



Water Topics

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My Watershed

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Administration

Ottawa Gatineau Watershed Atlas

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Water Quality Research*

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Presentation Overview

- Background to the Ottawa-Gatineau Watershed Atlas (OGWA) Project
- How are we facilitating better decision-making through OGWA?
 1. For the public
 2. For all watershed stakeholders
 3. For water resource managers
- Demonstration
- Next Steps



Why the Ottawa River Watershed?

- A natural, social, cultural, and economic asset to the region
- Management complexities with multiple provinces and jurisdictions
- No responsible body or framework for the management of the health of the river
- Difficult to find information on plans, projects, environmental conditions or scientific data related to the river





Who is Involved in OGWA?

- 3 Conservation Authorities (Ontario)
- 2 Basin Organizations (Quebec)
- 1 Academic Institution
- 2 Environmental NGOs
- 1 Industry Group
- 1 Regional Office for the Ministry of Natural Resources
- 2 Watershed Authority Umbrella Organizations
- Local Community Representatives





What is the OGWA Project?

- Free, bi-lingual, interactive watershed information tool
- Designed by watershed community and stakeholder representatives
- Built using free open source software
- Uses standardized geospatial data and metadata
- Where possible linking to data through distributed networks i.e. data that is “closest to source”
- Uses free web 2.0 technology to improve communication and engage local communities



Why an Atlas and why GIS?

- Familiar and interesting means of putting across information, images, and data
- An opportunity for us to link information and geospatially referenced data
- GIS is a powerful tool
- Presents data in an intriguing and interactive way
- Allows the user to see where they are in their watershed and the state of the environment around them



Increase the value of regional watershed data

Data is...

- Extremely valuable to learning, innovation and decision making
- Everywhere!
- Fascinating!

The Problems with Data are...

- It is difficult to **FIND** (not searchable)
- It is difficult to **ACCESS** (passwords and fees)
- It is difficult to **USE** (incompatible formats)
- It is difficult to **UNDERSTAND!** (boring tables)



Improving Decision-making

For the public

- Increase local community watershed awareness and engagement in decision-making

For all watershed stakeholders

- Encourage the use of 'Distributed Networks' for more transparent, efficient data sharing
- Increase the value of data being collected in the region

For watershed managers

- Improve inter-watershed communication, and data awareness and sharing



Distributed Networks

- Data custodians host their data on their servers and provide real-time access through web services
- In this way partner organizations retain control:
 - no handing out of disks
 - can open or close access at any time
 - maintain responsibility and ownership
 - can update and correct data instantly



Demonstration



Next Steps...

- Establish a user community and further tailor OGWA to that community
- Run workshops within the Ottawa-Gatineau watersheds to promote OGWA and train water management staff in the use of OGWA
- Work with data custodians to develop access to additional water data through distributed networks



Next Steps...

- Develop further partnerships with watershed stakeholders
- Promote the OGWA approach to data and information sharing outside of the Ottawa-Gatineau region
- Provide assistance to other jurisdictions who wish to develop their own “OGWA” – using what free open source software and what we have learned through this project



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Administration

Create content

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