



South Nation
Conservation
de la Nation Sud

Watershed Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

Date: March 24th, 2026

Time: 12:00 p.m.

Location: Watershed Room, SNC

Address: 38 Victoria Street, Finch, ON K0C 1K0





Watershed Advisory Committee

Meeting Agenda

March 24th, 2026 at 12:00 p.m.

1. Traditional Land Acknowledgement and Traditional Opening: John
2. Chair's Remarks
3. Approval of Agenda (Supplemental Agenda)
4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
5. Approval of Watershed Advisory Committee meeting minutes of November 25th, 2025 3-7
6. Staff Update: PowerPoint Presentation
7. New Business:
 - a. Update: Consolidation of Conservation Authorities (verbal): Carl
 - b. Update: Watershed Advisory Committee Membership: Ronda 8-10
 - c. Update: Grants Sub-Committee Meeting of March 9th, 2026: Ronda 11-12
 - d. Update: Great Lakes Stewardship and Education Agreement: John 13-14
 - e. Update: 2025 SNC Annual Report: John 15-16
 - f. Update: Community Engagements: Ronda 17-20
8. Supplemental Agenda
 - a. Update: Work Plans – Forest Cover and Water Budget: John/Sandra
9. Dates of Upcoming Meetings:
 - a. Watershed Advisory Committee
 - June 23rd at 12:00 p.m.
 - September 22nd at 12:00 p.m.
 - November 24th at 12:00 p.m.
 - b. Grants Sub-Committee
 - June 15th at 9:00 a.m.
 - September 14th at 9:00 a.m.
 - November 16th at 9:00 a.m.
10. Adjournment

Ronda Boutz,
Secretary-Treasurer.

/rb



WATERSHED ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting No. 03/25
 Tuesday, November 25th, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

Watershed Room, SNC



Members Present:

Bill Smirle, SNC Board of Directors, Committee Chair
 Matt Alkerton, Member at Large
 Sarah Burger, Member at Large
 Steve Densham, SNC Chair, ex-officio, Chair
 Emilie DeRochie, River Institute
 Dorothy Hamilton, Ontario Woodlot Association – SDG Chapter
 Larissa Holman, Ottawa River Keeper
 Murray Inch, Volunteer of Oak Valley Pioneer Park
 Alain Jaquemet, Member at Large
 Genevieve Lajoie, SNC Board of Directors
 Glenn Mackey, ALUS - Ontario East
 Pamela O'Donnell, Member at Large
 Louis Prevost, United Counties of Prescott & Russell
 Tara Redpath, City of Ottawa
 Jean Saint-Pierre, Bois  Est
 Cindy Saucier, Member at Large

Regrets:

Greg Faaren, St. Lawrence Parks Commission
 Tim Fisher, Leeds and Grenville Municipalities
 Jordan Graham, Member at Large
 Catherine Kitts, Second Vice Chair, ex-officio
 Jackie Kelly-Pemberton, Member at Large, Committee Vice Chair
 Erica Louttit, Miitig Healing Lodge
 Fran ois St. Amour, SNC Board of Directors
 Fred Schueler, Fragile Inheritance Natural History
 Erika Sheridan, Member at Large
 Kayla Sunday, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne
 Adrian Wynands, SNC Vice Chair, ex-officio
 Peter Young, United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

Staff Present:

Ronda Boutz, Secretary-Treasurer
 Michelle Cavanagh, Team Lead, Special Projects
 Sandra Mancini, Managing Director, Natural Hazards and Infrastructure
 John Mesman, Managing Director, Property, Conservation Lands and Community Outreach
 Kelsey Smith, Stewardship and Outreach Assistant

Guests:

Linda Payant, SNC Board of Directors



To: Watershed Advisory Committee
From: Ronda Boutz, Secretary-Treasurer
Date: March 16, 2026
Subject: Update: Watershed Advisory Committee Membership

RECOMMENDATION:

The Watershed Advisory Committee receive and file the Watershed Advisory Committee Membership update.

DISCUSSION:

Watershed Advisory Committee

The South Nation Conservation (SNC) Watershed Advisory Committee provides stakeholder input on SNC programs and services, and the development of watershed plans and strategies. Members help foster public awareness of SNC's programs and services including natural hazard programs; conservation lands; and stewardship and outreach initiatives.

As per the approved Watershed Advisory Committee Terms of Reference (BD-159/23), members hold a four-year term, with appointments synchronized with municipal council terms. A copy of the current 2024-2026 Committee membership is attached for the Committee's information.

