

**NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FULL AUTHORITY MEETING
BALL'S FALLS CENTRE FOR CONSERVATION**

AGENDA

JUNE 18, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES - FULL AUTHORITY MEETING –MAY 21, 2008

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held May 21, 2008.

(2) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(3) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(4) CAO'S REPORT

(5) BUDGET STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 46-08

Attached is Staff Report No. 46-08 outlining the status of the Authority's budget to date.

(6) NAMNG OF NPCA ASSETS AND FACILITIES - REPORT NO. 47-08

Attached is Staff Report No. 47-08 regarding this matter.

(7) LYONS CREEK SEDIMENT REMEDIATION PROJECT - REPORT NO. 48-08

Attached is Report No. 48-08 regarding this matter.

(8) CAVE SPRINGS CONSERVATION AREA (DRAFT MASTER PLAN) - REPORT NO. 49-08

Attached is Report No. 49-08 together with a copy of the draft master plan with respect to this matter.

(9) JORDAN HARBOUR SITE – REPORT NO. 50-08

Attached is Report No. 50-08 together with a draft request for proposals with respect to this matter.

(10) BALL'S FALLS LANDSCAPE TENDER - REPORT NO. 51-08

Attached is Report No. 51-08 regarding the results of this tender.

(11) ST. JOHNS TROUT POND PROGRAM REVIEW – REPORT NO. 52-08

Attached is Report No. 52-08 outlining this program.

(12) PROJECT STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 53-08

Attached is Report No. 53-08 outlining the status of Authority projects.

(13) IN-CAMERA

a) **Violation Status Report – CR-06-08**

(14) OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT



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E-mail: npc@conservation-niagara.on.ca

TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 18, 2008

RE: BUDGET STATUS REPORT - MAY 2008 - REPORT NO. 46-08

Attached is the budget status report for the month of May, 2008.

Recommendation:

That the budget status report for the month of May, 2008 be received.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Tony D'Amario, P.Eng. CAO/Secretary-Treasurer



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TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: May 8, 2008

SUBJECT: NAMING OF NPCA ASSETS AND FACILITIES - REPORT NO. 47-08

The Board has expressed periodic interest in the naming of NPCA owned land, buildings and facilities. With the construction, acquisition and development of an increased number of these assets, it is timely to consider a policy, process and guiding criteria to ensure a fair, consistent and appropriate approach to naming requests, either from Board or members of the public.

Staff have researched other agencies policies in this regard and have noted where policies exist, there are differing approaches in how various jurisdictions address requests for naming. Some emphasize the culture and history of a place and/or recognize individuals for exceptional or distinguished contributions. Others have set higher priorities on naming based on location and/or function of a public space rather than naming after an individual. Many policies do not recommend naming based on living persons and recommend a waiting period after the death of an individual before consideration of naming opportunities. Honouring individuals can take place in a number of ways including naming a park or a building, a portion of a park or building or related space. Although most policies strongly discouraged the practice of renaming, there are provisions to rename in the rare event if the individual or their reputation "falls from grace" after a facility is named after them.

Many jurisdictions also do not believe naming of public assets is appropriate under any circumstances. The reasons cited include public dissatisfaction with past choices, perceived favouritism and difficulty in developing and defending objective criteria. In addition, some jurisdictions are concerned that large corporations or those with sufficient financial resources can "buy" their way into naming of an asset or facility. Others limit the number assets or facilities that are named to preserve assets for future generations to name.

No policy can totally eliminate or prevent the above concerns however staff believe it essential that any adopted policies include clear and fair criteria and most importantly, a specific process to follow in all cases when naming is considered.

Attached for consideration of the Board is a policy and procedure which would allow for the naming of NPCA assets and facilities. These policies have been prepared where the permanent naming of an Authority asset or facility is proposed but would not include naming of sponsored events, programs, studies or programs, wall plaques, plants, tribute feature etc. Naming in these cases are program or project specific and can be considered at the appropriate time.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Report No. 47-08 regarding the Lyon's Creek Sediment Remediation Project be received

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D'Amario, P. Eng. CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

POLICY FOR NAMING OF NPCA ASSETS AND FACILITIES.

Purpose

It is the purpose of this policy to establish procedures for identifying those assets and facilities within the ownership of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority which would be appropriate for dedication, naming or renaming:

- To recognize a significant contribution toward acquisition or development in the spirit of conservation that enhances the quality of life in the community and/or is instrumental in acquiring or developing NPCA properties or facilities.
- To honour the outstanding dedication of an individual who has made distinct and significant contributions for the good of the community and conservation.

Procedures

1. Requests or proposals to name, rename or dedicate any NPCA Asset or Facility, or part thereof must be made in writing, with appropriate support information, to the attention of the CAO/Secretary Treasurer of the NPCA.
2. The NPCA will consider applications for dedication, naming or renaming on a yearly basis over the time period January 1st – March 31st inclusive.
3. The CAO/Secretary Treasurer shall forthwith following the timelines above, prepare a report to the Board summarizing all applications received and recommend the establishment of an appropriate Board committee to consider the application(s) and prepare an appropriate recommendation to the NPCA Board.

Criteria

Candidates either individual or group/organization will be considered based on the following criteria.

1. Fine moral character
2. 25 or more years related association
3. Demonstrated leadership qualities
4. Community Reputation
5. Nature of the contributions or support in the spirit of conservation.
6. Substantial contribution.
7. Initiative and/or involvement relating to a specific conservation program or project of exceptional merit which has extensively and directly benefited the public.

Renaming

Names chosen for any assets or facilities are expected to be permanent, and rededication or renaming will not be considered a normal or usual practice. A named asset or facility shall not be changed unless it is found that the continued use of such name would not be in the best interest of the community or the Conservation Authority. Should rededication or renaming be found necessary due to exceptional circumstance, the following policies shall apply.

The NPCA Board may, when the circumstances so warrant, approve a motion suspending the naming procedures contained in this policy or establish alternate procedure for the dedication, naming or renaming of a NPCA Asset or Facility as deemed appropriate by the Board given such circumstances. The Board's decision regarding the dedication, naming or renaming is final.

Notes:

1. Naming a public facility in memory of a deceased person cannot be considered until at least 1 year after the date of the persons death. Naming a public facility in honour of a living person is permitted.
2. Proposed names commemorating a deceased person(s) shall be considered only if the living next of kin have approved the request.
3. The naming of a NPCA Asset or Facility public facility for a strictly for-profit intent shall not be permitted.
4. The assets and facilities which may be considered as a subject for dedication, naming or renamed under this policy will be at the sole discretion of the NPCA Board of Directors and may include any structure, building, conservation areas in its entirety or partially, or specific described areas.
5. This policy is not intended to be retroactive to currently named NPCA assets and facilities unless the special circumstances provisions which require renaming applies.
6. This policy does not apply to NPCA assets and facilities that contain conditions or other encumbrances that prevent naming, renaming or dedication of such asset or facility.
7. The final decision is purely within the NPCA Board's discretion however the Board will consider delegations made on any application. The Board's decision is final and not subject to review.



