



# CAT TALES

WINTER/SPRING 2017

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## Knechtel Looks Back At 34 Years of Service with CRCA



Growing up in the rural community of Hanover, Ontario, a young Steve Knechtel found himself outdoors most of the time. Whether it was playing in area woods, streams and meadows, or working summer jobs for various environmental organizations, it seemed that he was destined to spend his entire professional career working to preserve, protect and enhance the natural environment.

And he did just that, concluding a lengthy, prolific and successful career in conservation with his retirement in September 2016 from his role as the general manager/secretary-treasurer of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority. In all, Knechtel spent 34 years with the CRCA, fulfilling the responsibilities as GM over the final 12 years of his tenure.

"I look at my time with the CRCA and I did about 10 years at the more hands-on technical level, and about 10 years as a program manager and then a little more than 10 years as GM, so I think it was time for a refresh for everybody," he said of the timing of his retirement.

"And I know we have a great organization moving forward. The bottom line is that the CRCA is made up of great people. I was just thinking about a few things as I looked back, and one of the things that I have appreciated the most is that we had people working here who really knew their stuff. They were always very dedicated and keenly interested in what they were doing. They weren't afraid to take the initiative and weren't afraid of working a few extra hours or

working weekends or evenings to get something done, and done right".

"I think the team we created here is very much solutions oriented. They're always looking for the best answer, the most effective answer and the most practical answer to an issue. If a simple \$100,000 project worked just as well as a complicated \$4 million solution, then why not go that route? Our staff has proved, over the years, how you can do great work in a very cost effective and efficient way."

After graduating from the Environmental Studies program at the University of Waterloo, Knechtel worked briefly with the Maitland Conservation Authority and then for the Upper Thames Conservation

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# CREATURE FEATURE: Eastern Screech Owl

The Eastern Screech Owl is one of the smallest, most versatile and most adaptable of the North American owl species.

Occupying the largest and most complex of habitats east of the Rocky Mountains, these owls range from northern Mexico in the south to Quebec in the north and all the way to the east coast of the continent. They possess one of the most recognizable 'trilling' songs, familiar to most birders and even the casual observer, although according to the folks at National Geographic "its vocalizations also include rasps, barks, hoots, chuckles and screeches. It has been noted by many observers that the 'screeching' part of their songbook is one of the least used – even given their name.

The branch of Eastern Screech Owls that live in Ontario and Quebec are generally around seven inches (18 cm) long with a wingspan maxing out around 18 to 20 inches (45-50 cm), and females are slightly larger than males. Regardless of whether it's a remote forested area or a fairly dense urban area, if there are decent-sized trees with lots of branches, knot holes and other nooks and crannies to hide in, these owls will be there. Eastern Screech Owls are generally grey in colour or a reddish-brown but have a complex group of bands and spots



that help them blend in against the bark of a variety of tree species.

Preferring to be active at night almost exclusively (the term 'night owl' wasn't made up after all!) they tend to hunt after large insects, other small birds and rodents. Because of this, they have adapted well to suburban environments where not only is there usually a good supply of

trees for their homes, but also an excellent supply of feeder birds, mice, rats and moles. In the southern United States, they also don't mind adding lizards to their dietary repertoire as well.

The more built up areas, generally speaking, don't have as many natural predators, including larger owl species, as might be found in rural regions, which is why these smaller owls thrive. Because of the preference for trees as a place to live and hunt, the Eastern Screech Owl tends to stay away from more open lands, fields, meadows etc. They don't seem to mind noisy environments as Eastern Screech Owls are often found in wooded areas alongside major highways.

They are efficient and effective hunters, blessed with both keen vision and hearing. It has been said by researchers that their sense of hearing is so acute that they can even hear mammals rustling under leaves or snow.

Sometimes they will sit perched in a tree waiting to see their prey on the ground, while other times they will go airborne and spy their prey through gaps in branches. Like a dive bomber, the Eastern Screech Owl is able to slice through the air, grasping its hapless victim in its talons before it knew what hit it.

As common as they are, because of

their ability to camouflage, and their completely nocturnal habits, they are a rarity to see, but are often heard, especially during their spring breeding season. Without probably knowing it, woodpeckers play an important part in the daily life of the Eastern Screech Owl, as the holes that they excavate in both deciduous and coniferous trees seeking food are often big enough for the owl to fit snugly. Orchards that have smaller trees with more cracks, crevices and gnarly branches are also common homes for these owls – that and the fact that there are often replete with meadow voles looking for a fruity treat.

These holes are also used for nesting (although no actual 'nest' is built in the traditional sense of a bird's nest) and often breeding pairs use the same nest year after year, with the eggs usually being laid in April with the incubation period lasting a month – give or take a day or two. The female spends most of the time with the eggs and young while the male is off gathering food for both the mother and the chicks. And it's also the mother's job to protect the nest which a female Eastern Screech Owl will do quite aggressively, including sometimes attacking humans who come too close.

In captivity, some Eastern Screech Owls have lived for up to 20 years, but studies have shown that those living in the wild rarely make it to that ripe old age.



CATARAQUI REGION  
CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

## CAT TALES

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# Knechtel Looks Back

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Authority, specializing in rural and agricultural drainage programs and other agricultural stewardship programs. When a position opened up at the CRCA, Knechtel applied and was hired in 1982 as a water resources technician.

"I was working on flood forecasting, operating the dams, issuing permits, that sort of stuff. And over time, my role just kept evolving. And in those days flood prevention was a big focus, as it still is today. Since Hurricane Hazel in 1954 there was a lot of emphasis given by conservation authorities to provide flood protection. Although it's interesting to note that it wasn't until the early to mid-1980s, around the time I was first working here, that conservation authorities were delegated flood management under the Province of Ontario's plan review system. So we were involved initially doing all of the water control structures and flood forecasting and that type of thing, and even though we were involved in the planning process, it wasn't until that time that we became the sole commenting agent on behalf of the Province on floodplain management," Knechtel explained.