The Board appointed Mr. Bill Smirle to the office of Committee Chair for a two-year term in March 2024 (BD-050/24). Ms. Jacqueline Kelly-Pemberton was appointed Committee Vice-Chair, for a two-year term, at the Committee's inaugural meeting in April 2024 (WAC-005/24). Given the uncertainty surrounding the proposed provincial consolidation of conservation authorities, the Board of Directors has extended the term of the current Committee Chair and Vice-Chair to the end of 2026.

Grants Sub-Committee

The Watershed Advisory Committee appointed members to the Grants Sub-Committee for a term ending December 31, 2026, at their March 2025 meeting (WAC-003/25). The Watershed Advisory Committee Vice-Chair, Ms. Kelly-Pemberton, is Chair of the Grants Sub-Committee.

Appointed members are:

- Tara Redpath, City of Ottawa (automatic appointment);
- Brendan Jacobs, Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program (automatic appointment);
- Glenn Mackey, ALUS-Ontario East;
- Jordan Graham, Member at Large;
- Alain Jaquemet, Member at Large; and
- Pam O'Donnell, Member at Large.



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

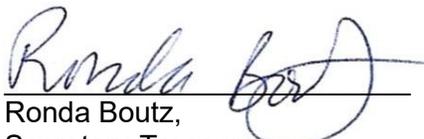
Compliance with Budget: Funding for the various grant programs is included in the 2025 Budget under the following sections:

- Resource Management: Landowner Stewardship and Outreach, pages 14-15
- Resource Management: Partner Programs, pages 16-17

SNC Policy Adherence: Subsection 18 (2) of the Conservation Authorities Act allows SNC to establish advisory boards as it considers appropriate.

The Watershed Advisory Committee is governed in accordance with SNC's Administrative By-laws and the Committee Terms of Reference.

Programs and Services Category: Category 2 – Municipal Agreements and Category 3 – Watershed (Other) Programs: Private Land Stewardship and Outreach



Ronda Boutz,
Secretary-Treasurer.

Attachments: 2024-2026 SNC Watershed Advisory Committee Membership



2024-2026 SNC Watershed Advisory Committee Membership

	Member Name	Affiliation	Sector Representation
1	Kayla Sunday	Mohawks of Akwesasne	First Nations
2	TBC	Algonquins of Pikwakanagan	First Nations
3	Erica Louttit	Miitig Healing Lodge	First Nations/Métis
4	Jordan Graham	Member at Large	Public
5	Sarah Burger	Member at Large	Public
6	Erika Sheridan	Member at Large	Public
7	Pamela O'Donnell	Member at Large	Public
8	Murray Inch	Volunteers of Oak Valley Pioneer Park	Public (environmental)
9	Fred Schueler	Fragile Inheritance Natural History	Public (environmental)
10	Cindy Saucier	Member at Large	Public (environmental)
11	Emilie DeRochie	River Institute	Partner Organization
12	Larissa Holman	Ottawa River Keeper	Partner Organization
13	Jaqueline Kelly-Pemberton, Committee Vice-Chair	Member at Large	Agriculture
14	Alain Jacquement	Member at Large	Agriculture
15	Glenn Mackey	ALUS - Ontario East	Agriculture
16	Jean Saint-Pierre	Boisé Est	Forestry
17	Dorothy Hamilton	Ontario Woodlot Association – SDG Chapter	Forestry
18	Matt Alkerton	Member at Large	Hunting/Trapping
19	Greg Faaren	St. Lawrence Parks Commission	Tourism/Recreation
20	Peter Young	United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry	Municipal
21	Louis Prevost	United Counties of Prescott and Russell	Municipal
22	Tim Fisher	Leeds and Grenville Municipalities	Municipal
23	Tara Redpath	City of Ottawa	Municipal
24	Genevieve Lajoie	SNC Board of Directors	SNC
25	Bill Smirle, Committee Chair	SNC Board of Directors	SNC
26	Francois St. Amour	SNC Board of Directors	SNC

Note: Board Executive Committee are *ex-officio members* of all SNC Standing Committee.



To: Watershed Advisory Committee
From: Ronda Boutz, Secretary-Treasurer
Date: March 16th, 2026
Subject: Update: Grants Sub-Committee Meeting of March 9th, 2026

RECOMMENDATION:

The Watershed Advisory Committee receive and file the Grants Sub-Committee Meeting of March 9th, 2026 update.

DISCUSSION:

The Grants Sub-Committee held their first meeting of 2026 on March 9th. This report provides a summary of the meeting.