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TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 12, 2008

SUBJECT: LYONS CREEK SEDIMENT REMEDIATION PROJECT - REPORT NO. 48-08

A sediment management strategy for Lyon's Creek East and West was initiated by the RAP under the direction of a technical advisory group comprised of representatives from Environment Canada, the MOE, the NPCA, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) and Niagara Region. As key stakeholders, Transport Canada, Hydro One and the City of Welland have also participated in meetings of the technical advisory group.

Background

In the 1940s, 50s and 60s, sewers that drained the southern sections of the City drained to Lyon's Creek. Lyon's Creek flowed from southeast Welland to the Niagara River. The Welland Canal By-Pass in 1971 severed the Lyon's Creek watershed, and created two separate watersheds: (i) Lyon's Creek West, which drains to the Welland Canal By-Pass and contains those headwaters of Lyons Creek in the form of a wetland that remained after construction of the original canal and development in the City of Welland, and; (ii) Lyon's Creek East which, after construction of the By-Pass, has its headwaters in the Welland Canal (Figure 1). As part of the construction of the By-Pass, a pumping station was installed on the Canal at the upstream end of Lyon's Creek East. The pumping station maintains flow in Lyon's Creek East through addition of water from the canal. Lyon's Creek East flows to the Niagara River.

Lyon's Creek West

The area associated with the Lyon's Creek West study area is shown on Figure 1. PCB contaminated areas of the sites include both soils and sediments. An ecological risk assessment of contaminated sediment and a sediment management study was performed for the Lyon's Creek study area by Golder Associates in 2006 to 2008. The sampling results show that PCB contamination is confined to the historic creek bed and adjacent banks. In addition to PCB contamination, arsenic concentrations in sediment are elevated in the south end of the old wetland area and the south ditch on the west side. The arsenic contamination in the south ditch was remediated by Hydro One in 2007.

A final decision regarding the preferred contaminated soil/sediment management strategy for Lyon's Creek West will be coordinated by Transport Canada as it owns most of the impacted property in this site.

Lyon's Creek East

The area of impacted sediment is located between the Welland Ship Canal and the CNR railway crossing at Buchner Road, east of Highway 140 (Figure 1).

Under the Niagara River RAP, a variety of studies were commissioned in 2005 - 2007. A wetland inventory of Lyon's Creek East confirmed a Provincially Significant Wetland that supports habitat for a variety of significant, special concern and threatened species. It was therefore found important to maintain these Provincially and regionally significant fish, bird, and plant species and associated habitats when considering remedial management options.

In conjunction with an ecological risk assessment (described below), a detailed human health risk assessment was performed by Dillon Consulting November, 2006. Health-based risk was assessed through an evaluation of the exposure to chemicals of potential concern in the sediment. (PCBs are present in the sediment but not in the water.) Exposure was evaluated for both children and adults based on the potential pathways of inhalation, ingestion and contact with the skin. Results of a community survey identified no risks based on skin contact. No risks were identified based on survey results that indicated that fish consumption was minimal, but sport fish consumption advisories will remain in place.

An ecological risk assessment and sediment management study was performed by Golder Associates in 2006 and completed in 2008 following consultation with the public and stakeholders. Effects in Lyon's Creek East were assessed on the basis of potential risks due to exposure to PCBs in sediments on a number of receptors, including those species that would be directly exposed to PCBs in sediments, and those that would indirectly be exposed through the food chain. The results of the ecological risk assessment indicate that a low risk exists to species in Lyon's Creek East.

Results of these studies and assessments provided the information needed to evaluate decision-making criteria for four sediment management options. Based on the evaluation process, the technical advisory group has recommended the option of Monitored Natural Recovery.

Community Involvement

In December 2004, a delegation from the technical advisory group made a presentation to City of Welland council on the plans for future studies and assessments of the contaminated sediment in Lyon's Creek.

In June 2007, the technical advisory group held public meetings at the Ukranian Centre in southeast Welland for Lyon's Creek West and at the Cooks Mills Hall for Lyon's Creek East to inform the community about the findings of the studies. In addition, options for managing the sediments were presented for input and comment.

The meeting for Lyon's Creek East was very well attended by approximately 50 local residents. As a result of citizens expressing concern for more information on background information, study findings, impact assessment, and the decision making process for a final remedial management option, a Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was formed for Lyon's Creek East in September, 2007. The CLC provides an opportunity for concerned individuals, group representatives and/or community representatives to receive updates and to discuss their concerns relative to the sediment study process. The CLC is comprised of five local residents and members of the technical advisory group.

Estimated timelines

It is anticipated that sediment management activities for Lyon's Creek East will begin in 2009, subject to the outcome of public consultation and upon completion of a detailed management strategy for the area.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Report No. 48-08 regarding the Lyon's Creek Sediment Remediation Project be received

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D'Amario, P. Eng. CAO/Secretary-Treasurer



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TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 9, 2008

**SUBJECT: CAVE SPRINGS CONSERVATION AREA (Draft Master Plan) –
REPORT NO. 49-08**

Background

The Cave Springs was first identified as a project by the Ministry of Natural Resources in 1974, although the first land acquisition did not take place until 1981. This area was specifically targeted for an Escarpment Park because of the significant geological features on the property.

A draft master plan was prepared in 1986, however it was never completed. There were a number of management issues related to lands below the Escarpment Brow. The Authority entered into a tenancy agreement with Margaret and Ronald Reid as part of the negotiations to purchase the property in 1981. This restricted management activities in the area surrounding the home, barn and outbuildings occupied by the Reeds. When Ms. Reid passed away in 2005, all restrictions associated with the tenancy were lifted. The Authority secured the buildings and restricted access to the lands below the Escarpment until a management plan could be completed for the entire site.

A considerable amount of land has been added to Cave Springs since the first draft master plan was undertaken. In addition, the lands affected by the former tenancy agreement can now be opened to the public without restrictions. These lands contain some of the most significant natural features of the site and therefore will require constant monitoring and protection.

Master Planning Process

Authority staff have been following the traditional planning process to update the Master Plan for Cave Springs. This process is informed by the Ministry of Natural Resources Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space Planning Manual, the Niagara Escarpment Plan and the Greenbelt Plan. Public consultation will also be required at several stages along the way.

Cave Springs is designated as a Nature Reserve Park in the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System. This designation covers parks which represent the most significant and the distinctive natural areas and landforms found along the Niagara Escarpment. Access to these areas will not be widely promoted and activities will be limited to those which can further scientific understanding and education.

Over the past year, staff have developed a draft plan using updated inventories and mapping. Natural heritage and cultural heritage attributes were considered, along with recreational opportunities and public interest in education. Particular attention has been given to balancing the desire for public access with the need to protect sensitive Escarpment features. Staff used this information to identify sensitive areas requiring protection, and those areas which can be opened to the public. A concept plan was developed, showing existing and proposed Conservation Area facilities.

