

Around the Rideau

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION FOR MUNICIPALITIES IN THE RIDEAU VALLEY

May/June 2017

Spring Water Levels in Review

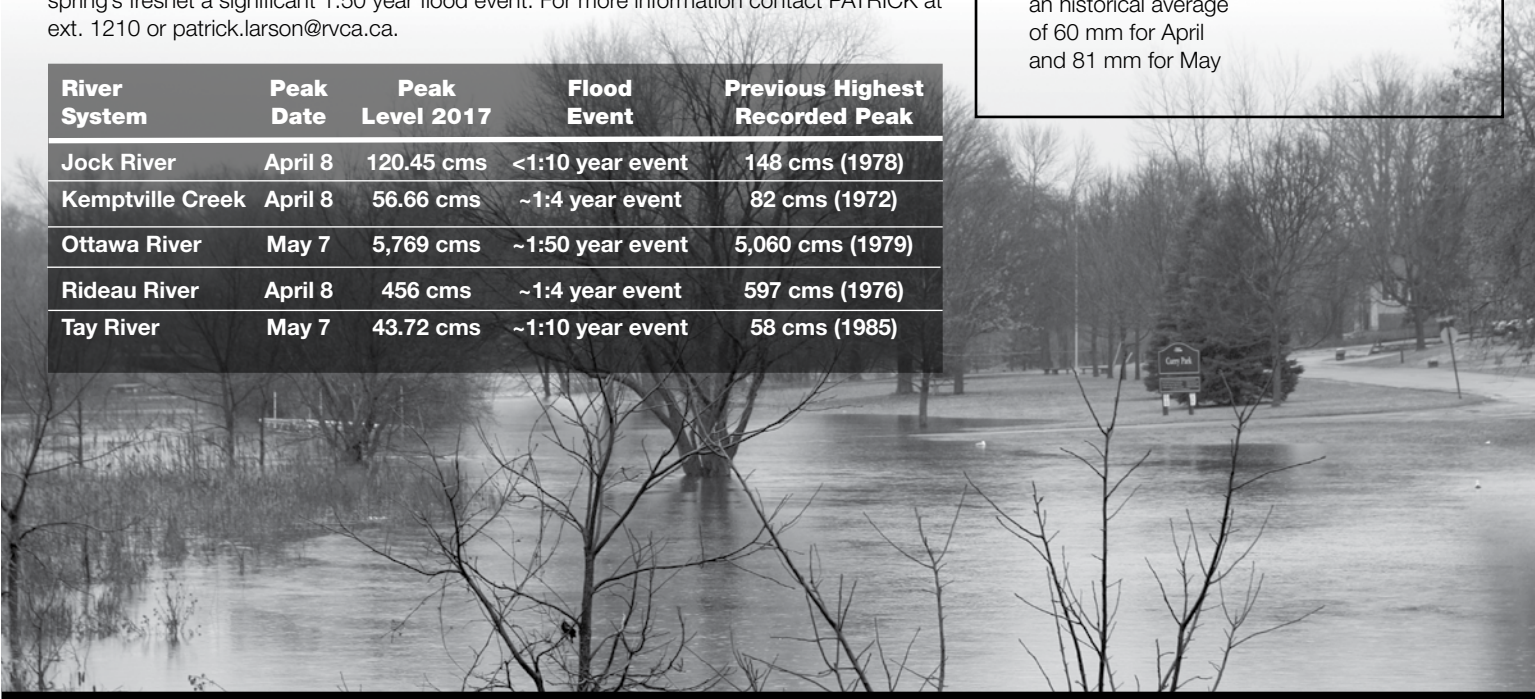
This spring saw prolonged and significant flooding in parts of the Rideau and Ottawa River watersheds. The mid-March snow levels were slightly above normal and combined with the large amount of precipitation received, it prompted the first flood outlook to be released early in April. This statement advised that low and flood-prone areas of the Long Reach and waterfront streets in Ottawa South may be affected. Within days the message was upgraded to a flood watch and in quick succession a flood warning. Early May saw another large rain event hit the area prompting flood outlook messages to be issued and quickly upgraded to a flood warning targeting Long Reach and the reservoir lakes of the Rideau Canal. By this time the reservoir lakes were above the full supply limit. Flood waters receded by May 15 and the flood warning was ended for the Rideau but was still in effect for the Tay system, which was affected by the high water levels in Bobs and Christie Lakes.

The Ottawa River always peaks later than the Rideau River and the first flood message for the Ottawa River, in the area that the RVCA monitors, was issued in mid-April. Over the next week several flood warning messages were triggered by the large amount of rain and runoff from up north. By May 1 the messaging was upgraded to a flood warning. The river peaked on May 7 with flows reaching a record of 5,769 cubic metres per second (cms) making this spring's freshet a significant 1:50 year flood event. For more information contact PATRICK at ext. 1210 or patrick.larson@rvca.ca.

