



# CAT TALES

Spring 2015 Issue

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CATARAQUI  
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CONSERVATION  
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## Cataraqui Source Protection Plan in Effect

The Cataraqui Source Protection Plan made under the Clean Water Act is now approved and it became effective on April 1, 2015.

The Plan is part of a provincial initiative to provide clean and plentiful drinking water and compliments the efforts of water treatment plant operators. Source protection is all about keeping pollution from affecting our drinking water, now and in the future. Some types of pollution are very difficult and expensive to clean and treat. In some cases, drinking water sources can be ruined forever. Keeping water clean is the best course of action to keep ourselves safe.

Required actions and recommendations in the Plan focus mainly on municipally-owned drinking water systems that serve residential popula-

tions, but regionally sensitive groundwater is also considered. The map below shows all the areas covered by the Plan.

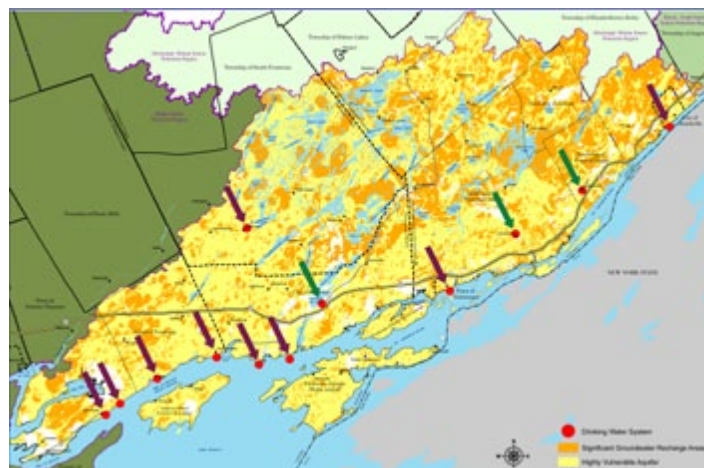
Wellhead protection areas and intake protection zones have been determined around municipal well supplies (green arrows in the figure below) and intakes (purple arrows). Specific actions are outlined in the Plan to reduce the risk of these drinking water sources becoming polluted. As you can see, more than 90 percent of the Cataraqui Source Protection Area is either a highly vulnerable aquifer (yellow) or a significant groundwater recharge area (orange) (i.e. regionally sensitive groundwater areas). Municipalities, provincial ministries, the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority and others are responsible

to put the Plan into action. You can learn more about the actions that are required or recommended for your community by visiting [www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca](http://www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca) and using the interactive maps under the resources tab. There you will also learn about the steps you can take to reduce the risk of polluting municipal and private drinking water supplies.

For more information about source protection plan implementation, please contact Holly Evans, CRCA Environmental Technician at [hevans@crca.ca](mailto:hevans@crca.ca) or 613-546-4228 ext. 233

For a list of the top 10 actions you can take to help keep drinking water sources clean

*see page 8.*



### From left to right:

1. Sandhurst Shores
2. A.L. Dafoe (Napanee)
3. Bath
4. Fairfield (Amherstview)
5. Point Pleasant (Kingston)
6. Kingston Central
7. Sydenham
8. Cana (Kingston Mills)
9. James W. King (Gananoque)
10. Lansdowne
11. Miller Manor (Mallorytown)
12. Brockville



### CREATURE FEATURE - Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*)

Back in the day, the term 'creature feature' referred to a horror movie that high-lighted some terrible, scary monster wreaking havoc and mayhem upon the world.

For us, it's been the clever name for our regular wild-life feature in this newsletter. But for this installment both meanings are apt as we examine one of the most destructive pests to hit Ontario for quite some time, one that has systematically attacked and wiped out one particular species of tree in communities across the province, and indeed throughout great swaths of North America.

We're talking, of course, about the voracious, seemingly indestructible and highly resilient emerald ash borer- a pest that truly defines the concept of the invasive species, and one that is of growing significance throughout the continent.

The adult beetles are generally about 8.5 millimeters long and 1.6 millimeters wide, and feature what is actually kind of an attractive bright metallic green hue. These adults don't live very long and are primarily around strictly to mate, with the females going



on to lay anywhere from 40 to 200 eggs. This is where the true problem lies. The eggs are usually housed in the various cracks and crevices in the bark on all species of ash trees. When they hatch the larvae then begin to methodically chew – or bore – their way into the more vulnerable interior of the trees, particularly their vascular system. Like our bloodstream, this is how trees receive and spread water, nutrients and sugars.

This means the trees don't get fed and die ... in large numbers. Sources with both the Canadian and American governments report that once the emerald ash borer has made its home in a woodlot, 99 to 100 per cent of the ash trees in that stand will be dead within six to 10 years.

And the emerald ash borer doesn't pick on the old and

weaker trees; it will go after younger, healthier trees as well. Those under 10 years old are then killed before they reach the age when they would begin to create seeds – almost like rubbing salt into the wounds of the ash species. Not only does the pest kill lots of trees, but it kills many that would have helped to perhaps prop up the species.

