

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

FULL AUTHORITY

BALL'S FALLS

AGENDA

MAY 20, 2009 – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

**BUSINESS:**

(1) **MINUTES - FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – APRIL 15, 2009**

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held April 15, 2009.

(2) **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

(3) **NEC PRESENTATION**

A presentation will be made to the Conservation Authority from the Niagara Escarpment Commission for the Centre for Conservation.

(4) **NPCA HEARING PROCEDURES – O.REG. 155/06 - REPORT NO. 28-09**

Attached is Report No. 28-09 outlining the hearing procedures.

(5) **CONTINUATION OF HEARING UNDER SECTION 28(3) – APPLICATION BY EMILE SAINE – REPORT NO. 24-09**

The documentation provided in the April agenda will be used in the continuation of the hearing.

(6) **DELEGATION**

Regional Staff will be in attendance regarding the Thorold/Fonthill Spur Trail.

(7) **CORRESPONDENCE**

Attached is the Conservation Ontario Annual Report and a resolution from the Town of Fort Erie regarding the Regulation and Tree By-Law.

(8) **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

(9) **CAO'S REPORT**

(10) **BUDGET STATUS REPORT TO APRIL 30, 2009 - REPORT NO. 29-09**

Attached is Staff Report No. 29-09 together with a copy of the Current Budget Summary to April 30, 2009.

(11) **2008 ANNUAL REPORT – REPORT NO. 30-09**

Attached is Report No. 30-09 together with a copy of the 2008 Annual Report.

(12) **NATIVE PLANTING WORKSHOP – REPORT NO. 31-09**

Attached is Report No. 31-09 regarding this workshop.

(13) **WATER QUALITY MONITORING PROGRAM – 2008 ANNUAL REPORT – REPORT NO. 32-09**

Attached is Report No. 32-09, together with a copy of the 2008 Water Quality Monitoring Program Annual Report.

(14) **GYPSY MOTH MANAGEMENT ON NPCA PROPERTIES – REPORT NO. 33-09**

Attached is Report No. 33-09 regarding this matter.

(15) **PAVILION AND PARK STORE – BINBROOK CONSERVATION AREA – REPORT NO. 34-09**

Attached is Report No. 34-09 together with a copy of the site plan.

(16) **ACCESSIBILITY FOR ONTARIANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT 2005 – REPORT NO. 35-09**

Attached is Report No. 35-09 regarding this Act.

(17) **PROJECT STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 36-09**

Attached is Staff Report No. 36-09 outlining the status of Authority projects and programs.

(18) **IN-CAMERA**

- (a) Complaint and Violation Status Report – Report No. CR-10-09
- (b) Duffin Violation Report – Report No. CR-11-09
- (c) Tree By-Law Status Report – Report No. CR-12-09
- (d) St. John's Centre Proposal – Report No. CR-13-09

(19) **OTHER BUSINESS**

**ADJOURNMENT**



**TO:** The Chairman and Members of the Authority

**DATE:** May 13, 2009

**SUBJECT:** NPCA Hearing Procedures – O. Reg. 155/06 - Report No. 28-09

Attached is correspondence received from Michael Kyne, NPCA Solicitor regarding legal opinion on the procedures for Hearings held by the NPCA relative to O. Reg. 155/06.

The opinions discussed pertain to the matter of hearing procedures and does not assess the merits of the current or other specific applications before the Board. Rather, it provided guidance to the Board on conduct during a hearing and the appropriateness of the Guidelines as set out in the NPCA Policies and Procedures.

The summary section of the correspondence indicates the need to treat all parties fairly and can impose reasonable limits to facilitate an efficient yet balanced hearing as long as the interests of the party (applicant) are not prejudiced.

The Hearing is a formal process, however not bound by the same rules as a civil or criminal court proceeding and accordingly, the Board may be involved in the discussions, ask questions and request clarification as necessary so long as the applicant has full opportunity to make their views known.

Also the Board has the opportunity to deliberate in private (without NPCA staff or applicant present), if desired, similar to any panel of judges, arbitrators or adjudicators.

It is important the note that Board members not present for any part of a hearing cannot be involved in discussions, the final decision or any deliberation.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the NPCA Hearing Procedures Report No. 28-09 be received.

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



**TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority**

**DATE: May 13, 2009**

**SUBJECT: Budget Status Report - Report No. 29-09**

Attached is the budget status report for the period ending April 30, 2009.

There are no major variances to report at this time. Many NPCA expenditures are seasonal and therefore expenditures will be more reflective as project and program activities increase with the summer operating months.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the Budget Status Report for the period ending April 30, 2009 be received.

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



**TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority**

**DATE: May 15, 2009**

**RE: 2008 Annual Report – Report No. 30-09**

Included in your agenda package is the Authority's recently completed 2008 Annual report. The intent of the Annual Report is to provide an overview of the Authority's various program activities and to acknowledge the support of our member municipalities, the Province and Federal governments as well as the many NGO's with which the Authority has established partnership with. The report is distributed to all watershed municipalities, MP's, MPP's libraries, universities, colleges, donors and is available at various events throughout the year.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the 2008 Annual Report be received.**

Prepared by: Mary Stack, Director of Communications

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

**To: Chairman and Members of the Authority**

**Date: May 20, 2009**

**Re: Native Planting Workshop – Report No. 31-09**

The purpose of this report is to advise the Board of the preliminary plans for a proposed Native Planting Workshop. The idea of a Native Planting Workshop was put forth at the April meeting by the Deputy Chairman, when discussing the planned activities for the “Simply Tremendous” - 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event. At that time, it was generally felt that there was a demand in the general public for this type of activity. Despite poor weather, based on the attendance of the Earth Day event held this year by the Authority at E.C. Brown Conservation Area, staff concur that interest in this area appears to be high.

In planning for a Native Planting Workshop, staff must ensure we are not perceived as duplicating the Region of Niagara’s Smart Gardening Initiative. This initiative involves seven workshops on topics including: drought resistant plants, backyard composting, organic gardening and water conservation.