A draft of the plan has been attached to this report for information purposes. It provides an overall view of the landholdings along with a detailed plan for the lands below the Escarpment.

Main Features of the Plan

- A new parking lot and staging area is proposed at the entrance on Cave Springs Road. This is located close to the road for security purposes, but far enough from adjacent residences to respect privacy.
- A trail system will lead visitors from the parking lot, through the Carolinian Forest, to the base of the Escarpment.
- Interpretive signs will inform visitors of the site's history, its role as part of the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System, significant natural features and local folklore surrounding Cave Springs.
- The existing barn is in relatively good condition and will be maintained. The house and several outbuildings are beyond repair and will be demolished.
- A new Bruce Trail Access Point will be developed above the Escarpment.
- The plan recommends working with the Town of Lincoln to limit the impact of off-road vehicles using the unopened road allowance along the top of the Escarpment.

Next Steps

With Board support of the draft plan, the next step in the planning process is to circulate this concept to the public, the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Niagara Escarpment Commission for review and comment. The information received will be used to refine the plan, including the development of cost and an implementation schedule.

The revised draft will be brought to a future Authority Board Meeting for consideration before being presented to the public as the final draft.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 49-08 regarding Cave Springs Conservation Area Draft Master Plan be received; and,

That staff be authorized to circulate the draft plan for public review and comment.

Prepared by: Darcy B. Baker - Director, Land Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D'Amario, P. Eng., CAO/ Secretary-Treasurer



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TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 9, 2008

SUBJECT: JORDAN HARBOUR SITE – REPORT NO. 50-08

Background

In the 1990s, when the Ministry of Transportation expanded the QEW, Jordan Marina property was expropriated from Mr. Campbell. The site was used as a construction staging area until 1997. The Province saw the benefit of providing public access to the Jordan Harbour and asked the NPCA to manage the site on their behalf through a land use agreement. In 1999, the Niagara Rowing School approached the Conservation Authority with a request to use the area for rowing instruction and boat storage. This use was approved by the Province and a one-year lease agreement was developed. The lease has been renewed each year since that time.

The property was formally acquired by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority in 2003. Since that time the property has been used by the Niagara Rowing School, and for occasional public access. The only building in use is an existing pole shed. Two other structures have fallen into disrepair. There is a great deal of material (docks, boating equipment, and construction material), left over from the marina operation that is stockpiled throughout the site.

In April 2008, the Niagara Rowing School approached Authority staff with a request to expand the services and activities at the site. They are interested in cleaning-up the property and making use of all the buildings. Since this would involve an investment in the property and facilities, the Rowing School would like to expand the lease agreement and extend the term.

Discussion

The Jordan Marina site is a key property in the overall Twenty Valley Tourism Strategy. It was identified as one of the last remaining links to the old heritage harbour that was once located at the mouth of the Twenty Mile Creek. It provides the only existing location to launch a small boat to travel up to the railway bridge ruins and to view the extensive marsh habitat.

The strategy identifies a number of high-priority actions for the site:

Encourage the operation of a boat rental concession offering a range of small boats (row

boats, kayaks, canoes, etc.) for “water-based touring”. A self guiding “water-based heritage tour” or guided “floatboat “excursion could commence from this location.

Develop an educational display about the submergent marsh ecology and promote marsh stewardship needs and management.

Develop an interpretive display of the early Jordan Harbour activities, related to marine history on Lake Ontario and the beginnings of industry in the area.

Recommendation

Although the Niagara Rowing School proposal is in keeping with the recommendations in the Tourism Strategy, the long-range plan for this property has always been to request proposals from the public for the operation of the facilities. A public/private cooperative venture would help facilitate the capital improvements require for the site, without adding to the Conservation Authority’s capital or operating budget. The site would also become a revenue centre for the Conservation Areas program.

As part of the agreement, a private operator would be required to guarantee public access to the Harbour, and manage the site to enhance stewardship of the shoreline and wetland ecosystem.

A recommended Request for Proposals is attached to this report. Staff recommend that a public notice be posted in local and regional papers to solicit interest in the property. Proposers would submit business plans which will maintain the spirit of the recommendations outlined in the Twenty Valley Tourism Strategy. Submissions would be evaluated and presented to the Board at their August 20th, 2008 meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 50-08 regarding the Jordan Harbour Site be received; and,

That a notice be placed in local and regional papers requesting proposals from the public.

Prepared by: Darcy B. Baker - Director, Land Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
Tony D’Amario, P.Eng. CAO/ Secretary-Treasurer



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TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 9, 2008

SUBJECT: BALL'S FALLS LANDSCAPE TENDER – REPORT NO. 51-08

Further to the May 21, 2008 report 43-08 regarding this project, Tender notices were published in local and Regional newspapers. A total of twelve tender packages were sent out with ten submissions received by the 4:00 pm deadline on June 9, 2008. The results are summarized on the attached sheet.

Staff analyzed the three low bids, taking into account alternate and unit prices submitted. The tender specified that the bidders quote an alternate price for Part C - Drainage Pipe and Associated Works for Drainage. This alternative is to change the drainage design from overland flow over rip rap stone, to a ditch inlet and buried pipe down the hill. In discussion with staff prior to tender, this option was developed in response to engineering concerns that large flows from storm events could potentially wash over the new trail and an adjacent trail at the base of the hill if handled as overland flow. Part C from each bid was deleted and replaced with the alternate price as quoted by each bidder. This analysis resulted in the following ranking by price:

1. Stevensville	\$ 53,098.99
2. Touchstone	\$ 58,591.35
3. Jason Steele	\$ 61,658.70

Staff recommend this tender be awarded based on using the alternate price for Part C Drainage, given the careful measures taken during construction of the Centre to address storm water concerns over the hill to 20 Mile Creek. It is proposed, based on review of information at hand, that the project be awarded to low bidder Stevensville upon their satisfactory submission of insurance certificates and confirmation of their bid price to our office.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 51-08 regarding the Ball's Falls Landscape Tender be received; and,

That Stevensville Landscaping be awarded the contract to construct a trail switchback at Ball's Falls Conservation Area for the contract price of \$53,098.99, including taxes.

Prepared by: Darcy B. Baker - Director, Land Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
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TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 9, 2008

SUBJECT: ST. JOHNS TROUT POND PROGRAM REVIEW – REPORT NO. 52-08

The St. Johns Conservation Area is a passive, day-use facility, designated as a Natural Environment Park in the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System. The primary purpose for the area is to ensure the preservation of the unique and scenic natural features of this headwater section of the Twelve Mile Creek for ecological and aesthetic reasons.

The dam and associated pond at St. Johns Conservation Area were constructed in 1964. The 1980 Master Plan recommends that the pond be maintained as a viable trout habitat, and that it would continue to be stocked on a “put and take” basis.

