

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



Ottawa RIVERKEEPER®
GARDE-RIVIÈRE des Outaouais

Welcome!

Dear friends and water lovers,

It has been a jubilant year for Ottawa Riverkeeper! A year of reconnecting to the water in so many ways. From diving back in with you at the Riverkeeper Open Water Swim to the return of our 'in-person' Gala overlooking the Rideau Falls, it has been revitalising to see you all enjoying and benefiting from the many gifts and wonders of the magnificent Ottawa River watershed.

And perhaps the biggest news is that Ottawa Riverkeeper will soon have a new home, and it is right on the river we all love! The culmination of years of work and a dream coming true, we are so excited to announce the future home of Ottawa Riverkeeper at River House. Much work remains, and we invite you to join us on this exciting new journey as we create this extraordinary on-the-river hub for collaboration, education, science, connection and advocacy. What more can we all achieve together? Let's find out!

As we embark on this new stage of Ottawa Riverkeeper's journey, let's look back at all the amazing things you helped to accomplish. In these pages, you will find stories of impact that were made possible through your generous support and engagement. From a turning point on nuclear waste, to inspiring the next generation of water leaders, to investigating watershed health thanks to community scientists, you power the work of Ottawa Riverkeeper.

You'll see your passion and love of the river reflected back to you in this report. The team at Ottawa Riverkeeper is working with you to realise your shared vision of the healthiest possible Ottawa River watershed.

As always, miigwetch, thank you, et un gros merci!