While the bug only migrates a few kilometres a year naturally, the movement of logs, lumber, firewood and wood chips by people is what is causing the spread to be more rapid. After starting its journey in Michigan, the emerald ash borer has spread across all parts of southern Ontario, including the catchment area of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, and is now appearing in western parts of Quebec. It

has even been spotted as far north as Sault Ste. Marie. Trees infested with emerald ash borer have some distinctive characteristics: trees appear to be thinning at the crown, have lots of dead branches and leaves are turning yellow. The adult beetles emerge in the late spring, from the middle of May to the end of June and exit from a D-shaped hole. The larvae are generally creamy white in colour with a light brown head.

So how did this incredibly destructive creature come to be such a plague on our ecosystem? The insect is native to a region of Asia that includes parts of eastern Russia, northern China, Japan and Korea. Over there it has natural predators, including a specific type of wasp that uses the recently-emerged adult beetle as feed for its own young. And the trees are generally more resistant to it over there. Here, there are no natural barriers to the spread of the emerald ash borer, which accounts for its rapid spread and the incredible number of trees that it has killed – a number that is easily in the tens of millions.

*Continued on page 4*



### New Faces on the CRCA Board

After the 2014 fall municipal election the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority (CRCA) has a few new faces around the boardroom table. Of the 16 board members, 10 are new around the table and they are all elected council members from their various municipalities. Of the six returning board members, three are elected municipal councillors and three are citizen appointees.

On January 28, 2015 the Full Authority AGM was held and Robert Morrison, longtime CRCA board member was voted in as the new Board Chair. Morrison has been a member of the CRCA Board since 2004 and has held the position of Chair and Vice-Chair during his time. New member Ross Sutherland from South Frontenac was

voted in as Vice-Chair. CRCA Board Members are appointed by the 11 municipalities that are within our jurisdiction and all the appointments are made by the elected council of the municipality. The number of representatives each municipality can appoint is based on the municipal population. It is the responsibility of the Board Members to represent the views of the citizens within their respective municipalities.

The current list of Board Members and their contact information is listed on the CRCA website at [www.crca.ca/board](http://www.crca.ca/board). All CRCA board meetings are open to the public and meeting schedules, agendas and minutes are available for download on our website.

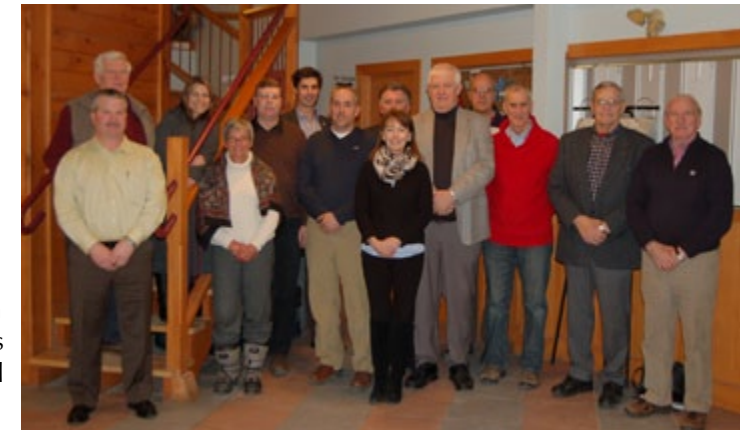
### Working Near Water?

Do you have a building project or doing some work along your shoreline? If you are planning to build or alter land (excavation, filling) near a wetland, watercourse or along a shoreline, you may require a permit or planning approval from the CRCA.

Planning and development staff would like to remind residents, developers and others that shorelines, floodplains, wetlands and lands adjacent to them post natural hazards including flooding and erosion. Development projects, including decks, bathhouses, docks and alterations to watercourses, may require planning approval from your municipality. These

works may also be covered under the CRCA's regulations. Before formally submitting your application to your municipality, we recommend that you consult with a CRCA planner in order to make the process as smooth as possible.

The CRCA planning staff are accessible, easy to talk to and can help guide you through the permit process. So if you are planning an addition to your lakeshore home, changes to your dock or any other projects that may be within 50 metres of water please give them a call. Assistance from the CRCA planning staff can save you time and money.



### 2015 Board Members:

- Athens - Rob Layng
- Brockville - Davis LeSueur
- Brockville - Phil Deery
- Elizabethtown-Kitley - Al Hanes
- Front of Yonge - Robert Morrison
- Gananoque - Vacant
- Greater Napanee - Max Kaiser
- Kingston - Richard Allen
- Kingston - Kevin George
- Kingston - Lisa Osanic
- Kingston - Laura Turner
- Leeds & 1000 Islands - Jeff Lackie
- Loyalist - Bert Herfst
- Loyalist - Penny Porter
- Rideau Lakes - Doug Good
- South Frontenac - Alan Revill
- South Frontenac - Ross Sutherland

For planning applications, regulation permits or development inquiries please call: 613-546-4228

**Andrew Schmidt**, Development Review Manager at ext. 224 (Greater Napanee, Loyalist and South Frontenac)

**Michael Dakin**, Resource Planner at ext. 228 (Leeds and the Thousand Islands, Athens, Front of Yonge, Elizabethtown-Kitley and Brockville)

**Christine Woods**, Resource Planner at ext. 235 (Rideau Lakes, Kingston and Gananoque)

For shoreline, in-water works (e.g. docks, shoreline retaining walls) and enforcement inquiries call:

**Jason Messenger**, Development Officer at ext. 286 (all of the above mentioned areas).

For information on CRCA policy and guidelines or to find a fee schedule and application form please visit our website at [www.crca.ca/planning-permits](http://www.crca.ca/planning-permits).



