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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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FILE NUMBER: ACS2020-PIE-EDP-0037

SUBJECT: **Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program – 2019 Annual Report**

OBJET : **Programme d'assainissement de l'eau en milieu rural d'Ottawa – Rapport  
annuel 2019**

## **PURPOSE**

This memorandum provides the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee with the 2019 annual report for the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program (ORCWP), which is a grant program administered by the South Nation Conservation Authority. The 2019 ORCWP budget was \$200,000 and funded through a conservation authority special levy.

## **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 2019 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 a landowner's 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 from the City to South Nation Conservation to provide overall program coordination and

grant payments. Interested farmers and rural property owners apply 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 2019 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 Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ontario Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
- Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry
- Ontario Woodlot Association – Ottawa Chapter
- Ottawa-Carleton Soil and Crop Improvement 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](http://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 2019.

The 2019 program was promoted through online and community newspaper advertisements, social media, e-newsletters and through contractors and partner agencies. Conservation Authority staff and ORCWP partners attended agricultural and rural fairs, meetings and events, including the Ottawa Valley Farm Show and the Eastern Ontario Crop Conference. Post cards were sent to homes in the Carp River,

Ottawa West, Ottawa East, Upper Bear Brook and Indian Creek subwatersheds, to coincide with City Stream Watch activities in these areas, and they were available at Client Service Centres and libraries. A bilingual display was available for Program Committee members to bring to their events.

A video showcasing the use of controlled tile drainage was produced in 2019 and will be featured on South Nation Conservation's YouTube channel later this year. A project profile was prepared for a hay buffer and erosion control demonstration project along the South Castor Municipal Drain to share a landowner's experience and benefits and is available on [Ottawa.ca](http://Ottawa.ca) and Conservation Authority websites. The Stoodley Buffer Demonstration project was also a featured stop on the 2019 South Nation Conservation Watershed Tour.

### **Summary of 2019 Grants**

In 2019, 54 projects were approved worth a total of \$215,901 in grants. Of these, 34 projects were completed in 2019, receiving \$77,019. An additional 10 projects that were approved in 2017 or 2018 were completed in 2019, receiving \$34,205 in grants. In total, 44 projects were completed in 2019 and awarded \$111,224 in grants (Table 1). Thirty-one projects approved in 2017, 2018 or 2019 will be completed in 2020, worth a total of \$183,352 in grants (see Supporting Documentation Table 3).

The most popular project types in 2019 were erosion control (21 projects approved), forest management plans (15 projects approved), and well decommissioning (six projects approved). These projects received 80 per cent of the total grant funds awarded in 2019. Most projects approved in 2019 are in the City's rural Wards (Figure 1), representing farm and non-farm properties of a range of sizes. All projects were identified and administered by the Conservation Authorities, with three projects approved in partnership with Green Acres, the City's rural tree planting program.

### **Ottawa River Flooding in 2019**

Many residential properties located along the Ottawa River were affected by flooding during the spring of 2019. One consequence of elevated water levels and flow rates is an increased risk of shoreline erosion. The ORCWP helped support landowners whose properties were damaged in the 2019 flooding by offering grants of up to \$7,500 to repair shorelines and address erosion issues. A Post Flood Open House was held in Constance Bay on July 9, 2019, and Program representatives were on hand to inform landowners about the grants available for shoreline erosion control.

**Table 1: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program 2019 Summary**

Project Type	Grants approved in 2019*		Grants completed in 2019**	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Manure storage & treatment	2	\$30,000	1	\$15,000
Washwater treatment	1	\$5,000	0	\$0
Nutrient management / precision farming	3	\$2,363	2	\$1,563
Watercourse fencing	0	\$0	0	\$0
Erosion control	21	\$153,732	9	\$62,841
Tile outlet erosion control	0	\$0	0	\$0
Cover crops	2	\$2,000	2	\$2,000
Clean water diversion	0	\$0	0	\$0
Tile drain control structures	0	\$0	0	\$0
Chemical or fuel storage	0	\$0	0	\$0
Well decommissioning	6	\$11,216	9	\$13,199
Septic system repair or replacement	0	\$0	0	\$0
Watercourse buffers & natural windbreaks	0	\$0	0	\$0
Land retirement incentive	4	\$4,463	4	\$4,463
Forest and wetland management plans	15	\$7,128	16	\$7,158
Educational initiatives	0	\$0	1	\$5,000
Innovative projects	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>\$215,902</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>\$111,224</b>