"And shortly after that, this responsibility got extended to the Great Lakes systems. So here we are now commenting on the Lake Ontario shoreline and the St. Lawrence River as well as all the inland lakes and rivers in our watershed. By the late 1980s, the provincial government finally released a couple of policy documents – more guidelines really – one on storm water management, which is what conservation authorities have been advocating for as part of their plan review process, and their flood management program. The other was guidelines for doing watershed planning and if you recall in the current Conservation Authorities Act review that the government is undertaking, there is an interest in acknowledging integrated watershed management – which is exactly what those guidelines were hoping for 25 years ago, and which conservation authorities have been wanting for years."

Knechtel also spoke about the multiple and evolving roles that conservation authorities play as we are well into the second decade of the 21st



Opening of the Lemoine Point Native Plant Nursery.

century, with conservation and nature education becoming a more prominent responsibility.

"Conservation Authorities, even when I was working as a summer student, have always been involved in education. I think what's changed is in order to attract school boards and for teachers to be able to justify bringing their students out to places like our Outdoor Centre at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, or the Education Centre at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville, our programs had to be tied to the curriculum," he said.

"The message used to be, 'hey come and enjoy nature.' And to a certain extent that's what we're still saying, but now we have been able to tie in so many parts of the curriculum, including science, geography and even history."

Monitoring water quality as well as quantity has become a very significant part of the mandate for all conservation authorities, including the CRCA, in the wake of the Walkerton Inquiry in the early 2000s. Knechtel was born in Walkerton and grew up in Hanover, so the issue hit home for him both personally, and as someone for whom



Steve out on a site visit 1985.

source water protection has always been of great importance.

"Certainly the commission brought source water and source water protection to prominence. I think everyone in good conscience was really

saying, 'you know, we can make the system better.' And as the hearings unfolded and you got the truth of what went on, the Province had to step

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## 34 Years of Service



Conservation Strategy Open House 1991.

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back and look at things differently. Walkerton really did put a different scope on these issues. And, again, we had always been advocating for the government to look at things in a more integrated way. Source water is just another component of that.”

Knechtel said the biggest challenge in his career, particularly once he was elevated to the role of General Manager/Secretary Treasurer in 2004, was maintaining services, programs and facilities on a very tight budget. Prior to that he was promoted to Water Management Supervisor in 1988, then to Watershed Management Co-ordinator in 1996.

“Funding is always an issue. But when it comes right down to it, I think we have been pretty fortunate in that our municipal partners generally support what we’re doing and see the value and are quite prepared to put out a relatively small outlay from their coffers towards our efforts,” he said.

“I guess the biggest challenge that I recall was the significant changes the Harris government [1995-2002] made where the funding of conservation authorities was cut by 80 per cent. And until that time we were largely provincially grant oriented. Basically, about 50 per cent of all our funding came from the Province at the time, so that was a significant impact for us and for all conservation authorities. And I think it’s a credit to conservation authorities collectively and obviously

the residents in the municipalities who said, ‘hey, we still need to have conservation authorities to deal with certain things’ And we have been able to recover, thanks to the support of the residents and the municipal partners.”

Highlights over his time with the CRCA are plentiful. Knechtel said he is proud of all the work that CRCA staff have put into floodplain mapping, flood control and erosion control projects throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s.

“We also put a push on trying to get municipalities to look at regional groundwater studies, which the Province put some money on the table for. We were able to convince most of the municipalities that it was a good thing to do,” he said.

“And one of the things that I see as something of value, although it’s not very prominent in the public eye, was the informal group called the Kingston Wetlands Working Group. Basically, a bunch of folks from Ducks Unlimited, the Ministry of Natural Resources, a couple of municipalities, the CRCA, and representatives from the army base wanted to do something related to wetland preservation and enhancement. So rather than each of us going off and doing our own thing, we should try to identify some common interests and common goals so that even if we continue to work on our own, all of the projects at least fit together towards a common aim and for the common good.

“And that was kind of neat because

Cataraqui Conservation Foundation recognizes Steve with the Stewart Fyfe Staff Award, April 2010.



we ran it for probably 10 years and we did a few wetland projects here and there, like the one on the property at the Frontenac Institution in Kingston. I think overall, we were able to advance some of the wetland conservation ideas here in the area, including improving education.”

When the announcement of his retirement was made, Knechtel agreed to stay on in an advisory capacity until January 2017, with Rob McRae being promoted to acting GM and Secretary/Treasurer. In early December, Geoff Rae was hired as Knechtel’s replacement, with his appointment taking effect on Dec. 8. (Stay tuned to

our next issue of Cat Tales for an article on our new GM).

Once Knechtel is completely disentangled from the CRCA, he said he plans on doing some travelling with his wife Dawn as well as doing work around their home.

“I am sure down the road I will get into some volunteering and stuff, but in the short term I am abiding by my wife’s suggestion, which is to say no to everybody but her,” he said.

CRCA staff would like to congratulate Steve on his retirement and thank him for all of his service and guidance over the years. Best wishes, you will be missed.

# Rec Programs Aplenty For Those Who Love Wintry Endeavours

The Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority has the facilities, trails, programs and services to help you get the most out of your winter fun. All of our conservation areas remain open throughout the winter months, but only Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area just north of Kingston and the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area near Brockville have programs and groomed trails. Walking trails at the others are open, but not maintained.

The Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area will be a hub of activity as soon as the snow starts to fly, as 13 kilometres of trails will be groomed and track-set for cross-country skiing and others will be prepared for walking, hiking and snowshoeing.

For those who prefer to spend their winter hours on steel blades rather than skis, there's also the largest natural outdoor skating rink in the Kingston area, complete with warming huts in order to lace up your blades or take a short break. Families, businesses or other organizations are also able to rent the outdoor rink for an evening skating party. The rental includes the use of the warming huts. A Family Day Skate happens Feb. 20, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Inside the cozy confines of the



Outdoor Centre there are always refreshments, as well as a bevy of seasonal programs for folks of all ages. Cross-country skis, skates and snowshoes are available to rent from the Outdoor Centre.

The Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville also has great facilities for those looking to get outside this winter. Enjoy hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing on 11 kilometres of groomed trails and skating on the pond (weather permitting). One of the highlights of the

winter season will be the 15th Annual Winter Fun day at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area, Saturday, Jan. 28, featuring the popular Mush Larose Association sled dog races. Racing starts at 11 a.m.

A Family Day skate will also be held on the Back Pond on Monday, Feb. 20, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information on these, or any of the other CRCA winter recreation events, visit our page on Facebook, follow us on Twitter or visit [www.crca.ca/events](http://www.crca.ca/events)

You can also pull out pages 6 and 7 of this edition of Cat Tales, which contains the full event calendar for winter recreation activities as well as for Maple Madness festivities.

## TRAIL ETIQUETTE FOR SKIERS:

- Ski on the right hand side of the trail
- Ski single file, not side by side
- Give descending skiers the right of way
- Allow faster skiers to pass
- Do not obstruct trails or intersections
- Do not stop where you are not visible to oncoming skiers

## TRAIL ETIQUETTE FOR SNOWSHOEING AND WALKERS

- DO NOT walk, walk your dog or snowshoe on the groomed ski trails
- Please pick up after your pet
- Dogs must be leashed and under control at all times
- Step off the trail to allow skiers to pass

## Maple Madness Continues to Be A Spring Highlight for Area Families



For more than 30 years, thousands of visitors throughout the region flock to the sugar bush and CRCA Outdoor Centre at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston to take the tractor-drawn wagon ride back to the sugar shack, where they can explore the ages-old skill of turning maple sap into delicious sweet treats made from maple syrup and maple sugar as part of Maple Madness.

As with past years, the event runs through the entirety of the March Break week (including both weekends), which is March 11 to March 19, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day, as well as the weekends of March 25 and 26 and April 1 and 2.

Before heading back to the sugar bush, families with small children are encouraged to sit in on one of the free, fun and informative puppet shows that

happen in the Outdoor Centre. They take place each Saturday throughout Maple Madness, at 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 12 noon, 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. during March Break (Monday through Friday) they happen at 10 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2 p.m. and 2:30 p.m.

Tree Tapping demonstrations also take place each weekday of March Break, from March 13 to 17, continuously from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., as well as on each Sunday of Maple Madness, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The popular First Nations display shows how the original inhabitants of the Cataraqui region used to process maple syrup. Led by First Nations teacher Paul Carl, these education demonstrations take place each Saturday during Maple

Madness, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

On Saturday, March 18, the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation hosts its annual bake sale in the Outdoor Centre at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area as part of the Maple Madness festivities. All funds raised go to support CRCA conservation education programs.

On Saturday, April 1, you can try your hand at some 'old tyme' sugar bush chores as part of a special demonstration day. Visitors can try sawing logs with pioneer tools, emptying sap buckets and tapping trees like the 19th century settlers did. You can also see how maple taffy is made – with samples for sale for a donation.

For more information, visit our Facebook page, follow the [@CataraquiRCA](https://www.facebook.com/CataraquiRCA) on Twitter or go to [www.crca.ca/maple-madness](http://www.crca.ca/maple-madness)

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

## MAC JOHNSON WILDLIFE AREA

### SATURDAY SKATES

Saturdays in January and February  
Starting Saturday January 7  
(11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.)

Come out and enjoy a skate with your family and friends at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area on Saturdays in January and February. The Friends and community volunteers will be serving hot chocolate and coffee at the skating shelter (weather permitting).

### WINTER FUN DAY

Saturday, January 28  
(10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Enjoy the festivities at our 15th annual Winter Fun Day at Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Enjoy skating on the pond, cross-country skiing, free snowshoeing for children, lunch and refreshments. The dog sled races are back again this year by the Mush Larose Association, the race will start at 11:00a.m. Admission is just \$5.00 per car.

### FAMILY DAY SKATE

Monday, February 20  
(11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Join us for a special day of family activities. Bring out your skates and skis and skate on the pond or ski on the cross-country ski trails. The ice slide will be open. You can bring your lunch or buy something at the barbecue hosted by the Friends of Mac Johnson Wildlife Area.

### TICK INFORMATION SESSION

Saturday, April 29  
(2:00 p.m.)

Join CRCA staff and the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit for a presentation on ticks, Lyme disease and how to protect yourself while enjoying the great outdoors. The presentation will take place at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area Nature Centre.

### LITERACY NATURE WALK

Saturday, May 6  
(10:00 to 11:30 a.m.)

Join us for a literacy nature walk for parents and caregivers with children birth to 6 years of age. Meet in the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area parking lot (Debrugge Road entrance) at 9:45 a.m. to enjoy a nature walk experiencing literacy outdoors. Make sure to dress for the weather, bring a snack and older siblings are welcome. Washrooms available. To register please call the Ontario Early Years Centre toll free at 1-866-433-8933 x 2374. The nature literacy walk is in collaboration with the United Counties of Leeds & Grenville, the Ontario Early Years Centre and the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.

### MOTHER'S DAY TREE SALE

Saturday, May 13  
(11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)  
Centennial Road Entrance

Come out and support our annual spring tree sale just in time for Mother's Day. All trees and shrubs are native stock grown at the Mac Johnson Wildlife Area tree nursery. The sales takes place at the Centennial Road (south entrance) parking lot.

## LITTLE CATARAQUI CREEK CONSERVATION AREA

### WINTER ACTIVITIES

#### CROSS-COUNTRY SKI LESSONS

Learn how to ski or improve your technique. Cross-country ski lessons are offered on Saturdays from January 7 to February 25, weather permitting. Register in advance at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services), or on the day of the lesson, at the Outdoor Centre. Cost is \$20.00 per person. Group lessons are one-hour in length. Lesson times are 10:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

#### EQUIPMENT RENTALS

Cross-country skis, skates and snowshoes are available for rent at the Outdoor Centre. Rentals are available from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. All rentals must be returned by 4:00 p.m. Rental prices (including tax): set of cross-country skis, boots and poles \$17 snowshoes \$12, skates \$10.

#### ICE RINK RENTAL

Host your own evening skating party! Rink rental includes access to the warming huts. Call Shannon Fleming at (613) 546-4228 ext. 222 for more information or to make a booking.