## CAT TALES

Cat tales is published three times per year by the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.

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### Enjoy the Outdoors with your family!

Did you know that the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority owns more than 4,000 hectares (10,000 acres) of land? This includes seven Conservation Areas, eight boat ramps and seven water access points suitable for kayaking and canoeing. It also includes the Cataraqui Trail, a multi-use trail along a former railway bed stretching from Strathcona to Smiths Falls.

We encourage you to get outside this spring and summer and enjoy our facilities. You could:

- launch a canoe or kayak at one of our water access points and explore a lake or river that you have never seen.
- cool off with a refreshing swim at Gould Lake or Lyn Valley Conservation Areas
- pack a picnic lunch to enjoy in one of our picnic areas
- go bird watching (see [crca.ca/good-birding-practices](http://crca.ca/good-birding-practices))
- take a nature hike along one of our many trails
- launch a boat at one of our boat ramps and go fishing (in accordance with MNR regulations)
- cycle or horseback ride along the Cataraqui Trail
- rent a canoe, kayak or pedal boat ([crca.ca/canoe](http://crca.ca/canoe))

Just remember to take only pictures and leave only footprints. If you are visiting one of our Conservation Areas with your dog please ensure it is on a leash at all times for the comfort and safety of all users. Don't forget to stoop and scoop!

Find a Conservation Area near you:

- Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area** (Kingston)
- Lemoine Point Conservation Area** (Kingston)
- Gould Lake Conservation Area** (South Frontenac)
- Lyn Valley Conservation Area** (Elizabethtown-Kitley)
- Mac Johnson Wildlife Area** (Elizabethtown-Kitley, Brockville)
- Marshlands Conservation Area** (Kingston)
- Parrott's Bay Conservation Area** (Loyalist)

For further details on the CRCA's Conservation Areas please visit our website at [www.crca.ca/conservation-areas](http://www.crca.ca/conservation-areas)



### CREATURE FEATURE - continued

The first official report of the beetle in North America came in June of 2002 in Michigan and they were most likely brought to the continent in packing crates or palettes that came over from Asia that were held in a ship. The impact of the devastation the emerald ash borer continues to unleash is remarkable in its scope and scale. It means loss of habitat and food sources, decreased biodiversity which means these areas are even more exposed and vulnerable to other invasive species.

One of the biggest challenges facing those looking to stop the onslaught is that the emerald ash borer is not readily detected when it first moves into a new area. It's only after the pest has become relatively well established in an area that it is discovered and by that time, it's probably too late.

Economic impacts of the spread of this invasive species are generally two-fold: First, there are the extraordinary costs involved in any number of schemes to deal with the spread of the beetle – usually borne at the provincial or municipal government level. It's possible that anywhere from \$11 to \$25 billion would be spent by governments throughout North America to contain and hopefully curtail the problem over the next 15 to 20 years.

What essentially has to happen is governments need to identify infested trees and remove them and treat the area with pesticides that would kill off the emerald ash borer.



As well, many governments, including in Ontario, have set quarantines meaning ash wood in any form cannot be transported from where it was cut. The Ontario Invading Species Awareness Program advises folks to use local firewood and burn it on site.

Secondarily, ash is a popular species used in the creation of furniture, recreational products (i.e. baseball bats) and in construction, meaning these sectors may have to switch to more expensive wood. Losing your primary resource could have a devastating effect on companies that would not be able to come up with an economical and effective contingency plan to losing their ash supply.

What can be done? The general public, and especially those who own property with trees, are encouraged to study the warning signs and ways to identify when the emerald ash borer is present. As well, they are reminded, as stated above, to not move infested wood in the quarantine areas. If you spot signs of an infestation, call the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources at 1-800-667-1940 or the Canadian Food Inspection Agency at 1-800-442-2342. There is also the Invading Species Hotline at 1-800-563-7711.



### Maple Madness Draws Thousands of Residents and Students

It's one of the sweetest annual events on the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's calendar, and one that never fails to draw a crowd. Maple Madness was once again held to great acclaim at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area as it has been since the sugar bush opened in 1983. A great way for folks to come and see how maple syrup is made both yesterday and today, the event was held this year from March 14 to March 22 (the entirety of the March Break) and the following two weekends: March 28 and 29, as well as April 4 and 5. Numerous school groups throughout the region also came out for curriculum-based Maple Madness programming.

