

# 2024

## ANNUAL REPORT



Rideau Valley  
Conservation  
Foundation



## About the RVCF

**FOUNDED IN 1970**, the RVCF is a registered charity led by a dedicated volunteer board of directors. Your donation to the RVCF directly supports conservation initiatives that restore habitats, expand green spaces, enhance water quality and promote outdoor education.

**Mission:** The Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation is a registered environmental charity working to help protect and conserve the lands and waters of the valley of the Rideau River in Eastern Ontario.

**Vision:** For a thriving watershed with clean abundant water, natural shorelines, rich forests and wetlands, diverse habitat and sustainable land use that is valued and protected by all.

### RVCF Board of Directors

- Andrew Harkness, Chair
- Tom Scott, Vice Chair
- Jason W. M. Kelly, Past Chair
- John Batson
- Reginald Evans
- Allison Gibbons
- Olivia Gregoire
- Gary Howard
- Mark Mortimer
- Jake Rice
- Kathy Thomas

### Support Team

Diane Downey, Executive Director

Kathy Dallaire, Secretary-Treasurer

Marissa Grondin, Executive Assistant

Cover photo: The Rideau River  
at Burritts Rapids

# Letter from the Chair

Dear Friends,

As we reflect on another year, I am deeply grateful for the incredible community that continues to support our conservation mission. This year in particular marks the culmination of years of hard work as we paved the way for major capital projects and meaningful program delivery across the watershed. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of staff, board members and supporters like you.

A major highlight was the completion and opening of the Accessible Bridge and Education Platforms at Baxter Conservation Area. This project represents a significant step toward making nature accessible to all, and we are incredibly proud of this achievement. We look forward to continuing this journey with you as we move into Phase II, which will focus on the construction of accessible trails and boardwalks at Baxter.

We were also thrilled to increase support for outdoor education subsidies for schools, students, and families who face financial barriers. These subsidies ensure that all young people, regardless of their background, can connect with nature, learn about conservation and develop a lifelong appreciation for the environment. It's an investment not only in their education but in the future stewardship of our watershed.

We also welcomed another 80 hectares of natural lands into our care this year, further advancing our mission to preserve vital ecosystems for future generations. A heartfelt thank you to those who have donated land and to those who contribute to our endowment funds, ensuring that we can protect these lands in perpetuity.

None of this would have been possible without your ongoing support – through donations, volunteer hours, or expertise. Together, we're ensuring cleaner water, healthier habitats, and a more sustainable future for generations to come. Thank you for being part of this important work.

Yours in conservation,



**Andrew Harkness**  
RVCF Chair





## 2024 Highlights

# Celebrating Our Success

We appreciate your continued trust and support of the RVCF. Your commitment to funding programs and projects helps protect our beautiful watershed, both now and for future generations. Here's a glimpse of what we've accomplished together in 2024:

- Celebrated opening of boardwalk bridge and education platforms thanks to funding from Canada's Community Revitalization Fund, City of Ottawa Rural Community Building Grant, RVCA support and many generous donors.
- Launched Phase II fundraising and began construction of 950 meters of accessible boardwalk and trails at the Baxter Conservation Area.
- Welcomed a generous donation of 80 hectares, securing the long-term protection of forests, lake shorelines and Provincially Significant Wetlands.
- Secured funds from the Federal Environment and Climate Change Canada Challenge Fund and other private donors to support the acquisition of conservation land.
- Protected 3,463 hectares (8,556 acres) of conservation land throughout the Rideau watershed.
- Continued the acquisition of local natural lands thanks to ongoing funding support from Modern Niagara, which has allowed us to acquire 994 acres and secure easements on 460 acres during four years of partnership. This effort has helped sequester 350,767 tonnes of carbon so far.
- Facilitated two Planned Giving workshops focused on estate planning and land donations. A special thank you to IG Wealth Management and Kelly Santini LLP for generously sharing their expertise in financial and estate planning.
- Secured funding to enhance the shoreline buffer on conservation land. Thanks to TD Friends of the Environment, 1,000 native shrubs and trees will be planted in 2025.
- Continued partnership with Hulse, Playfair and McGarry to plant 1,500 trees seedlings annually.
- Planted 508 memorial and special occasion trees in tribute of loved ones.
- Welcomed back returning Carbon Neutral individuals, businesses and events including Capital Pyro, LiVE 88.5, Elephant Print, Greek Fest Ottawa, McCooeye Wealth Management – Mandeville Private Client Inc., Somersault Events and Velofix Ottawa.
- Celebrated the installation of the Baxter Story Trail made possible thanks to TD Friends of the Environment





**ABOVE** Nature For All chair Mike Nemesvary, middle, officially opens Baxter's new accessible bridge and education platforms in June 2024.

