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TO: Chair and Members of the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Président et membre du Comité de l'agriculture et des affaires rurales

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SUBJECT: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program – 2017 Annual Report

OBJET : Programme municipal de subventions pour l'assainissement de l'eau en milieu rural – rapport annuel 2017

PURPOSE

This memorandum provides the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee with the 2017 annual report for the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program (ORCWP).

BACKGROUND

The ORCWP provides cost-sharing grants to farmers and other rural property owners to adopt best management practices that protect Ottawa's streams, rivers, wetlands and groundwater. The 2016-2020 program was approved by Council in September 2015, based on a review of the 2011-2015 Program [[ACS2015-COS-ESD-0016](#)]. The program is required to report annually to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

In 2017 grants were available to support best management practices in five categories:

- Nutrient management;
- Soil protection;
- Water management;
- Land stewardship;
- Education and innovation.

This included several new grant types and other supports introduced in 2016 such as:

- Cover crops;
- Development of forest or wetland management plans;
- Repairs of septic systems close to watercourses;
- Demonstration projects and other innovative projects that protect water quality;
- Increased funding for tile drain control structures;
- Site visit to discuss options on your property;
- Support from a Conservation Authority to plan and undertake shoreline plantings.

The program is delivered in partnership with the three local Conservation Authorities: South Nation, Rideau Valley and Mississippi Valley. It is funded through a special levy to South Nation Conservation, who provides overall program coordination. Interested farmers and rural property owners submit an application through the Landowner Resource Centre.

The Program Committee provides direction and advice to staff. Committee members also serve on watershed Review Committees to review and approve projects. The 2017 Program Committee consisted of representatives from the following groups:

- Arnprior Region Federation of Agriculture;
- Canadian Organic Growers – Ottawa Chapter;
- City of Ottawa;
- Conservation Authorities;
- Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change;
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs;
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry;
- Ottawa-Carleton Soil and Crop Improvement Association;
- Ottawa Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association;
- Ottawa Federation of Agriculture;
- Ottawa Septic System Office;
- Ottawa Stewardship Council;
- Members at Large.

Further program details can be found on ottawa.ca/cleanwater

DISCUSSION

The ORCWP helps farmers and other rural landowners with cost-sharing grants to undertake projects that improve surface water and groundwater quality. Applications were accepted starting in May and throughout the summer and fall of 2017.

The 2017 program was promoted through online and community newspaper advertisements, social media, e-newsletters and through contractors and other partner agencies. Conservation Authority staff and ORCWP partners attended agricultural and rural fairs, meetings and events, including the Ottawa Valley Farm Show, Eastern Ontario Crop Conference and Environmental Farm Plan workshop.

A workshop on Controlled Tile Drainage was organized for contractors and farmers to share hands-on experience with this new technology to manage water levels on fields.

Staff participated in an information session in Constance Bay for landowners affected by the spring flooding of the Ottawa River, sharing information on shoreline protection practices and available grants. The grant program was also promoted as part of subwatershed monitoring activities in Cumberland and the Jock River subwatershed.

Summary of 2017 Grants

In 2017, 77 projects were approved worth a total of \$267,744 in grants. Of these, 48 projects were completed in 2017, receiving \$122,554 in grants. An additional 15 projects that were approved in 2016 were completed in 2017, receiving \$25,272 in grants for a total of 63 projects completed and \$147,826 in grants (Table 1). Thirty-five projects approved in 2016 and 2017 will be completed in 2018, worth a total of \$158,114 in grants (see Supporting Documentation Table 3).

The most popular project types in 2017 were forest management plans (21 projects approved), erosion control (19 projects approved) and well decommissioning (16 projects approved). The erosion control, manure storage, well decommissioning and forest management projects received 85 per cent of the total paid grant funds.

Projects were approved in each of the new grant categories: cover crops; forest management plans; repairs of septic systems close to watercourses; and innovative projects that protect water quality. Most projects approved in 2017 are located in the City's rural Wards, representing farm and non-farm properties of a range of sizes.

All projects were identified and administered by the Conservation Authorities, with one project approved in partnership with Green Acres, the City's rural tree planting program.

Table 1: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program 2017 Summary

| Project Type | Grants approved in 2017 | | Grants completed in 2017** | |
|--|-------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------|
| | Number | Amount | Number | Amount |
| Manure storage & treatment | 4 | \$60,000 | 1 | \$15,000 |
| Washwater treatment | 1 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$5,000 |
| Nutrient management / precision farming | 5 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$1,000 |
| Watercourse fencing | 1 | \$7,500 | 0 | \$0 |
| Erosion control | 19 | \$131,811 | 12 | \$78,549 |
| Tile outlet erosion control | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Cover crops | 1 | \$1,000 | 0 | \$0 |
| Clean water diversion | 1 | \$5,000 | 0 | \$0 |
| Tile drain control structures | 1 | \$5,000 | 0 | \$0 |
| Chemical or fuel storage | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$1,000 |
| Well decommissioning | 16 | \$24,970 | 14 | \$22,093 |
| Septic system repair or replacement | 1 | \$1,000 | 3 | \$3,000 |
| Watercourse buffers & natural windbreaks | 1 | \$2,463 | 1 | \$2,456 |
| Land retirement incentive | 3 | \$1,200 | 4 | \$1,950 |
| Forest and wetland management plans | 21 | \$8,800 | 23 | \$10,278 |
| Educational initiatives | 2 | \$9,000 | 1 | \$2,500 |
| Innovative projects | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$5,000 |
| TOTAL | 77 | \$267,744 | 63 | \$147,826 |

