



**SOUTH NATION CONSERVATION  
MUNICIPAL WORKPLAN  
RUSSELL TOWNSHIP**



**SOUTH NATION  
CONSERVATION**  
DE LA NATION SUD



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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR:

Dear Russell,

Conservation Authorities are community-based environmental organizations dedicated to conserving, restoring, developing, and managing natural resources on a watershed scale.

South Nation Conservation (SNC) exists because of local initiatives and we recognize the importance of our continued partnership with our 16 member municipalities. In 2020, we look forward to building on these relationships and continuing to deliver key programs and services on your behalf.

Please review this summary document prepared for your Municipality by SNC staff.

Bill Smirle,  
Chair, South Nation Conservation



### OUR VISION

Improved Water Quality for a Healthy Ecosystem: Our vision encompasses water levels which satisfy the needs of humans and the environment, healthy rivers and natural shorelines, and safe wastewater management practices.

### OUR MISSION

To ensure that the management of natural occurrences, natural resources, and human activities results in the protection or improvement of water resources.

### OUR EXPERTISE

Conservation is our core competency. SNC offers knowledge and experience to help our partners contribute to a healthy region.



SOUTH NATION CONSERVATION ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, FINCH

# FOSTERING LANDOWNER STEWARDSHIP



## WHAT WE DO:

- Plant approximately 140,000 trees per year and provide subsidies on tree purchases for landowners. SNC has planted 3.3 million trees since 1990.
- Offer free site visits and resources to woodlot owners, and offer \$500 grants to help develop forest management plans.
- Provide over \$75,000 annually in funding to landowners for projects that protect water quality through the Clean Water Program.
- Own approximately 12,000 acres of land acquired through donation or purchase, following SNC's Land Securement Strategy.
- Manage over 20,000 acres of community forest in Eastern Ontario; 4,450 acres in the United Counties of Prescott and Russell (UCPR).

## TO-DATE, IN RUSSELL:

- Planted 263,010 trees since 1990.
- Offered 38 woodlot owners our Woodlot Advisory Services since 2011, visiting 558 acres of land.
- Distributed \$3,452 in forest management grants since 2011, helping protect approximately 1,773 acres of forest under private ownership.
- Provided over \$168,817 in funding to local landowners for projects that protect water quality since 1998.
- Planted 240 trees at 1 site in UCPR as part of the Roadside Tree Project.

## 2020 PRIORITIES:

- SNC continues to work with its partners through its Forest Conservation Initiative, to implement recommendations from our 2018 Report on "Protecting and Increasing Forest Cover in the South Nation Conservation Jurisdiction.
- Through the Forest Conservation Initiative, SNC will be hosting community free tree activities and has implemented new tree planting subsidies to help plant more trees along fields and watercourses.
- SNC will continue to plant trees, manage community lands, offer resources, work with partners, and help fund important water quality improvement projects.



**3** MILLIONTH TREE  
PLANTED SINCE 1990!



SNC HAS PLANTED OVER 3 MILLION TREES SINCE 1990

# PROTECTING PEOPLE AND PROPERTY AND SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



## WHAT WE DO:

- Map floodplains and other natural hazards, review construction and approve projects in and around watercourses, floodplains and wetlands.
- Conduct septic system inspections and permits for 13 municipalities.
- Work to protect drinking water through the Source Water Protection program.
- Flood Forecasting and Warning provides advance notice of flood conditions and updates on watershed conditions during flood events for the South Nation, Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers.
- Low Water Response provides declaration of drought conditions and offers guidance for reducing water consumption based on condition severity.
- Operate and maintain 7 water control structures.

## TO-DATE, IN RUSSELL:

- SNC maintains the Russell Weir, an important water control structure.
- 1.85 km<sup>2</sup> of flood hazard maps are regulated.
- 45.8 km of unstable slope is mapped.