- Assisted the Nature for All Committee in implementing accessibility projects at Baxter Conservation Area.
- Raised more than \$84,000 to reduce or eliminate bus and registration fees for priority schools attending outdoor education programs at Foley and Baxter Conservation Areas. Special thanks to the RAM Foundation, BOGS Outdoor Fund, North Face, Norman Lapoint, Ottawa Community Foundation, and supporters of the Don Maciver Memorial Fund for their continued commitment.
- Helped families in need participate in Forest School programming at Baxter and Foley Mountain Conservation Areas.



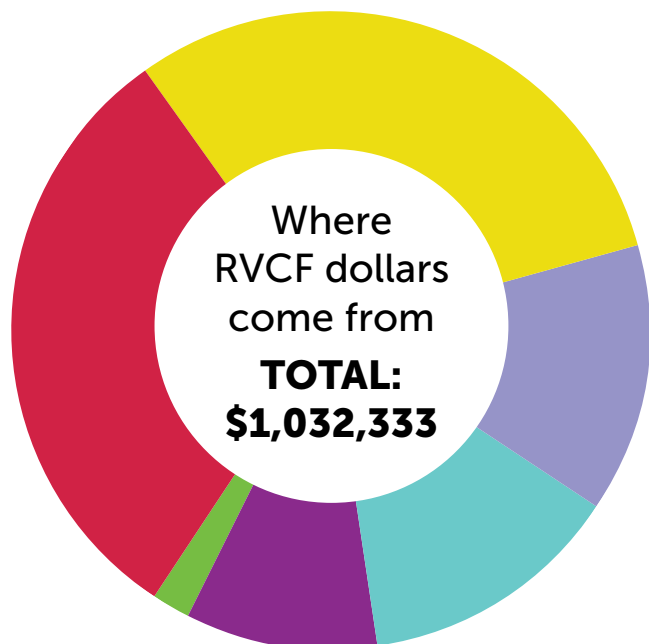
**ABOVE** Baxter's Andrea Wood (left) and RVCF's Executive Director Diane Downey (right), join TD Bank's Joshua Cayer at Baxter's new permanent Storybook Trail.

**BELOW** RVCF Board Chair Andrew Harkness accepts a tree planting donation from the Fo Guang Shan Temple.



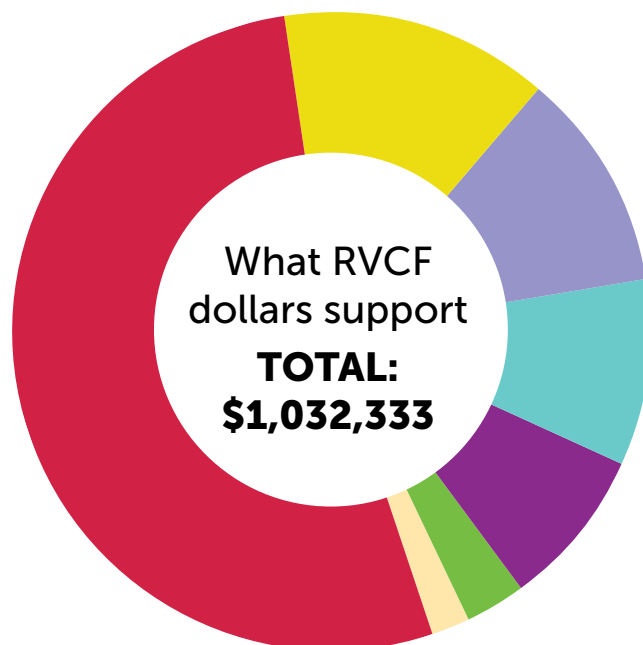
- Supported community science, invasive species removal and garbage clean ups along Ottawa's Graham Creek with special funding from the Danbe Foundation and Accora Village
- Earned the continued confidence of several land development companies who use the Foundation's Species at Risk Compensation Program services to compensate for the unavoidable loss of butternut or barn swallow, bobolink and meadowlark habitat during their business activities. We are currently managing 40 projects.