While the pond stocking is identified in the master plan, the fishing program is not clearly addressed. Based on a review of Authority files, it appears that the pond has been stocked annually over the past 40 or so years. Stocking numbers fluctuated, but usually involved two deliveries of fish. One before the season began and one mid-way through the season for an average total of 3,000 fish.

Prior to 1984, the pond was stocked by the Ministry of Natural Resources. In 1985, the MNR cut funding and the NPCA approached local conservation clubs for contributions towards this public fishing opportunity. The last donations occurred in 2000. In 2001, the number of trout stocked in the pond was reduced, in part to lower costs and reduce the number of fish occupying the pond. In 2008, only one delivery of fish was arranged, several days before the opening.

Over the past 25-years the Conservation Authority has attended the site on the first day of the Trout Season to “officially open” the season. The event became very popular attracting upwards of 200 people. Authority staff are assigned for that day to control parking and ensure clear flow of traffic into and out of the site. Staff have also been in attendance to promote other Conservation Areas and the various programs throughout the watershed. This is seen as a good opportunity for the Authority to get our message out to the public. The annual event is not geared to the serious angler, although many attend. A large number of those attending the event are children with their parents

Fee for Service

There have been past discussions by Board members regarding the opportunity to charge an admission fee for this event. The NPCA currently charges for admission at Long Beach, Chippawa Creek, Binbrook and Ball’s Falls. A fee was also recently instituted for the hunting permit program, covering all of the Authority’s properties.

Neighbouring Conservation Authorities who operate Trout ponds do charge a fee, however these facilities are located at gated Conservation Areas, which are already set-up to charge admission. Operationally, St. Johns is a day-use area, free of charge to the public. While it would not be impossible to set-up a fee for opening day, it is not an activity that can be sustained throughout the season without significant capital investment in upgraded facilities. Rather than attracting a crowd for opening day, staff believe the fee would result in a smaller turnout for the event, with visitors opting to fish on the days following the opening.

In the past, staff were on hand to solicit voluntary contributions towards the stocking program. A self pay box at the pond allows visitors to contribute any time while using the site. Combined, these measures generate an average of \$400 throughout the year.

Authority staff believe there are good public relations benefits from offering this event free-of-charge and recommend that the program continue. Stocking has been modified so that the pond is not replenished mid-way through the season for individuals that only visit the site to take fish. The event generates several newspaper articles with photos of people enjoying the site. Staff also recognize the need to engage residents in conservation initiatives, including fisheries management.

As an alternative to implementing an admission fee, staff recommend finding a sponsor for the event to financially assist in stocking and other costs for the event. This could provide an opportunity for local service clubs and conservation organizations to join the Authority in hosting the event.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 52-08 regarding the St. Johns Trout Pond Program Review be received.

Prepared by: Darcy B. Baker - Director, Land Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____
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TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: June 18, 2008

RE: PROJECT STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 53-08

WATER MANAGEMENT

Binbrook Reservoir – City of Hamilton (Glanbrook)

Reservoir Water Levels

The reservoir water levels for the last 30 days have generally fluctuated between 650.5 feet and 651.2 feet. For reference, the dam holding level is 650.50 feet. The reservoir water level currently sits at 650.9 feet. NPCA staff continue to monitor the reservoir water levels daily.

Shriners Creek – City of Niagara Falls

The 2003 Shriners Creek Study had recommended that the existing NPCA owned stormwater detention facility (known as Dyke B) located west of Kalar Road on the Shriners Creek W5-4 Tributary be modified in order to improve water quality, attenuate flows, and provide year round base flow to the Shriners Creek system.

Construction of the two proposed wetlands is substantially complete. The NPCA is pleased with Circle 'P' Paving's quality of work. The NPCA has already witnessed wildlife (ducks, geese, and heron) utilizing the facility.

NPCA 'Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alteration to Shorelines and Watercourses' Permits

The NPCA regulates construction around watercourses, wetlands, valley lands, shorelines, and floodplains. The NPCA has approved 18 permit applications for the 2008 calendar year.

Drinking Water Source Protection Program

Financial Update

The MNR has approved a budget of \$692,400.00 for NPCA for Operating and Administration costs for the Source Protection program for MNR's fiscal year (April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009).

The funding is based on a business plan submitted in March, and is consistent with source protection funding in previous years.

Terms of Reference Update

The Draft of the Proposed Terms of Reference (Draft TOR) was approved by the SPC on May 20. The Draft TOR was posted on the internet, and notices were published in the newspapers on May 31. Three public meetings concerning the Draft TOR are scheduled for June 23, 25, and 26 in Port Colborne, Thorold, and Grimsby respectively.

Technical Reports Update

HEC-HMS modeling is progressing as planned for the Water Availability Study. The study forms part of the Tier 1 Water Budget.

The consultants are still working on the Intake Protection Zone (IPZ) Studies, which are managed by Regional Municipality of Niagara. Final draft reports for the IPZ Studies have now been received for Decew, Grimsby, Port Colborne, Welland, and Niagara Falls drinking water systems, but the IPZ study for the Rosehill/Fort Erie drinking water system has not yet been received.

Fifteen-Sixteen-Eighteen Mile Creeks Watershed Plan

The Watershed Plan was passed over to the Communications Director in April for final formatting and to be sent to the printers. Once completed, a copy of the final publication will be presented to the Steering Committee as an appreciation of their efforts on the project.

Erosion pins in the 15-16-18 Mile Creek watershed were checked and reset. All sites have experienced some degree of erosion since last October when the pins were last checked.

South Niagara Falls Watershed Plan

The Watershed Plan was passed over to the Communications Director in April for final formatting and to be sent to the printers. Once completed, a copy of the final publication will be presented to the Steering Committee as an appreciation of their efforts on the project.

Erosion pins in the South Niagara Falls watershed were checked and reset. All sites have experienced some degree of erosion since last October when the pins were last checked. In addition, Rhonneke assisted Parish Geomorphic and Philips Engineering, the consultants working on the Lyons Creek Fluvial Geomorphology Study, with the geomorphic assessments at the road crossings of the study areas and the insertion of a flow meter in Lyons Creek

Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan

The initial steering committee meeting was held on May 13th. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the watershed planning process, the role of the steering committee and to review the Draft Background Report of the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan. The group also participated in a brainstorming session to identify their vision and objectives for the watershed plan. A similar exercise will be conducted with the public and will result in one vision statement that incorporates the ideas from the steering committee and the public. In addition, the objectives from both exercises will be incorporated into the watershed plan.

Representatives from the following organizations sit on the steering committee: Town of Fort Erie (drainage superintendent and planning), City of Port Colborne (drainage superintendent), Region of Niagara (planning), Township of Wainfleet (mayor and planning), Lorraine Bay Water Quality Group, Friends of Fort Erie's Creeks, and Wainfleet Water and Sewer.