In the River Spirit,

Geoff and Laura



Geoff Green, C.M., C.Q.
Chair of the Board of Directors



Laura Reinsborough
Riverkeeper and CEO

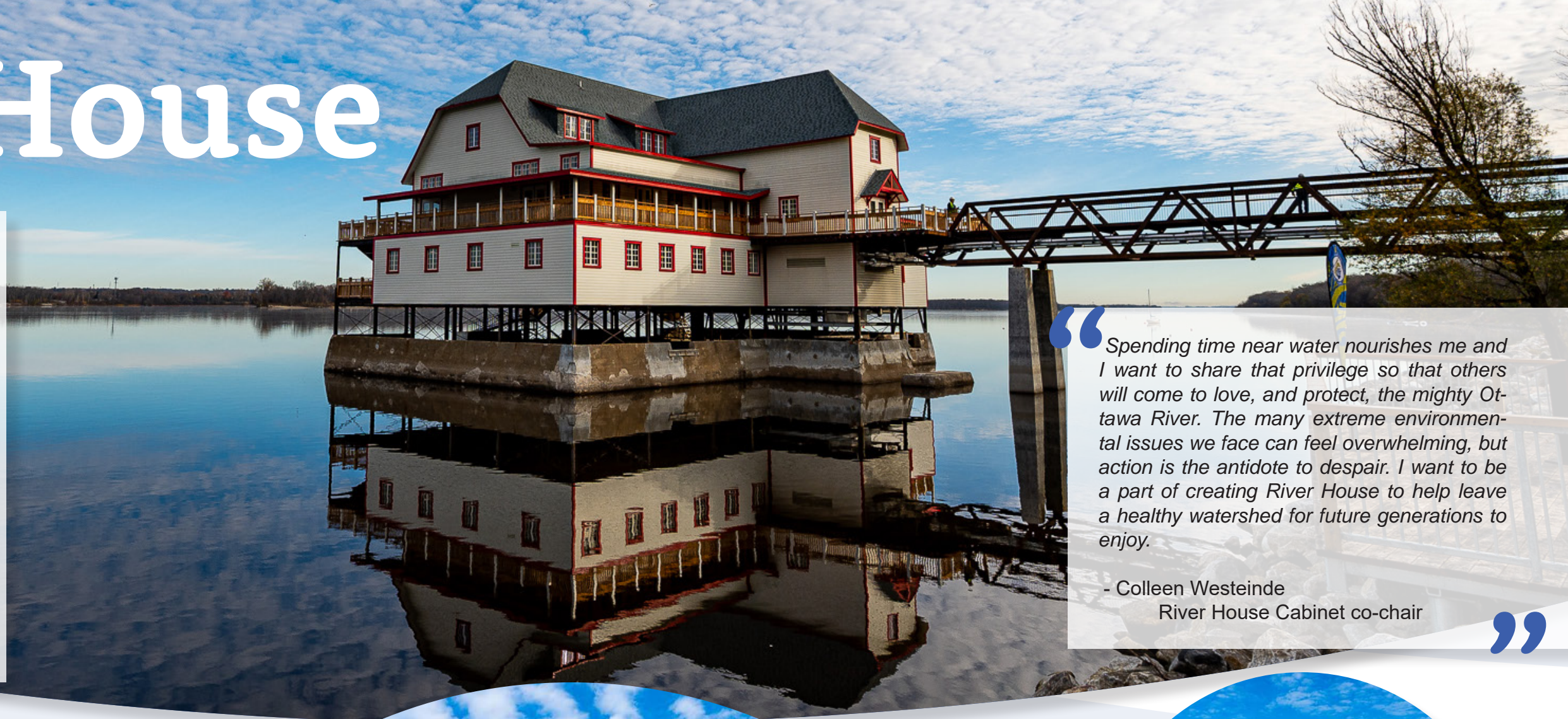


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River House

This is a momentous event in Ottawa Riverkeeper history: we will soon have a new home right on the river! With extensive renovations underway by the National Capital Commission, we are thrilled to be part of transforming River House into the go-to destination for water lovers from across the region to discover, learn about, and connect with the Ottawa River. This historic building will also house a learning centre and scientific lab, providing new opportunities for people of all ages to participate in expanded science and education programming. River House will amplify our ability to address the pressing challenges facing our watershed, and help ensure a legacy where we can all swim, drink and fish healthy waters for generations to come.



“ Spending time near water nourishes me and I want to share that privilege so that others will come to love, and protect, the mighty Ottawa River. The many extreme environmental issues we face can feel overwhelming, but action is the antidote to despair. I want to be a part of creating River House to help leave a healthy watershed for future generations to enjoy.

- Colleen Westeinde
River House Cabinet co-chair

”

Connecting with the watershed

Ottawa River:

1271 km 17
major tributaries

Ottawa River watershed:

146 300 km²

2/3
in Québec

1/3
in Ontario



\$ 750K

towards renovations from
the Canada Community
Revitalization Fund



Meet the River House Campaign Cabinet!
Left to right: Éric Déry, Michel Drouin*, Geoff Green, Colleen Westeinde*, Velma McColl, Kimberly Biggs

Not pictured: Nicholas Bouquet, Charles Desjardins, Paul Drouin, Linda Dwyer-Commando, Jeff Parkes, and Craig Stewart.

*co-chairs

Science

Monitoring Watershed Health

The Watershed Health Assessment and Monitoring initiative aims to understand the health of the Ottawa River and its tributaries using 14 ecological indicators. By gathering baseline data and identifying trends, we can assess watershed health over the long term, and in the short term, we can use the data being collected to advocate for policy-making. Regardless of time scale, uploading data from our monitoring initiatives to our open data portal is one way we are making progress, and this year we've added more data than ever!

In February we launched the Discovery Portal, a brand new interactive tool designed to answer some of the common questions around watershed health that we get asked, and which functions as an accessible entry point to our assessment of watershed health.