Staff believe that the best location to host this initiative is the E.C. Brown Conservation Area, since it was developed as a “living classroom”, with this type of use in mind. Briefly summarized the site includes 23 acres of floodplain property, a 3 acre wetland, a ½ acre vernal pool, 3 acres of planted native trees and shrubs, 30 pit and mound wetland pockets and 13 acres of meadow habitat. The site includes numerous interpretative signs along 3 kilometres of trails. The biggest restriction on the site is the limited parking.

With respect to timing, staff propose to hold the Native Planting Workshop later this summer for two reasons.

Firstly, in the last 3 years the Watershed Restoration Division has delivered a similar initiative called the ECO School Program and in 2008, 29 schools in 12 municipalities participated. This program focuses on completing hands on workshops and/or environmental enhancement on school grounds. Currently, staffing resources are not sufficient to deliver another workshop until this program is completed in late June. By that time the Watershed Restoration Division will have 2 subsidized seasonal positions on board, through the Ministry of Natural Resources Summer Work Experience Program.

Secondly and of equal importance is that by mid July, most native species are typically “at their best”, in terms of appearance. Staff believe this is a paramount point in order to showcase native species to the public, municipalities, etc.

Staff would propose a half day workshop and would hold both a morning and afternoon session, for a total of 80 participants. The workshop would be in the form of an interpretive walk, along with demonstration plantings and 3 “lecture” points. The three main topic to be dealt with would be:

- An introduction to our Native Plant Guide
- The value and benefits of Natural Habitat Interconnection
- Water Quality issues affecting the Natural Environment

A fee of \$ 30.00 per participant is proposed to offset expenses for printing and refreshments.

Once the format/agenda is finalized advertisements will be placed/distributed to local media.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT: Report No. 31- 09 regarding the Proposed Native Planting Workshop be received for information.**

Prepared by: John Kukalis; Director, Water Management

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

**TO:** The Chairman and Members of the Authority

**DATE:** May 20, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Water Quality Monitoring Program – 2008 Annual Report – Report No. 32-09

The purpose of this report is to present the Draft 2008 Water Quality Monitoring Program Report for the Board's consideration.

In 2008, Authority staff gathered and tested water samples from 13 groundwater monitoring wells, and 65 surface locations. The Authority has been conducting this program for the past 8 years and the program is financed primarily from the general municipal levy, with some additional dollars from the Ministry of Environment. In addition, the program also periodically completes special projects that are funded by other interested agencies.

The intent of the surface water testing is to document the trends in surface water quality from both a chemical (metals, nutrients, suspended solids, etc.) and biological (leeches, larval stage dragonflies, crayfish, etc.) perspective, on some of the Niagara Peninsula's more major sub watersheds. In general, the 2008 study found that approximately 66% of the surface water stations tested were found to have poor or impaired water quality. The likely causes are both point sources (i.e. combined sewer overflows, direct storm roadway outlets) and non point sources (i.e. agricultural/ livestock land runoff, faulty septic systems).

With respect to groundwater, the NPCA tests groundwater at 13 locations forming part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN). Data collected from the PGMN monitoring wells indicates that most groundwater quality parameters meet accepted standards however, exceedances of boron, selenium, sodium, fluoride and nitrate were identified at various wells and/or in select samples. While mineral exceedances are generally thought to be attributed to natural groundwater conditions, nitrate exceedances are attributed to human activities such as agricultural land uses or faulty septic systems.

Unfortunately, due to the small number of monitoring wells and lack of available subsurface aquifer mapping, it is impossible to draw any global conclusions concerning the ambient groundwater characteristics in the Niagara Peninsula. This same conclusion was also made in the Ambient Groundwater Quality Study completed earlier this year by Jagger Hims Limited, as part of the requirements for the provincial Source Water Protection program.

Ultimately, both the Region and Province need to direct more financial resources to both surface and subsurface testing and mapping programs for the NPCA's information to be useful for proactive/impact forecasting applications.



Attachments:

1. 2008 Water Quality Monitoring Program Report, dated May 2009.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That: the 2008 Water Quality Monitoring Program Report appended be received, and;**

**That: the 2008 Water Quality Monitoring Program Report be forwarded to the watershed Municipalities, Medical Officers of Health and Ministry of Environment.**

Prepared by: John Kukalis; Director, Water Management

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

**TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority**

**DATE: May 12, 2009**

**SUBJECT: Gypsy Moth Management on NPCA Properties Report No. 33-09**

In 2008, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority participated in an aerial spray program to control an infestation of the European Gypsy Moth (*Lymantria dispar* L.) in Haldimand County. Two properties (Ruigrok Tract and Hedley Forest) were identified as having high populations of egg masses and at risk of severe defoliation. The timing of this infestation was particularly troubling because trees in this area were already under stress from successive hot, dry summers. These two Conservation Areas were sprayed and monitoring plots were set-up at other properties throughout the watershed to track the progress of the infestation.

The Canadian Forestry Service (CFS) is responsible for mapping defoliation and projecting the spread of the Gypsy Moth. The 2009 defoliation map has been attached to this report for information purposes along with the 2008 information. The CFS research suggests the infestation has spread north and east in the NPCA watershed. New areas of concern include St. Catharines, Pelham, Welland, South-West Niagara Falls and Fort Erie.

NPCA staff visited Conservation Areas throughout the watershed to conduct egg mass counts. The two properties sprayed in 2008 have low numbers of egg masses. This is consistent with results of properties enrolled in last year's spray program. Most of the sites in new areas of infestation also have low to moderate egg mass counts. One of the theories behind the low numbers is that a naturally occurring virus has been impacting Gypsy Moth larva, resulting in high mortality.