Rhonneke and the summer student have begun geomorphic field assessments in the Lake Erie North Shore watershed. A database has been created and collected field data has started to be input into the database.

Central Welland River Watershed Plan

The initial steering committee meeting was held on May 15th. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the watershed planning process, the role of the steering committee and to review the Draft Background Report of the Central Welland River Watershed Plan. The group also participated in a brainstorming session to identify their vision and objectives for the watershed plan. A similar exercise will be conducted with the public and will result in one vision statement that incorporates the ideas from the steering committee and the public. In addition, the objectives from both exercises will be incorporated into the watershed plan.

Representatives from the following organizations sit on the steering committee: Township of West Lincoln (planning), City of Port Colborne (drainage superintendent), City of Welland (planning), Region of Niagara (planning), Township of Wainfleet (drainage superintendent), Town of Pelham, Remedial Action Plan, Welland River Keepers and Niagara Restoration Council.

A public open house was held on June 3rd in Welland at the Lions Club. The purpose of the open house was to present the initiation of the Watershed Plan to the community and inform the public how they can participate in the process. Approximately 20 people attended the open house. The main concern expressed by those that attended the open house was an increase in boating activity on the Welland River since the closing of the Recreational Canal to boaters. The main concern was the fast speed of some of the boats and the wake these boats were creating which was resulting in an increase of erosion along the shoreline in addition to some destruction of shoreline habitat for wildlife.

Rhonneke, the Watershed Planning Technician and Matt (summer student) have collected additional background information on the study area and visited a number of sites throughout the watershed.

Natural Heritage Areas Inventory

Three teams consisting of an NAI Ecological Land Classification Technician and their Assistant started in the field on May 26th. All members of the team have completed their Ecological Land Classification training. The teams also took part in a Sedge Identification Workshop with instructors from the Royal Botanical Gardens on June 3rd.

The expert volunteer teams began their field work on Friday June 6th. Two teams will be out collecting data for the project this year with leadership from members of the three naturalist clubs of Niagara.

The NAI project received word recently that we are being funded in part by the Species at Risk Stewardship Fund of the Ministry of Natural Resources for this field season. This funding will cover some of the cost of having the teams in the field and will allow them to collect additional data on sites where species at risk are encountered. The money will also be used to complete information packages for private landowners on three particular species namely, American Chestnut, Five-lined Skink and Spotted Wintergreen all of which have been documented in the first two years of the project.

Consultants have been hired for this season to collect data and produce reports on herpetofauna, plants including a list of local rarity and the vegetative communities documented by the project.

Staff are hoping to meet with the technical committee of the project by the end of June to discuss the final report.

Niagara River Remedial Action

Contaminated sediments:

Recommendations on the preferred sediment management options for the Lyon's Creek East and West sites by the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) have been incorporated into the Phase 1V report, which has been circulated to the agencies for sign-off. There was agreement that each of the participating agencies will provide a sign-off letter prior to the next TAG meeting in June.

For Lyon's Creek West, TAG recommended that all stakeholders proceed with sediment management, and requested Transport Canada (the largest property owner) to provide a letter on their intended actions.

For Lyon's Creek East, TAG recommended that the preferred sediment management option should be Monitored Natural Recovery.

The next TAG meeting is scheduled for June 17, 2008. The next steps in the process will include communicating the preferred option to the community.

In the meantime, on April 23 in Fort Erie, it was announced that the Government of Canada is investing up to \$2.9 million to clean up the contaminated sediments in Lyon's Creek.

The fifth meeting of the Lyon's Creek East Community Liaison Committee (CLC) was held on April 22, and NPCA staff provided an overview on wetland regulations and the Species at Risk Act. The presentation concluded the list of information sessions requested by the committee.

Niagara Water Strategy (NWS):

The next NWS Water Advisory Group meeting is anticipated to be in Fall 2008.

Stage 2 Update:

It is anticipated that a RAP Implementers Workshop will be convened in the Fall to review and confirm actions under the RAP Work Plan, which incorporates the RAP Monitoring Plan. In the meantime, confirmation of lead agencies for the projects identified in the Monitoring Plan is

underway, and the establishment of technical groups to develop work plans for the projects will facilitate the identification of resources required to implement the projects. These projects include Sport Fish Contaminants monitoring, Wildlife monitoring, Fish Health Effects assessment, Fisheries and Fish and Wildlife habitat assessments. Data collected through the implementation of the monitoring plan will be used to measure progress towards delisting the Niagara River (Ontario) AOC.

The first field season for the Eutrophication and Water Quality Assessment project is underway with the objective of gathering missing data on how the Welland River ecosystem is responding to nutrient inputs.

International Liaison:

The Niagara River RAP (New York) Advisory Committee has planned an implementation meeting on June 19 at DEC Region 9 Headquarters in Buffalo. Staff have been invited to provide an overview of the Canadian RAP.

Staff have been invited to participate in a Niagara River Ecosystem Roundtable on June 27 in Buffalo.

Niagara River Toxics Management Plan (NRTMP):

A NRTMP "State of the Niagara" conference and the International Joint Commission's centennial celebration of the International Boundary Waters Treaty are expected to be held in multiple locations within the Niagara Region in early June 2009.

Upcoming conferences:

October 22 – 23: 2008 State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC). Niagara Falls, Ontario. Theme: The Nearshore

November 19 – 21, 2008: A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium. Theme to be announced.

Niagara River RAP / Welland River Restoration

The Ducks Unlimited Partnership Project funded by the Trillium grant is underway. Staff are in the process of selecting the three 2008 sites for wetland creation. Three preliminary sites have been selected but still require CA planning and engineering staff input and approval.

Spring planting season in the Welland River Watershed is almost complete with 19 restoration/reforestation project sites being planted totalling approximately 32 acres, 1km of riparian buffer planting and erosion protection and 2km of farm windbreaks to reduce soil erosion.

Staff met with Niagara Parks Commission (NPC) staff to discuss options for erosion control along a section of the Niagara River near Fort Erie. NPC staff will also be seeking advice and approval from the CA's Aquatic Habitat Biologist.

Restoration projects for the summer and fall of 2008 are also in the planning stages as staff continues to visit with landowners to discuss and design projects.

E.C. Brown Wetland

The restoration team coordinated the planting of 1000 trees along the west edge of the E.C. Brown wetland property and an additional 600 shrubs in the "pit and mound" areas.

Also planned for June are additional wildflower plantings and an aquatic plant transplant to introduce cattails, arrowhead, sedges and other important species to the site. While there are a number of weed and nuisance species on the site, much of the site has native plant species germinating from the seeding in 2007.

Staff led a tour of E.C. Brown to grade 9 students visiting from SJK School in Waterloo. The students learned about the various restoration techniques employed at E.C. Brown and the importance of wetland restoration.