\* an additional 10 projects approved in 2017 and 2018 were completed in 2019

\*\* includes grants that were approved in 2017, 2018 and 2019

## **Program Outcomes**

As a result of the 44 projects completed in 2019:

- 293 metres of streambank were protected from erosion;
- 263 hectares of farmland have improved nutrient management using GPS precision farming techniques;
- 79 hectares of sensitive land have been retired from agricultural production;
- 16 hectares of farmland have been protected from erosion through cover crops;
- 706 hectares of forest were protected through forest management plans;
- Approximately 203 kilograms of phosphorus are being kept out of waterways each year from improved manure storage (based on calculations from South Nation Conservation's phosphorous trading program); and
- The risks of surface and groundwater contamination at nine sites have been reduced through well decommissioning.

In addition to the \$111,224 awarded in grants in 2019, landowners contributed an additional \$159,292 for a total of \$270,516 invested in rural land stewardship.

## **Financial Overview**

The budget for 2019 was \$269,618. This was funded by amounts carried forward from projects approved in 2018 and a \$200,000 special levy request made by South Nation Conservation Authority (Table 2).

Total expenses in 2019 were \$154,058, including grants and program delivery expenses. The balance of \$115,560 is encumbered for approved projects to be completed in 2020.

**Table 2: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program 2019 Budget**

Revenue	
2018 Carry-forward	\$69,618
2019 Ottawa Special Levy	\$200,000
Total Revenue	\$269,618
Expenses	
ORCWP Grants – completed in 2019	\$111,224
Program Coordination, Communication, Administration	\$42,834
Total Expenses	\$154,058
Balance	\$115,560

## **CONCLUSION**

The Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program benefits 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. ORCWP benefits from the advice of representatives of agricultural organizations, provincial agencies and community members through the Program Committee, as well as ongoing staff involvement.

A total of \$270,516 was invested in the stewardship of rural land and water in 2019, through \$111,224 awarded in grants and an additional \$159,292 invested by landowners. Economic Development and Long Range Planning will continue to work with program partners to deliver the Grant Program in 2020 and report in 2021. The next five-year program review is currently underway and will be reported to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee in 2021.

*Original signed by*

Don Herweyer

Director, Economic Development and Long Range Planning, Planning

CC: Tara Redpath, Natural Systems and Rural Affairs Branch

Supporting Documentation – Table 3: Projects approved and completed in 2019

Project Type	Approved Grants (2019)		Approved Grants (2017 & 2018)		Grants Paid (2019)		Grants to be Completed in 2020	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
<b>Nutrient Management</b>								
Manure storage & treatment	2	\$30,000	0	\$0	1	\$15,000	1	\$15,000
Washwater treatment	1	\$5,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$5,000
Nutrient management	3	\$2,363	1	\$1,000	2	\$1,563	2	\$1,800
Watercourse fencing	0	\$0	1	\$7,500	0	\$0	1	\$7,500
<b>Soil Protection</b>								
Erosion control	21	\$153,732	8	\$60,000	9	\$62,841	19	\$138,732
Tile outlet erosion control	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Cover crops	2	\$2,000	0	\$0	2	\$2,000	0	\$0
<b>Water Management</b>								
Clean water diversion	0	\$0	1	\$5,000	0	\$0	1	\$5,000
Tile drain control structures	0	\$0	1	\$5,000	0	\$0	1	\$5,000
Chemical or fuel storage	0	\$0	1	\$1,000	0	\$0	1	\$1,000
Well decommissioning	6	\$11,216	5	\$7,921	9	\$13,199	2	\$3,420
Septic system repair or replacement	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>Land Stewardship</b>								
Watercourse buffers & windbreaks	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Land retirement incentive	4	\$4,463	1	\$150	4	\$4,463	1	\$150
Forest & wetland management plans	15	\$7,128	3	\$1,575	16	\$7,158	0	\$0
<b>Education and Innovation</b>								
Educational initiatives	0	\$0	1	\$5,000	1	\$5,000	1	\$750
Innovative projects	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>\$215,902</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>\$94,146</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>\$111,224</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>\$183,352</b>

Figure 1: Projects approved in 2019