#### OWL HOOT AND COYOTE HOWL HIKE

Saturday, January 14  
(6:30 p.m.)  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Bring your family out on a night walk to learn about owls and coyotes. We will not see these animals, but if we are lucky we might hear them. To ensure we have enough hike leaders for participants registration is required. Registration forms can be found online at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services). Cost is \$2 per person plus regular gate fee.

#### SKI WAXING CLINIC

Sunday, January 22  
(2:00 p.m.)

Join the Canadian Ski Patrol for this hands-on workshop on ski waxing. Learn all

about waxing techniques for different snow conditions. Bring your skis and waxing gear and think snow!

#### LITTLE CAT CLASSIC SKI RACE

Sunday, January 29

Register for each event 30 minutes before start time. (Registration fee is \$5.00 per person or \$10.00 per team.) The day's events include:

10:00 a.m. - Cross-Country Ski Loppets, 5 km or 10 km.

1:00 p.m. - Family Fun Relay, skate, snowshoe and ski.

This annual winter fun day is hosted by the Canadian Ski Patrol Frontenac Zone. Skis and snowshoes are available to rent at the Outdoor Centre.

#### WINTER SPORTS P.A. DAY

Friday, February 3  
(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)  
Ages 6 to 11  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Give your children an opportunity to have a P.A. Day full of winter adventure and fun. We'll be cross-country skiing on the trails and snowshoeing through the fields, forests and wetland areas of Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your lunch, snacks, drinks, and warm and extra clothes. The program will run regardless of the weather. We have alternate plans for interactive games and activities if there is not enough snow.

Cost is \$40.00 per child and includes equipment rentals. You must register in advance. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. Online registration is available or pick up a form at the Administration Office or Outdoor Centre. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

#### STARLIGHT SNOWSHOE HIKE

Saturday, February 11  
(6:30 p.m.)  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Join us for an easy snowshoe trek under the stars. Please register in advance as there is limited space. Registration forms can be found at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services) and registration will close on Friday, February 10 at 4:00 p.m.. Cost is \$12.00 per person for annual pass holders and \$17.50 for non-pass holders (this includes the gate fee and snowshoe rental). Please see the registration form for prices if you are bringing your own snowshoes. Hot chocolate and snacks will be available for purchase after the hike at the snack bar.

#### SNOWSHOE DEMONSTRATION

Sunday, February 19  
(2:00 to 4:00 p.m.)

Come out and try snowshoeing. It's fun and easy to do. No experience necessary. Trailhead staff will provide the snowshoes, a quick lesson and off you go! Remember if you can walk you can snowshoe.

#### FAMILY DAY SKATE

Monday, February 20  
(9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Bring the family out for a skate on Kingston's largest natural ice skating rink (weather permitting)! We'll have the fire going in the warming hut by the rink or you can drop by the Outdoor Centre for a cup of hot chocolate or coffee. Skate rentals will also be available at the Outdoor Centre.

#### MAPLE PA DAY PROGRAM

Friday, March 3  
(8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)  
Ages 6 to 11  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Give your children an opportunity to have a P.A. Day full of adventure and fun. Children ages 6 to 11 will get a chance to have a sneak peek at all the fun and flavourful activities that await in our sugar bush – before Maple Madness begins. Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. and the program runs until 4:30 p.m. Bring your lunch, snacks, drinks, and warm and extra clothes. The program will run regardless of the weather.

Cost is \$40.00 per child. You must register in advance. Space is limited for this popular program, so register early. Online registration is available or pick up a form at the Administration Office or Outdoor Centre. For more information call (613) 546-4228 ext. 251.

#### MAPLE MADNESS

March 11 to 19 (March Break)  
March 25 and 26  
April 1 and 2  
(9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

March means maple syrup at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. Take a tractor-drawn wagon back to our sugar bush to see how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Enjoy pancakes with real maple syrup and buy some maple syrup or sugar to take home.

The sugar bush is open from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. each day of the Maple Madness program. Be sure to check out some of our special activities like puppet shows, tree tapping demonstrations, our annual Bake Sale and Olde Thyme Sugar Bush Chores. Check our schedule below for the times and dates for these activities. You'll want to visit us more than once!

# OPENING 2017

## PUPPET SHOWS

Saturday, March 11  
(10:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m.,  
12:00 p.m., 12:30 p.m. and 1:00 p.m.)

Take in one of our fun puppet shows geared towards the whole family. Meet some of our new and favourite puppet friends that share with us the secrets of the sugar bush.

## FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY

Saturday, March 11  
(10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

Join Paul Carl for an interactive presentation at our First Nations maple syrup display in the sugar bush. Paul will explain how his ancestors harvested and used sweet water in ceremonies to make maple syrup and sugar.

## TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS

Sunday, March 12

Visit our self-guided displays in the sugar bush and learn about sweet water. See how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Be sure to visit our tapping demonstrations from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. learn how to identify a sugar maple tree, measure it and use a brace and bit hand drill to practice your tapping skills on a log.

## PUPPET SHOWS

Monday, March 13 to Friday, March 17  
(Daily at 10:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m.  
11:30 a.m. 1:00 p.m., 1:30 p.m., 2:00 p.m.  
and 2:30 p.m.)

Take in one of our fun puppet shows geared towards the whole family. Meet some of our new and favourite puppet friends that share with us the secrets of the sugar bush. There are daily puppet shows from Monday through Friday during the March Break.

## TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS

Monday, March 13 to Friday, March 17

Visit our self-guided displays in the sugar bush and learn about sweet water. See how maple syrup was made in the olden days and how we make it now. Be sure to visit our tapping demonstrations from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Learn how to identify a sugar maple tree, measure it and use a brace and bit hand drill to practice your tapping skills on a log.

## FOUNDATION BAKE SALE

Saturday, March 18

Pick up some sweet treats at the annual Catarauqui Conservation Foundation Bake Sale at the Outdoor Centre. All proceeds from the bake sale support the Catarauqui Region Conservation Authority's Conservation Education School Programs.

## PUPPET SHOWS AND FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY

Saturday, March 18

See Saturday, March 11 for details.

## TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS

Sunday, March 19

See Sunday, March 12 for details.

## PUPPET SHOWS AND FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY

Saturday, March 25

See Saturday, March 11 for details.

## TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS

Sunday, March 26

See Sunday, March 12 for details.

## PUPPET SHOWS AND FIRST NATIONS DISPLAY

Saturday, April 1

See Saturday, March 11 for details.

## OLDE TYME SUGAR BUSH CHORES & MAPLE TAFFY DEMONSTRATION

Try your hand at some "olde tyme" sugar bush chores today. You can try log sawing, emptying sap buckets and tapping trees. You can also see how maple taffy is made – samples will be available for a donation.

## TREE TAPPING DEMONSTRATIONS

Sunday, April 2

See Sunday, March 12 for details.

## SPRING ACTIVITIES

### SALAMANDERS AND SNAKES

Sunday, April 9  
(2:00 p.m.)

Salamander conservationist Matt Ellerbeck (aka The Salamander Man), and reptile educator Kenny Ruelland will be giving a special presentation on salamanders, snakes and more as part of their Reptile and Amphibian Advocacy Project. Come out and see live species, both local and exotic.

### THE ONTARIO HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT

Sunday, April 16  
(2:00 p.m.)

Join Stephen Kapusta and learn about the Ruby Throated hummingbird, its migration in Ontario, planning and planting a successful hummingbird garden and about Stephen's work with the project over the past decade. Presentation takes place at 2:00 p.m. in the Outdoor Centre at Little Catarauqui Creek Conservation Area.

## EARTH DAY CELEBRATIONS

Saturday, April 22  
(2:00 p.m.)

Gather with Paul Carl to cleanse your mind and body and offer good thoughts for Mother Earth. By smudging we allow the smoke to rise into Father Sky and ask that the Eagle take those thoughts to the creator for a healthier Mother Earth and all of our relations on her.

Full Moon Puppetry Troupe will be presenting a shadow puppet show about a brave mouse who journeys to the far-away land. Along the way, the mouse helps many animals in need. Full Moon Puppetry Troupe is comprised of students from Mulberry Waldorf School's Grade 7/8 class who volunteer their time to share the ancient art of shadow puppetry with our community. The students meet on the weekends to learn new stories, to make the puppets, and to practice together.

## TRAILSONG

Sunday, April 23  
(2:00 p.m.)

Trailsong: Join Young Choristers Limestone, Kingston Area Choir and the Mulberry Waldorf School Choir, both under the direction of Margaret Moncrieff, as we hike around Trail 1 on Sunday, April 23 at 2 p.m. We will continue Earth Day celebrations by bringing music to the trail. The choirs will present several songs at different spots along the trail and there will also be opportunities for all hikers to join in singing a couple of songs!

## TICK INFORMATION SESSION

Sunday, April 30  
(2:00 p.m.)

Join CRCA staff and the Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox & Addington Public Health for a presentation on ticks, Lyme disease and how to protect yourself while enjoying the great outdoors. The presentation will take place in the Outdoor Centre at the Little Catarauqui Creek Conservation Area.

## FROG NIGHT HIKE

Saturday May 6  
(6:30 p.m.)  
REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Bring everyone in the family out to our annual frog hike. You'll learn about the different frogs that live at Little Catarauqui Creek and go on a short walk to listen for frog calls. To ensure we have enough hike leaders to participants registration is required. Registration forms can be found online at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services). Cost is \$2 per person plus regular gate fee.

## LAKE MONITORING

Sunday, May 28  
(2:00 p.m.)

Join CRCA staff to learn about our watershed monitoring activities and how we determine the health of the lakes in our jurisdiction. We will also be unveiling our new Catarauqui Region Lake Assessment Reports that provide basic lake information and define their health and resilience.

## NATURE EXPLORERS CAMP

Little Catarauqui Creek Conservation Area  
(Ages 6 to 11, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.)

Based at Little Catarauqui Creek Conservation Area, campers experience the great outdoors through our fun nature-inspired theme weeks, outdoor activities, hands-on experience, and a weekly guest speaker. For two days a week, campers get loads of time to swim, play on the beach and explore Gould Lake Conservation Area.

Cost is \$195 per week. Camp runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday. Before and after care is available for \$25 per week from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Registration is required and forms will be online early in the new year at [www.crca.ca/online-services](http://www.crca.ca/online-services).

## LEMOINE POINT CONSERVATION AREA

### SPRING CLEAN-UP DAY

Saturday, April 29  
(9:00 a.m. to Noon)

Come out and help the Friends of Lemoine Point give the Conservation Area a good spring cleaning. Volunteers will be in both parking lots handing out gloves and garbage bags to people who want to participate in the clean-up.

### SPRING TREE PLANTING

Saturday, May 6  
(9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.)

Our annual spring tree planting will take place at Lemoine Point Conservation Area. Meet at the north parking lot (Coverdale Drive) to help plant trees. Bring your shovel, work gloves and your energy. For more information call Peter at (613) 389-4187 or Rick at (613) 389-3651.

### NATIVE PLANT SALE

Saturday, May 20  
(9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.)

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.

# Cataraqui Region was still in a Drought Scenario as Winter Approached



It was the news story of the summer and fall as far as the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority, its member municipal partners and residents were concerned: the drought. The lack of rain was the lead story in the previous edition of Cat Tales and continues to create headlines – and headaches – for folks living within the CRCA jurisdiction.

As of the writing of this article, in early December, officials with the Cataraqui Region Water Response Team had deemed that the region was still in a moderate drought situation, downgrading it on Nov. 15 from severe where it had been for much of the summer and fall. That action came about after there was a significant amount of rainfall in mid-October helping stream flows and groundwater to rise to levels where supply was barely meeting demand. At this level, officials still recommend that water users practice conservation with at least a 20 per cent reduction in normal usage. As recently as Nov. 2, the ‘severe’ tag was still in place.