General Watershed Restoration

Staff attended a workshop on the Evaluation of Water Resource Monitoring Efforts in Support of Agricultural Stewardship in Watersheds of the Great Lakes Basin. Agricultural, water quality and stewardship professionals from across Ontario met to identify water resource information monitoring successes and needs that evaluate progress of agricultural stewardship programming. A workshop report is expected in the near future.

Restoration and Lands Department staff met with City of Niagara Falls Parks staff to discuss strategies for dealing with ATVs using parks and the damage to ecologically sensitive areas. Education, signage and giving ATV riders designated areas were some ideas discussed for Niagara Falls to consider.

The winning team from the Niagara Envirothon, Lakeshore Catholic High School participated in the Ontario Envirothon in May. Lakeshore was awarded the award for best rookie team and came in second place overall for their presentation about the impacts of recreation on the environment. This is a great start for the first Niagara team and the NPCA hopes to continue its involvement in this important competition.

About 4,500 seedlings and 12,000 acorn and hickory nuts were planted in a headwater area of Fifteen Mile Creek watershed. The vernal pool excavation went smoothly, re-establishing a slough forest patterning to parts of the property.

Seven acres of floodplain were machine planted in a section of Fifteen mile creek experiencing erosion problems.

The second phase of restoration work for a site on Fifteen Mile Creek has begun. More than 1200 bare root trees and shrubs were planted covering an area greater than 7 acres. In addition to the bare root stock, 150 RPM (larger, potted stock) trees were also planted at the site. The project will continue throughout June with more than 200 wildflower plugs being planted along the newly restored wetland. The wetland itself will be requiring some maintenance in the near future. Erosion control at the outlet of the wetland will take place in an effort to prevent the spillway from eroding away. Filter fabric and an addition of stone will help to alleviate this issue.

The spring project in the 40 Mile creek watershed was also completed this month. The shelterbelt project consisting of more than 1500 bare root trees and shrubs and 60 RPM trees was completed this month. The project covered more than 1.5 acres of land. The landowner

was very pleased with the result and is recruiting his neighbours to participate in the program as well. This project connects with the existing project on an adjacent property.

Another 40 Mile creek landowner in the area has expressed interest in creating a wetland complex feature and conducting reforestation, as plans solidify; a restoration plan for the property will be prepared and be executed likely in the fall of this year.

A wetland project originally scheduled for 2007 has been completed in St. Anns. The site consists of over an acre of wetland. The site will be seeded in the coming week and will be followed by a planting of trees and shrubs.

Twenty Mile Creek Restoration

Staff have begun planting sites in the Twenty Mile Creek Watershed.

Reforestation of a 12 acre site was planted in mid-May. More than 6000 trees were planted on the site by machine planters in rows. Unfortunately the site has already experienced a significant amount of die off, especially with the spruce species. Staff will be utilizing the surplus trees stock to help address this issue and will be replanting on an infill basis in the immediate future.

The water quality and reforestation project located east of Smithville also commenced in May. More than 30 volunteer planters from College Street Public school assisted in planting more than 200 bare root trees and shrubs. The remaining trees and shrubs were planted along the watercourse in a buffer strip by a machine planter. The site still requires the planting of the wildflower vegetation. It is anticipated that the 300 wildflower plugs will be planted in June. The landowner was very pleased with the first phase of the project.

Plans are still moving forward with the manure storage project located in Hannon. With the landowners personal planting season coming to an end, the manure storage project will be constructed.

A second manure storage project has been initiated in the Grassie area of West Lincoln. At present staff are awaiting the completed application for plans to move forward. It is anticipated that the project will be completed closer to the end of the summer.

Twelve Mile Creek Restoration

Staff have met with contractors for site preparation for the Decew Escarpment Tablelands project, with work expected to begin mid-June.

A triple-stream crossing and buffer project is planned for a cash crop farm in Upper Twelve Mile Creek. Additionally, the project will restore a few sections of stream that are badly eroded. Check dams may be installed, if conditions allow.

This week volunteers and staff installed the first portion of deer fencing in Shorthills Provincial Park, protecting a sensitive gully area. The Friends of Shorthills will be assisting with the remaining installation, and planting. The two areas will be monitored over the next few years, and the observations incorporated into future reforestation practices.

Staff have replanted a few areas from last year's projects which were badly affected by drought. A large hand-planting occurred in a stream-fencing project from 2005. These

land-owners have been excellent stewards of their section of cold-water stream, and requested the replacement plants.

Staff facilitated donated herpetology research by OPG, and assisted with volunteers to gather data on Salamander populations in April, as part of the species at risk component of the Lathrop project. Staff partnered with the Nature Conservancy of Canada on Species at Risk funding applications. We have just learned that the funding has been awarded, so hopefully things are back on track with this project. NPCA's main role is to fund and implement the reforestation of three areas of old-field. Other partners will tackle invasive species and other issues.

Niagara-on-the-Lake Restoration

Site visits, site preparation and planting have been keeping staff busy in May/June, however staff continue to engage in training and project development for the coming fall.

Staff attended 2 training sessions during May. The first training session was with the Region of Niagara and the aim of the session was to learn more about the various applications of the web GIS tool which the Conservation Authority uses to create maps.

The second training session was held at the NOTL campus of Niagara College and was focused on the challenges and vision for the future of wine growing in NOTL. The conference was very informative and was a great opportunity to meet with industry experts and local wine growers who are looking for alternative ways to do business in a future that includes uncertainties such as climate changes.

Staff attended a general members meeting as well as an executive meeting with the Friends of One Mile Creek (FOMC) to discuss the riparian planting that the Friends of One Mile Creek and staff are organizing for this June along the upper reaches of One Mile Creek. Implementation of the watershed plan has also been a regular topic of discussion with the FOMC.

An Implementation Committee Meeting for One Mile Creek is scheduled for 25th.

3 sites were planted in NOTL, 2 riparian plantings along One Mile Creek and a forest ravine planting along a tributary of the Niagara River. The plantings within NOTL saw the grade 4/5 students from Saint Michaels in NOTL helping to plant tree and shrub material in order to buffer the creek from urban effects. There were 50 students that volunteered their time over the course of 2 days. The third planting took place in Queenston with the help of Blessed Trinity Secondary School and saw 45 students from grades 9-12 come out to plant local forest tree and shrub species on the eroding valley slope.

ECO School Program

The ECO School Program is now into planting days. Students along with their ECO School representative have been out planting their ECO plots, watering and then applying mulch. Staff assist with two plantings every day. Students are given a short presentation prior to planting to teach them about the benefits of native plants to water quality and wildlife. Each participating school is left with a maintenance kit consisting of a pail, watering can, trowels, shovel and gloves.

Yellow Fish Road

The Yellow Fish Road program continues to be very popular in 2008.