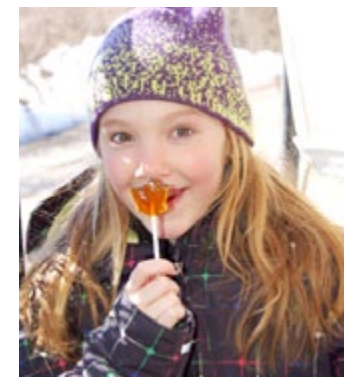
The CRCA education programming staff did its usual superlative job in organizing the various events and displays, and received lots of assistance from CRCA operations staff, as well as volunteers and Queen's University teacher candidates.

Approximately 8,500 area residents came out to Maple Madness this year, which is up from about 7,800 last year. 2013 was a particularly good year, as 11,000 people came out to participate. One of the highlights of the event is the chance to sample some pancakes smothered in genuine locally-produced maple syrup. CRCA Outdoor Centre staff estimated that 13,700 pancakes were gobbled up

throughout the program. Special programming during Maple Madness included puppet shows at the Outdoor Centre, First Nation's displays hosted by local teacher/elder Paul Carl which showed how the people who essentially invented maple syrup harvested, boiled and created it. There were also regular tree tapping demonstrations, a maple taffy demo, an afternoon of traditional pioneer sugar bush chores, a treasure hunt and more.

For the school programs – which were actually extended for more than a week and a half because of popular demand – hundreds of students were taken back to the demonstration sugar

bush at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area on the tractor-drawn wagons. Kindergarten to Grade 2 students used a fun riddle and scavenger hunt game to visit the various stations and learn how syrup is made, starting with learning how to identify sugar maples, through to the processing of the sap into syrup and maple sugar. Grade 3 students experienced the bush in the manner of early European settlers, while students from Grade 5 and up practised their mathematics skills through 'Maple Math.' CRCA staff looks forward to next year's Maple Madness fun. Visit our website at [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca) to find out when Maple Madness is happening in 2016.





# WHAT'S HAPPENING 2015

# WHAT'S HAPPENING cont.

Spring and summer are ideal times for visiting one of our Conservation Areas! Enjoy hiking, paddling, bird watching and nature appreciation or cool off with a refreshing swim. To find the Conservation Area closest to you visit [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca).



**ENTRANCE FEES**  
Gould Lake and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Areas have a daily entry fee of:

- \$5.50 for adults and children over 12
- \$3.00 for children 12 and under
- maximum fee of \$14.00 per car

Annual passes are available for \$80 per year and provide entry to both of these Conservation Area.

Donation boxes are located at our other conservation areas and at our boat ramps. Your donations help to maintain these facilities, so please make a contribution each time you visit.

During July and August, entrance fees to Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area are reduced to \$5.00 per car.

**HOURS OF OPERATION**  
Conservation Areas are open only during daylight hours.

**Little Cataraqui Creek Outdoor Centre** is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday to Friday (other times available by appointment). Closed weekends from May to September except during programs. Room rentals are also available.

**LITTLE CATARAQUI CREEK CONSERVATION AREA**  
Little Cataraqui Creek is located 2km north of Highway 401 on Division Street.

**Spring Fling P.A. Day Program**  
*Friday, May 22*  
*ages 6 to 11*  
*(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)*  
**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**  
Give your child(ren) a P.A. Day full of spring adventure and fun. We'll be exploring the fields, forests and marshes of the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Activities include searching for salamanders, making friends with frogs, singing with the birds, playing games and having wonderful experiences in the great outdoors.

Drop off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your own snacks, drinks and lunch as well as suitable outdoor clothes. The program will run

regardless of the weather. Cost is \$40 per child. Advance registration is required. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. Register online at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services). For more info call 613-546-4228 ext. 251.

**LEMOINE POINT CONSERVATION AREA**  
Lemoine Point is located in the west end of Kingston on the shore of Collins Bay. There are entrances off Front Road and Coverdale Drive.

**Native Plant Sale**  
*Saturday, May 23*  
*(9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)*  
Join the Friends of Lemoine Point for their annual Spring Plant Sale. Buy some trees, shrubs or wildflowers for your home garden. All plants are grown at the Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery. Proceeds from the sale help to support the nursery and the tree stock grown to support local forestry programs.



**MAC JOHNSON WILDLIFE AREA**  
Explore the trails, pond and reservoir at the Back Pond! Enjoy 11 km of hiking trails, a Nature Centre, picnic facilities and canoe and kayak launches.

Directions: Take Highway 29 north from Brockville to Tincap, turn east on Debrugge Road and drive 2 km to the main entrance. There are also two entrances off Centennial Road and the entrance at the Broome-Runciman Dam has a canoe launch and a small picnic area.

**Mother's Day Tree Sale**  
*Saturday, May 9*  
*(10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)*  
Come out and support the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area's annual spring tree sale. All trees and shrubs are native stock grown at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area nursery. The sale takes place at the Centennial Road (south entrance) parking lot.

**Work-Bee Wednesday's**  
*(8:30 a.m. to noon)*  
*Mac Johnson Wildlife Area*  
Calling all volunteers! Join the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and CRCA staff for Work-Bee Wednesday's. Help out at the tree nursery, with tree planting events, brushing or with work on the trails. Locations and duties to be determined each week and will be posted on the CRCA's Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/CataraquiRegionCA](http://www.facebook.com/CataraquiRegionCA).