When the drought was in the severe range, it meant that there wasn’t enough water to meet demand, as many farmers

and rural residents could attest to as their wells ran dry. Farms throughout the Cataraqui Watershed were forced to truck in water from elsewhere, at the cost of time, energy and money, to provide a bare minimum of moisture for their crops and livestock. For some, even with the drop from the severe to moderate designation, this challenge remains.

So it’s no wonder that one of the most popular Christmas songs this year could prove to be Let it Snow, because it’s going to take significant precipitation to help raise water levels, and subsequently drop the drought warning down to further, and perhaps remove the warnings altogether. The downside is, if there isn’t a significant amount of precipitation, the warning could be upgraded to severe again.

According to Sean Watt, the Water Resources Engineer for the CRCA, throughout November our region experienced about 50 per cent of the normal level of precipitation, with much of that coming in the form of snow. Thankfully the snow melted, adding to the water table. If we get a lot of snow

but it doesn’t melt, it doesn’t really help water levels much.

Stream levels rose with the rain and melting snow in November, but are still only between 30 to 50 per cent of normal levels for the time of year. Groundwater levels are faring better thanks to the precipitation with levels approaching normal for the time of year. Watt said that inland lake levels are close to where they normally are, but that may be due more to the fact that there is less evaporation because of the cooler temperatures. Lake Ontario is down about 10 to 15 cm below the norm for November, but Watt believes that this is not too far out of the ordinary and should be improved with rain forecast for early December.

“The forecast is similar to what’s been happening over the last number of months. The current three-month forecast is for above normal temperatures and normal to below normal precipitation. Otherwise, I keep hearing about us having a ‘normal’ winter. Much of the media is picking up on predictions calling for a bad winter, or a snowy winter, and I do think extra

snow may be in store for those in lake-effect snow areas owing to warmer than normal temperatures in the Great Lakes. But the probably won’t affect us too much in that Cataraqui Region,” Watt said.

So for the time being, The Water Response Team continues to recommend water conservation for businesses, institutions and individuals throughout the region, especially those areas which are supplied by a ground water well or shore well. For conservation information, visit <http://crca.ca/education/publications-resources/resources-for-wise-water-use>.

And if you are a well owner experiencing difficulties with your water levels, we ask that you contact the CRCA at 613-546-4228 or 1-977-956-2722 ext. 241 or fill in the survey on our website at [www.crca.ca/drought](http://www.crca.ca/drought).

The Cataraqui Region Water Response Team is made up of water managers, major water users, public health, agriculture, school boards, marina operators, golf courses, government agencies, dam operators and others as well as representatives from the CRCA.



# Do Kingston's Wastewater Treatment Plants Prevent Microplastics from Entering our Watershed?



PHOTO BY: ALLEN LUCAS 2015  
Red microplastics found in toothpaste and white ones from shower soap

**By Allen Lucas, Manager, Research and Projects Office, Utilities Kingston**

Some things that get flushed are not always easily seen. A recent area of study is the impact of microplastics found in common household products such as body washes and toothpaste. Microplastics are defined as plastic particles smaller than 5.0 mm.

Public concern arises from the fact that these microplastics can end up in our watershed and harm the ecosystem. Researchers and media often generalize that wastewater treatment plants – because they're not specifically designed to remove these particles - must be the source of the problem.

To find out if microplastics are released from the Ravensview Wastewater Treatment Plant into the St. Lawrence River, in 2015/16 we partnered on a study with Queen's

University's Technology, Engineering and Management (TEAM) program.

TEAM is a multidisciplinary project course offered by the Department of Chemical Engineering that links fourth-year students (arts, science, engineering, law, commerce and business) with industries seeking additional consulting resources. Four chemical engineering students accepted the challenge.

Over the period of one month, TEAM took representative samples from treated wastewater at Ravensview before the discharge point to the St. Lawrence River. They tested samples for the presence of microplastics.

The main conclusion: there is no significant presence of microplastics in the effluent being discharged from Ravensview to the St. Lawrence. In

other words, the treatment process is effective in removing these particles.

The research team recommended further assessment, investigating alternate processes for sample collection and analyzing the raw wastewater entering the plant.

While microbeads have been banned from most products, we remain concerned that they could enter wastewater from other sources, such as degrading plastics disposed into the sewers, from washing synthetic materials and even older toiletries that may still be in use.

For this reason, we continue to look for opportunities to identify the presence of microplastics in wastewater and ensure the treatment processes in place are effective.

[www.UtilitiesKingston.com](http://www.UtilitiesKingston.com)

There are many household products that should never be flushed down the toilet or poured down the drain - despite what the packaging might tell you.

Common offenders include wipes, fats, oils and greases, feminine hygiene products, pharmaceuticals, needles, dental floss and hair.

Flushing these products can cause sewage back-ups in your home and clog wastewater treatment equipment. Protect your home and health: learn more at [UtilitiesKingston.com/KnowWhatToFlush](http://UtilitiesKingston.com/KnowWhatToFlush)

# Marginal farmland becomes vibrant forest

Article courtesy of  
Forests Ontario

From their country-side home near Kingston, Ontario, artists Meg and Maury Breslow overlook their legacy – where there was once marginal farmland, thousands of trees grow tall on their 18-acre parcel of land that is flourishing into a verdant forest. Maury first purchased the property in 1975, after joining the faculty at Queen's School of Drama, where he met Meg, who teaches singing at the Kingston School of Music. Maury spent most weekends those following few years tackling various home renovation projects, however this planting project has proven to be his most adventuresome endeavour yet.

Planting through the Ontario government's 50 Million Tree Program offered the Breslows an affordable option to re-green their property. Without it, Maury says, "it would have been very expensive, especially since we have almost 14,000 trees out there! Without the financial assistance from the 50 Million Tree Program, it would have cost significantly more money to plant trees on our property."

This fall, the couple will be recognized as Green Leaders for their commitment to re-greening Ontario's landscapes. The Green Leader program recognizes private landowners whose stewardship efforts have significantly contributed to enhancing forest cover in the province.

The couple began planting trees on their property when they first heard of the 50 Million Tree Program and since 2008, the Breslows have planted 13,400 seedlings: 2,400 in the first year, 4,000 in 2009 and a total of 7,000 in 2010, featuring a variety of tree species, including white pine, Norway spruce, red oak, bur oak and white spruce.