1. The Grants Sub-Committee reviewed two grant appeals for cover crop projects denied at the November 2025 meeting.
 - Sub-Committee upheld their decision to deny funding as project applications were considered retro-active and therefore ineligible.

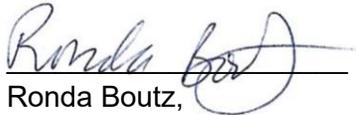
2. The Grants Sub-Committee approved:
 - Eastern Ontario Water Resources Program 2026 Application Form, Guidelines, and Rating Criteria
 - No changes, status quo
 - Clean Water Program 2026 Grant Structure, Guidelines, and Rating Criteria with the following changes:
 - Cover crops
 - Changed guidelines to allow for harvested and/or grazed cover crops
 - Added new grant for harvested/grazed cover crops: \$10/ac up to a max. of 100 ac
 - Manure Storages
 - Increased maximum grant to \$15,000 from \$8,000
 - Well Decommissioning
 - Changed grant rate to 80% up to \$2,000 from 100% up to \$1,000
 - Septic Systems
 - Increased maximum grant to \$3,000 from \$2,000
 - Innovated Projects
 - Re-introduced an innovation grant at 50% funding to a maximum of \$5,000



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3. The Grants Sub-Committee received updates on:

- Eastern Ontario Water Resources Program Financial Statement – as of December 31st, 2025
- Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program - Marginal Lands Initiative
- Clean Water Program 2026 Budget

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Ronda Boutz", written over a horizontal line.

Ronda Boutz,
Secretary-Treasurer.



To: Watershed Advisory Committee
From: John Mesman, Managing Director, Property, Conservation Lands and Community Outreach
Date: March 16, 2026
Subject: Update: Great Lakes Stewardship and Education Agreement

RECOMMENDATION:

The Watershed Advisory Committee receive and file the update on the Great Lakes Stewardship and Education Agreement.

DISCUSSION:

South Nation Conservation (SNC) is working with the Great Lakes Office at the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks to create learning opportunities at key project sites including at the Two Creek Forest, Findlay Creek, The Healing Place, and Cooper's Marsh Conservation Areas.

Project sites have been selected due to ongoing stewardship projects at these locations with external funding support. Project funding will allow for additional habitat restoration activities that students can complete to further restore natural resources. Field trips will be scheduled throughout 2027 via engagement with all school boards in both the SNC and RRCA region in 2026.

This project will also support the return of the St. Lawrence River Student Summit which was last hosted in 2017. A recap video can be accessed here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-wZnfKKOEjU>

High school students enrolled in Specialist High Skills Major programs will be targeted to participate to help provide training certificates for their high school diplomas. However, this Student Summit will be open for all high school students to participate, with an approximate expected attendance of 100 to 200 students in Fall 2027.

This project aims to establish an educational stewardship model to allow for annual student participation in SNC's environmental stewardship projects and to work with regional partners to maintain an annual Student Summit focused on the Ottawa and St. Lawrence Rivers.

Teacher training opportunities will also be established to help both students and teachers become more familiar with the watershed's natural resources and their condition.

This initiative builds on the success of SNC's education programs and environmental stewardship projects on SNC properties. Collaboration with school boards will help restore education program participation to levels experienced before the COVID-19 Pandemic.



FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget: Costs associated with environmental education are included in the 2026 SNC Budget under: Resource Management: Landowner Stewardship and Outreach: pages 14 and 15.

Costs associated with habitat restoration projects on SNC land are included in the 2026 SNC Budget under Property Management: Conservation Lands, pages 22 and 23.

Costs associated with the St. Lawrence River Student Summit were not included in the 2026 SNC Budget and will be 100% cost-recovered through this project. It is also expected that an approximately \$20,000 in additional funding will be provided by participating school boards to support the summit.

Approximately \$15,000 will be provided to the Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA) to support student opportunities at the Cooper's Marsh Conservation Area.

SNC Policy Adherence: All project expenditures will adhere to SNC's Purchasing Policy. Project activities involving students will adhere to applicable Standard Operating Procedures and policies.

Programs and Services Category: Category 1: Mandatory Programs: Conservation Lands Management and Category 3 – Other Watershed Programs: Education and Outreach.

John Mesman,
Managing Director,
Property, Conservation Lands, and Community Outreach



To: Watershed Advisory Committee
From: John Mesman, Managing Director, Property, Conservation Lands,
and Community Outreach
Date: March 12, 2026
Subject: Update: 2025 SNC Annual Report

RECOMMENDATION:

The Watershed Advisory Committee receive and file the 2025 SNC Annual Report update.

