

	Our logo The RPEVG logo was created jointly by Caroline Grégoire and Roger Girard. Its spherical shape evokes the movement of water and its perpetual renewal. The three drops represent the main sources of water in our region: lakes, rivers, and groundwater. This logo thus symbolizes the essential, dynamic, and interconnected nature of water—a shared resource that the RPEVG is committed to protecting and promoting.
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ANNUAL REPORT 2025-2026

A Word from the President

Since its founding in 2013, the *Regroupement pour la protection de l'eau de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau (RPEVG)*, has held an annual general meeting every year and has regularly elected its board members. During this period, the board of directors has held 79 official meetings.

Thanks to these meetings, decisions, and initiatives, we now have a substantial written record of our progress. However, we felt it was important to establish a new practice: the publication of an annual report for our members, our partners, and anyone interested in water protection in our region.

This first annual report, presented at the 2026 Annual General Meeting, highlights the progress made and the efforts devoted to the organization's development over the past year.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to my predecessors as president, Marc Grégoire and Mario Gaudette, as well as to everyone who has served on the board of directors since the organization's founding. Their commitment has helped build a strong, credible, and unifying organization.

Thanks to the work done by those who came before us, we can now continue our mission on a solid foundation and confidently tackle the challenges that lie ahead for our region.

Francis LeBlanc
President

1. The RPEVG at a Glance

Founded in 2013, the Regroupement pour la protection de l'eau de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau is a nonprofit organization that operates primarily within the territory of the MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau.

Its jurisdiction includes:

- 17 municipalities;
- 5 unorganized territories;
- The territory of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation;
- More than 3,200 lakes;
- Approximately 19,231 kilometers of waterways;
- More than 367,000 hectares of lakes and other bodies of water.

The territory is primarily divided between two major watersheds: the Gatineau River watershed, which covers most of the region, and the Coulange River watershed, located to the west.

The Gatineau River is the MRC's main watercourse. It originates in the Laurentians and flows southward to the Ottawa River. Among the territory's most significant bodies of water are the Baskatong and Cabonga reservoirs, as well as 31-Mile Lake and Lake Poisson-Blanc.

This abundance of water directly contributes to the quality of life, identity, appeal, and economy of the Gatineau Valley. It also represents a significant collective responsibility.

1.1 Our Mission

The RPEVG's mission is to protect and enhance the waterways, bodies of water, and groundwater within the MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau to contribute to residents' quality of life and the region's sustainable prosperity.

This mission is based, in particular, on:

- Coordination among stakeholders in the field;
- Support for municipalities and lake associations;
- Raising public awareness and fostering citizen engagement;
- Improving knowledge;
- Disseminating scientific and technical information;
- Developing regional solutions tailored to water-related challenges.

The RPEVG acts as a regional partner to the MRC, municipalities, governments, lake associations, environmental groups, and other organizations that share its goals.

1.3 Organization Status

The Regroupement pour la protection de l'eau de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau received its letters patent on January 21, 2013, pursuant to Part III of the Quebec Companies Act.

Its Quebec business number is 1168871970.

The RPEVG operates in accordance with its general by-laws, which were originally adopted on May 4th, 2013, and revised on February 20th, 2019.

1.4 Governance Based on Volunteer Engagement

The RPEVG is governed by a board of directors composed of volunteers. Board members receive no compensation for their participation in the organization's meetings, activities, or projects.

Since 2013, the board of directors has held 79 official meetings. These meetings have helped ensure the organization's governance, develop its strategic direction, and maintain a consistent regional presence in water protection.

The Association also holds an annual general meeting during which its members are briefed on the organization's activities, finances, and priorities and elect the board members.

1.5 Funding and Operations

The RPEVG funds its activities primarily through:

- Annual contributions from municipalities;
- Contributions from lake associations;
- Donations and contributions from partners;
- Fundraising campaigns;
- Requests for financial assistance related to specific projects.

The contribution of volunteers is also essential to the Regroupement's operations. Their expertise, their knowledge of the region, and the time they devote to its main activities enable the RPEVG to maintain its capacity for action.

1.6 Our Principal Partners

Water protection is a shared responsibility. Several organizations contribute to the understanding, planning, and management of our region's water resources.

The RPEVG collaborates in particular with:

- The MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau ;
- Local municipalities ;
- Lake and lakeshore residents' associations;
- The Agence de bassin versant des 7 (ABV des 7);
- The Outaouais Regional Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development;
- Government ministries and agencies;
- Specialized companies and experts;
- Engaged citizens.

The ABV des 7 is responsible for developing and updating the Water Master Plan for the Outaouais watersheds within its jurisdiction.

The Outaouais Regional Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CREDDO) also collaborated on the preparation of the MRC's Regional Plan for Wetlands and Water Bodies.

These planning tools help improve understanding of natural environments, establish priorities for action, and support the decisions of regional stakeholders.

2. The Strategic Plan for 2025-2029

At its annual general meeting on August 10, 2025, the RPEVG adopted a five-year strategic plan covering the period 2025-2029.