The NPCA's 2009 Capital Budget includes funding for a one-time Gypsy Moth spray project. This amount was identified to cover the cost of aerial spraying where necessary for forest health or neighbouring landowner relations. Two areas will be sprayed under this program in:

**St. Johns Conservation Area** – Egg mass counts in neighbouring properties are moderate to high. Short Hills Provincial Park, further down in the valley, is another site that has been identified as a hot spot in the Niagara Area. The majority of neighbouring property owners are spraying their woodlots. Although egg mass counts are lower than the suggested trigger for spraying, staff believe that our Conservation Area will become a hot spot, defeating the control efforts of neighbouring property owners. This would result in a perception that the NPCA is not being a good neighbour by allowing the pest safe harbour.

**Smith-Ness Forest** – This site was donated by the Smith-Ness family in 2005. It is a 16.5 hectare forest, with high numbers of oak (a species preferred by the Gypsy Moth). Egg mass counts were high, suggesting the area will benefit from a spray application.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Report Number 33-09 be received for information purposes

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

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



**TO:** The Chairman and Members of the Authority

**DATE:** May 12, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Pavilion and Park Store – Binbrook Conservation Area - Report No. 34-09

The 2009 Capital Plan for the Binbrook Conservation Area includes funding for the construction of an additional open air pavilion with attached park store. The open air pavilion will be rented or available for park picnic use. The park store will serve basic items such as packaged snacks, refreshments and bait for fishing. It will also act as an outlet for watercraft rentals and equipment storage.

The new pavilion is approximately 7.3m x 17m (24' x 56'). It will be situated in close proximity to the day-use beach and the new system of floating docks. The exact location of the proposed structure is outlined on the attached site plan.

The project is split into three parts: Site Work; Building Structure; and Building Cladding & Finishing. This approach provides greater transparency, allowing staff to verify where resources are being allocated by contractors. It also provides greater flexibility in the award of the contract.

The deadline for quotations is 4:00 pm, Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. As such, prices are not available at the time of writing this report. Once all quotations have been received, staff will analyse the submissions and bring recommendations to the May 20<sup>th</sup>, meeting of the Full Authority Membership under a separate report.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Report No. 34-09 be received for information purposes

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

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



**TO:** The Chairman and Members of the Authority

**DATE:** May 12, 2009

**SUBJECT:** Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 – Report No. 35-09

As a responsible public agency, the Conservation Authority is subject to the standard requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. The goal of this legislation is to provide people with disabilities the same opportunities as everyone else. Businesses and organizations that provide goods and services to people in Ontario will have to meet certain accessibility standards in five important areas of our lives:

1. Customer Service
2. Transportation
3. Information and Communications
4. Built Environment
5. Employment

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service came into force on January 1, 2008. Under this regulation, public agencies are required to comply by January 1, 2010. A summary of these requirements is attached for information purposes.

Conservation Authority staff are in the process of developing policies and services to bring the NPCA into compliance in advance of the deadline. A great deal of this work relies on training for staff, volunteers, and members of the Board. The Conservation Authority has been working in cooperation with the Region of Niagara on matters related to accessibility. The Region has an Accessibility Advisory Coordinator, who is responsible for training and policy development. They have been most helpful in our efforts to date.

Regional staff have offered to conduct a training session for Board Members. This would be a 1-hour session, covering the Act, the NPCA's obligations under the act and the steps required to bring the NPCA into compliance. This is the same training that will be offered to members of Regional Council. Authority staff recommend that the training be scheduled immediately before the June meeting of the Full Authority.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That Report No 35-09 be received for information purposes;

That staff organize a training session for the Accessibility Standards for Customer Service in advance of the June 17<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

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

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



## Accessibility Standards for Customer Service

# Summary of Requirements

### What you need to know

The Accessibility Standards for Customer Service (Ontario Regulation 429/07) came into force on January 1, 2008. If you are a provider of goods or services, and have one or more employees in Ontario, you will be required to comply with the regulation.

- If you are a public sector organization designated in the standard, you must comply by January 1, 2010.
- If you are a private business, non-profit organization, or any other service provider with at least one employee in Ontario, you must comply by January 1, 2012.

The regulation outlines some things you must do in order to ensure you are providing accessible customer service to people with various kinds of disabilities. The following is a summary of requirements:

1. Establish policies, practices and procedures on providing goods or services to people with disabilities.
2. Set a policy on allowing people to use their own personal assistive devices to access your goods and use your services and about any other measures your organization offers (assistive devices, services, or methods) to enable them to access your goods and use your services.
3. Use reasonable efforts to ensure that your policies, practices and procedures are consistent with the core principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity.
4. Communicate with a person with a disability in a manner that takes into account his or her disability.
5. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who interact with the public or other third parties on your behalf on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.

6. Train staff, volunteers, contractors and any other people who are involved in developing your policies, practices and procedures on the provision of goods or services on a number of topics as outlined in the customer service standard.
7. Allow people with disabilities to be accompanied by their guide dog or service animal in those areas of the premises you own or operate that are open to the public, unless the animal is excluded by another law. If a service animal is excluded by law, use other measures to provide services to the person with a disability.
8. Permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties.
9. Where admission fees are charged, provide notice ahead of time on what admission, if any, would be charged for a support person of a person with a disability.
10. Provide notice when facilities or services that people with disabilities rely on to access or use your goods or services are temporarily disrupted.
11. Establish a process for people to provide feedback on how you provide goods or services to people with disabilities and how you will respond to any feedback and take action on any complaints. Make the information about your feedback process readily available to the public.

If you are a designated public sector organization or other provider with 20 or more employees, you must:

1. Document in writing all your policies, practices and procedures for providing accessible customer service and meet other document requirements set out in the standard.
2. Notify customers that documents required under the customer service standard are available upon request.
3. When giving documents required under the customer service standard to a person with a disability, provide the information in a format that takes into account the person's disability.

Some small steps you can take immediately to improve accessibility include:

- treating all customers with dignity and respect
- asking 'How may I help you?'

## **Additional Information for You**

At [www.AccessOn.ca/compliance](http://www.AccessOn.ca/compliance) you'll find information and resources to help you understand how to comply with the regulation.