DISCUSSION:

Annual reports are an important way to highlight South Nation Conservation's (SNC) programs, services, and accomplishments throughout the preceding year. The report also provides partners and stakeholders with information regarding financial performance, Board of Directors membership, program implementation, and project updates.

Highlights from the 2025 Annual Report are summarized below:

- **Featured Topics:**
Water Response Programs (Flood Forecasting and Low Water Advisory), Bear Brook Watershed Characterization, Floodplain and Erosion Hazard Mapping, Public Consultation, Planning and Permitting Timelines, Dam Management, new Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program, and funding partnerships.
- **Conservation Areas (CA):**
A new record of over 280,000 park visitors. Restoration work at the Two Creeks Forest CA and continued shoreline restoration in J. Henry Tweed CA. Infrastructure site improvements including two new pedestrian bridges, two new public docks (including at the Spencerville Mill), and BBQ replacements.
- **Conservation Land Securement:**
Six properties totalling 228 acres of land were secured through partial purchase and donation in Augusta (145 acres), North Grenville (46 acres), The Nation (24 acres), Edwardsburgh-Cardinal (9 acres), North Stormont (2 acres) and North Dundas (2 acres).
- **Environmental Stewardship Initiatives:**
Tree Planting Programs (110,000 trees planted), Woodlot Advisory Service, Woodlot Storm Recovery, Clean Water and Monitoring Programs.
- **Corporate Services:**
Financial summary and Board of Directors membership.

Copies of the Annual Report in both English and French are now available in print and online on the SNC website under Resources / Publications. Copies will be distributed throughout the year and made available to municipalities and partner agencies.



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FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/ADHERENCE TO SNC POLICY:

Compliance with Budget: Funding for completing the design of the 2025 Annual Report is included in the 2026 SNC Budget under Corporate Services, Corporate Communications, on pages 38-39.

SNC Policy Adherence: All expenditures will adhere to SNC's Purchasing Policy. For purchases of \$500 up to \$10,000 competitive quotes will be obtained where practical.

Programs and Services Category: General Operating: Governance

John Mesman,
Managing Director, Property, Conservation Lands, and Community Outreach



To: Watershed Advisory Committee
From: Ronda Boutz, Secretary-Treasurer
Date: March 16, 2026
Subject: Update: Community Engagements

RECOMMENDATION:

The Watershed Advisory Committee receive and file the Community Engagement update.

DISCUSSION:

A key role of the Watershed Advisory Committee is to promote and advocate for South Nation Conservation (SNC) and its role in watershed management and to communicate results of program achievements to the public.

SNC relies on its members to share updates and information to their member organizations and local communities. Members attendance at meetings and events help to strengthen SNC's partnerships across the jurisdiction.

The attached provides a summary of community engagements, since the last meeting, provided by Committee members. Members will have an opportunity at the meeting to ask questions or provide additional comments on this update.

Ronda Boutz
Secretary-Treasurer.

Attachment: Community Engagement Update – as of March 16th, 2026



Community Engagement Update – as of March 16th, 2026

- Tara Redpath
 - City of Ottawa staff have carried out a 5-year review and renewal of the Ottawa Rural Clean Water Program, and the report will be presented to the City's Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee (ARAC) on April 2, 2026. Pending ARAC's support, this report will rise to City Council on April 8, 2026. Many Watershed Advisory Committee members, other interest holders, and past grant recipients shared valuable insights on this Program by completing surveys or through interviews. Many of the suggestions for improvement have been incorporated into the recommendations for renewing this Program for 2026-2030. Thanks very much to all those who participated in this review!
 - The City of Ottawa is once again offering [Plant Your Place!](#) to City residents, our private land tree planting program. In 2026, Plant Your Place! will double the numbers of trees planted by supporting the planting of approximately 2,500 trees on private land through two program streams: City-Wide Tree Distribution (2,400 trees) and Full-Service Tree Planting in Priority Areas (100 trees). Trees are being offered to residents, free of charge, for planting on private property. Trees will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis, with a phased launch that prioritizes residents in Wards containing Priority Areas, based on the City of Ottawa's Tree Equity Score Analysis. Registration for City-wide tree distribution opened on March 2, and registration for full-service tree planting in priority areas will open on April 8.
- Pam O'Donnell
 - Carlsbad Springs Community Association will host their third annual Tree for Tree event on May 2, with a plan to give away over 750 trees. For the first time, they will host a community BBQ at the same time. They have invited South Nation Conservation Authority to participate and are open to other environmental organizations joining the occasion. You can email pamelajeannotdonnell@gmail.com if your group is interested.
 - CAFES (Community Action for Environmental Sustainability) is hosting their AGM on March 24 from 6:30 to 9:30 pm via zoom. It will begin with a keynote address by Dr. Katherine Hayhoe on "Climate Science: What's new" and this portion of the agenda is open to non-members. You can find information and register to attend at <https://cafesottawa.ca>.
- Matt Alkerton
 - proposed Conservation Authority changes were brought up at our local Fur Harvesters meeting
 - SNC invited to speak at our upcoming OFMF zone meeting April 18th about Hunting and Trapping on CA lands



