



SOUTH NATION  
CONSERVATION  
DE LA NATION SUD

# 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Lands For Today, Forests For Tomorrow

## Managing Lands For Today

SNC owns and manages 12,000 acres of public, natural space across a 4,384 square-km jurisdiction in Eastern Ontario. Our 15 day-use parks and trails offer year-round recreational opportunities, including 9 public river access points and 5 canoe/kayak routes ideal for fishing, boating and hiking, to snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Our Conservation Areas (CAs) host many unique events organized by community groups each year.

### Conservation Area Highlights:

- 10,300 resident anglers in this region makes the South Nation River a premier fishing destination that supports 3 of the top 5 sport fish in Ontario
- Warwick Forest CA, in Berwick, is well-known for its horseback riding trails and received new upgrades this year, including new signage, a boardwalk and wetland viewing platform
- Over 1,600 geocaches are hidden throughout the jurisdiction, though a collaborative partnership with the Geocachers of Eastern Ontario
- A new accessible dock at Jessup's Falls CA, in Plantagenet, removes barriers and increases access

## Thousands Of Visitors At SNC Parks Over The Past Year

Since 2013, the Conservation Area Monitoring Program gathers weekly visitor attendance numbers at CAs across the jurisdiction, helping build public support and guide improvements to on-site facilities.

A total of 53,552 visitors were recorded from both car and trail counters from May to November, an increase of 3 percent since 2014.

### Visitor Numbers – May to November 2015

#### Car Counters Visitor Use Data

- High Falls CA, Casselman – 13,825 visitors
- Jessup's Falls CA, Plantagenet – 8,153 visitors

#### Trail Counter Visitor Use Data

- Two Creeks CA, Morrisburg – 3,897 visitors
- J. Henry Tweed CA, Russell – 9,389 visitors
- Findlay Creek Boardwalk, Ottawa – 18,288 visitors

## SNC partners with area businesses to harvest locally sourced products from our land to support the local economy.



**Trapping:** 7,236 acres of land is used by local trappers



**Hunting:** 140 permits distributed to local hunters



**Sugar Bush Operations:** 2,047 maple trees were inventoried for a total tapping potential of 2,198 taps, about 32,970 gallons of sap, 825 gallons of maple syrup



**Apiculture:** SNC receives an annual gift of 10 pounds of honey from local bee keepers



**Agricultural Cropping:** 36 acres of land is leased for local farmers



## A Natural Legacy: Securing Land For The Future

In 2015, SNC acquired 379 acres of land through the Land Donation Program. SNC is a member of Ontario Land Trust Alliance and is approved to accept land donations through Environment Canada's Ecological Gifts Program, which helps protect ecologically sensitive land and offers significant tax benefits to property owners. Among the latest additions to our growing network of natural spaces:

- A 40 acre property generously donated by the Velema family. Over the past 40 years, the Velemas restored and created a forest island within the surrounding landscape. The property is designated as a Natural Heritage Area.
- A pine and white spruce plantation was donated by Mr. Chabot, originally purchased in the 1970s and planted by hand with the help of friends and family.
- Through a partnership with the Ontario Heritage Trust and the City of Ottawa, a 237 acre property located near Ottawa features Provincially Significant Wetlands and over 238 vascular plants.

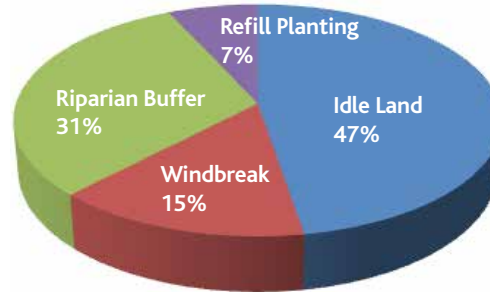
## Our Programs Promote And Increase Forest Cover

SNC works with many partners to offer substantial tree planting subsidies for property owners through the Tree Planting Program. The Woodlot Advisory Service (WAS) offers free site visits and resources to woodlot owners, including up to \$500 in subsidies to develop Forest Management Plans. Approved plans can help woodlot owners save up to 75% on property taxes.

### Forestry Program Highlights:

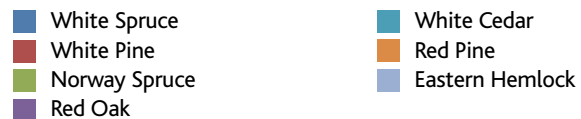
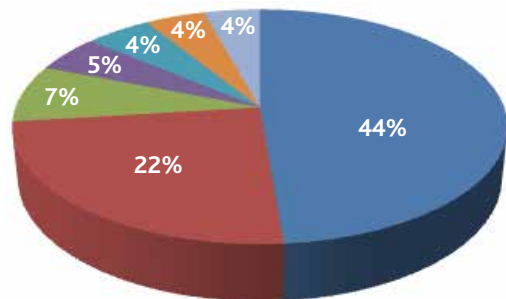
- 2.8 million trees have been planted since 1990
- 120,000 trees were planted in 2015 – creating 116 acres of future forests
- \$102,836 was distributed in grants through the Tree Planting and WAS programs
- 36 property owners were visited through WAS
- Support the management of 2,122 acres of woodlot = 1,109 acres through the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program and 1,012 acres through the WAS program
- Manage 20,000 acres of County Forests for public benefit
- 313 acres were assessed in Larose Forest for Species at Risk

