

# SOUTH NATION CONSERVATION

## 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

SOUTH NATION RIVER,  
SPENCERVILLE

# 2017 YEAR IN REVIEW

## ST. LAWRENCE RIVER STUDENT SUMMIT

### Providing Opportunities for Students to Experience their Local Environment

In partnership with Ontario's Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, South Nation Conservation (SNC) hosted nearly 100 Specialist High Skills Major students for the inaugural St. Lawrence River Student Summit during October.

The three-day Summit featured a range of environmental, leadership and educational programming, including: invasive species removal, water quality testing, an indigenous sunrise ceremony, and a boat cruise along the St. Lawrence River.

Student teams were tasked with delivering innovative pitches on how to solve problems related to the loss of riparian habitat to a panel of Great Lakes decision-makers at the end of the Summit.

In any given year, SNC reaches over 4,000 youth through hands-on environmental education programs in Eastern Ontario. Guided by SNC's environmental specialists, youth learn about a range of conservation topics.



*Student Team at St. Lawrence River Student Summit Pitch Session at Fort Henry in Kingston*



## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT INVESTS ONE MILLION DOLLARS IN TECHNOLOGY TO HELP MANAGE RISKS

### Protecting Communities with Science

With Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's financial support, SNC is developing state-of-the-art technology in predictive watershed modelling.

The model will enhance existing Flood Forecasting and Warning and Low Water Response programs, allowing SNC to provide more advanced, accurate notice for flood events so that farmers, municipalities, and residents can prepare accordingly.

*Predictive watershed monitoring equipment site in Winchester*

## SNC CELEBRATES 70 YEARS OF CONSERVATION

### Recognizing Leadership in Watershed Management

2017 marked the celebration of SNC's 70th anniversary of environmental conservation. Residents and partners were invited to share in SNC's dedication to watershed management, environmental stewardship, and community engagement at monthly events.

Retiring in May, Dennis O'Grady had served as SNC's General Manager for 35 years, welcoming Angela Coleman as SNC's new leadership.

In May, SNC was home to a public open house, an eco-adventure day, and an anniversary and retirement celebration for Dennis O'Grady.

*Students learning about aquatic invertebrates found in the SNC Watershed at SNC's Eco-Adventure Day in Finch*



## PROTECTING ONTARIO'S RARE HABITATS

### \$16,000 Patagonia Investment

In 2017, SNC worked to reduce the trend of declining wetlands in Eastern Ontario through projects that promote habitat restoration, improve biodiversity, and increase awareness on the importance of green infrastructure.

Stewardship efforts included the enhancement of approximately 1 acre of rare fen habitat in the Leitrim Wetland through invasive species removal and native tree planting.

This year's fen restoration project is just one of the many ongoing initiatives that SNC completes within the Findlay Creek Community each year. Other 2017 activities included; a spring clean-up and shrub giveaway event, riparian tree planting events for students, interpretive hikes along the boardwalk, a local wildlife show, and a visit from Ontario's Invasive Species Council.

*SNC Stewardship Staff and volunteers planting trees as part of the Leitrim Wetland fen restoration project in Ottawa*

# 2017 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## ENDLESS RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES AT SNC CONSERVATION AREAS

In 2017, SNC's network of 14 Conservation Areas (CA) welcomed over 85,000 visitors to hike, geocache, picnic, kayak, canoe, launch their boat, bird watch, fish, and enjoy their local environment.

### The most popular destinations?

J. Henry Tweed CA in Russell with 20,592 visitors and W.E. Burton CA in Russell with 16,461 visitors.

2017 was a year of many CA upgrades! Improvement highlights included: a new accessible dock at Cass Bridge CA, the installation of 100 new property identification signs on SNC-owned land, the addition of 2 new park benches and the maintenance of 10 partnership docks.



Hike at Warwick Forest Conservation Area in Berwick



Property identification sign on a SNC property in South Dundas



Kayaking at Cass Bridge Conservation Area in Winchester

## LAND PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT LOCAL ECONOMY

SNC partners with area businesses and community members to sustainably harvest locally-sourced products from our land and to support the local economy.



### HUNTING

Nearly 9,000 acres of SNC land is used by hunters; 57 permits issued in 2017.



### TRAPPING

Nearly 9,000 acres of land is used by trappers; 8 permits issued in 2017.



### HONEY

SNC is gifted 10 lbs of honey annually from local beekeepers; 1 land lease in 2017.