**RENT A CANOE, KAYAK OR PEDAL BOAT THIS SUMMER**  
Explore the waters at Gould Lake and Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Areas! During the summer months we rent canoes, kayaks and pedal boats - pedal boats only available at Gould Lake. Rental rates being at \$8.00 per hour and include paddles, life jackets and safety kits. Rentals are available from May to September. Daily



admission fees apply. Rentals at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area are available Monday to Friday at the CRCA administration office from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**GOULD LAKE CONSERVATION AREA**  
Enjoy the warm weather at Gould Lake Conservation Area this summer with a picnic, swim, or paddle in a canoe or kayak. There are 20 km of hiking trails for you to enjoy with many spectacular views of the lake. CRCA staff are available at Gould Lake from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekends only during May and June. During July and August staff are there daily from 10:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Gould Lake has a daily entry fee or you can buy an annual vehicle pass. The Conservation Areas is located 5 km northwest of Sydenham. For more information visit our website at [www.crca.ca/conservation-areas](http://www.crca.ca/conservation-areas).

**LYN VALLEY CONSERVATION AREA**  
Cool off at Lyn Valley this summer! The small spring-fed lake provides an excellent swimming spot with a sandy beach to relax on. Picnic tables and change rooms are also available. Lyn Valley is open from May to September and located north-west of Brockville on Lyn Valley Road. For more information visit our website at [www.crca.ca/conservation-areas](http://www.crca.ca/conservation-areas).

**CATARAQUI TRAIL**  
Take a hike, go for a run, cycle, or ride your horse on the Cataraqui Trail - a 104 km multi-use trail that runs from Strathcona to Smiths Falls. The trail is located on a former CN Railway line so the terrain is flat with a mainly gravel surface.

The following users are permitted on the Cataraqui Trail: walkers, hikers, joggers, naturalists and bird watchers; cyclists (due to the gravel



surface, a 2" tire is recommended); horseback riders; snowmobilers with a current Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs trail permit; and cross-country skiers. Except for trail maintenance and emergency vehicles, motor vehicles are not allowed on the Cataraqui Trail. This means that vehicles such as ATV's and dirt bikes are not permitted on the trail. Visit [www.cataraquitrail.ca](http://www.cataraquitrail.ca) for a trail map and information and also check them out on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CataraquiTrail](http://www.facebook.com/CataraquiTrail) and Twitter [www.twitter.com/CataraquiTrail](http://www.twitter.com/CataraquiTrail) for news, photos and information.

**Bike or Hike Fundraiser**  
*Saturday, August 29*  
*Chaffey's Locks*  
Help raise funds to support the Cataraqui Trail at the annual Bike or Hike event. For further details and registration forms please visit [www.cataraquitrail.ca](http://www.cataraquitrail.ca)





### Help Keep Your Drinking Water Safe - Top 10 List

Here are the top ten actions you can take to help keep drinking water sources clean:

1. Handle and dispose of waste properly: reduce you waste production, use local hazardous waste collection programs, and pick up pet waste.
2. Maintain heating oil tanks and fill lines: inspect your oil tank regularly, upgrade to a modern fuel tank, install a drip pan, and use oil land/gauge protectors.
3. Maintain and use septic systems properly: know the location of your tank and bed and protect it from damage, have the tank pumped out every three to five years, conserve water, and avoid the use of bleaches/harsh cleaning products.
4. Maintain wells: inspect your well at least once a year, keep potential pollutants (i.e. livestock, septic systems, fuel sources, gardens) away from you well, and test your well water regularly for bacterial contamination.
5. Hire a licensed well contractor to upgrade your well or properly plug unused wells: be sure to use a Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change licensed contractor for well upgrades and to properly decommission an unused well.
6. Avoid or limit the use of road salt: wear sturdy footwear, switch to snow tires, and use traction aides (i.e. sand), in combination with smart salt practices.
7. Practice smart agriculture: fence livestock away from watercourses, practice conservation tillage, mix/apply chemicals away from water bodies, follow the manufacturer's directions for storage and application methods, and establish and maintain a buffer zone near watercourses.
8. Practice water conservation: use a rain barrel to water your garden, install low flow shower heads and toilets, and fix leaking taps.
9. Use green products: for household cleaning, personal care and lawn care.
10. Work together to find opportunities in your community to better protect water.