### Where Are Trees Being Planted?



- Over 33,000 trees were planted on idle land that is not forested, such as hay fields – 47% of tree planting projects took place on idle lands

### Most Commonly Planted Tree Species



- The average survival rate of trees planted in 2015 was 76%, an increase of 5% from the 2014 survival rate

### Community Tree Planting Events

- Over 100 volunteers supported 8 tree planting events
- 19 Forest Steward volunteers actively monitor 40 SNC properties
- Work with First Nations to preserve species of cultural significance like black ash and Ginseng

### Sustainable Harvesting – Boosting The Local Economy

- Harvesting operations took place on 122 acres of red and white pine, white spruce and hardwood forests
- Lower quality trees affected by disease are removed to increase forest health and provide wildlife habitat
- Approximately \$44,400 in revenue will be reinvested into public forested land by improving trails and ongoing silvicultural activities



## On the Ground Stewardship Through Science-Based Monitoring

SNC has decades of experience protecting the environment and leading successful stewardship projects. SNC staff:

- Conduct habitat enhancement projects and stream restorations; improve fisheries and fish habitat
- Monitor daily water levels for flood forecasting and drought programs, and monitor surface/groundwater
- Produce floodplain mapping and Watershed Report Cards
- Track invasive species occurrences
- Disbursed \$225,000 in grants for clean water projects

Our municipal partners call on SNC for assistance in providing the following environmental services:

- Plant trees for Roadside Tree Programs and manage County Forests for public benefit
- Conduct Tree Risk Evaluations for the St. Lawrence Parks Commission and Municipalities
- Sample 138 wells in the Township of Alfred and Plantagenet to complete scientific groundwater studies
- Encourage sustainable development through the review of 310 planning applications
- Work with 220 developers and property owners to protect people, property, and the environment
- Conduct septic system inspections and permitting for 12 municipalities, and inspect 1,440 sewage systems
- Implement source protection plans to protect municipal drinking water systems

## 2015 Year in Review

### Municipality Of Champlain Joins SNC Jurisdiction

A 2.06 square-km portion of the Township of Champlain, which drains to the South Nation River Watershed, was officially added at the Township's request. Residents will benefit from services such as tree planting, fisheries protection, and water quality improvement projects. With the new addition, sixteen member municipalities now oversee our budget, programs and services through the Board of Directors. This new expansion marks the fourth time since 2004 that the SNC jurisdiction has expanded, a rare occurrence provincially.

### Three Year Partnership With Ontario Power Generation Continues To Enhance Biodiversity

SNC has successfully completed the second year of the Biodiversity Project, part of a three year partnership with Ontario Power Generation to increase and enhance biodiversity in grasslands, woodlands and wetlands across the jurisdiction. Highlights from the past year include: planting 47,000 tree seedlings, creating 60 acres of continuous grassland and pollinator habitat for Species at Risk at Reveler CA, in Crysler, as well as creating three vernal pools at Robert Graham CA, in Glen Stewart to support important amphibian breeding habitat.

### Port of Johnstown Project Complete

As part of the environmental assessment for the \$38 million Port expansion project that began in 2009, SNC worked with many project partners including: St. Lawrence Parks Commission, First Nations, Federal and Provincial Governments, and Municipalities. Channel construction is now complete as part of the Fish Habitat Compensation for the Port of Johnstown near Riverside Heights. Located on the St. Lawrence River, the channels provide ideal fish habitat for turtles and other wildlife and species of concern.

## Financial Summary 2015

Budget:	Revenue:
\$6,238,824	\$3,400,088 (52%) - Municipal Levy
	\$3,097,504 (48%) - Self Generated Revenue & Grants

### 2015 Board of Directors

**Chair:** Doug Thompson, City of Ottawa

**Vice Chair:** François St. Amour, Prescott-Russell

**Past Chair:** Bill Smirle, Stormont Dundas Glengarry

City of Ottawa: Stephen Blais, George Darouze and Alan Perks

Prescott-Russell: Fernand Dicaire and Conrad Lamadeleine

Stormont Dundas & Glengarry: Francois Landry and Archie Mellan

Leeds-Grenville: Lawrence Levere and Glenn Mackey

### Standing Committees

*Four committees that provide program direction:*

Clean Water Committee

Communications Committee

Forestry Committee

Fish and Wildlife Committee



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