Two Yellow Fish Road events took place in Fort Erie, one at Fort Erie Elementary and one at St. George Catholic Elementary. The NPCA worked in collaboration with the Fort Erie Communities in Bloom and the Town of Fort Erie to deliver these events. The event at Fort Erie Elementary was documented by Cogeco and NPCA staff was interviewed to give more information about the program. This appeared on The Source. For both events a PowerPoint presentation was given to the entire school and each student was given a fish hanger with information about the program to take home. By giving the presentation to the whole school we are reaching a wider number of students and informing them about the program. It is hoped that by giving each student a fish hanger, the message can be taken home. Smaller groups of students went out to paint after the presentation. Approximately 70 drains were painted by Fort Erie Elementary and 30 were painted by St. George Catholic Elementary.

In addition to YFR events, kits have been dropped off to schools in St. Catharines and Welland that did not request a presentation. These schools were given a demonstration of the painting process and the fish hanger distribution procedures. A YMCA daycare painted yellow fish with pre-school aged children during the month of May.

Water Quality Program

Monthly surface water quality monitoring continues and samples were collected in May at 66 stations in the NPCA watershed. The NPCA has deployed dissolved oxygen data loggers at 2 sites in the Area of Concern as part of the Welland River Eutrophication Study. These sites include the Welland River at O'Reilly's Bridge and Big Fork's Creek at Gents Rd. Dissolved oxygen patterns will be correlated to nutrient levels in these watercourses.

The 2008 spring BioMAP sampling has concluded. Spring samples have been collected from Hamilton International Airport and the Glanbrook Landfill. Additional sampling was conducted at 20 regular NPCA monitoring stations and restoration sites. Identification of sample specimens will be carried out in July. The Water Quality Team will also assist the NPCA Lands Department in a bioassessment of Mud Lake Conservation Area in mid-June.

The NPCA has installed an autosampler on Twenty Mile Creek in Jordon as part of the Lake Ontario Collaborative Study in late-May. The autosampler will be collecting water samples during wet weather events. The purpose of the study is to determine nutrient, sediment and bacteria loadings to Lake Ontario. The NPCA will be trying to sample 15-25 wet weather events throughout the year.

GIS (GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS) / INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Source Water Protection

- Spatial surface water hydrology model inputs have now been completed for all Watershed Planning Areas and delivered to the consultant for the Water Availability study.
- Characterization maps for all Watershed Planning Areas have all been drafted for the reporting components of the Water Availability study.

Watershed Planning

- DRAFT Community Series ELC mapping has been completed for the City of Welland through the Natural Areas Inventory project.

Corporate GIS

- GIS staff nears completion of 'Area of Concern' mapping templates for the Environment Canada Great Lakes Area of Concern Section.
- GIS Staff attended a 2 day workshop on Conservation Authority collaboration in GIS and Information Management.
- GIS staff is currently searching for a new GIS Technician to replace a vacancy due to maternity.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

Although unable to attend the provincial ceremony at Club Italia in Niagara Falls on May 30th, Ellen Mitchinson and Linda Holmes were recognized and will receive an Ontario Volunteer Service Award for 15 and 10 years respectively of volunteer service.

Seasonal heritage staff has been hired and training and orientation undertaken. The Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ), program wage subsidy has approved 12 weeks of funding for only 1 position (Summer Program Coordinator) of the 2 heritage positions. Staff are assisting when possible at the new Centre. A total of 2 positions were also approved for Long Beach and Chippawa to offer visitor programming through CSJ program.

On May 24th, Angela Wallace gave a presentation at the Lincoln Library on the history of Ball's Falls as part of a series focusing on early communities in the Town of Lincoln that sprang up on top of the Escarpment.

A full schedule of programming is underway at Ball's Falls, offering both established and new programs to schools, organized groups and the general public. There has been considerable interest by the public requesting guided programs to learn more about the Centre For Conservation and particularly the LEED design philosophy. New programs and workshops that incorporate the Centre are being developed and introduced and will be evaluated and fine-tuned based on feed-back. Several classes from local schools have been invited to participate and provide feedback on pilot curriculum-linked educational programs for Grades 3-6.

Approximately 84 students attended the Native Awareness Program lead by Joe Paquette on May 28th.

There has been a very good response to the "Spring Awakening" educational program as numbers continue to increase. Close to 400 students are registered to attend. Once again, volunteers play an important part in achieving the staffing levels required for this interactive program.

The Mother's Day weekend, Girl's Afternoon Adventure was a success. Participants enjoyed an afternoon hike, made stepping stones and enjoyed refreshments in the CFC education room.

Unfortunately, "Down the Garden Path", the first of a series of 3 new workshops was cancelled due to insufficient registration.

On June 1st, 25 registrants participated in "Sensational Squirrels", a new family program offered as a 2 hour morning or afternoon program. Participants built a corn cob squirrel feeder and took a guided nature hike where they learned about squirrel habits and habitats. We also brought peanuts to distribute along the pathways, but we did not see a single squirrel.

Arrangements continue for the various elements of the Thanksgiving Festival.

Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation

The furnishing of the Centre is almost complete. Staff continue to work on elements related to daily operation and administration of the Centre, primarily with regard to public functions. A limited number of rentals have taken place, mostly corporate workshops and NPCA functions. There have been a considerable number of inquiries regarding rentals for receptions. At least 4 receptions have been confirmed for 2008 since opening.

Substantial completion of the landscape installation was achieved May 14th. Staff are monitoring with the contractor the grass seed germination and some new plants that did not leaf out satisfactorily requiring replacement. Once the seeded areas have sufficiently grown in, our staff will be removing the perimeter silt fencing.

Staff are identifying site signage needs and working with the directors to develop a new site signage program for the property in line with the corporate branding strategy developed in the 2004 Marketing Plan.

Landscape plans were tendered for a new switch-back trail that connects the Centre for Conservation with the pedestrian bridge and trail over Twenty Mile Creek. Results of the tender which closed June 9th are noted in a separate report.

Binbrook CA

Land management staff were actively involved in the past two months reviewing new capital work in the park completed in connection with the dam spillway project. The former wind surf beach parking lot has been improved with the installation of a larger gravel parking area and berms. Site preparation has started for a new boat launch to be built in this location. The larger parking area allows for the anticipated need for boat trailer parking. Nearby, the excess fill off the dam was used to build a new hill near the group picnic areas; this hill could receive the winter toboggan use that has occasionally happened near Harrison Road at the dam. Reinstatement of park trail across the spillway construction area was completed by the contractor in time for the triathlon. Once the boat launch project is completed, the construction haul route from the spillway project will be abandoned and park staff will naturalize the gravel road bed as time and resources allow.

EC Brown Constructed Wetland

Land management staff have installed a second wood outlook platform between the river and new wetland. In addition, some routine site maintenance was completed repairing the trail from minor winter damage, trail culverts have been installed to improve drainage, the old farm fence was removed along the road, and trail paths mown along the river. Field staff will continue to

perform routine site maintenance as needed and for the opening ceremony to be held in the near future.

