

May 4, 2007

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Subject:       **Erosion Concerns**  
                  **South bank of the Jock River Upstream on the Heart's Desire Weir**

Gentlemen;

Thank you for your letter dated April 17, 2007.

We have been aware of the condition of the river bank above the Heart's Desire weir and have been casually monitoring it for some time. Until now, there has not been a call for action to investigate means of arresting the erosion and stabilizing the banks.

The land that is most affected by the erosion/slope stability condition is in the ownership of the City of Ottawa. RVCA owns only a two small areas in the immediate vicinity of the abutments of the weir which our crews access via the municipal road allowance (as indicated in the attached diagram).

From time to time, RVCA staff have considered initiating a review of the RVCA's annual operations at the Heart's Desire Weir, with a view to permanently removing the bulkheads and letting the river flow naturally through the site on a year round basis. Our motivation for such a change in operating policy has to do with minimizing annual operational costs and avoiding occupational health and safety issues, where doing so can be accomplished without compromising watershed management objectives. The process would involve consultations with fish and aquatic habitat specialists in order to have a thorough understanding of the ecological merits of the operating policy alternatives.

However, past suggestions that we might change the RVCA's annual routine at the weir (undertaken since the weir's construction in 1978) have met some resistance from members of the Heart's Desire community on the north side of the river, who see the headpond as a local amenity, so the operation has continued unchanged.

There are a number of perspectives and interests that will have to be considered in any review of the RVCA's operating practices at the weir site. Your letter could be the catalyst that we should use to initiate a review, starting with a meeting of the interested parties to see if it would be possible to arrive quickly at a consensus on an appropriate course of action.

Our field crew has tentatively scheduled the annual bulkhead installation to proceed on or around May 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>, depending on weather and flow/water level conditions, but that could be postponed to accommodate an initial meeting to explore the possibility of a change in policy that could be supported by all interested parties, including (but not necessarily limited to):

- Stonebridge Community Association
- Hearts Desire Community Association
- Friends of the Jock River
- RVCA (personnel responsible for fish and aquatic habitat evaluation, personnel responsible for water control operations, and communications personnel)
- City of Ottawa (personnel responsible for property management, and personnel connected with the Jock River Reach 1 subwatershed plan)

We would be pleased to host a meeting of the appropriate parties at our offices in Manotick, sometime in the next few weeks.

If you could give me a few dates when you would be available to participate in a meeting (I assume evenings would be preferable), we can start the process of setting one up.

Also, any advice you might be able to provide in terms of identifying other individuals to represent the community-based organizations at such a meeting would be very much appreciated.

Yours truly



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