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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: ACS2023-PRE-EDP-0044**

**SUBJECT: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program – 2022 Annual Report**

**OBJET: Programme d'assainissement de l'eau en milieu rural d'Ottawa – Rapport  
annuel 2022**

## **PURPOSE**

This memorandum provides the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee with the 2022 annual report for the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program (ORCWP), which is a grant program administered by the South Nation Conservation Authority. The 2022 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 program is required to report annually to the Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee.

In 2022, grants were available to support best management practices in five categories:

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

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 2021-2025 program renewal was approved by Council in May 2021, based on a review of the 2016-2020 Program [[ASC2021-PIE-EDP-0013](#)]. Conservation Authority partners and City staff began implementing the recommendations from this 5-year review in 2022. 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 2022.

The 2022 program was promoted through online and community newspaper advertisements, social media, e-newsletters and through contractors and partner agencies. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic resulted in some closures and event cancellations; some events were moved to an online platform with fewer in-person options than pre-pandemic years. The Program was promoted at the Kemptville Woodlot Day (held virtually) and the International Plowing Match (held in person). The landowner stewardship update for South Nation Conservation's Municipal Day featured the ORCWP.

### **Summary of 2022 Grants**

In 2022, 42 projects were approved worth a total of \$142,535 in grants. Of these, 27 projects were completed in 2022, receiving \$54,992. An additional 26 projects that were approved between 2017-2021 were completed in 2022, receiving \$91,311 in grants. In total, 53 projects were completed in 2022 and awarded \$146,303 in grants (Table 1). Fifteen projects approved between 2017-2021 will be completed in 2023, worth a total of \$88,065 in grants (see Supporting Documentation Table 3).

The most popular project types in 2022 were related to erosion control (13 projects approved), watercourse buffers / natural windbreaks (10 projects approved), well decommissioning (6 projects approved) and forest management plans (6 projects approved). These projects received 91 per cent of the total grant funds awarded in 2022.

A new project type for wetland restoration was introduced in 2022 following the 2021-2025 program renewal. In 2022, one project to undertake a wetland restoration in the Middle Castor River watershed was approved and initiated with additional support from ALUS Ontario East, Ducks Unlimited Canada, and South Nation Conservation.

Most projects approved in 2022 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 five projects approved in partnership with Green Acres, the City's rural tree planting program.

**Table 1: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program 2022 Summary**

Project Type	Grants approved in 2022*		Grants completed in 2022**	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
Manure storage & treatment	0	\$0	0	\$0
Washwater treatment	0	\$0	0	\$0
Nutrient management / precision farming	1	\$2,000	1	\$1,000
Watercourse fencing	0	\$0	0	\$0
Erosion control	13	\$94,928	14	\$101,397
Tile outlet erosion control	0	\$0	0	\$0
Cover crops	1	\$900	1	\$900
Clean water diversion	0	\$0	0	\$0
Tile drain control structures	0	\$0	1	\$2,990
Chemical or fuel storage	0	\$0	0	\$0
Well decommissioning	6	\$13,546	13	\$23,257
Septic system repair or replacement	1	\$2,000	2	\$3,000
Watercourse buffers & natural windbreaks	10	\$18,510	12	\$9,033
Land retirement incentive	3	\$2,250	1	\$450
Forest and wetland management plans	6	\$3,401	8	\$4,276
Wetland restoration	1	\$5,000	0	\$0
Educational initiatives	0	\$0	0	\$0
Innovative projects	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>\$142,535</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>\$146,303</b>

\* An additional 26 projects approved between 2017-2021 were completed in 2022.

\*\* Includes grants that were approved between 2017-2021.

### Program Outcomes

As a result of the 53 projects completed in 2022:

- 342 metres of streambank were protected from erosion and an additional 1,466 metres have a new watercourse buffer;
- 71,873 trees were planted along shorelines or in natural windbreaks;
- 40 hectares of farmland have improved nutrient management using GPS precision farming techniques;
- 7.3 hectares of farmland have been protected from erosion through cover crops;
- 148 hectares of forest were protected through forest management plans;
- Approximately 2.4 kilograms of phosphorus are being kept out of waterways each year through repair of faulty septic systems (based on calculations from South Nation Conservation's phosphorous trading program); and
- The risks of surface and groundwater contamination at 13 sites have been reduced through well decommissioning.

In addition to the \$146,303 awarded in grants in 2022, landowners contributed an additional \$244,956 for a total of \$391,259 invested in rural land stewardship.

### **Financial Overview**

The budget for 2022 was \$443,370. This was funded by amounts carried forward from projects approved in 2021 and a \$200,000 special levy request made by South Nation Conservation Authority (Table 2).

Total expenses in 2022 were \$182,575, including grants and program delivery expenses. The remaining balance of \$260,795 includes \$172,558 encumbered to approved projects to be completed in 2023. The remaining surplus of \$88,237 is available for 2023 grants.

**Table 2: Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program 2022 Budget**

Revenue	
2021 Carry-forward	\$243,370
2022 Ottawa Special Levy	\$200,000
Total Revenue	\$443,370
Expenses	
ORCWP Grants – completed in 2022	\$146,303
Program Coordination, Communication, Administration	\$36,272
Total Expenses	\$182,575
Balance	\$260,795

**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 \$391,259 was invested in the stewardship of rural land and water in 2022, through \$146,303 awarded in grants and an additional \$244,956 invested by landowners. Economic Development and Long Range Planning will continue to work with program partners to deliver the Grant Program in 2023 and will report back in 2024.

Original signed by

David Wise

Acting Director, Economic Development and Long Range Planning

CC: Tara Redpath, Natural Systems and Rural Affairs Branch

**Supporting Documentation – Table 3: Projects approved and completed in 2022**

Project Type	Approved Grants (2022)		Approved Grants (2017-2021)		Grants Paid (2022)		Grants to be Completed in 2023	
	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount	Number	Amount
<b>Nutrient Management</b>								
Manure storage & treatment	0	\$0	1	\$15,000	0	\$0	1	\$15,000
Washwater treatment	0	\$0	1	\$5,000	0	\$0	1	\$5,000
Nutrient management	1	\$2,000	3	\$2,800	1	\$1,000	3	\$3,800
Watercourse fencing	0	\$0	1	\$7,500	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>Soil Protection</b>								
Erosion control	13	\$94,928	19	\$142,500	14	\$101,397	16	\$120,000
Tile outlet erosion control	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Cover crops	1	\$900	0	\$0	1	\$900	0	\$0
<b>Water Management</b>								
Clean water diversion	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Tile drain control structures	0	\$0	1	\$5,000	1	\$2,990	0	\$0
Chemical or fuel storage	0	\$0	1	\$1,000	0	\$0	1	\$1,000
Well decommissioning	6	\$13,546	10	\$19,724	13	\$23,257	2	\$5,265
Septic system repair or replacement	1	\$2,000	1	\$1,000	2	\$3,000	0	\$0
<b>Land Stewardship</b>								
Watercourse buffers & windbreaks	10	\$18,510	5	\$6,216	12	\$9,033	3	\$15,693
Land retirement incentive	3	\$2,250	0	\$0	1	\$450	2	\$1,800
Forest & wetland management plans	6	\$3,401	2	\$900	8	\$4,276	0	\$0
Wetland restoration	1	\$5,000	0	\$0	0	\$0	1	\$5,000
<b>Education and Innovation</b>								
Educational initiatives	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
Innovative projects	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0	0	\$0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>\$142,535</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>\$206,640</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>\$146,303</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>\$172,558</b>

Figure 1: Projects approved between 2017-2022