Please note: This document is for information purposes only. This is not legal advice and should be read together with the official language of the standard. To view the official wording of the regulation, go to [www.e-laws.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.on.ca) or contact ServiceOntario or Publications Ontario for a print copy.

For further assistance, you may wish to contact:

### **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Contact Centre (ServiceOntario)**

Phone: 1-866-515-2025

TTY: 416-325-3408 / TTY Toll-free: 1-800-268-7095

Fax: 416-325-3407

Website: [www.AccessON.ca](http://www.AccessON.ca)



**TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority**

**DATE: May 15, 2009**

**RE: PROJECT STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 36-09**

## **WATER MANAGEMENT**

### **I. Watershed Regulation Division**

#### **1) Binbrook Reservoir & Gauge Stations**

Staff continue to visually monitor the water levels at the Binbrook reservoir on a regular basis and adjust the valve settings as required based on forecast weather. Staff also continue to monitor the water levels at our 12 gauge stations on a daily basis as part of the NPCA's routine flood forecasting/warning duties. The contract for the instrumentation system upgrades has been finalized and executed by the Authority. The new instrumentation has been ordered and an on-site meeting with the contractor's technicians is scheduled for the end of May. Work is scheduled to be completed by July.

#### **2) NPCA 'Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alteration to Shorelines and Watercourses'**

##### **i) Permits**

The NPCA has approved 19 permit applications for the 2009 calendar year. The NPCA has also refused to issue approvals for 3 development proposals during this same time period.

##### **ii) Violations**

Please refer to the associated Report under "in camera" section of agenda.

##### **iii) NPCA-DFO Partnership Agreement**

The NPCA is under agreement with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to review works in or near water to determine whether the work is likely to result in the harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat (HADD). As part of the NPCA-DFO Partnership Agreement, NPCA staff work as a liaison between DFO Assessors and proponents to recommend appropriate fish habitat compensation projects. During the current calendar year NPCA staff has reviewed 25 applications under this agreement.

##### **iv) Municipal Drain Maintenance Review**

The NPCA continues to represent Conservation Authorities located in Central Ontario. on the DART Committee with representatives of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Drainage Superintendents Association of Ontario, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers(Land Drainage Committee), Association of Municipalities of Ontario – Rural Caucus, OMAFRA, MNR

and Conservation Ontario. The purpose of the DART is to develop a consistent approach and technical direction with regard to municipal drainage project review under Conservation Authority Regulations. NPCA staff has reviewed 8 municipal drain projects during the current calendar year.

### **3) Floodplain Mapping**

#### **i) Ussher's Creek – City of Niagara Falls**

The NPCA is presently undertaking the necessary calculations, field work, and map analysis to accurately determine the extent of the 100 year flood elevations for Ussher's Creek in the City of Niagara Falls.

#### **ii) Bayer's (Boyer's) Creek – City of Niagara Falls**

The NPCA is presently undertaking the necessary calculations, field work, and map analysis to accurately determine the extent of the 100 year flood elevations for Bayer's Creek in the City of Niagara Falls.

## **II. Watershed Planning Division**

### **1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review**

Plan review activity has remained brisk through this traditionally slower time of year.

Staff continue to work with the Region of Niagara to update the Environmental Impact Study Guidelines. The Guidelines are being updated to reflect the Region's new Environmental Policies and the NPCA's Regulation 155/06 requirements. This joint project is being conducted under the Niagara Planning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

### **2) Watershed Plan Preparation**

#### **a) Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan**

A combined Steering Committee meeting with the Central Welland River Watershed Plan Steering Committee was held on April 23. The purpose of this meeting was to review the steps in Phase 2 of the watershed planning process. A representative from the Ministry of Natural Resources joined us and gave a presentation on Species at Risk and what makes the two watershed plan study areas unique to a number of species.

The 'Recommended Restoration Options' from the Lake Erie North Shore Geomorphic Assessment has been submitted to the Watershed Planning Specialist for incorporation into Phase 2 of the Watershed Plan.

#### **b) Central Welland River Watershed Plan**

A combined Steering Committee meeting with the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan Steering Committee was held on April 23. The purpose of this meeting was to review the steps in Phase 2 of the watershed planning process. A representative from the Ministry of Natural Resources joined us and gave a presentation on Species at Risk and what makes the two watershed plan study areas unique to a number of species.

Landowner letters to gain access to private property for the Geomorphic Assessment have been sent out to properties that are adjacent to watercourses. Positive responses have started to be received via e-mail, mail and telephone.

### **c) Beaverdams and Shriners Creek Watershed Plan**

The first Steering Committee meeting was held on April 30. The purpose of this meeting was to explain the purpose and process of Watershed Planning and to discuss any comments or concerns with the Draft Background and Characterization Report. An open house will take place in June for this study area. The purpose of this open house is to inform the public of the study and how they can become a part of the watershed planning process.

Phase One of the Geomorphic Assessment has been initiated. This phase entails the collection of background information such as slope, landuse, sinuosity and changes in planform. All associated digital files have also been created in preparation for data collection.

### **d) Upper Welland River Watershed Plan**

Background data collection has been initiated for a Terms of Reference to be submitted to the NPCA Board of Directors.

### **3) Lyons Creek East Fluvial Geomorphology Study**

A Final Phase One Report was received on April 27 accompanied by project data and models. This report has been forwarded to respective staff. A meeting will be scheduled in the future to address any outstanding project questions.

### **4) Natural Areas Inventory**

This has been a very busy month for the NAI team as we have worked hard to complete the data entry portion of the project.

Several of the staff are moving on to new positions within the Conservation Authority while others completed their time with us on April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Reports from consultants on various components of the project are being edited including Butterfly and Moth and, Dragonfly and Damselfly lists and the Bird lists. The contributions are being edited for the final document.

Final reports for funders and technical summaries for each of the Study Sites are in the process of being written.