Ruigrok Tract and Hedley CA

Land management staff are working with our NAI staff on ecological reviews of these properties, field reviews were delayed by other project work but will resume shortly. Results from the field reviews will be compared with the proposed trail plans for the properties; trail plans will be adjusted should sensitive ecological features be identified.

Communities in Bloom – Town of Lincoln

The Town is finalizing the itinerary for the judge's visit July 21 - 23, which includes a stop at Ball's Falls CA as part of their tour of Lincoln on July 22nd. Plans are underway on the social program for the judges while they are in the community. New flowerbeds and banners are also being placed in downtown Beamsville to promote the program.

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek

Campground numbers were below normal this past Victoria Day Weekend. This is mostly the result of the cold damp weather. Seasonal camping registration has already surpassed the 2007 levels, and short-term registration is starting to pick-up with the warmer weather.

Long Beach will host the first Southern-Ontario Russian Folk Music Festival on June 14th.

In previous years the Authority received permission to reduce Canada Geese numbers at Chippawa Creek by humanely rounding up and transporting them to Mud Lake Conservation Area. This year as in the past 2 years, the numbers of Canada Geese at the site in the spring has decreased to the point where relocation will not be required. While some shore vegetation has increased at the site, changes in the surrounding land uses and food sources are most likely the reasons for the decline.

Mud Lake Conservation Area

2008 will be the third consecutive year of planned low water levels at Mud Lake Cons. Area. These lower water levels are implemented every 7-10 years to mimic natural wetland pulses and to help increase plant germination, cover, types of plants, and edge habitat. Water is being maintained at minimal levels until late September again this year. This will mark the third and final year of this low water level manipulation, provided that the expected results are achieved.

As part of this on-going wetland restoration assessment, staff are completing the 2008 benthic invertebrate population monitoring. Populations are expected to peak in the first 2-3 years after the reflow. Other assessments to determine the success of habitat restoration include monitoring the quality for resident reptiles, amphibians and bird, including plant species and the length of habitat edge between plant communities.

Gypsy Moth

Both the Ruigrok Tract and Hedley Forest Conservation Areas are being sprayed with the natural bacteria Btk (*Bacillus thuringiensis* –variety *kurstaki*). This bacteria is found naturally in soil and is known to cause illness to the gypsy moth larvae (caterpillars). It also has the least

environmental impact of products available. Two sprays are being completed approximately 5-7 days apart. The second and final application is just being completed. In addition to these Conservation Areas, the Comfort Maple was also monitored and found to have a high number of egg masses of increasing population on it. Due to the increased stresses of this tree, it was sprayed with Btk to help maintain the health of this heritage tree.

Later in the summer the NPCA staff will be assessing the defoliation rates and determining the effects of the spraying on the moth population this year.

NPCA Hunting Program

Staff have issued an addition 3 hunting permits. To date staff has received and issued 140 hunting permits/permission for 2008. Of these, 5 permits are issued to individuals residing outside of our administrative area. Wild turkey season closed May 10 at Long Beach and May 31 at the remaining NPCA hunting areas.

Emerald Ash Borer

Similar to previous years, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is concerned with the spread of the Emerald Ash Borer, for fear of its destructive effects to the forestry and agricultural sector. They note that the major risk is through the movement of infested wood and that it is prohibited for anyone to move firewood and ash tree material from any of the quarantined areas:

- Counties of Essex, Elgin, Lambton, Middlesex and Norfolk
- Municipality of Chatham-Kent, and
- City of Toronto

To assist in reduce the spread of this species the NPCA has taken the following measures:

- Posted information making visitors aware of the federal firewood movement restriction (via poster and brochure handout information)
- All campers must inform the gatehouse if they are carrying firewood
- If firewood is from the EAB regulated areas above or the US, they will ask them to turn the wood over for safe disposal (immediate burning)
- Record the amount of wood taken, origin and person whom it was taken from if possible

Geocaching on NPCA Lands

To help improve the geocaching administration and eliminate unpermitted geocaches on NPCA lands, the CA staff has been working with the Geocaching Association to establish an easy protocol for them to identify NPCA property boundaries to flag when their members must obtain permit from the NPCA prior to any web posting of public geocaches.

Red Mulberry Recovery

The Ecologist continues to monitor Red Mulberry tree species in Niagara and is working with the Recovery team and area experts in implementing strategies for enhanced reproduction of these species.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Niagara Children's Water Festival

Registrations for the 2008 festival are coming in quickly with numbers nearing the capacity of 5,000 students. A public day will take place on Sunday, September 14 from 11:00 to 4:00. Staff attended the first Children's Water Festival sponsored by the City of Hamilton.

Niagara Watershed Report Card

Staff is continuing to collect data from the 2007 annual Report Card which will be distributed to all households within the watershed (242,730). This is a joint outreach initiative of the Conservation Authority and Niagara Region.

Source Water Protection

The Source Protection Committee held many meetings to work on the draft Terms of Reference as required by the Clean Water Act. Open houses will be held for the public to review and comment on the Draft Terms of Reference – dates are Monday, June 23, from 7:00 to 9:00 at the Roselawn Centre, Port Colborne; Wednesday, June 25, from 2:00 pm to 5:00 pm at Four Points Sheraton, in Thorold, and Thursday, June 26, 2008 from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at Casablanca Inn, Grimsby.

Community Outreach

Staff continues to participate in a number of community partnership initiatives to promote the work of the Conservation Authority. A number of promotional initiatives geared to the Centre for Conservation, Binbrook, Long Beach and Chippawa Creek are being undertaken in an effort to increase visitation to the revenue producing sites.

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Golf Tournament

The 2008 Bob Welch Memorial Golf Classic held Tuesday, June 3rd was once again a successful fundraising event. With a little luck, the weather cooperated, we had 102 golfers participate, \$6,550 in sponsorships was received, the silent auction raised \$1,355 and overall, the event will net around \$12,000 in support of the Centre for Conservation at Ball's Falls. Many thanks are extended to the volunteers and members who participated or assisted with this event. Follow-up is currently proceeding in the form of letters of thank you letters and receipts. Next year's tournament is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, June 2nd.

Conservation Education Bursaries

The Chairman and staff will meet to review applications received this year to determine their eligibility for a bursary. This program supports students from Fort Erie and surrounding area that are pursuing a post-secondary education in a field related to conservation and resource management. Since 1992, 106 bursaries totaling \$105,600 have been awarded as a result of the conservation education bursary program.

Rock 'N Ribs Event

This annual event at Harbour Estates Winery will take place on September 6th. Featuring a rib dinner and concert by April Wine, we will once again have the opportunity for a silent auction table. Last year, approximately \$2,500 was raised. Staff is requesting assistance to secure items for this year's silent auction.

Recommendation:

Report No. 53-08 outlining the status of Authority projects be received for information.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Tony D'Amario, P.Eng. CAO/Secretary-Treasurer