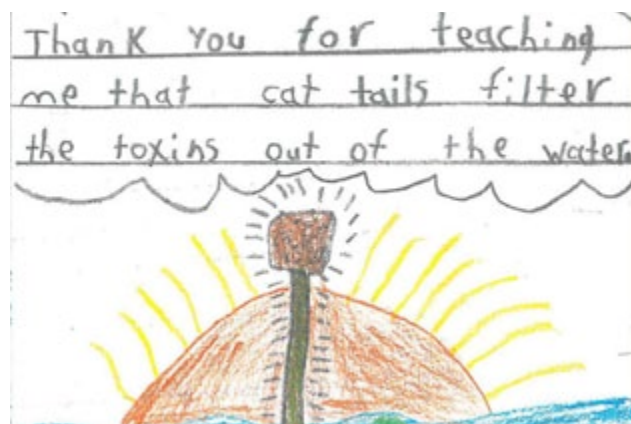
For more information on the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan please visit [www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca](http://www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca) or contact Holly Evans, CRCA Environmental Technician: 613-546-4228 ext. 233 or [hevans@crca.ca](mailto:hevans@crca.ca)

### News from the Foundation

2015 marks 50 years since the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation was established to raise funds for the Conservation Authority to support education programs and land acquisition. At the website [www.cataraquiconservationfoundation.org](http://www.cataraquiconservationfoundation.org) there is an opportunity for supporters to leave a legacy for ongoing conservation and education.

#### Partner in Education Mailing

As spring is now finally upon us, Foundation board members have been busy mailing out annual appeal letters for Partners in Education, in support of the conservation education programs for children and youth offered at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Many of you receiving the letter have been remarkably generous in the past. We hope that your generosity will continue and that you will be able to give as much or more to this worthy cause. Your continued financial support will help ensure that as many areas students as possible will benefit from these wonderful educational opportunities.



#### Volunteer Board Members Needed:

You can have a say in ensuring that children throughout our watershed continue to have access to excellent conservation education programs, and learn lessons that will help them make a positive impact on their world by becoming a Foundation board member. If you are interested, please contact the secretary at [forevergreen.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:forevergreen.secretary@gmail.com).

#### Forever Green Gala

Mark you calendar today for the annual fund-raising gala, Forever Green, to be held this year on Saturday, November 7 at the Italo-Canadian Club. Take note of the new location and be prepared to have a great time.

#### Annual General Meeting

Foundation board members will gather for the Annual General Meeting, on Thursday, May 14, at 4 p.m., in the boardroom of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority administration building, located at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, 1641 Perth Road. Everyone is welcome to attend. It's a chance to learn more about the Foundation and its important work.



### Winter Fun in Abundance at CRCA Conservation Areas

Even though there were lots of folks complaining about what was perceived to be a perpetually frigid and unpleasant winter, there were many others who loved it because of the abundant seasonal recreational pursuits that it allowed.

Two of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority's Conservation Areas, Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville and the Little Cataraqui Creek in Kingston, were busy with outdoor enthusiasts even on the most blustery and biting cold days. At Mac Johnson Wildlife Area, the free Saturday skates began Jan. 10 and ran until early March, bringing hundreds of families and individuals out to the pond for some fresh air and exercise. The cold air didn't dampen spirits but it meant the volunteers in the skating shelter served a lot of hot chocolate. The 13th-annual Winter Fun Day at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area was also a big hit. It featured dog-sled races organized by the Mush Larose Association Training Division, as well as skating on the pond, cross-country skiing and free snowshoeing for the kids.

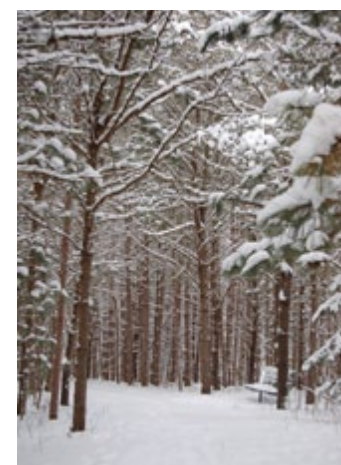
Family Day on Feb. 16, also brought out a hardy crowd of skaters, snowshoers and cross-country skiers as the temperature plunge just meant more vigorous exercise on the pond or trails. A special barbecue hosted by the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area kept folks warm and their tummies full.

Conservation education programs at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area had great turn-outs, according to our education and Outdoor Centre staff. Participants ranging from kindergarten students, to English as a Second Language exchange students from Queen's and many ages in between were able to snowshoe, cross-country ski and explore the winter wilderness. There were also a good numbers participating in winter sports P.A. day programming.

As well, there were regular cross-country ski lessons, snowshoe demonstrations, skating opportunities and more throughout January and February. The Owl Hoot and Coyote Howl on Jan. 17 had a full slate of registrants, as did the Valentine's Evening Skate on Feb. 14, the Family Day Skate on Feb. 16 and the always popular Scat and Tracks Hike on Feb. 22.

One of the highlights of the winter was the Starlight Snowshoe Hike on Feb. 28, which saw participants experience a unique night-time trek through the wilderness under a starry winter night's sky.

For all the winter recreation activities, the number of participants was high and the ski and snowshoe rentals were always doing a brisk business. For more information on all the seasonal activities at all our conservation areas, visit [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca).



### Early Bird Nature Program Registration

Sign up online for our Nature Programs for Early Learners and Home Learners. Space is limited so secure your spot today for programs starting in the fall of 2015 and winter/spring 2016.

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority offers quality outdoor and environmental education programs for preschool age children (2.5 to 5 years old). Children in the Early Learners Program experience a connection to nature through songs, puppetry, touch tables, exploring, stories, games and hands-on activities. The Nature Program fosters a strong connection to nature by guiding children with their head, heart and hands.