## **III. Source Water Protection Division**

### **1) Source Water Protection Plan**

-NPCA received a letter from the Minister of the Environment indicating he has approved the amended SPC Terms of Reference (TOR). The TOR was posted on the province's EBR website on April 14, 2009. Therefore, according to the regulations, the Assessment Report is required to be submitted to the province on April 14, 2010, (one year from the EBR posting of the TOR).

-NPCA staff and Niagara Region staff have been meeting on a regular basis to review the progress of the SP work undertaken on the Intake Protection Zones (IPZs).

Stantec Consulting is proceeding to complete the IPZ delineations and vulnerability scoring, as well as additional IPZ-2 surface water modeling for Grimsby and Rosehill Water Treatment Plant intakes. Stantec has also started working on the threats and issues tasks for the IPZs.

-Currently "in house" staff are focusing efforts on the Tier 1 Water Budget and assisting with work on the IPZs. Current water budget work includes mainly report preparation. A meeting to present the Tier 1 water budget results to the peer reviewers and the province is scheduled for May 27<sup>th</sup>.

-The SPC met on March 10 and April 14, 2009. The main focus of the meetings was the review of vulnerability scoring for Port Colborne, Niagara Falls, Welland, and Decew Water Treatment Plant Intake Protection Zones (IPZs).

## **2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:**

### **a) Routine Water Quality Work**

- Routine surface water quality monitoring has resumed and will continue until November of 2009. The 2008 data is presented in the Water Quality Monitoring Program 2008 Annual Report which will be distributed to the NPCA Board in May.

-The NPCA continues to collect groundwater level data at 15 monitoring wells as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN). Spring groundwater quality samples were collected at the wells and analyzed for routine parameters. Nitrate exceedances continue to be reported at monitoring wells located in Niagara-On-The-Lake and Pelham. The NPCA is also continuing to work with the Ministry of the Environment to establish digital service at PGMN telemetry sites.

- Spring BioMAP sampling is currently underway. New sites to be sampled in 2009 include watercourses in Niagara-On-The-Lake, Beaver Dam Creek, and Shriners Creek.

-Taxonomic identification of benthic invertebrates continues on samples collected during the fall 2008 sampling season.

### **b) Special Water Quality Projects**

- Field work for the Welland River Eutrophication Study began earlier this month with the collection of grab samples and flow data at Welland River monitoring stations. Additional data collected in 2009 will include sediment quality, diurnal dissolved oxygen, chlorophyll a, and benthic macroinvertebrates.

- Technical reports have been completed for the Hamilton International Airport and Glanbrook Landfill bioassessment studies.

- Spring BioMAP samples have been collected at Hamilton International Airport as per the annual monitoring agreement. Additional BioMAP samples will be collected in the fall of 2009.

-The Lake Ontario Collaborative Study on Twenty Mile Creek has been extended through 2009. The auto-sampler has been installed and is capturing spring wet weather events on Twenty Mile Creek.

-The NPCA continues to receive requests for applications for the NPCA Water Well Decommissioning Grant Program.

#### **IV. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division**

##### **1) Source Water Protection Support Activities**

- Cartographic figure production for the Tier 1 Water Budget Report continues...so far close to 40 maps have been generated to support this text.
- Staff participated in a provincial workshop about the identification and mapping of land use activities and potential drinking water threats and the development of associated data standards.
- The Authority has received spatial non-municipal drinking water system data from the MOE through Conservation Ontario for O. Regulation 170 and the former O. Reg 252 which is now Regulation 318 under the Health Protection and Promotion Act. The inventory is not complete and staff has approached the Regional Health Department about collaborating towards this.

##### **2) Watershed Planning Support Activities**

- Several tasks supporting the Natural Areas Inventory Project are still being addressed:
  - DRAFT Community Series ELC mapping QA/QC activities continue.
  - Several statistics have been generated to facilitate the development of the site summaries for the final reports.
  - Several queries from the ELC project database are being generated to support data needs of the external contributors to final report.
- The *Niagara Natural Environment Information Map Layer* as an NPCA requirement under the Niagara Planning MOU is being prepared for delivery to the municipalities. This product will replace the NPCA's Generic Regulations *Screening Layer* as it is the combination of this information with the Regional Environmental Policies and provides a comprehensive screen for all Authority plan and permit review activities.
- Staff helped the Watershed Planning division with facilitating the landowner contact analysis for the Central Welland River Watershed Geomorphology Study.

##### **3) Watershed Restoration Support Activities**

- GIS staff is still working with Restoration staff to update the restoration database based on the 2008 field season.

##### **4) Corporate GIS Support Activities**

- A modest server has been scoped out to host the real time river gauging solution purchased by the Watershed Regulations division for flood forecasting and warning. The server will have to be hosted off site via a third party provider because the database management tools required to support it pose a risk to Regional network security. While the principle purpose of the server will be to host the real time web interface of the river gauging solution and associated water/flow data, it will also allow SWP and GIS staff to develop and test new ways to integrate observed hydrologic data with our ongoing model development.
- The NPCA continues to represent on the Region of Niagara Corporate GIS Committee (CGIS) and recently commented on the Region's Strategic GIS Plan for 2009 -2012. As a part of the new plan the CGIS will transition into more of an official steering or advisory

role reporting to either CMT or CMAT. Many of the Authority's initial recommendations based on its GIS service level agreement and partnership have been incorporated.