OTTAWA RIVERKEEPER'S Discovery Portal

Presented by
RBC

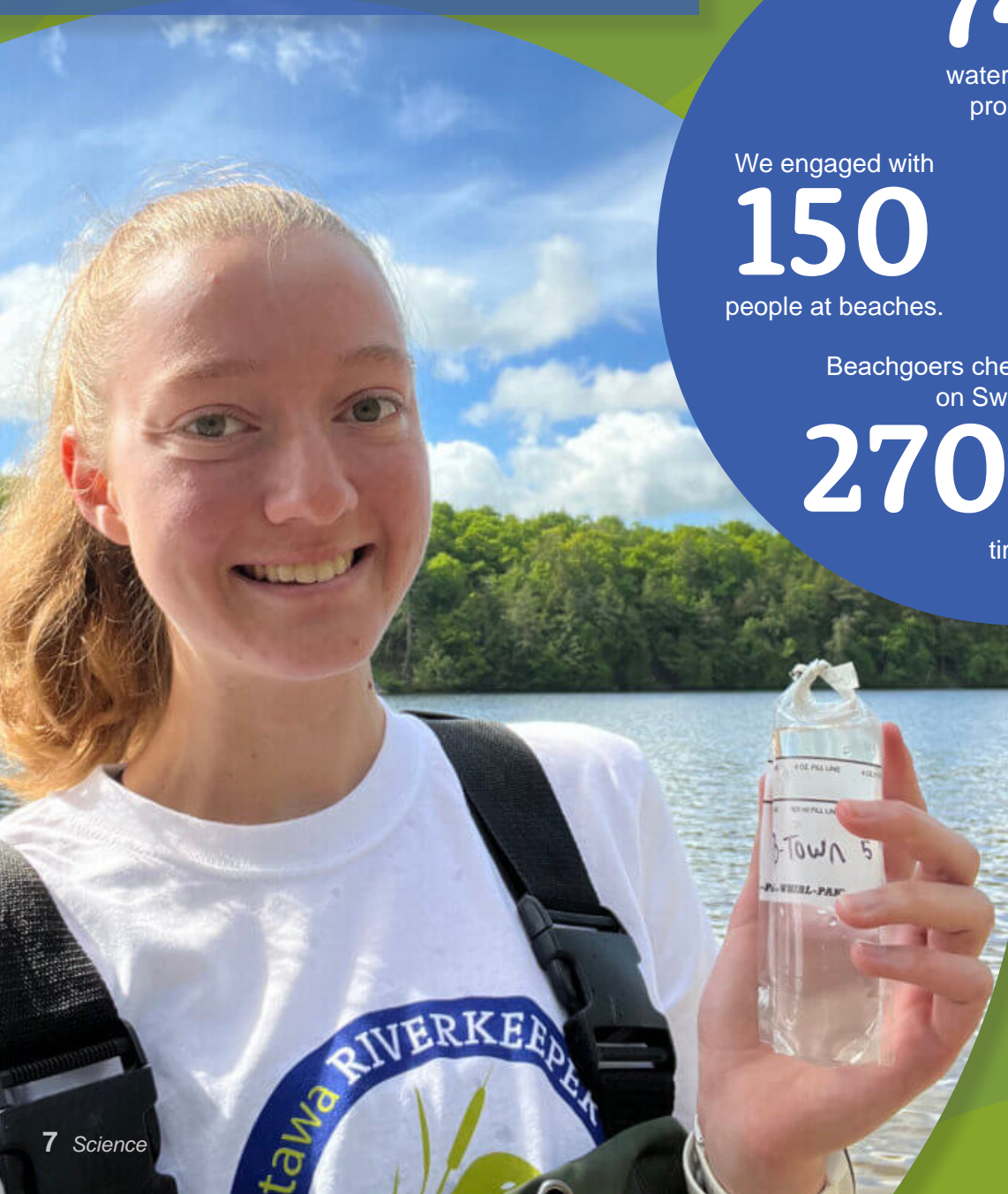


The Open Data
Portal was visited
16,715
times



Swimmable Beaches

Our recreational water quality monitoring program continues to educate the public about water quality at public beaches around the watershed. Through regular sampling at those locations and sharing the results on Swim Guide, we offered timely information about recreational water quality, so that beachgoers could make informed decisions about getting in the water. This year, we also spent more time at the beach, engaging with visitors in-person and we found ways to share a look behind the scenes at how we monitor water quality!



Community Scientists in Action!