** includes grants approved in 2016 and 2017

Program Outcomes

As a result of the 63 projects completed in 2017:

- 536 metres of streambank were protected from erosion and an additional 30 metres have a new watercourse buffer;
- 120 trees were planted along shorelines or in natural windbreaks;
- 214 hectares of farmland have improved nutrient management through the use of GPS precision farming techniques;
- 5 hectares of sensitive land have been retired from agricultural production;
- 223 hectares of forest were protected through a forest management plan;
- Approximately 132 kilograms of phosphorus are being kept out of waterways each year from improved manure storage and washwater treatment, and repair of faulty septic systems (based on calculations from South Nation Conservation's phosphorous trading program);
- The risks of surface and groundwater contamination at 17 sites have been reduced through repair of septic systems and well decommissioning.

In addition to the \$147,826 awarded in grants in 2017, landowners contributed an additional \$281,897 for a total of \$427,773 invested in rural land stewardship.

Financial Overview

The budget for 2017 was \$265,710. This was funded by surplus funds from 2016 and a \$95,273 special levy request made by South Nation Conservation Authority (Table 2).

Total expenses in 2017 were \$209,328, including grants and program delivery expenses. The balance of \$56,382 is encumbered for approved projects to be completed in 2018.

Table 2: 2017 Budget

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Revenue | |
| 2016 Carry-forward | \$170,437 |
| 2017 Ottawa Special Levy | \$95,273 |
| Total Revenue | \$265,710 |
| Expenses | |
| ORCWP Grants – completed in 2017 | \$147,826 |
| Program Coordination, Communication, Administration | \$61,502 |
| Total Expenses | \$209,328 |
| Balance | \$56,382 |

CONCLUSION

The Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program supports Council's Sustainable Environmental Services priority benefiting rural property owners and the environment. The program enables Ottawa farmers and other rural property owners to adopt best management practices that protect Ottawa's streams, rivers, wetlands and groundwater. The ORCWP benefits from the advice of representatives of agricultural organizations, provincial agencies, local conservation authorities and various community members.

A total of \$427,773 was invested in the stewardship of rural land and water in 2017, through \$147,826 awarded in grants and an additional \$281,897 invested by landowners. Economic Development and Long Range Planning will continue to work with program partners to deliver the Grant Program in 2018 and report again in 2019.

John Smit

Director, Economic Development and Long Range Planning, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department

CC: Julia Robinson, Policy Planning Branch, Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Department

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION – Table 3: Projects approved and completed in 2017

| Project Type | Approved Grants (2017) | | Approved Grants (2016) | | Grants Paid (2017) | | Grants to be Completed in 2018 | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|
| | Number | Amount | Number | Amount | Number | Amount | Number | Amount |
| Nutrient Management | | | | | | | | |
| Manure storage & treatment | 4 | \$60,000 | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$15,000 | 3 | \$45,000 |
| Washwater treatment | 1 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$2,450 | 1 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$2,450 |
| Nutrient management | 5 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$1,000 | 1 | \$1,000 | 4 | \$4,000 |
| Watercourse fencing | 1 | \$7,500 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$7,500 |
| Soil Protection | | | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Erosion control | 19 | \$131,811 | 4 | \$30,000 | 12 | \$78,549 | 8 | \$59,686 |
| Tile outlet erosion control | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Cover crops | 1 | \$1,000 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$1,000 |
| Water Management | | | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Clean water diversion | 1 | \$5,000 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$5,000 |
| Tile drain control structures | 1 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$2,500 | 0 | \$0 | 2 | \$7,500 |
| Chemical or fuel storage | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$1,000 | 1 | \$1,000 | 0 | \$0 |
| Well decommissioning | 16 | \$24,970 | 6 | \$12,663 | 14 | \$22,093 | 5 | \$9,222 |
| Septic system repair or replacement | 1 | \$1,000 | 2 | \$2,000 | 3 | \$3,000 | 0 | \$0 |
| Land Stewardship | | | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Watercourse buffers & windbreaks | 1 | \$2,463 | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$2,456 | 0 | \$0 |
| Land retirement incentive | 3 | \$1,200 | 4 | \$1,650 | 4 | \$1,950 | 0 | \$0 |
| Forest & wetland management plans | 21 | \$8,800 | 8 | \$4,243 | 23 | \$10,278 | 6 | \$2,756 |
| Education and Innovation | | | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 | 0 | \$0 |
| Educational initiatives | 2 | \$9,000 | 2 | \$7,500 | 1 | \$2,500 | 3 | \$14,000 |
| Innovative projects | 0 | \$0 | 1 | \$5,000 | 1 | \$5,000 | 0 | \$0 |
| TOTAL | 77 | \$267,744 | 31** | \$70,006 | 63 | \$147,826 | 35 | \$158,114 |

** 10 projects approved in 2016 will not be completed. Landowners can reapply should they wish to be reconsidered.