"It has been a pleasure working with such a wonderful couple as Meg and Maury, who have shown sincere commitment and concern for the environment over the years. They truly deserve the recognition," says Rick Knapton, Forestry Technician with the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority.

As the lead delivery agent of the government of Ontario's 50 Million Tree Program, Forests Ontario works with partners across the province to connect



landowners, like the Breslows, with experienced forestry professionals who help manage the planting process and reduce the amount of effort and cost that is required by the landowners. In all, the couple credit their successful planting experience to their partnership with Knapton who has been involved in the planting process since their first year and nominated the couple as Green Leaders.

"It pleased us, the idea that we would be putting trees in the environment and letting the fields go back to nature," says Maury. For years, the arts-loving couple have also been fond of bird-watching and have kept record of up to 103 species that frequent their property. "Sometimes when we're out in the rows we find nests in the spruce," says Meg with excitement. Indeed, trees offers multiple ecological benefits including the expansion of wildlife habitat, the sequestration of atmospheric carbon, cleaner air, water and soil, and opportunities to get outside and enjoy nature.

Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, Kathryn McGarry commends their success.

"Our forests have profound importance on our health and well-being, and Meg and Maury's outstanding efforts serve as a positive example for landowners across Ontario. Every

year more and more organizations and individuals are working with us to achieve our goal of planting 50 million trees in southern Ontario, making our communities greener, healthier and fighting the threat of climate change."

The Breslows' children, Max and Mimi, who visit time and again, are deeply thankful to have grown up in the beauty of the countryside. In fact, when Maury moved to Kingston in 1973 that was all he had hoped for. Nearly 45 years later the couple are leaving a lasting legacy not only to their children, but for the community and province as a whole.

"I would like to commend the Breslows for their significant contribution to re-greening Ontario's landscapes through the 50 Million Tree Program. Their efforts are a testament to the importance of our forests which are vital to the social, economic and environmental health of our province," says Rob Keen, CEO of Forests Ontario.

Meg and Maury look forward to watching their forest flourish in the coming years with the ongoing assistance of the Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority. Periodic site visits and survival assessments are also conducted to ensure the future success of their forest.

To learn more about the 50 Million

Tree Program visit: [forestsontario.ca/50MTP](http://forestsontario.ca/50MTP), or contact Rick Knapton, Forestry Technician for the CRCA at [rknapton@crca](mailto:rknapton@crca).

## There is still time to arrange for spring tree planting

Interested in planting trees on your property? There is still time to order trees for spring 2017 planting. The CRCA offers a tree planting program to rural landowners in our watershed on a cost sharing basis. We deliver reforestation programs in partnership with Trees Ontario and the Ministry of Natural Resources. You must have a minimum of 1 hectare of land to qualify for this program.

Landowners can also order trees with us and do the planting themselves. There is a minimum order of 500 seedlings and individual species can be ordered in multiples of 50. Group orders are welcome. Get together with your neighbours and plant some trees!

## - FOUNDATION NEWS -

## Get to know our new board members

**JULIE SOINI**

Julie Soini has been an Ontario certified teacher since 1999. She taught in Northern Ontario and in the GTA before moving to Kingston in 2009. For several years she taught Grades 7 and 8 at École secondaire publique Mille-Îles, Kingston's French-as-a-frist language secondary school. Julie now teaches Mathematics and Science in Grades 9 and 10 at Mille-Îles, an IB Middle Years Program accredited school.

As an educator and mother of two wonderful boys, she understands the importance of the conservation of our natural resources and of spreading this message to a greater audience. She wants to be more involved in her community

and set a positive example for her children and her students. Having enjoyed many activities at Little Cataraqui Conservation Area, including field trips with her students, many Maple Madnesses and even a wedding, it holds a special place in her heart. She really looks forward to meeting and working with the other members of the Cataraqui Conservation Foundation.

**SCOTT STONESS**

Scott Stoness spent his formative years frolicking in the Collin's Creek watershed, and from an early age understood first-hand the incredible benefits of access to relatively unspoiled nature and biodiversity in an urban or suburban

environment.

His undergraduate studies at Queen's University in computer science and linguistics did little to directly further this appreciation, and the pressures of his studies and the attractions of the dim glow of the monitors in basement computer labs may have led to a slight bloating and unnatural pallor. A love of nature was rekindled with a move to Vancouver for graduate work in Computational Linguistics at Simon Fraser University thanks to access to the splendour of parks, wetland trails and mountain streams in Port Moody, Burnaby, and North Vancouver. Eventually, Mr. Stoness ended up in an adjunct teaching position at the Groton Point (Marine

Sciences) campus of the University of Connecticut, guiding students through an Introduction to Mathematical Modelling and the Environment, helping a colleague with a project looking at the history of biodiversity of the New England fisheries, and steeping himself in the glories of the Long Island Sound estuary.

Scott is currently a web developer in Kingston where he lives with his beautiful and intelligent wife Julie (who approved this biography), two school-aged children who have both enjoyed Maple Madness at Little Cat, and zero dogs. He is looking forward to an opportunity to give back to the conservation movement and help preserve urban watersheds, biodiversity, and "pretty birdies" for future generations.

**Foundation Happenings:**

The Foundation will once again have delicious baked goods and other treats for sale at the Foundation Bake Sale on the second Saturday of Maple Madness, March 18. We hope that you will drop by to see us at the Outdoor Centre when you come to the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area.

The no-carbon Forever Green Gala has arrived. You have been used to receiving our annual fall gala invitation for many years. This year the Foundation is making a temporary change which we feel reflects the goals of our Foundation and is in keeping with current environmental concerns. This year you can participate in the "no-carbon gala" by making a donation at the value of our traditional gala ticket

(\$100 per person or \$200 per couple). No driving, no energy used cooking the meal or providing the feed for the protein on the menu and many other carbon "savings." Of course, your generous donation will be fully recognized with a charitable receipt. Gala proceeds support the CRCA outdoor education programs. With your generous help, we anticipate that more than 7,000 young people will benefit from carefully planned and professionally delivered activities, linked to provincial curriculum guidelines, both at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area in Kingston and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area in Brockville. To make a donation, or for more information, please visit [www.cataraquiconservationfoundation.org](http://www.cataraquiconservationfoundation.org).