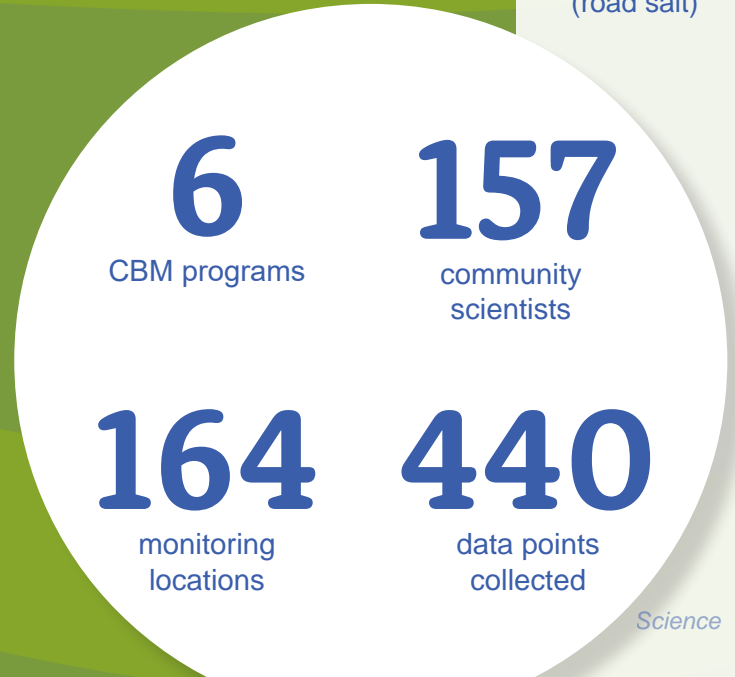
Ottawa Riverkeeper's science programs rely heavily on the dedication of volunteer community scientists, and luckily for us, there is no shortage of enthusiasm! This year, we were able to expand our community-based monitoring programs with more participants collecting samples in more areas throughout the watershed than ever before. We also created more robust methodologies and training for our observational monitoring programs, which include guidelines for performing observations on a regular basis to track changes in a single location. The data that our amazing network of community scientists helped collect is available through Ottawa Riverkeeper's Open Data Portal.



“It’s very important to understand the quality of water in the river. Being part of that makes me feel that I’m doing my part to help the environment.”
- Volunteer community scientist, phosphorus monitoring



- phosphorus
- chlorophyll-a
- algal blooms
- invasive species
- ice on/off
- chloride (road salt)



Education & Outreach

Our education team was on the ground this year, teaching young and old alike about the watershed! You could find us leading workshops, giving presentations - both online and off - and piloting new educational materials with school groups. One such was the Stop Plastic Pollution project, geared towards teaching high school students to take action to tackle plastic pollution in our waters. In partnership with Skeleton Key Theatre, we also led FLOW workshops with grade 9 students at St. Patrick's Catholic High School, connecting the Ottawa River watershed to performance and Indigenous knowledge.



“ We thought that the presentation was fabulous and enjoyed the addition of movement to the lesson so that the students were fully engaged. The content was very kindergarten-friendly and accessible to the students.

- Kindergarten teacher

”

“ The engaging presentation about the watershed and how we can take action to protect water inspired our students to ask Julia dozens and dozens of excellent questions, and it was clear that the students were keenly interested in complex scientific and engineering issues about ensuring watershed health.

- Grade 4 teacher

”



26

educational workshops and presentations (in person and online)

1541

PreK-12 student participants

670

people reached through our Learning Library



We invite educators to regularly check out our Learning Library page on our website for new educational materials. For instance, this year we released a fun video about watershed protection that shows our stormwater model in action!

Youth Water Leaders Program

With activities like kayarafting on the Ottawa River, releasing turtle hatchlings at Mud Lake, a visit to the National Herbarium of Canada, and participating in an archaeological dig, the Youth Water Leaders have certainly been busy this year! The 2022 cohort has gained hands-on experience with watershed issues ranging from science-based workshops on water quality monitoring, the impacts of climate change on water systems, and invasive species management.

Over the six months of the program, Youth Water Leaders explored social and cultural topics such as environmental justice and Algonquin Anishinaabe connections to water through language and culture. The program culminated in awesome volunteer community service projects led by the youth participants - like Matt & Sarah's social media takeover and booth for Capital Pride, and Rae's River Aware Challenge!



17
Youth Water Leader Program
participants

1176.5
service hours completed

Partnership with the Pacte d'amitié

What could be better than communities coming together to protect the river? This year we marked the third year in partnership with the Pacte d'Amitié! Located on both sides of the river, the regions of Argenteuil, Papineau, and Prescott-Russell worked together to cross political boundaries and help the river.