- Staff is busy conceptualizing a restructuring of the Authority corporate GIS databases so that they can be published to a broader audience of all GIS users across the Regional network which will also help elevate the profile of Authority business information holdings and services. After this process Authority staff will also be given edit rights into the databases so that Regional staff does not have to do as much of the physical maintenance in this environment on its behalf. The databases need to be remodeled to accommodate a security aspect for the third party GIS data that the Authority has privilege to but that the Region does not. Similarly, the third party data that is common and privileged to both organizations which is predominantly provincial (MNR) in origin through Land Information Ontario and the Ontario Geospatial Data Exchange is being moved into a separate database, and because this information is largely natural resource based or environmentally themed, the NPCA has assumed primary custodianship of this information under our GIS shared services agreement.
- Staff is gearing up for the development of a publicly accessible web mapping application through our shared service agreement with the Region and their GeoSmart infrastructure. The custom version of the *Niagara Navigator* internet mapping tool will be implemented later this year. Its release which is currently targeted for the fall will attempt to be communicated with ties to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary initiative as an 'explore the Niagara Watershed online' kind of experience. The launch timing is largely scheduled so that the new large scale Ecological Land Classification Community Series mapping developed as part of the Natural Areas Inventory which will be going through QA/QC into the summer, can be included as content as well to showcase that project. The primary objective of this tool is to make more of the Authority business data graphically available over the web to the public and partners specifically to reduce the number of map requests, but also to help elevate the profile of Authority information holdings and services supporting its business areas as well.

## **V. Watershed Restoration Division**

### **1) General Watershed Restoration**

Areas where current watershed plans have not yet been developed continue to have priority water quality and habitat projects delivered through the general restoration program. The following are the restoration projects that are currently being planned for 2009:

- 3 wetland creation project located in 40 Mile Creek Watershed, totaling approximately 2 hectares Project located in the 40 Mile Creek Watershed, approximately 0.75 hectares
- 2 shelterbelt riparian planting projects
- 1 grassed waterway, will greatly reduce erosion and stabilize sediment run-off into Forty Mile Creek.
- 2 pit and mound restoration projects in the Vineland Drain watershed, totaling approx. 6.2 acres
- Staff area assisting residents along Beamsville Creek with some severe erosion on the slopes of the valley lands behind their homes. Shrub cuttings will be used to stabilize the soils, with the slope's soils being monitored for any further instability. Staff will also be assisting residents who have expressed interest in forming a community group to undertake projects in the valley lands of Beamsville Creek.

Staff attended a workshop on aquatic invasive species held by Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters. The workshop was held at the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

## **2) Niagara River RAP/ Welland River Restoration**

The spring planting season is just around the corner and staff are working on the planning and implementation of Water Quality and Habitat Improvement projects for 2009. Projects currently underway include:

- 4 riparian restoration projects including the establishment of 2 riparian buffers, the stabilization of 150m of Welland River shoreline, reducing erosion and improving aquatic habitat and a sheep restriction fencing project in Oswego Creek
- 5 woodland habitat restoration projects totaling approximately 20 acres
- 1 pit and mound restoration project
- 1 Best Management Practices project involving a manure management system
- 3 past restoration project enhancements including in-fill planting and seeding
- The NPCA's partnership with Ducks Unlimited Canada for 2009/2010 is underway and projects are in the early stages of design and completion. Staff went on a short flight of the project area with Ducks Unlimited to determine priority areas for 2009/2010 and for future projects. The results from the flight will be incorporated into the GIS portion of the 3 year program.

Staff attended a 3 day Fish Identification course through the Royal Ontario Museum in April. The training received through this course will be beneficial for future aquatic habitat and water quality restoration work within the Niagara AOC.

## **3) Fort Erie Creeks Watershed Restoration**

The Fort Erie Creeks Watershed Plan has been received by restoration staff for implementation. Staff are currently reviewing the recommendations and will assemble the Implementation Committee after the spring planting season. Staff has also been spending time visiting with landowners for possible restoration projects.

- The following are the restoration projects that are currently underway for 2009:

- 2 riparian restoration projects and 1 Best Management Practices projects within the Black Creek watershed.
- An alternate watering source project in the Six Mile Creek watershed.
- A partnership with the Niagara Parks Commission to help complete a riparian restoration project along the Niagara River

## **4) Twenty Mile Creek Restoration**

-Twenty Mile Creek projects planned to date for implementation in 2009 include:

- 1 windbreak tree planting approximately 200m in length,
- 1 manure storage project,
- 4 riparian buffer plantings,
- 1 wetland habitat enhancement project
- 2 woodland habitat restoration
- A clean water diversion project installing rain gutters on a livestock barn will greatly –and inexpensively- reduce nutrient run-off from the site in Lincoln/Spring Creek.
- A 5 acres of forest habitat, 120 m of riparian planting and a wetland feature in Smithville.

Staff are working with members of a condominium complex in the headwaters of Twenty Mile Creek in Hamilton to control invasive Phragmites (Common Reed) and Sweet White

Clover dominating wetland areas on the property. This project will complement ongoing wetland enhancement work being undertaken at the adjacent St. Elizabeth's Village Property.

Staff have been busy with site visits for upcoming habitat restoration projects and tree in-fill projects and follow-up meetings for 2009 projects.

#### **4) Twelve Mile Creek Restoration**

The following are the restoration projects that are currently being planned for 2009:

- Floodplain wetland restoration and reforestation in a western Twelve Mile Creek headwater area. A wetland will be re-excavated in a former meander area of a "straightened" stream.
- About 4 acres of hilly pasture land in Upper Twelve will be reforested to protect perhaps the most important spring source of this system. Additionally, we are investigating partnering with EFP to assist with the funding of two stream crossings.
- 2 Stream buffers and reforestation on different tributaries of Richardson's Creek.
- Staff are working with Regional Niagara and Town of Pelham to develop a solution to a serious erosion problem arising from Highway 20 runoff, which threatens Brook Trout downstream.
- A farm in Upper Twelve Mile Creek will undergo an ecological transformation this spring, in partnership with EFP funding. Buffers will be planted on 1.5 km of stream, dispersion sandwich technology will be employed to filter runoff, which will then flow into the restored floodplain wetland. Three stream crossings for cropping machinery will be installed. In addition, the most highly impacted areas of the stream will have some erosion control, and pool restoration through excavation. The latter will serve to trap sediments in the short-term.
- Year Two of the Decew Escarpment Tablelands Restoration, a partnership with OPG, Region of Niagara, NRC, Bruce Trail Conservancy, and Niagara College, will see planting of about 10 acres.
- About 3 acres of old field will be direct-seeded with prairie and tree species at the Lathrop property.
- Two smaller Stream-buffer/reforestation projects are planned in Upper Twelve Mile Creek on rural-residential properties.