**Nature Programs**

The CRCA offers Nature Programs for both early learners (ages 2 to 5) and home learners (ages 6 to 11) at Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area. We still have spaces available in the nature programs for both early learners and home learners running in the winter wonderland of January and February as well as the spring awakenings of April and May.

To make a program booking email [educate@crca.ca](mailto:educate@crca.ca) or call 613 546-4228 ext. 251. For more program descriptions visit our website at: [www.crca.ca](http://www.crca.ca).

**Teachers, book your education program today**

Our fall 2016 outdoor and environmental education programs at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area were a great success. Thanks to the beautiful autumn weather, students ranging from preschool to secondary grades took part in a variety of our fall programs.

Spaces are still available for our winter, maple and spring programs based at the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area and Mac Johnson Wildlife Area. Our programs are connected to the curriculum and will help to enrich your class experience with hands-on, outdoor learning and nature connection. You are encouraged to share the cost of the bus and bring a second class and make a day of it by eating lunch at our conservation areas. You may choose to do the same program(s) or opt for different ones.

In January and February, get your students outdoors to experience winter at its finest. We have excellent snowshoeing and cross-country skiing opportunities as well as a natural skating rink. No snow... don't worry, we've got it covered with learning about winter survival through our *Winter Survivors* program (Grades 4-6), or take part in our famous *Instincts for Survival* Program (Grade 4- up). Consider having your class navigate around our trails with our Mapping Tree-sure Hunt, *Mapping It Out!* or our *Orienteering:*

*Map and Compass and Taking a Bearing* Programs (Grades 7 – 9). We even have *Kinderscience in Winter* for the kinders and *Nature in Winter* (Grades 1 -2). Our programs are adaptable to any kind of winter weather that comes our way.

In March, visit the Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area's interactive sugar bush and experience how syrup was made long ago and how it is made today. Students from kindergarten to Grade 2 experience the sugar bush through sensory exploration. Grade 3 students discover how the early settlers learned all about sugaring off from the First Nations. Grade 4 to 7 students have the opportunity to put their math skills to work on a practical level in our *Maple Math* program.

From April to June, you and your students have excellent opportunities to discover spring awakenings through adventures in our forests with our *Kinderscience in Spring* or *Secrets of Spring* programs or marsh dip-netting by taking part in our *Marsh Mysteries (JK- 2)*, *Home Sweet Home: Habitat Adventure (Grade 4)*, *Biodiversity Bonanza (Grade 6)* or *Wetland Conservation (Grade 9)* programs. As well as any of our map reading curriculum-connected programs (Grades 1 – 9) and the *Instincts for Survival!* (Grades 4 and up) just to mention a handful of our programs.

## CRCA To Begin Issuing Special Lake Reports for the Region

Without a doubt, one of the defining features of the Cataraqui Region, particularly in the northern portion of the watershed, is the wonderful abundance of lakes. With more than 200 of these water bodies within the CRCA's jurisdiction, they are a significant source of habitat, recreational opportunities and drinking water.

Those living near or visiting these lakes often have questions about water quality, fishing opportunities, and where they can be accessed by boats, canoes, kayaks, etc. For both part time and permanent residents of these lakes, the interest in maintaining healthy lake environments is growing, with residents beginning to play a more active role in reporting anomalies such as algae blooms, taking water samples and surveying habitat and local species – including keeping an eye out for invasive species.

As a way of helping to inform members of the public, CRCA staff members are currently developing a Regional Lake Assessment Report intended for local residents, cottagers, scientists, lake managers, local governments, interested groups, and the general public, which will become available online once finalized. It will include background information on how



a lake functions, monitoring techniques to assess lake health, standards and guidelines for water quality parameters, and summarized results (e.g. total phosphorus trends) for 50 lakes within the CRCA region. The Report will consist of four main themes: nutrients, water quality, invasive species, and acidification. Additional supplementary information will include documents detailing invasive species within the Cataraqui Region, shoreline protection, and aquatic phenomenon you might see

in a lake environment (i.e. foam, pollen mats etc.).

As part of the report, individual lake summary sheets are in development for the 50 lakes based on data availability. These summary reports include information such as lake statistics, maps, lake characteristics (i.e. water level), vulnerability to current stressors, water quality results from 2009-2015, and aquatic diversity. Data for these documents were collected from a variety of sources including the Ministry

of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), MOECC, Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), Queen's University, and local Lake Associations.

The goal of the Report is to provide awareness of general lake health, the importance of monitoring and evaluating, current data gaps, and answer questions about the region's local lake environment. In the future, this document will be updated at regular intervals to account for new information and local interest on additional topics.

## Source Water Protection Update

After a lot of hard work, research, collaboration and negotiation, the Cataraqui Source Protection Plan was approved by the provincial government and came into effect on April 1, 2015.

The plan is an important part of the provincial strategy to ensure the ongoing monitoring of drinking water at its source in order to ensure it is safe and viable for all users, and that policies are in place to ensure compliance, remediation and ongoing testing where there are issues. The policies are understandably strict, the requirements rigid, with firm deadlines for testing, reporting and issuing recommendations.

Under the auspices of the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority (CPSA), the plan brings together the pertinent provincial ministries, municipal governments, public health units and other implementation bodies to form a united front to help preserve, protect

and enhance our drinking water at its source.

Over the first year of the plan (April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016) CRCA source water staff reported that all the mandatory policies mentioned above were put in place and that progress was made in a variety of areas. [A detailed breakdown of the report can be found at [www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca](http://www.cleanwatercataraqui.ca).]

The report summarizes source water protection implementation efforts under the Cataraqui Source Water Plan and the Clean Water Act (2006) including the current status of work being done by the various implementation bodies, municipal agencies, public health units and provincial bodies throughout the region.

CPSA officials believe the plan has solid 'buy-in' from the various partners and progress is being made on a number of key fronts, but that there is still much to be done.