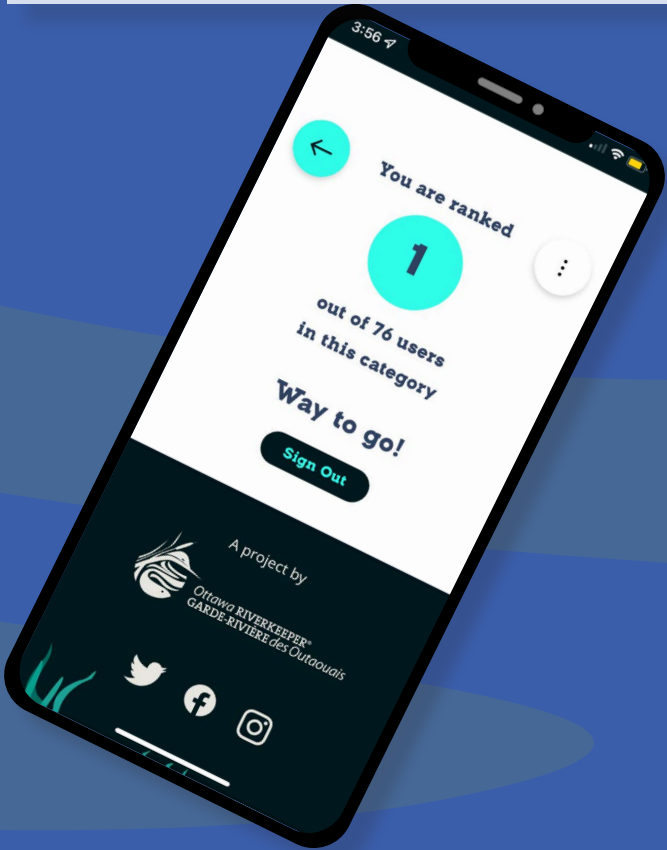
Our collaboration with these municipalities involved organizing shoreline cleanups in the regions and building a sense of mutual togetherness around the river that runs through all of these communities. We hosted incredibly successful cleanups this year, collecting an enormous amount of trash. We also released two videos highlighting the three-year project and celebrating the communities that helped make it possible.

We look forward to continuing to organize collective cleanups with the Pacte d'Amitié, and also hope these three regions can serve as a model for what can be possible when taking a watershed-wide view towards freshwater protection!



iCleanup

The iCleanup community continues to grow! This year the application was updated to have a more engaging and interactive format for its users by adding leaderboards and new challenges.



427
Shoreline cleanup volunteers

1557.3 kg
garbage collected
(approximately the same weight as a midsize car!)

110
new iCleanup members

Advocacy

Nuclear Waste

2022 was one of the most pivotal years for the issue of nuclear waste in the watershed since we began investigating this threat to the river in 2006.

The process of licensing for the proposed Near Surface Disposal Facility (NSDF) at Chalk River came to a head at the long-awaited hearings with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC). Ottawa Riverkeeper presented at the hearings, sharing our concerns and answering questions from the commissioners. This was the culmination of many years of work as part of a small but engaged group of organizations committed to holding the CNSC accountable as a regulator. The commission made the encouraging decision to delay a final ruling, in favour of extended consultations with two Indigenous communities within the watershed, Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg and Kebaowek First Nation. A final decision on the project is expected in 2023.

We also continued our push to address radioactive waste policy more broadly, following through on our 2020 campaign to engage with the government on a review of current policy. In early February, Natural Resources Canada released a draft of the new policy, which did not meet our expectations or adopt any of our recommendations. We continued to advocate for stronger rules and submitted a second summary of our recommendations.

American Eel

Major renovations planned at the Carillon Dam provide an important opportunity to restore the endangered American eel population in our watershed. This is the ideal time to equip the facility with an eel ladder, which would allow the eels to migrate past the dam on their journey upstream. We advanced our demand for an eel ladder to be installed at Carillon Dam by meeting with the operator, Hydro Quebec, and various levels of government to advocate for how we can work together to save this incredible species.

In late 2022, the Quebec government released its long-awaited action plan for the American eel, which we are hopeful will help this species recover. The plan contains objectives for restoring this species' access to headwater streams, and the plan's main objective is to ensure the recovery and sustainable management of the American eel in Quebec.

