



Bonnechere River Watershed Project

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“Helping Ourselves to a Healthy Environment”

2018 Update Celebrating 20 years!

BRWP AGM: The Bonnechere River Watershed Project (BRWP) celebrated its 20th anniversary at the Renfrew Royal Canadian Legion on April 18th. The celebration was opened by Renfrew Reeve Peter Emon, who welcomed everyone and congratulated the organization on the successes of its many projects over the past 20 years. The afternoon provided an opportunity for attendees to view memorabilia including newspaper clippings, brochures, and membership cards from the BRWP early days, as well as more recent items such as BRWP water quality reports, video clips, and commissioned music and paintings that have accompanied BRWP projects in more recent years. Many past BRWP board members, including Wayne Remus, Ron Deshane and Alan Fox were at the celebration and entertained the attendees with their shared memories of the formation of the organization and of the many BRWP environmental projects completed across the Bonnechere River Watershed in the early days of the organization. Current Chair, Kathy Lindsay, recounted the long list of projects and initiatives that the BRWP has completed since she became a board member in 2007, and Chair since 2009, including the Nature in Your Neighbourhood initiative, countless water quality studies and many projects that combined the arts with environmental stewardship.

Bonnechere River Water Management Plan: The BRWP participated in the ad hoc stakeholders meetings in the summer of 2017 that resulted in amendments that are still under review by MNRF. The Standing Advisory Committee to the plan has been reconstituted with members from from ?

Interlake Association: The BRWP was invited to present at the annual meeting on September 23, 2017 hosted by the Golden Lake Property Owners Association at the Sands in Golden Lake. The topic was current and potential roles of the Interlake Association and Lake POAs on freshwater issues in Renfrew County.

RC official plan review: An amended official plan (March 2018) has been submitted by the County for provincial approval. It includes a new watershed planning section that provides for amendments in response to recommendations of a lake plan affecting development applications. The County has decided that it will not adopt the request from the Renfrew County Water Quality Leadership Group (which includes members from eleven agricultural, other business and environmental organizations in Renfrew County) for modifications to the objectives and policies of the OP in order to promote the creation of a community-based non-regulatory watershed council that would take a leadership role on water quality issues and watershed planning in Renfrew County.

Freshwater Partners Renfrew County: The BRWP was awarded a collective impact grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation in November to partner with eight other organizations from April 2018 to September 2019 to promote collaboration on the interests of freshwater and watersheds in Renfrew County. Activities include community events, citizen science education and outreach consultation sessions in the fall of 2018 and spring of 2019.

Renfrew County Stewardship Forum: The BRWP, the Ottawa River Institute and Sustainable Eastern Ontario partnered on the 6th annual Renfrew County Stewardship Forum, held May 16 at the Royal Canadian Legion in Renfrew on the theme of “*Our Freshwater, Our Future*”. Twenty-seven participants from around the County including local lake POAs contributed to lively discussions on freshwater topics. A report and digital presentations are posted on the BRWP website under Community engagement> Renfrew County Stewardship Forum.

Celebrate Our Rivers: This paddle series has been coordinated and co-lead by the BRWP annually since 2012 starting with the paddle from Wilbur Lake to Eganville on the Bonnechere. Over that time, 1252 paddlers have been hosted on our waterways in Renfrew County. In 2018, there are 12 paddles from May to September (poster available on BRWP website and Facebook page) including the Paddle & Fiddle on the Bonnechere from below Eganville to the Fourth Chute on Saturday July 21, the Upper Ottawa River heritage roundtrip paddle from Petawawa to Fort William on Sunday August 12, and a roundtrip paddle upstream on the Bonnechere from Deacon on Saturday September 15, in partnership with the Golden Lake and Area Community Group.

Water Rangers Guardians Project: The BRWP was awarded one of 17 water quality test kits from Water Rangers (waterrangers.ca) to participate in their Guardians project this summer. BRWP is testing during the Celebrate Our Rivers paddles and at the boat launch and at the former beach in Renfrew. Results are available on the Water Rangers mapping application. BRWP is also doing a small shoreline naturalization and shrub planting along the Bonnechere below the second chute in Renfrew.

Supporting the BRWP: Memberships are \$20 for individuals, \$40 for a family, \$50 for Not-for-Profits and \$100 for Businesses/Corporations. Donations are also welcome. An official receipt for Income Tax purposes can be provided. Thanks to the Bonnechere Lake POAs for their continued financial and volunteer support which enables the BRWP to continue to engage on local freshwater and watershed-wide issues.