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SUBJECT: **Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program – 2016 Annual Report**

OBJET : **Programme municipal de subventions pour l'assainissement de l'eau en milieu rural – rapport annuel 2016**

PURPOSE

This memorandum provides the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee with the 2016 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 2016, grants were available to support best management practices in five categories:

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

The 2016 program included several new grant types and other supports 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.

Since the program's inception in 2000, more than one thousand projects have been supported with more than \$1.8 million in grants. Landowners have invested an additional \$8 million in these environmental stewardship projects.

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 2016 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.

The 2016 program was promoted through online and community newspaper advertisements, targeted mail drops to 22,000 rural residents, 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 the Canadian Plowing Championship. Applications were accepted in May and throughout the fall of 2016.

Summary of 2016 Grants Awarded

In 2016, 74 projects were approved worth a total of \$149,435 in grants. Of these, 43 projects were completed in 2016, receiving \$79,169 in grants *. An additional 31 projects will be completed in 2017, worth a total of \$70,006 in grants (Table 1).

The most popular project types in 2016 were well decommissioning (24 projects approved) and forest management plans (15 projects approved). The manure storage, erosion control and well decommissioning projects received 84 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. While most projects are located in the City's rural Wards, projects were approved across the City, representing farm and non-farm properties of a range of sizes.

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

Table 1: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program 2016 Summary

Project Type	Grants approved		Grants Paid		Grants to be Completed in 2017	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Nutrient Management						
Manure storage & treatment	1	\$15,000	1	\$15,000	0	\$0
Washwater treatment	1	\$2,450	0	\$0	1	\$2,450
Nutrient management plan/ precision farming	3	\$3,000	2	\$2,000	1	\$1,000
Watercourse fencing	0	0	0	\$0	0	\$0

	Grants approved		Grants Paid		Grants to be Completed in 2017	
Project Type	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Soil Protection						
Erosion control	8	\$53,052	4	\$22,782	4	\$30,000
Tile outlet erosion control	2	\$2,992	2	\$3,002	0	\$0
Cover crops	1	\$1,000	1	\$1,000	0	\$0
Water Management						
Clean water diversion	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Tile drain control structures	1	\$2,500	0	\$0	1	\$2,500
Chemical or fuel storage	1	\$1,000	0	\$0	1	\$1,000
Well decommissioning	24	\$41,515	18	\$28,852	6	\$12,663
Septic system repair or replacement	3	\$3,000	1	\$1,000	2	\$2,000
Land Stewardship						
Watercourse buffers & Natural windbreaks	3	\$868	3	\$868	0	\$0
Land retirement incentive	8	\$3,285	4	\$1,635	4	\$1,650
Forest and wetland management plans	15	\$7,273	7	\$3,030	8	\$4,243
Education and Innovation						
Educational initiatives	2	\$7,500	0	\$0	2	\$7,500
Innovative projects	1	\$5,000	0	\$0	1	\$5,000

Project Type	Grants approved		Grants Paid		Grants to be Completed in 2017	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
TOTAL	74	\$149,435	43	\$79,169	31	\$70,006

Program Outcomes

As a result of the projects completed in 2016:

- 825 metres of streambank have been protected from erosion;
- 172 trees have been planted along shorelines or in natural windbreaks;
- 81 hectares of farmland have been protected from erosion through cover crops;
- 120 hectares of farmland have improved nutrient management through the use of GPS precision farming techniques;
- 7 hectares of sensitive land have been retired from agricultural production;
- 158 hectares of forest have been protected through a forest management plan;
- Approximately 50 kilograms of phosphorus are being kept out of waterways each year from improved manure storage and repair of faulty septic systems **;
- The risks of surface and groundwater contamination at 20 sites have been reduced through repair of septic systems and well decommissioning.

Landowners contributed an additional \$136,528 in the projects completed in 2016 for a total of \$215,697 invested in rural land stewardship.

Financial Overview

The budget for 2016 was \$200,000. This was funded by the \$303,827 surplus funds from 2015, which will also partially fund the program in 2017. No special levy request was made by South Nation Conservation Authority for the 2016 program.

Total expenses in 2016 were \$134,290, including grants and program delivery expenses. An additional \$70,006 is encumbered for projects approved in 2016 to be completed in 2017.

Table 2: 2016 Budget

Revenue	
2015 Carry-Over	\$303,827
Total Revenue	\$303, 827
Expenses	
ORCWP Grants – completed in 2016	\$79,169
Program Coordination, Communication, Administration	\$55,122
Total Expenses	\$134,291
ORCWP Grants – to be completed in 2017	\$70,006
Balance	\$99,530

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.

In the first year of the 2016-2020 ORCWP, projects have been initiated in each of the new grant categories. Planning Services will continue to work with program partners to deliver the Grants Program in 2017 and report again in 2018.

Original signed by

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CC: Julia Robinson

*Final costs reflect actual costs of completed projects.

**Based on calculations from South Nation Conservation's phosphorous trading program.