Road Salt

For three winters in a row, volunteers have been monitoring road salt concentrations in the local creeks and rivers of the National Capital Region as part of our community-based monitoring program. Unfortunately, this year's results have generally remained as high as previous years, at levels that are very concerning.

After seeing the alarming results from the first two years, in 2022 we took a more proactive approach. We expanded the program by inviting snow-clearing professionals to participate in subsidized Smart About Salt training, and there are signs of success! At one site we witnessed up to a 30% reduction in road salt concentration after the training was complete!



13

Smart About Salt
trainees

100

hours of
road salt training

14

locations monitored
by volunteers

261

data points



Events

Riverkeeper Gala

Presented by Insurance Bureau of Canada



“I’ll be attending next year and likely every year if possible. It’s a great way to promote the Riverkeeper and to raise funds. Good job!”
- 2022 Riverkeeper Gala guest



River protectors and enthusiasts gathered by the river’s edge for the grand return of the watershed’s best party! Guests enjoyed award-winning catering, local drinks, and music, all while sharing and celebrating a mutual love for the Ottawa River.

An amazing performance from Grammy Award winner Alex Cuba had the crowd on their feet, while earlier in the evening we enjoyed the drumming and song of The Ottawa River Singers, and a moving jingle dance by Amanda Fox. We also recognized our two 2022 award-winners, Honorary Riverkeeper Daniel Alfredsson and Water Leader Senator Rosa Galvez.

Ottawa
RIVERKEEPER
Gala
GARDE-RIVIÈRE
des Outaouais

414

Gala guests

\$ 286,425

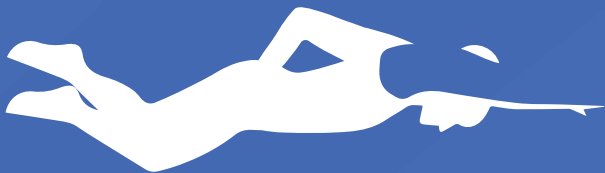
raised for river protection

Riverkeeper Open Water Swim

Powered by Canaqua Sports

Ready, set, race! Swimmers from across the watershed and beyond gathered together in August this year to swim in 1.5 km or 4 km races in the Ottawa River -- a remarkable demonstration of true commitment to keeping the Ottawa River swimmable!

The return of the Riverkeeper Open Water Swim, powered by Canaqua Sports, was a huge success! It was all thanks to our donors, the event sponsors, and, of course, the many volunteer paddlers, lifeguards, cheering squads, and race supporters who made the event possible.



RIVERKEEPER® OPEN WATER SWIM
NAGE EN EAU LIBRE GARDE-RIVIÈRE

Powered by
Canaqua Sports



Volunteer and Donor Appreciation



On a lovely sunny Fall day in late September, a group of incredible and passionate volunteers and donors gathered at the New Edinburgh Field House. After a three-year hiatus, we were once again able to come together and celebrate these wonderful river lovers for all they do for the river.

Riverkeeper Laura Reinsborough thanked everyone present for their ongoing dedication to a healthy river, and marked the notable commitment of two individuals with our yearly awards. The Community Impact Award went to Joann McCann and the Dan Brunton Volunteer of the Year Award to Olivia Leon. We look forward to continuing the tradition of recognizing and celebrating these amazing contributors at an even bigger event next year!



168
swimmers

\$ 15,528
raised for river protection

60
volunteers

“It was a great event and I am sure that it was well appreciated by all the donors and volunteers”
- Volunteer”

8 who have been volunteering with Ottawa Riverkeeper for eight years or more!