Come explore the wild spaces of Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area with other home learners. Our outdoor and environmental education programs for Home Learners will teach children ages 6 to 14 about nature and conservation and they will come away with a better appreciation of the natural world. This is a drop-off program.

CRCA Nature programs take place at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Programs are \$63 (\$7.00 x 9 visits) and registration is required. Register online at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services). For more information visit [www.crca.ca/nature-programs](http://www.crca.ca/nature-programs) or call 613-546-4228 ext. 251.





### CRCA to Use Blogs to Connect with Area Residents

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority is always looking for new ways to connect with the people living in the communities it serves.

We have an active and popular website at [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca), and an ever-increasing presence on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest. Part of the goal of these communication channels is to help folks understand the varied roles and responsibilities that the CRCA has in the region.

Many people may know us for one aspect of our mandate or another. They may know of our Conservation Areas, education programs and special events like Maple Madness. Or they may have had dealing with us because planning and regulations permits or development proposals. They also may know of us as key players in Source Water Protection. Very few people know that we do all of this and much more.

So with that in mind, starting later this spring we will be

introducing a new blog feature to our website. Instead of more staid and institutional sounding general posts, each blog entry will be written by a member of the CRCA staff and each posting will be related to their particular realm of expertise.

The style of the blogs will be comfortable and conversational - as if you were sitting across the table from them having a coffee. And they will consist of stories, anecdotes and perhaps the occasional humorous observation, as well as key facts, figures and informative tips or advice about something applicable to most people's lives.

So why a blog? It had been shown in mass media, advertising and marketing that you can connect more profoundly with both print and online readers if you can 'put a human face' on the story you are telling or the information you are imparting. If visitors to the blog feel 'connected' to the person writing the blog, and form a bit of an attachment to them, it will mean the message will

get through more effectively and audience members will take it to heart.

People like to read their favourite newspaper columnist, see Don Cherry's pontifications on Hockey Night in Canada, or look forward to the regular tweets from their favourite celebrity.

It's the same with our proposed blogs. We believe the content will be compelling in and of itself, but when it's presented in a manner that is more relaxed and conversational, it will be more effective.

Final details are still being worked out, but the structure of the blog will see a regular roster of five or six CRCA staffers contributing once a month. There will also be a number of what we are calling 'general purpose' blogs, written by the Communications Department.

Subjects to be blogged about may include: species at risk, invasive species, plant and wildlife identification, Source Water Protection, outdoor

education, citizen science, flood forecasting and warning, watershed protection, tree planting, planning and regulations and much more.

The blogs will also be interactive, allowing for questions and commentary. We might even use them to answer questions coming from members of the public directly.

We will also try to include visual elements such as photos, graphics and/or video to enhance the reader experience which will increase the likelihood they will be shared around the various social media channels. This increasing the awareness or 'brand awareness' of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority and its work.

All in all, it will be a positive process for all concerned. It will give us a chance to talk about our ongoing work, special projects and upcoming events, and it will educate and hopefully entertain a growing number of our friends and neighbours living in the CRCA Watershed.



### Your photos on ODC TV

You may have noticed something new in the Outdoor Centre at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area on your last visit - we have a new TV! Each month we will be displaying information about our upcoming events, photos of wildlife and scenery from our Conservation Areas and general information and tips.

We would love to showcase some of your photos on our TV. If you have photos of wildlife, scenery or you and your family enjoying one of our Conservation Areas please send them to us and we will include them in our monthly slideshow. You can email photos to [kfazackerley@crca.ca](mailto:kfazackerley@crca.ca) or drop them off on CD or USB stick at the CRCA Administration Office.



### Swans Thrive at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area Thanks to Public Support

The Trumpeter Swan Restoration Program at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville continues to be a remarkable success story since it was established in 1999.

A total of 15 Trumpeter Swans decided to make their winter home (a term known as over-wintering) at Mac Johnson this year. Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority staff said they showed up on Jan. 31 after their favourite wintering spots on the St. Lawrence River froze over. The CRCA swan feeding program was of great help in ensuring their health as it was a particularly harsh winter with prolonged periods of bitter temperatures and ice thicknesses not seen in decades. This contributes to making food difficult to attain.

The swans were fed a mixture of whole corn and a specially formulated duck/goose growth-promoting feed. The program continues to be the beneficiary of many generous donations of swan food from local residents. CRCA staff (and we presume the swans themselves) wanted to thank all those individuals and groups who made a donation, including the always-helpful Friends of the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Donors have the option of dropping off whole corn at the Mac Johnson workshop, or donating money at Ritchie's Feed and Seed in Brockville. That's where the seed is stored, and it's only removed as needed in order to prevent it from getting mouldy at the workshop.

Mould is quite harmful to waterfowl such as ducks and geese as it causes congestive issues in the eyes and nasal

cavity. That's why staff stress the importance of not feeding birds with mouldy bread. And on the subject of bread, it may seem a trivial matter but folks should understand that there are certain breads that are more beneficial than others - the same as it is for humans. Many visitors to the area come to feed the swans, so besides not feeding them mouldy bread, it's best to not feed the waterfowl white bread either as it is calorie neutral - meaning they burn more energy eating it than they get from ingesting it. Whole wheat and/or rye bread is generally seen as the preferred choice.