#### **6) Niagara-on-the-Lake Restoration**

-The One Mile Creek Watershed Implementation Committee met on March 24<sup>th</sup> 2009 to get updates from all partners. Some of the topics of discussion were the prioritization of culvert replacement along one mile creek, the MOE analysis of a geotechnical study performed on the old William Street landfill area adjacent to the creek, the proper ownership of Lansdowne pond, and progress on the OMC stewardship manual.

-The third NOTL Watershed Plan Implementation Committee meeting was held on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2009. The committee terms of reference was discussed and will be confirmed at the next meeting. Work plan items were also discussed and prioritized. The meeting was concluded with a presentation on creating self maintaining municipal drains by incorporating natural channel design. The presentation was given by Jack Imhof, National biologist with Trout Unlimited Canada. There is great potential for this idea to be implemented within NOTL.



-Staff participated in the One Mile Creek Earth Day Creek Clean Up which saw a good turn out and 12 bags of garbage collected.

Below is a list of the restoration projects that are currently being planned for 2009:

- 2 shelterbelt within the Four Mile Creek watershed totaling approximately 400 m
- 1 woodland enhancement project within the Four Mile Creek watershed totaling approximately 1.5 ac.
- 1 riparian improvement projects along One Mile Creek 90 m<sup>2</sup>
- 2 riparian improvement projects along Four Mile Creek 500 m<sup>2</sup>

## **7) 15,16,18 Mile Creeks Restoration**

- The following are the restoration projects that are currently being planned for 2009:

- 5 Riparian Buffer Projects, 2 sites on 15 Mile Creek, 2 sites on 16 Mile Creek and one site on 18 Mile Creek, with an approximate total of 1 km of stream length to be restored with a vegetated buffer
- 4 woodland restoration projects, all of which are in the 15 Mile Creek watershed. 3 of these projects are infilling for projects completed in past years.
- 1 conservation farm practices project, consisting of a sediment trap and planting of a row of wildflowers within an existing vineyard for pollinating insects.
- 1 nutrient management project, to contain runoff from a grape pumice storage area

## **8) Yellow Fish Road**

- Yellow Fish Road bookings are in place for the month of May and June. In addition to regular painting events, June 5th is National Yellow Fish Road Day across Canada. Staff are planning to distribute kits to 10 groups across the NPCA jurisdiction on June 5th.

## **9) ECO School Program**

-Site Visits for the ECO School Program are underway and site preparation will begin the week of May 11th and plantings will begin in June. Twenty eight schools in the NPCA jurisdiction will be participating in this program in 2009.

## **10) E.C. Brown Wetland Earth Day Event**

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority hosted an Earth Day Event on Wednesday April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2009 at the E.C. Brown wetland restoration site Conservation Area. 300 students from 9 local schools, staff from the District office of the Ministry of the Environment and several members of the public attended the event. Approximately 1000 trees and shrubs were planted. Guided tours of the site were given and other activities were offered including bird box building, monitoring exercises including water quality assessments. Hot dogs and light refreshments were also served. The feedback from the event has been positive. We plan to host another Earth Day event next year.

## **11) Landowner Stewardship Guide**

Staff are currently developing a Landowner Water Quality and Habitat Stewardship Guide. This guide is being developed to be specific for each sub-watershed in the Niagara Peninsula; currently One Mile Creek in Niagara-on-the-Lake is being developed as the prototype. Once this document is completed it will be adapted to all sub-watersheds within our jurisdiction. The expected completion date for One Mile Creek is September.

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- 5 woodland habitat restoration projects totaling approximately 8.7 hectares
- Riparian and Wetland Planting

## **IV. Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Division**

### **1) Lyons Creek East**

The Niagara River AOC Contaminated Sediment Management Work Plan has been approved by the Contaminated Sediments Technical Advisory Group (TAG). The work plan captures any work that has to be done in the AOC. Under a new agreement with MOE, the NPCA will coordinate the development of the Monitored Natural Recovery strategy for Lyon's Creek East in collaboration with local stakeholders.

### **2) Stage 2 RAP Update**

- The RAP Coordinating Committee sent a letter to the City of Welland's planning Division containing recommendations and suggestions on section 11 of the City's New Official Plan Background Policy Report December 2008.
- The RAP Communications Plan will be discussed with the Niagara Restoration Council and MOE and Environment Canada communications staff in early May. The draft plan includes the release of the RAP Stage 2 Update Report, together with a celebratory event to recognize the completion and success of the fish barrier removal project, in Fall 2009.
- The RAP Implementers meeting was convened on April 23/09 at Niagara Region's headquarters to discuss and further fine-tune the draft RAP Work Plan. From the comments and information received, a revised plan will be circulated to all the implementers. The next meeting is scheduled for November 2009.
- The Public Advisory Committee (PAC) met on the evening of April 23 in the NPCA Boardroom and members were updated on the status of the RAP, the revised delisting criteria and upcoming events. It is anticipated that the PAC will be reconvened in June to review the draft Stage 2 Update report.
- The Welland River Eutrophication Study 2009 field season is underway.

### **3) International Liaison**

- The RAP Coordinator presented an update at the U.S. Remedial Advisory Committee's meeting on April 8 at the NYSDEC headquarters in Buffalo.
- The International Joint Commission's Centennial celebration of the International Boundary Waters Treaty will be held in multiple locations within the Niagara area. From June 5 – 14, 2009, the Niagara River Corridor will be host to a variety of events, climaxing with the official celebration of the Boundary Waters Treaty on June 13 at the Rainbow Bridge, Niagara Falls. Further information is available at: [www.oursharedwaters.com](http://www.oursharedwaters.com)

#### **4) Niagara River Toxics Management Plan (NRTMP)**

- The NRTMP Secretariat is considering options for the future mandate and structure of the NRTMP for addressing the remaining water quality challenges. Consultations on the proposed options are underway.
- A NRTMP "State of the Niagara" conference will be included in the IJC's Boundary Waters Treaty Centennial celebrations in June/09.