2017 Flooding by the Numbers

- Snow totals for the 2016-2017 season: 273.2 cm from December to March (historical average 151 cm)
- Most snow in one day: February 12 with 28 cm
- Rainfall totals to date for 2017: 359.8 mm of rain in total with 264.6 in April (147.8 mm) and May (116.8 mm). Compared to an historical average of 60 mm for April and 81 mm for May
- Most rain in one day: May 1 with 45.4 mm
- RVCA staff recorded water levels at 46 locations throughout the watershed during this spring's freshet
- 31 Watershed Condition Statements released
- 22 media interviews
- Flood affected properties visited and photographed

River System	Peak Date	Peak Level 2017	Flood Event	Previous Highest Recorded Peak
Jock River	April 8	120.45 cms	<1:10 year event	148 cms (1978)
Kemptville Creek	April 8	56.66 cms	~1:4 year event	82 cms (1972)
Ottawa River	May 7	5,769 cms	~1:50 year event	5,060 cms (1979)
Rideau River	April 8	456 cms	~1:4 year event	597 cms (1976)
Tay River	May 7	43.72 cms	~1:10 year event	58 cms (1985)



Hazard Mapping in Ottawa



One responsibility of Conservation Authorities is to identify hazard lands. During the last five years, RVCA has been conducting several hazard mapping studies on watercourses within the City of Ottawa and the RVCA area of jurisdiction. For some watercourses, old mapping will be updated; and for others, hazard maps will be created for the first time. The ongoing studies identify two main types of hazards — flood risk and slope stability risk. Through various types of analysis flood risk maps identify areas that may be flood-vulnerable and restrict or prohibit development in accordance with Provincial Planning Policies. Slope stability studies make use of highly detailed topographic data to identify potentially unstable slope areas.

The new and updated maps will be used by the City of Ottawa to update their *Official Plan* and *Zoning Schedules* and also used for review of development applications under the *Planning Act*. CAs will use the maps in administration and enforcement of regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Currently, the RVCA is focusing its efforts on the following watercourses:

- Flowing Creek (Flewellyn Road to Jock River)
- Hobbs Drain (Fallowfield Road to Jock River)
- Kings Creek (Brunton Side Road to Jock River)
- Nichols Creek (Montague Boundary Road to Jock River)
- Becketts Creek (Sarsfield Road to Ottawa River)
- Bilberry Creek (Innes Road to Ottawa River)
- Rideau River (Hogs Back to Kars)
- Rideau River (Kars to Burritts Rapids)

Once the technical work for individual study areas is complete and hazard mapping has been prepared, a public information session will be held to collect feedback. Any new information or comments will be taken into consideration in further refinement of the mapped hazard limits. Contact FERDOUS at ext. 1170 or ferdous.ahmed@rvca.ca.

After the Flood

A fact sheet that answers the most frequently asked questions of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority and Ottawa Septic System Office after floods is now available. The fact sheet explores steps to repair houses, how to dispose of garbage, debris and what to do with sand bags. It also talks about how your septic system may be affected and what to do to safely handle the strain floods put on septic systems. Visit www.rvca.ca and select "After the Flood Resources." Call TERRY for more information at ext. 1107 or terry.davidson@rvca.ca.

City Stream Watch Recognized!

RVCA's City Stream Watch Program was awarded the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects Certificate of Merit for Service to the Environment on March 31, 2017. Program Co-ordinator Justin Robert and Program Manager Jennifer Lamoureux were on hand to receive the award. The certificate is given to individuals or groups in Ontario to recognize and encourage a special or unusual contribution to the sensitive, sustainable design for human use of the environment. For over 15 years City Stream Watch has obtained, recorded and managed valuable information on the physical and biological characteristics of creeks and streams in the City of Ottawa. The program brings together a diverse group of volunteers from the Ottawa area. For more information call JENNIFER at ext. 1108 or jennifer.lamoureux@rvca.ca

Family Programs @ Foley Mountain and Baxter

Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas are offering family programming this summer. Families can experience nature hands-on in our exciting educational programs. At Foley Mountain, we have three FREE morning programs (July 6, 27 and August 17) with a valid day pass (\$6/vehicle). Children must be accompanied by an adult. At Baxter, the cost of family programs is \$5 per person per program with a maximum of \$20 per family per program, children under five are free and you must pre-register! On July 5 Baxter offers a morning and an afternoon FREE pond study, maximum 40 people — don't forget to pre-register! The free program at Baxter is to celebrate Canada 150! Visit our website for complete details! (www.rvca.ca).



Water Guardian Bursary

Friends of the Tay Watershed are offering a \$1,000 bursary to students living in the watershed who plan to pursue post-secondary education in Environmental Science or a related program concerned with water and/or the environment. The award is not based on marks but rather on the student's passion for or interest in the environment. Visit www.tayriver.org for more information or to apply.

RVCA Student Inundation

RVCA has been inundated but in the best way possible! Our hallowed halls are ringing with youthful voices as an influx of students from Ontario colleges and universities flush out the ranks of RVCA this summer. These talented, enthusiastic students will be testing, monitoring and assisting in RVCA programs. Summer is a great time to boost RVCA programs with student resources. Contact ROSIE at rosie.maclean@rvca.ca or ext. 1145 for more information.



Amazing RVCA students out fish sampling using a fyke net on the Tay River on May 19, 2017.

Very Special Thank You

A special "thank you" to the family, friends and co-workers of Peter Goddard who generously donated to Peter's Memorial Fund. The funds are being directed to buy much needed equipment for Foley Mountain outdoor education programs. Foley's library is also being enhanced with donations from Peter's personal book collection. Contact LEAH at 613-273-3255 or leah.roberts@rvca.ca.



Al Goddard presents a ceremonial cheque to Leah Roberts, RVCA Acting Foley Mountain Site Supervisor. This generous donation was made in memory of Peter Goddard, former outdoor interpreter at RVCA.



Around the Rideau

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