## LAST YEAR, IN RUSSELL:

- 32 septic approvals issued.
- 37 Planning Act application reviews.
- 16 permits processed.
- 2 low water advisory memos issued.
- 43 watershed conditions and flood statements issued.
- The Emergency Management Toolkit improved SNC's Flood Forecasting and Warning Program, enhancing SNC's ability to predict floods and provides municipalities with the ability to prepare and respond quickly and efficiently to save lives, prevent or limit property damage, and relieve local financial burdens.
- Completed floodplain mapping for York Creek to protect people and property.

## 2020 PRIORITIES:

- Provide engineering services to member municipalities as needed.
- Continued maintenance and operation of erosion and water control structures.
- Continue working in the Emergency Management Toolkit consisting of an automated alert system, which provides advanced notice of watershed conditions.
- In 2019, SNC completed its work on the UCPR Stormwater Management Facilities Project. SNC will continue to work with United Counties and municipalities on stormwater management initiatives.



# PROVIDING NATURAL SPACES AND RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES



## WHAT WE DO:

- Own and manage over 12,000 acres of public, natural spaces.
- Operate 15 day-use parks and trails, including 9 public river access points.
- Protect environmentally significant properties and accept land donations.
- Protect over 7,000 km of fish habitat which support 72 fish species, offering endless recreational fishing opportunities.

## RECREATIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS IN RUSSELL:

In Russell, SNC maintains 47 acres of community land including 2 Conservation Areas encouraging residents to enjoy local nature:

- **W.E. Burton:** With 3 km of trails winding alongside the Castor River, it's a great place to hike, have a picnic, and fish; plus, it offers a spectacular view of the Russell Dam. In 2019, this Conservation Area welcomed 17,650 visitors.
- **J. Henry Tweed:** This Conservation Area was donated to SNC in 1980 to protect its natural heritage for generations to come. Today it features 16 acres of green space and links with the Russell Recreational Trail. In 2019, it welcomed 19,850 visitors.

## LAST YEAR, IN THE SNC JURISDICTION:

In 2019, SNC's network of 15 Conservation Areas welcomed over 92,800 visitors to hike, geocache, picnic, kayak, canoe, launch their boat, bird watch, fish, and enjoy their local environment.

- SNC installed 100 new signs across its Community Lands to identify ownership and promote sustainable, proper management of forests.
- SNC completed an emergency preparedness inventory to assign civic numbers at all Conservation Areas.

## 2020 PRIORITIES:

- SNC will continue to work with partner municipalities to increase visitor safety and enhance emergency preparedness at Conservation Areas.
- SNC is committed to regular maintenance and upkeep of parks and trails to ensure accessible recreation for residents. This includes grooming year-round to ensure safe trails during every season.
- SNC will continue working on a multi-year project in partnership with Ontario Power Generation at J. Henry Tweed featuring channel restoration, tree planting and bridge construction.



SNC INSTALLED A NEW FOOT-BRIDGE AT J. HENRY TWEED CONSERVATION AREA

# MAKING SCIENCE BASED DECISIONS



## WHAT WE DO:

- Collect water quality and quantity, stream health, fisheries and forestry data to support stewardship programs and guide sustainable development.
- Invasive species management and species at risk habitat assessments.
- Produce Subwatershed Report Cards and other reports on environmental health.
- Monitor weather and water data at groundwater and surface water monitoring stations.

## TO-DATE, IN RUSSELL:

- 17 sites monitored through the Ontario Stream Assessment Protocol (OSAP).
  - Sites have been evaluated for factors such as channel morphology, bank stability, stream flow, water quality, invertebrate composition, and fish community composition. Data guides habitat restoration priorities.
- 1 groundwater monitoring station located on the Castor River, outfitted with a rain gauge.
- In 2018, SNC released its South Nation Watershed Report Card: State of the Nation. This document provides watershed health information on natural resources and habitat features within the region.
- SNC has developed a new hydrological model for the South Nation Watershed which enhances Flood Forecasting and Warning and Low Water Response Programs. Recent updates to the model have improved its simulations of future hydrological conditions using soil moisture and groundwater data.
- 8 headwater drainage features assessed for contribution of sediment and flow downstream.