267 volunteers 3129 volunteer hours

812 individual donors \$ 321K raised for river protection from individual donors
For the fiscal year ending March 31 2022

“This was a great introduction for me to open water swimming! This is something that I have wanted to try for years...and I now look forward to participating in the years to come!”
- 2022 Open Water Swim participant”



Riverkeeper Gala Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor



Chair's Reception



Music



Lounge



Net Zero



Oyster Bar



Gold



Silver



Bronze



Special Thanks



Our People

Staff

- Riverkeeper & CEO*
Laura Reinsborough
- Managing Director*
Dave Rayner
- Administrative Assistant*
Naomi Davies
- Director of Philanthropy*
Chloe Hillier
- Fundraising Manager*
Kim Holmes
- Database & Fundraising Coordinator*
Ian Atwell
- Donor Stewardship Coordinator*
Maddie Perrault
- Director of Science & Policy*
Larissa Holman
- Biologist*
Katy Alambo
- Scientist & Program Coordinator*
Matt Fyfe
- Director of Education & Community Engagement*
Julia Ostertag
- Outreach & Volunteer Coordinator*
Renée Davies
- Youth Programming Assistant*
Hannah Delion
- Communications Manager*
Matthew Brocklehurst
- Communications & Design Coordinator*
Mark Bernards
- Seasonal Staff*
Meghan Burns
Alexander Dufour
Ian Jason-Byerley
Meghan Jolley
Olivia MacAskill
Emma Stewart
Uforo Udofia
- Outgoing Staff*
Melinda Gilhen-Baker
Pier-Antoine Lacombe

Honourees

- Riverkeeper Emeritus*
Meredith Brown
- Honorary Riverkeepers*
Daniel "Alfie" Alfredsson
Hon. Elizabeth Dowdeswell
Rt Hon. David Johnston and Mrs Sharon Johnston
Rt Hon. Beverley McLachlin
Henry Burris
Sen. Murray Sinclair
Sophie Gregoire Trudeau
Kevin Vickers
Stephen Poloz
Mark Carney
- Ottawa Riverkeeper Ambassadors*
Kathleen Edwards
Claudette Commanda
- Water Leaders*
Sen. Rosa Galvez
Founders of Ottawa Riverkeeper
Pacte de l'Amitié
Mission 100 Tonnes
River Surf Ottawa-Gatineau
Autumn Peltier
Paul Dewar
de Gaspé Beaubien Foundation
Jim Watson
Gord Nixon

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- Outgoing Directors*
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Linda Dwyer-Commando
Sen. Rosa Galvez
Michael McSweeney

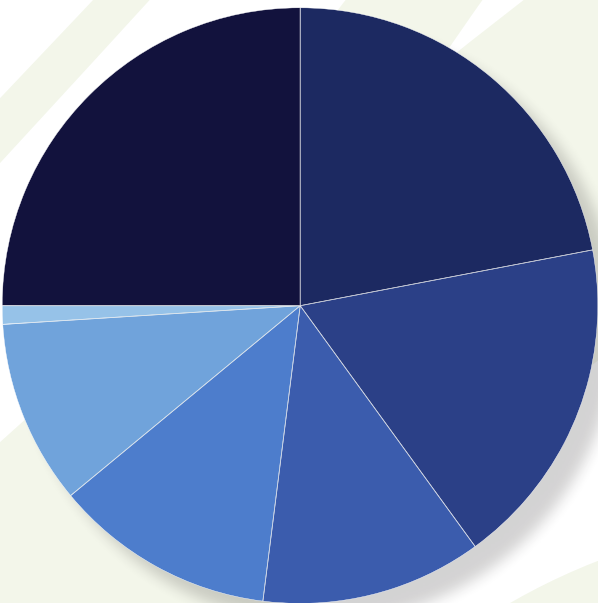


We want to acknowledge and thank everyone who has been a part of the Ottawa Riverkeeper team this year. We have waved goodbye and watched proudly as some members of our team have gone on to new opportunities, all while excitedly welcoming fresh faces to the organization.

