valley Drive, Manotick, Ontario K4M 1A5  
 692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504 [www.rvca.ca](http://www.rvca.ca)

*Around the Rideau* circulation has risen to 3,800 Heads of Council, Councillors, senior municipal and provincial staff, interested persons and the media throughout the 18 municipalities in the Rideau Valley watershed courtesy of:



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