## 2020 PRIORITIES:

- Subwatershed Report Cards are produced annually in different regions following a year of monitoring, reporting on surface and groundwater quality along with forest and wetland cover. The recently published report on the Upper South Nation Subwatershed highlights conditions in southern municipalities; SNC will be working on the Castor River Subwatershed Report Card in 2020. Reporting is based on a 5-year rotation of monitoring programs.
- SNC will work with the municipality to develop a plan for a subwatershed study in an area under high development pressure. A subwatershed study provides guidance regarding important natural heritage features and how to ensure safe and sustainable development.
- Work with municipal partners to evaluate the sustainability of municipal the water supplies.
- SNC will work with UCPR to develop low impact development parking spaces at the Larose Forest.



ELECTROFISHING ON THE SOUTH NATION RIVER

# EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES AND YOUTH



## WHAT WE DO:

- Deliver curriculum-based education programs to over 2,000 local youth every year; including Youth Fish Camps, Youth Hunt Apprenticeships, the Stream of Dreams Community Art and Environmental Education Program, and the Maple Syrup Education Program.
- Regularly attend community events and fairs to network with residents and highlight SNC's programs and services.
- Offer over \$10,000 in Community Environmental Grants to non-profit community groups.
- Partner with school boards to deliver environmental high school program certifications.

## LAST YEAR, IN THE SNC JURISDICTION:

- SNC worked closely with partner agencies to sponsor or cohost river races along the South Nation River, Ottawa River and St. Lawrence River.
- SNC hosted high school students at various project sites for Specialist High Skills Major certifications towards their high school diplomas.
- SNC delivered the Stream of Dreams program to over 1,000 local students.
- Thanks to support from Federal and Provincial funding agencies, SNC hires several local summer students every year from across its 4,384 square-kilometer jurisdiction in Eastern Ontario.
- SNC hosted dozens of local youth at its annual Fish Camps and Hunt Apprenticeship Programs.
- SNC worked with its local partners to help organize and host community events across the jurisdiction.
- SNC relaunched its Maple Syrup Education Program for the 18th season at the Oschmann Forest in North Dundas. The not-for-profit education program hosted over 500 local students in 2019, providing them with a hands-on environmental learning experience at a local sugar shack.
  - Students learn about the process of maple syrup production as it has evolved from First Nations traditions through to modern day production techniques. The program supplements the Ontario science curriculum and includes key teachable moments in areas of natural heritage, forest management, and ecosystem habitats.

## 2020 PRIORITIES:

- SNC will work with municipalities and partner agencies to adapt and create new ways to connect with local communities and youth during Covid-19 such as online campaigns, 'Nature at Home' live educational facebook series and digital media learning opportunities.
- SNC will continue to work with its regional partners and member-municipalities to deliver meaningful environmental education and host community events across the jurisdiction.
- SNC will work with partners to create a new strategic vision and plan to position the Authority beyond the year 2020.