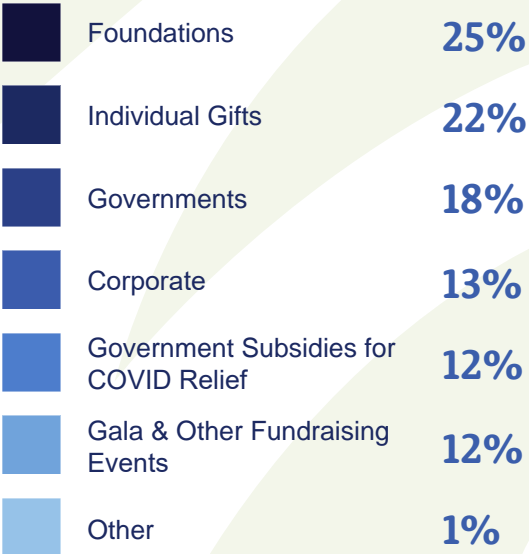
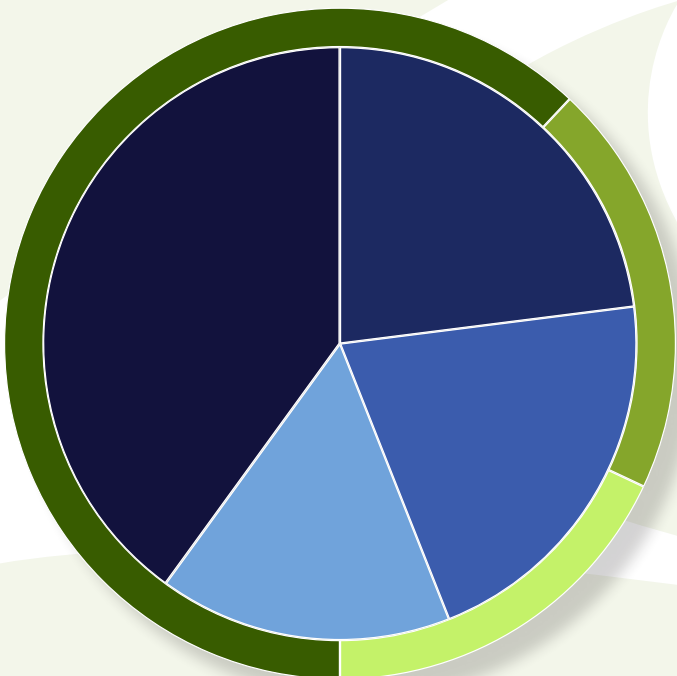
Our Financials

For the fiscal year ending March 31 2022

Income: \$ 1 427 429



Expenses: \$ 1 419 688



Your Support

For the fiscal year ending March 31 2022

\$ 100 000 +

Colleen & Jeff Westeinde
Government of Canada
Government of Canada - Employment & Social Development Canada
RBC Foundation

\$ 50 000 - \$ 99 999

Franklin Holtforster & Birgitte Alting-Mees
Government of Canada - Environment & Climate Change Canada
Insurance Bureau of Canada
The Mosaic Company
Anonymous donors

\$ 25 000 - \$ 49 999

Barbara Crook & Dan Greenberg, The Danbe Foundation
Diana & Mark Carney
Echo Fondation
Evolugen
Gary & Cornelia Duck
MakeWay Foundation
Ontario Ministry of the Environment - Conservation & Parks
Anonymous donors

\$ 1 000 - \$ 4 999

Barry Sims
Bass Pro Shop & Cabela's Outdoor Fund
Bill & Margaret Dean Perpetual Motion - OCF
Caduceon Environmental Laboratories
Cairine Wilson Secondary School
Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission
Daniel Brunton
David Coletto & Lisa Hansen
David & Helen Spence
Dominion City Brewing Co.
ExecHealth
Frankton-Coffin Family Foundation
GGFL Chartered Professional Accountants
Government of Canada - Fisheries & Oceans Canada
Government of Québec
The Grand Lodge of Quebec
Jean & Richard Van Loon

\$ 10 000 - \$ 24 999

Bayne Family
Boreal River Adventures
Chemistry Industry Association of Canada
The Crabtree Foundation
Leacross Foundation
Mierins Family
Ottawa Community Foundation
Thistledown Foundation
Weider Family
Anonymous donors

\$ 5 000 - \$ 9 999

Alterna Savings - Caisse Alterna
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Labarge Charitable Foundation
The McLean Foundation
MRC D'Argenteuil
MRC de Papineau
Portage Power
Wall Space Gallery & Framing
Whitewater Brewing Co
Tim & Michele Hayman
United Counties of Prescott & Russell
Anonymous donors

< \$ 1 000

We recognize and thank the over 750 donors who contributed at this level.



Ottawa RIVERKEEPER®
GARDE-RIVIÈRE *des Outaouais*

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www.ottawariverkeeper.ca

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