## Financials



Government Funding	\$319,513
Partnership Agreements	\$314,661
Donations	\$142,852
In-kind donation	\$135,000
Interest/Investment Income	\$101,377
Other	\$18,930

Land Acquisition	\$546,675
Restoration Stewardship	\$140,816
Future Projects	\$115,098
Endowment Funds	\$96,162
Outdoor Education	\$84,247
Species at Risk	\$30,481
Conservation Lands	\$18,854





# Make a difference today!

Wondering how you can help? Below are some high-priority projects that need your support. Every donation, no matter the size, brings us one step closer to a healthier, more vibrant watershed community. Together, we can make a lasting impact!

## Steve Simmering Conservation Land Endowment Fund:

The RVCF protects over 3,463 hectares (8,556 acres) of natural spaces, improving our collective well-being and safeguarding us from climate change. A donation to the Steve Simmering Conservation Lands Endowment Fund helps maintain these areas, ensuring their benefits for years to come.

## Out to Learn! Outdoor Education Support:

No child should miss out on the benefits of outdoor education. Your donation helps provide opportunities for disadvantaged children by covering scholarships, transportation, and educational materials, fostering curiosity and environmental stewardship.

## Nature for All at Baxter Conservation Area:

We are committed to making the outdoors accessible and welcoming for all. By supporting Nature for All, you help ensure everyone can enjoy the physical and emotional benefits of nature, regardless of age or ability.

## Memorial and Special Occasion Tree Planting Programs:

Trees are planted in honour of loved ones or to celebrate milestones such as birthdays and weddings. These native Canadian trees, such as white cedar, white pine, red oak, and sugar maple, offer lasting environmental benefits and create a meaningful legacy.

Visit [rvcf.ca](https://rvcf.ca) to discover these initiatives and other meaningful ways you can support local conservation efforts.



[rvcf.ca](https://rvcf.ca)

## Donor Milestones

We recognize the following donors who have reached new cumulative giving milestones in 2024:

- **Patrons (\$100,000+)**  
Linda Gillespie, LiVE 88.5
- **Sponsors (\$25,000 to \$99,999)**  
Ottawa Community Foundation, RAM Foundation
- **Benefactors (\$5,000 to \$24,999)**  
Barbara Crook & Dan Greenberg, The Danbe Foundation
- **Supporters (\$1,000 to \$4,999)**  
Amazon YOW, Capital Pyrotechnics, Marina Darthenay, Ecivda Financial Planning Boutique, Heather Maciver, Iain Maciver, Peter & Liane Smith, Upper Rideau Lake Association, Katie Wallace
- **Friends (\$500 to \$999)**  
49 Solutions, Katharine Anderson, Aspire Wealth Group, Canadian Online Giving Foundation Donors, Laurence Davidson, Cory Dignard, Tom & Joyce Scott, U24B6 Solutions Ltd., United Way Centraide Canada, Patricia Yaterick

For a complete list of our valued donors, visit our digital donor board at [rvcf.ca/supporters](https://rvcf.ca/supporters) or in person at 3889 Rideau Valley Drive in Manotick.

## Thank you to all our generous donors!



**Accredited**  
**IMAGINE CANADA**

The RVCF is proudly accredited under Imagine Canada's Standards Program, having demonstrated excellence in board governance, financial accountability and transparency, ethical fundraising, staff management and volunteer involvement.

RVCF is also a proud and practicing member of both the Ontario and Canada Land Trust Alliances.





Rideau Valley  
Conservation  
Foundation

**Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation**

Box 599, 3889 Rideau Valley Drive

Manotick, ON K4M 1A5

613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504

[www.rvcf.ca](http://www.rvcf.ca)



RideauValleyConservationFoundation



RVCFoundation