- Jackie Pemberton
 - behalf of ALUS National, I have been asked to participate in a video opportunity with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). To be featured as a woman farmer (for the International Year of the Woman Farmer), and especially highlight our work on ALUS Ontario
- Cindy Saucier
 - MARCH IT ON OUT! March 28 at St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Russell. Pay \$15 and take away anything. An initiative and fundraiser by Russell District Horticultural Society to divert from landfill.



- Fred Schueler
 - We've distributed our 5K records of Ontario Phragmites, and have applied for funding to revisit and analyse the sites these represent, we had a quite successful season of Mudpuppy Nights in Oxford Mills, we worked with the grades 1&2 class at Oxford-on-Rideau school in their bonding with the creek, arranged for an April presentation on Eels at the North Grenville Historical Society, published an account of a major aspect of the life history of Water Snakes, continue to advocate for a municipal museum in North Grenville, we've groaned with Jean Saint-Pierre about the high speed rail proposal, and I continue on the boards of the Ontario Rivers Alliance and Butternut Creek Nature Reserve.
 - Below is an article, "Spring Calling", that's in press at the North Grenville Times

Spring Calling

Fred Schueler – Fragile Inheritance Natural History

On the first of March in 2017, we reported on an active Treefrog (*Hyla versicolor*) in Bishops Mills...

Schueler, Fred, & Aleta Karstad. 2017. **Record-breaking Treefrog on St-Lawrence Street in Bishops Mills**. North Grenville Times 10 (5):14. 8 March 2017. - <https://nqtimes.ca/record-breaking-treefrog-on-st-lawrence-street-in-bishops-mills/>



....This year there is 47 cm of snow (containing 10.5 cm of water) on the ground at this date, as I begin the programme of listening for calling frogs and birds that we've been carrying out since 1992, and the air, as I listen, is -16.5°C , a low temperature matched in the listening records only in 2012, 2014, and 2025, when the displaced polar vortex had begun to disrupt the steady progress of global warming. This winter has been the most extreme of these disruptions, with arctic localities experiencing record high temperatures while we've had steady negative teens & twenties.

The first three species we expect to hear in a normal year are Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*), Spring Peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*), and Chorus Frogs (*Pseudacris triseriata/maculata*).

Woodcock, which probe for earthworms with their long bills, will be coming north from their southern wintering grounds to begin the males' song and dance routine: nasal calls of "peent" from the ground followed by a twittering flight song produced by narrow wing feathers. Peepers and Chorus Frogs thaw from their overwinter freeze-tolerance, and move to fish-free temporary "vernal" ponds to give their distinctive calls: peeps for Peepers and a rough trill for Chorus Frogs.

The earliest date we've heard Woodcock fight-singing is 8 March 2000, and the latest 9 June 2003 – they've been less abundant in recent years as their preferred open habitat is squeezed out by brushy second-growth woods. Before European earthworms were introduced to glaciated areas, Woodcock weren't found north of New Jersey, but now that the European worms have followed settler agriculture and bait fishing across Canada, they're found north to James Bay. Peepers are the most ubiquitous of these species, and our earliest date is 19 March 2012, trailing off into summer calling from trees to 23 July 2003. Since the early 1990s our "Great Lakes-St Lawrence" Chorus Frogs, with a mixed genetic heritage from the northwest and southwest, have declined all across their range in Ontario and Quebec, so that we only hear them from Bishops Mills in some years now: the earliest date is 31 March 1981, before the decline, and since then 2 April 2010 & 5 May 2014.

Our Chorus Frogs are designated as "Threatened," and there are efforts to restore them: conservation authorities are digging vernal pools, Vance Trudeau's lab at the University of Ottawa is working towards breeding them in captivity for release in sites where they have disappeared, and Stephen Lougheed's lab at Queens University is working on the hybrid genetics of our populations. If you want to hear the calls of this distinctive species, there are several populations in the swamps and ponds along Bolton road north of Bishops Mills, and they call during the day as well as at night.