SNC DELIVERED THE STREAM OF DREAMS PROGRAM AT MOTHER TERESA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

# YOUR PARTNER IN CONSERVATION

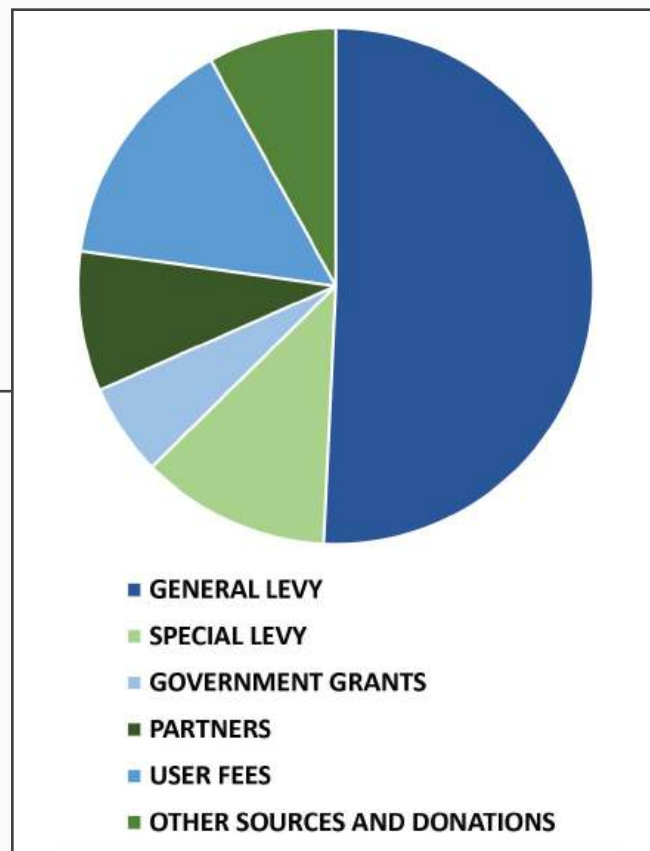
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South Nation Conservation (SNC) contributes to the local environment thanks to the funding support of SNC's 16 member municipalities and self-generated revenue from donations, partnerships, and government grants.

## 2020 SNC BUDGET SUMMARY

**Budget:** \$6,855,520

- General Levy: \$3,478,942
- Special Levy: \$815,394
- Government Grants: \$395,294
- Partners: \$600,968
- User Fees: \$1,012,670
- Other Sources and Donations: \$552,252



For every \$100,000 in household assessment, your municipality contributes \$5.58 on average to South Nation Conservation. These contributions allow SNC to provide programs and services that promote watershed management, sustainability, and the protection of people and property.



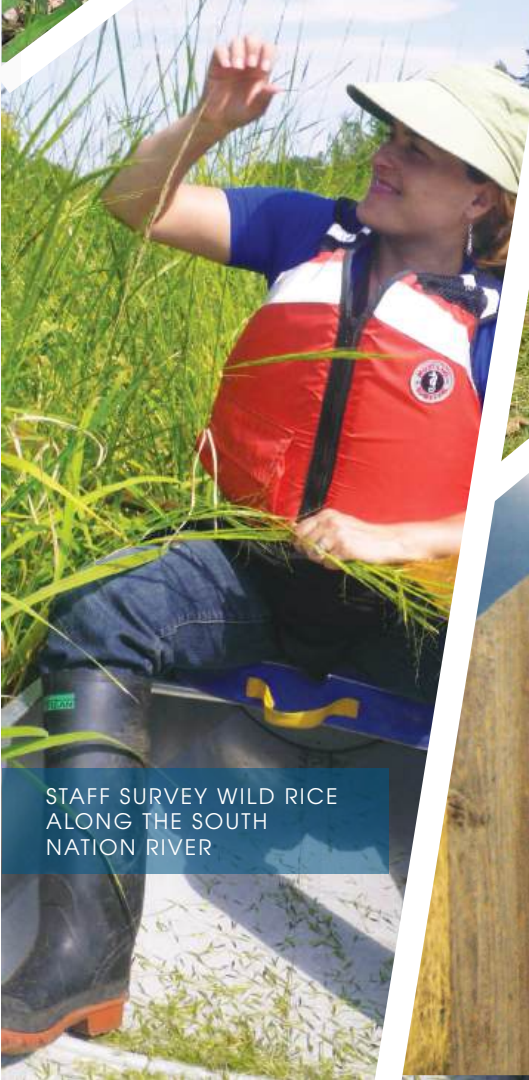
SNC STAFF TREE PLANTING AT WARWICK FOREST