### MAPLE SYRUP

15 acres of SNC land is leased for sugar bush operations. SNC land has the potential for approximately 2,200 taps, which could make 825 gallons of sweet maple syrup!



### CROP PRODUCTION

30 acres of SNC land is leased to local farmers.



Beekeeping at Ambrosia Apiaries, in Berwick

The guidance, wisdom, and holistic perspectives shared through partnerships with First Nations ensure the protection of culturally significant species.

## WOODLOT MANAGEMENT AND TREE PLANTING

- Planted 98,370 trees, adding to the 2.94 million trees planted since 1990.
- Worked with 17 Forest Stewards to monitor forest activity on 39 SNC properties.
- Provided over \$113,000 in grants through Forest Ontario's 50 Million Tree Program to help plant trees on private land.
- Provided \$15,670 in grants and free Woodlot Advisory Service visits to 32 property owners to create forest management plans for 1,132 acres of land.
- Assessed 238 acres of land for species at risk.
- Worked with local farm producers and agricultural organizations to help provide recommendations on ways to improve forest cover.

## CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

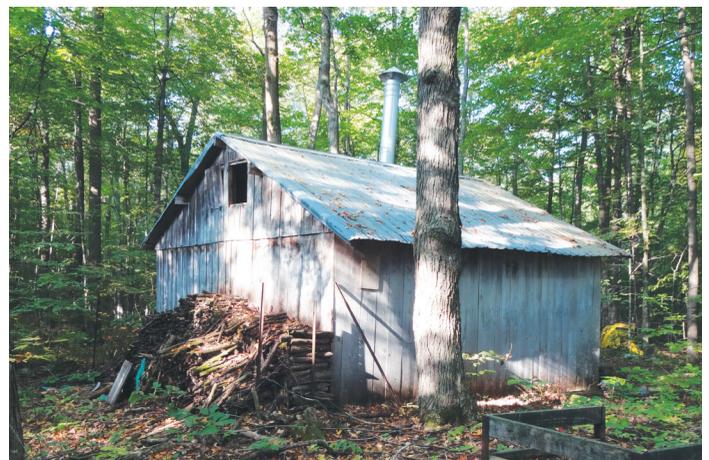
- Awarded over \$39,000 in cost share grants to residents for projects that improve water quality.

## WATERSHED MONITORING AND REPORTING

- Surface water, groundwater, and fisheries sampling was conducted to produce the Bear Brook Subwatershed Report Card.



*Watershed monitoring being conducted by SNC Stewardship Staff and summer students*



*Oschmann Forest in Ormond*



*Tree marking by SNC Forestry Technicians in Warwick Forest Conservation Area in Berwick*



## LAND SECUREMENT

Three new properties were acquired through donation or purchase in 2017:

### **Oschmann Forest, Township of North Dundas**

This unique 18-acre forest near Ormond, previously owned by the Oschmann Family, boasts a diverse woodlot with mature Maple, Oak, Ash, and even Butternut trees. The property was also actively managed for maple syrup production for 50 years.

### **Riddell Property, City of Clarence Rockland**

Located adjacent to an existing SNC property, a portion of this 50-acre property is designated as a Provincially Significant Wetland.

### **Vas Nunes Property, Township of North Stormont**

This 97-acre property is a headwater feature of Moose Creek and features an extensive wetland and a white spruce and pine plantation.

*Oschmann Forest Official Opening in June 2017*

# 2017 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



*Stream of Dreams Mural at Nationview Public School in South Mountain*

## SOURCE WATER PROTECTION – RISK MANAGEMENT PLANS COMPLETE

In 2017, the Raisin-South Nation Source Protection Team managed 702 drinking water threats on 210 properties and worked with landowners to develop 94 plans to mitigate risks to drinking water sources.



*Delta Waterfowl, Recipient of 2017 Community Environmental Grant*

## COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL GRANTS

Grants are offered to community groups and non-profit organizations to support events and projects within SNC's jurisdiction that promote recreational use of our river, protect the environment, and celebrate the natural heritage of the area.

In 2017, over \$6,000 were awarded to groups across the jurisdiction supporting local fishing derbies, festivals, agriculture events, canoe and kayak runs, and heritage events.



*Habitat Restoration, South Castor River in Ottawa*

## HABITAT RESTORATION

The ability to track and report changes to an ecosystem is dependent on sound, science-based monitoring programs. SNC collects information on surface and ground water, water quality and quantity, and native, invasive and at-risk species.