This strategic plan is accompanied by:

- A communications plan;
- An action plan;
- Short-, medium-, and long-term objectives;
- Initiatives structured around four priority areas.

The Four Pillars of the Strategic Plan

Governance

Strengthen the RPEVG's structures, capacities, and recognition to ensure the continuity and credibility of its work.

Collaboration

Bring together municipalities, lake associations, organizations, experts, and citizens around a shared vision.

Protection

Help prevent and reduce threats to lakes, rivers, wetlands, and groundwater.

Promotion

Raise awareness of the value of water, promote best practices and foster initiatives carried out in the Gatineau Valley.

3. Highlights of 2025-2026

The 2025-2026 year marked an important milestone in the development of the RPEVG.

Key achievements included:

- The adoption of the 2025-2029 strategic plan;
- The development of a communication plan;
- The development of a new website;
- The launch of a newsletter;
- The continuation of a regional radio campaign;
- Participation in two boat and outdoor recreation trade shows;
- The organization of a demonstration of boat decontamination technologies;
- The presentation of the Regroupement's priorities to the MRC;
- The preparation and hosting of the regional forum "Our Water, Our Wealth";
- The launch of a mobilization effort focused on the prevention of invasive aquatic species.

3.1 Dialogue with the MRC

Over the course of the year, the RPEVG Presented an action and collaboration plan to the Prefect of the MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau.

The Regroupement's president also presented the organization's priorities to the MRC's climate change committee.

These efforts helped raise awareness of the RPEVG's regional role and strengthen dialogue with municipal decision-makers.

The Regroupement hopes to continue this collaboration so that water-related issues are fully considered in regional decision-making, particularly regarding land-use planning, tourism, access to bodies of water, shoreline protection, and the prevention of invasive species.

3.2 Raising Awareness Among Boaters

Boats, trailers, and boating equipment are one of the main vectors for the spread of invasive alien aquatic species.

To raise awareness among boaters, the RPEVG set up an information booth at two regional events:

- The Ottawa Boat Show;
- Le Salon chasse, pêche et plein de Maniwaki

These activities provided an opportunity to meet directly with waterway users, sharer information with them, and remind them of the importance of cleaning, draining, and drying boats and equipment before moving from one body of water to another.

A demonstration of boat decontamination technologies was also organized in collaboration with the company Ozero during the RPEVG’s annual general meeting.

This demonstration allowed members and partners to see various solutions that could be used to improve cleaning and decontamination services in the region.

3.3 Communications and Information

In 2025, the RPEVG continued a public service announcement campaign broadcast on CHGA.FM, a radio station that serves the entire Gatineau Valley.

These messages were designed to raise awareness about protecting water bodies and the behaviours people can adopt to reduce the risk of spreading invasive species.

- The Association has also strengthened its communication tools by:
- Launching its website;
- Launching a newsletter;
- Producing brochures and informational materials;
- Increasing its use of digital communications;
- Disseminating information to its members and partners.

These tools enable the RPEVG to reach out more effectively to citizens, municipalities, lake associations, and the various users of the area.

3.4 Regional Forum “Our Water, Our Wealth”

In 2025, the board of directors began preparations for a major regional forum on the protection of lakes and waterways.

The “Our Water, Our Wealth” Forum was held on May 29th, 2026, in Messines. It brought together more than 70 participants from municipalities, lake associations, regional organizations, concerned citizens, and experts on water issues.

The Forum aimed to:

- Gain a better understanding of the threats affecting water bodies;
- Raise awareness of initiatives already implemented in the region;
- Share scientific and technical knowledge;

- Foster dialogue among the various stakeholders;
- Identify common priorities for action;
- Mobilize the community around key regional projects;

The diversity of participants demonstrated that water protection is a widely shared concern in the Gatineau Valley.

3.5 Ecosystems Under Pressure

The Forum's discussions helped raise awareness of two major categories of threats affecting lakes and waterways: pressures from the watershed and threats related to invasive alien species.

Pressures from the watershed

Eutrophication refers to the accelerated aging of a lake caused, in particular, by an excessive influx of nutrients, including phosphorus.

This situation can be exacerbated by:

- Inadequate or poorly maintained septic systems;
- Bank erosion
- The absence or insufficiency of riparian vegetation;
- Rainwater runoff;
- Certain land-use practices;
- Fertilizer application;
- Various sources of pollution.

These pressures can promote the proliferation of algae and aquatic plants, reduce water quality, and alter natural habitats.

Invasive Alien Aquatic Species

Invasive alien aquatic species pose a major external threat. When introduced into a new body of water, they can spread rapidly and profoundly alter its ecological balance.

Eurasian water milfoil is currently one of the most concerning species in the region. Other species, such as the zebra mussel, also pose a significant risk.

Once they are well established, certain species are extremely difficult and costly to control. Prevention, early detection, and rapid response are therefore the most effective ways to protect water bodies.

3.6 Toward a Regional Prevention Strategy

The Forum resulted in a clear commitment to continue mobilizing efforts and to develop strategic initiatives.