HOOP NETTING FISH SURVEYS ON THE SOUTH NATION RIVER



SNC'S FIRST STREAM OF DREAMS IN ROCKLAND



STAFF SURVEY WILD RICE ALONG THE SOUTH NATION RIVER



BEE-KEEPING ON SNC COMMUNITY LANDS AT AMBROSIA APIARIES IN BERWICK

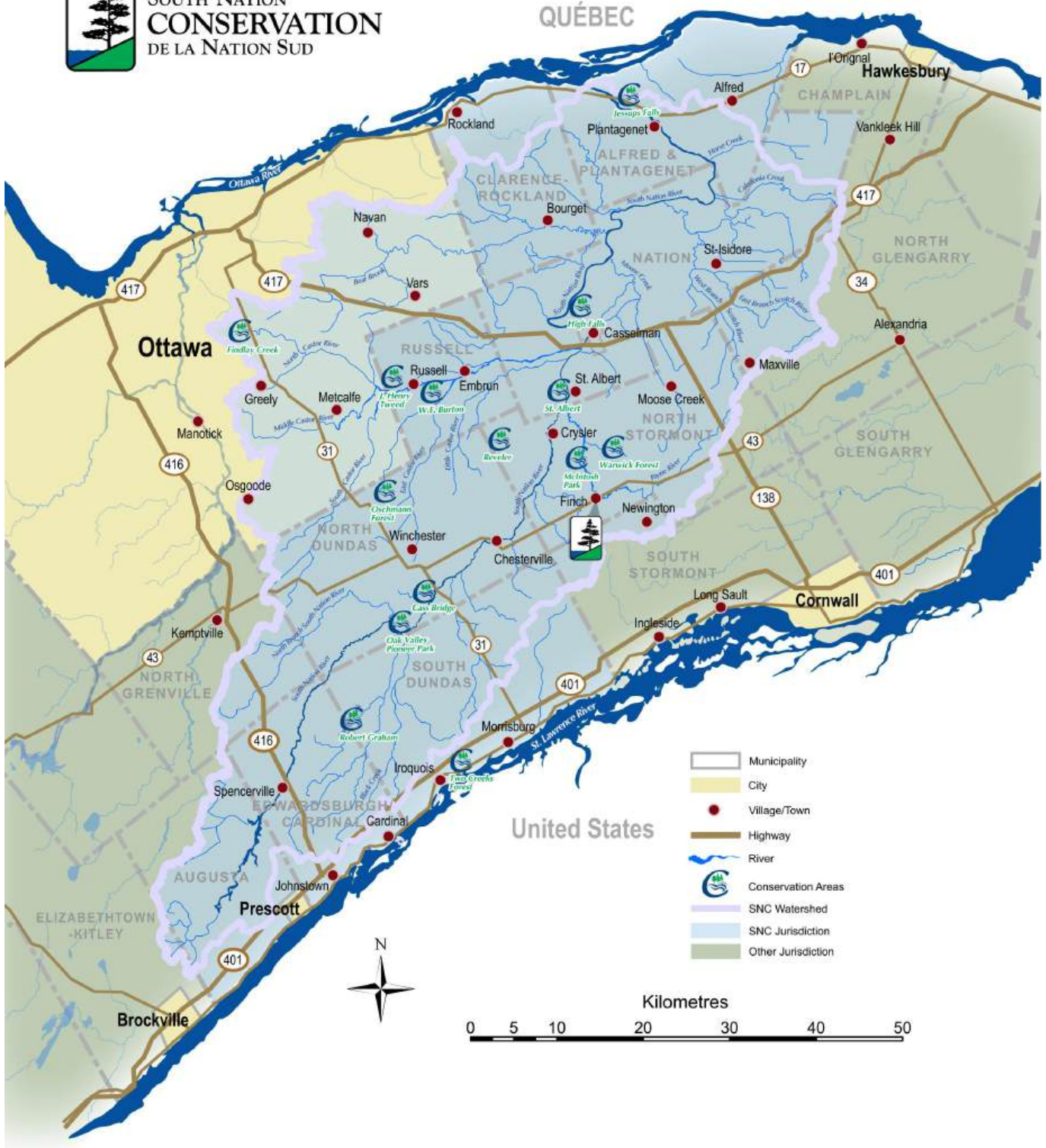


SNC RAIN GAUGE FOR COLLECTION OF PRECIPITATION DATA

# OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT; WE'RE IN IT TOGETHER.



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