Just to be clear, while the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority does not promote the general concept of feeding wildlife, the swan feeding program is a unique exception as it is meant to help the overall restoration program, particularly through the winter. It's also important to the process of 'imprinting' the swans with the CRCA staff so the birds can be more easily captured and banded. This helps the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS) keep records on the development and tracking of the swan's Atlantic migration route. The feeding program will also help to supplement normal feeding during the fall and spring to give the birds every advantage they can get to help them survive and thrive and to have their numbers continue to grow at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area and beyond.

One interesting development that has generated some discussion is the prospect, put forward by the Friends group,



to set-up an "ice-away" machine out on the reservoir during the winter to provide a small patch of open water for the swans. Open water is important for two reasons: the water itself helps the swans eat because it 'washes' the food down their long necks. And as with people and other animals, it helps break the food up for more efficient digestion.

The second reason the open water is important is for preening: being on the open water allows the swans to preen (straighten out and clean) their feathers. And although it may make them more attractive to a potential mate it serves a more significant and practical purpose and that is to preserve the insulating quality of their down. This was very important this past winter, which saw our region endure temperatures of -10C and below throughout most of February.

As of the writing of this article, there is one pair of wild resident trumpeter swans preparing for another breeding season. This pair has been successfully breeding in the area for three years and

has produced seven cygnets (baby swans). They will be provided supplemental feed from a hopper located at the end of the North docks at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Centre. At this location the swans can be observed at most times throughout the year, but they remain elusive during nesting times.

A word of warning to canoers and kayakers: swans are known to be very aggressive during nesting season and capable of overturning canoes if sufficiently vexed by intruders. There have been recorded instances of swans killing people who approached too close to a nesting sight. Once in the water and without a live jacket the swans could potentially drown an unlucky boater.

But this happens rarely and generally speaking our visitors usually do their best to keep a distance from swans in the nesting season.

For more information on the Trumpeter Swan Restoration Program at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area, visit [crca.ca/trumpeter-swan-restoration-program](http://crca.ca/trumpeter-swan-restoration-program)



## Social Media Channels

It's almost a ridiculously obvious statement to say that social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and Instagram (to name a handful of the most popular) have become a dominant force in the way people interact with one another.

And not just individuals, but non-profits, artists, corporations large and small, sports teams, political organizations, cultural groups and even so-called 'celebrities' communicate with their 'followers' and those who 'like' them in growing numbers in this manner. If it is done strategically and with solid planning, social media can be a very powerful, efficient and cost-effective way for businesses and organizations to 'stay in touch.' And it's also a lot of fun.

The Cataraqui Region Con-

servation Authority understands this and is quite active on a number of these social media platforms. At the time of the writing of this article, our Twitter handle of @CataraquiRCA has 2,071 followers and has issued nearly 2,400 'tweets.' We also follow 937 other Twitter accounts, primarily related to conservation, nature and environmental concerns, although we do also follow many local, regional and national media outlets and individuals who routinely tweet about environmentalism or sustainability issues.

At [www.facebook.com/CataraquiRegionCA](http://www.facebook.com/CataraquiRegionCA) we regularly post about events happening at our various conservation areas as well as important information regarding source water protection, watershed preservation, water levels

(including flood warnings), planning and regulatory issues. And we also like to repost interesting information or photos from folks visiting our site. Most of the posts link back to specific pages or the general landing page of our popular website, [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca).

And for dedicated followers of Pinterest, our page at [www.pinterest.com/cataraquirca](http://www.pinterest.com/cataraquirca) features 17 different boards showing loads of photos of our conservation areas, programs and special events. Many are our own 'pins' while others coming from our followers.

We would love for you to share with us your photos and experiences from our Conservation Areas, our events or our school programs by tagging us in your photos, posts and tweets.



## CRCA Staff Comings and Goings



Michael Dakin



Jim Barber



Stephen Bohan



David Ringuette

The CRCA is pleased to welcome back Michael Dakin, Resource Planner, who took some time off for parental leave. Michael is one of three resource planners that review planning and regulation permit applications throughout the watershed. With Michael's return we say goodbye to Resource Planning Assistant Stephen Bohan. Stephen assisted CRCA staff in the review of policy and development proposals while Michael was on leave. Best of luck Stephen!

We also have two new faces joining the CRCA team, Jim Barber and David Ringuette. Jim Barber comes to us from the world of the community newspaper business and is

our new part-time Communications and Marketing Specialist. An award-winning journalist for more than 20 years - including 11 years as an editor - he is now a freelance writer and communications/marketing consultant who has called Greater Napanee home for nearly seven years. Jim has a B.A. from Trent University and a Diploma in Print Journalism from Centennial College.

David Ringuette joins us as a contract Watershed Monitoring Assistant. He will assist the watershed management team with various aspects of our watershed monitoring enhancement initiatives. Welcome Jim and David!