The spread of invasive alien aquatic species is a priority for the RPEVG. The transport of boats, trailers, and water sports equipment from one body of water to another remains the primary means of spread.

The Regroupement therefore hopes to work with the MRC, the municipalities, the lake associations, and partner organizations to develop a coherent regional strategy.

This strategy could include, in particular:

- Better coordination of boat washing stations;
- Mandatory decontamination of boats;
- Harmonization of municipal regulations;
- Improved access control;
- The installation of automated terminals or barriers;
- Standardized signage;
- A regional awareness campaign;
- The establishment of a network of sentinals;
- Early detection of new species;
- The sharing of data and best practices;
- Better collaboration between municipalities and lake associations.

Such an approach would make it easier for users to understand the rules while enhancing the effectiveness of preventive measures.

3.7 A unifying role

The RPEVG does not replace the responsibilities of municipalities, the MRC, government departments, or lake associations.

Rather, its role is to facilitate communication, promote collaboration, and support the implementation of joint solutions.

Thanks to its regional presence, the Regroupement can:

- Disseminate information;
- Bring together relevant stakeholders;
- Facilitate the sharing of experiences;
- Support Fundraising efforts;
- Encourage the adoption of consistent practices;
- Contribute to the implementation of intermunicipal projects;

- Represent the concerns of its members.

This ability to bring people together is one of the RPEVG's main strengths.

4. Priorities for 2026-2027

Over the next year, the RPEVG hopes to continue the work it has begun and focus its efforts on several priorities.

4.1 Strengthen Governance

The Regroupement will continue to implement its strategic plan, develop its internal policies, and improve its management and communication tools.

4.2 Increase Participation

The RPEVG hopes to increase the number of municipalities, organizations, and citizens who actively participate in its activities.

4.3 Develop a regional strategy to control AIAS

The Regroupement will continue to take the necessary steps to secure funding to develop a coordinated regional strategy for the prevention and control of alien invasive aquatic species (AIAS).

4.4 Support Lake Associations

The RPEVG will continue to disseminate information, promote knowledge sharing, and support associations in their protection and monitoring efforts.

4.5 Raise Awareness

Information campaigns on best practices, boat decontamination, shoreline protection, and water quality will continue and be improved.

4.6 Develop a network of sentinels

The Regroupement aims to support the training of citizens and volunteers who can identify certain invasive species and quickly report their presence.

5. Acknowledgements

The Board of Directors would like to thank all the individuals and organizations that contribute to the RPEVG's mission.

We would like especially to thank:

- Member municipalities;
- Lake associations;
- The MRC de la Vallée-de-la-Gatineau ;
- Environmental Partners ;
- Speakers and contributors ;
- Companies that support our projects;
- Regional media;
- Volunteers;
- Engaged citizens.

Water protection relies on collective action. Every contribution – whether in the form of time, expertise, funding, or participation – helps strengthen our ability to take action.

6. Conclusion

The 2025-2026 year marks a major turning point in the history of the RPEVG.

The Regroupement now has a strategic plan, new communication tools, a network of committed partners, and a clearer vision of the actions to be taken over the next few years.

“Our Water, Our Wealth”, the Forum held on May 29th 2026, underscored the importance of issues related to water quality and the spread of alien invasive aquatic species. It also demonstrated that there is a genuine desire for collaboration in the Gatineau Valley.

The challenges are considerable, but our region also has significant strengths: engaged citizens, dynamic organizations, municipalities committed to protecting their waterways, and agencies willing to work together.

The RPEVG will continue its work to turn this mobilization into concrete, coordinated, and sustainable actions.

Water is at the heart of our region, our economy, and our quality of life. Protecting it today means preserving the future of the Gatineau Valley.

Consolidated Statement of Income and Expenditures

INCOME	At March 31 2026	At March 31 2025
Membership: Municipalities	2,400.00	4,000.00
Membership: Associations	2,100.00	1,900.00
Membership: Individuals	240.00	300.00
MRC Financial contribution (Ottawa and Maniwaki Boat Shows)	4,425.00	
MNA Robert Bussière	1,000.00	
Sale of articles	294.13	
Cash Rebate	5.99	6.61
TOTAL INCOME	10,465.12	6,206.61
EXPENDITURES	At 31 March 2026	At 31 March 2-25
Radio Publicity - CHGA	1,500.41	4,408.16
CHGA Member's card	25.00	25.00
Boat Shows – Ottawa, Maniwaki	2,545.69	1,014.32
Insurance – Annual Declaration	698.50	640.01
Meeting expenses - AGM	130.93	170.00
Equipment Storage	966.14	1,414.20
Office Furniture, Bank Charges	127.38	336.07
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	6,153.00	8,166.71
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) AT 31 MARCH	4,312.12	(1,960.10)
BALANCE AT 31 MARCH 2025 (2024)	10,361.32	12,321.42
CASH ON HAND AT 31 MARCH 2026 (2025)	14,673.44	10,361.32