In 2017, our monitoring efforts guided over 5 restoration projects to improve water quality, stream flow, mitigate erosion, protect people and property and enhance ecosystems including sites along Shield's Creek and the South Castor River in Ottawa.



*SNC septic system inspection*

## SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SNC reviews development applications and provides technical advice on environmental aspects of projects. In 2017, 481 planning and 68 regulations applications were submitted for review, and 165 permits were issued.

SNC officials also conduct septic inspections for municipalities. In 2017, the City of Cornwall expanded part of SNC's jurisdiction, allowing SNC to deliver Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code (Septic Systems) on their behalf; becoming the 13th municipality to partner on this program. In 2017, over 370 septic permits were issued to residents across the jurisdiction.



*Water Control Structure, South Nation River at Chrysler*

## FLOOD FORECASTING AND WARNING

The Flood Forecasting and Warning program advises and updates municipalities and the public of potentially unsafe conditions due to flooding. In 2017, 36 watershed conditions and flood statements were issued for the SNC jurisdiction, an additional 20 were issued in response to the Ottawa River flooding, and 18 for the St. Lawrence River flooding. Both flood events were historic.

SNC also operates several water and erosion control structures including dams, weirs, and berms to reduce risk to life and damage to property.



# 2017 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

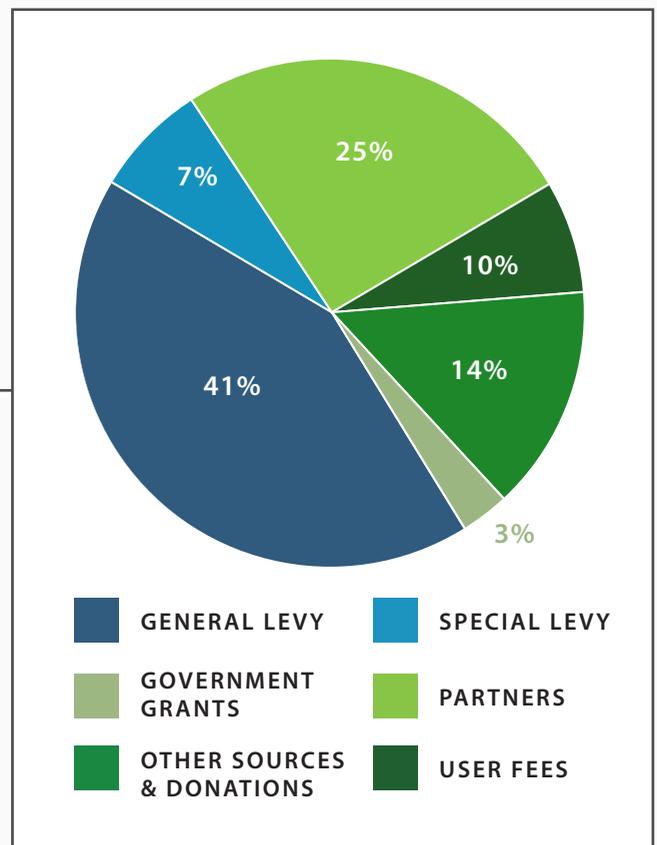
SNC's Board of Directors consists of 12 appointed representatives from SNC's 16 member municipalities who govern and provide direction for all the work completed by SNC staff.

Front (left to right): Fernand Dicaire, Vice Chair, Prescott-Russell; François St. Amour, Chair, Prescott-Russell; Doug Thompson, Past Chair. Back (left to right): Angela Coleman, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer, SNC; George Darouze, City of Ottawa; François Landry, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry; Archie Mellan, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry; Glenn Mackey, Leeds and Grenville; Peggy Taylor, Leeds and Grenville; Pierre Leroux, Prescott-Russell; Bill Smirle, Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Absent: Stephen Blais, City of Ottawa; Magda Kubasiewicz, City of Ottawa.

## 2017 SNC BUDGET SUMMARY

**Budget:** \$7,708,345

- General Levy: \$3,147,471
- Special Levy: \$550,000
- Government Grants: \$191,500
- Partners: \$1,939,790
- User Fees: \$761,235
- Other Sources and Donations: \$1,118,349



OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT; WE'RE IN IT TOGETHER.  
 NOTRE ENVIRONNEMENT LOCAL, PROTÉGEONS-LE ENSEMBLE.