### **LAND MANAGEMENT DIVISION**

#### **Ball's Falls Conservation Area**

The heritage programming staff have been hired for the season: Jenica Veenstra is returning to fill the summer program coordinator position. Gabrielle Beerman has been hired as the summer program assistant and Tarah Csaszar joins staff as the part-time heritage interpreter.

The Summer Jobs Service (SJS) funding to provide a wage subsidy for up to 34 qualified seasonal staff has been approved for 6800 hours in the amount of \$13,600. No word has been received on the Canada Summer Jobs (CJS) funding application.

Unfortunately several heritage programs have been cancelled due to lack of registrants. Cancelled programs include: Earth Day, Migrating Birds Walk, Spring Warbler Walk and Butterfly Gardening. Staff will try to re-schedule some programs where feasible. Centre staff have promoted the programs through Cogeco's "In Touch" program and have prepared listings, posters and press releases for all programs. The flat screen at the Centre and the NPCA website post all information as well.

Planning for summer day camp sessions has begun. Changes this year will include offering increased extended hours from 8:30-4:00 to 8:00-4:30 to better service working parents. The camp will be re-named as "Ball's Falls Adventure Day Camp" instead of "Trailblazer's Adventure Day Camp." This year the weekly themes are: Pioneer Bees, Green LEEDers, Wild About Nature and Creek Crusades.

The volunteer gardeners have been hard at work in the gardens. A rose garden is being developed along the Northwest side of the Ball home. The woven fences along the front of the cabin have been reconstructed.

During the course of "Ontario Frogs: The Ribbet Exhibit" from March 14 - April 13, approximately 1,200 visitors were in attendance at the site.

In the temporary gallery, "The Real Decoy", Woodcarvings by the Niagara Woodcarvers Association (April 18 – June 25) traces the history of the decoy from the invention of this floating duck decoy by Native North Americans to present day, as seen through the bird carvings by the Niagara Woodcarvers; how the use, construction and collecting of decoys has naturally developed into bird carvings that capture the essence of our feathered friends. The reasons for using decoys and the challenges that grew out of hunting practices in the nineteenth century are addressed. A range of bird types and styles are represented in the exhibit, from waterfowl to songbirds. Each is created by a member of the Niagara Woodcarvers. The tools and materials used in carving are

also displayed.

A video of World Champion bird carver, Pat Godin carving the detailed feather textures on a Hen Cavasback Decoy is also featured. The gift shop will be selling Pat Godin's DVD and books for those interested in carving.

During this exhibit, crayoning and craft activities relating to birds, flight and migration activities will be available in the creative creatures area in the atrium: An 8 week education program "For the Birds" has been developed for schools.

Public programs offered in conjunction with the exhibit include:

April 26, 2009 - Migrating Birds Walk, 9:30 am-11:30 am. Take a guided hike with Marie Jacklin.

May 3, 2009 - Spring Warbler Walk, 9 am -11 am. Discover the wild world of warblers with Rob Kuret.

May 30, 2009, 9 am -11:00 am With admission to the park, visitors will get up close at birds watching members of the Haldimand Bird Observatory catch and band birds. Staff will share their science knowledge gained through bird banding and you will see the unique skills needed to take on this valuable work.

June 6, 2009 – 10am – noon - Woodcarving Workshop with the Niagara Woodcarvers Association

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, the second of three workshops in the Archival Preservation Series, presented by Mary Gladwin, Oxford County Archivist had 19 participants. The last session on May 9 will feature documents. There are only 3 openings left for registration.

Beamsville Secondary School is the first secondary school to book the Four - Cree Hand Drum Workshops for May and June. Angela Wallace is coordinating the program with facilitators Jackie Labonte and Bill Russ.

### **Ball's Falls Capital Projects**

Staff are working with contractors to install new electronic parking gates at the parking lot for the Centre and into the lower parking lot. A new traffic island has been installed at the lower parking lot that will help direct traffic flow, handle the new gate system, and add garden area at this entrance into the park. Once the gate installation and staff training are completed, look for these gates to be in operation at both locations in the park.

Spring construction projects in the park will include installation of new cedar split rail fencing along 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue in the heritage area and new trail work and signage to improve the trail system throughout the park.

### **Binbrook Conservation Area**

Conservation Authority staff are working with the Glanbrook Conservation Committee to organize the first Great Outdoor Community Festival, in celebration of the NPCA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. This event is designed to bring the public out to visit the park and discover some of the activities that take place here. The festival begins on Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> with a Camp under the Stars evening, in cooperation with Scouts Canada. On Saturday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, admission to the park will be free. A full schedule of activities and exhibits are planned for the day including horse drawn wagon rides, canoe races and art in the park. Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>, will be the close-out event, the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Binbrook Crappie Derby.

Multi-sport Canada will be holding a triathlon at Binbrook Conservation Area on Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>.

Staff are proceeding with the workplan for the new park pavilion, store, and boat rental facility for the park. The engineered building plans have been drawn up and submitted to the City of Hamilton for building permit. No concerns from the City were noted at time of permit submission; the plan is being circulated for staff review prior to issuing us the permit. In the meantime, staff have been working on specifications for the construction and broken out the project in three parts: site work, foundation and structural work, and building shell. Specification packages have been prepared for each portion and packages are circulating to bidders for quotations by May 19<sup>th</sup>.

### **Chippawa Creek and Long Beach Conservation Areas**

Staff have been busy preparing for the opening weekend beginning May 15<sup>th</sup>. As in previous years, a total alcohol ban will be in effect at both campgrounds for this weekend.

Seasonal campers have been moving into the park since Monday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. This allows for a smoother set-up and spreads this busy activity over several days in advance of the busy weekend.

Water systems are up and running, although treatment at both sites is being held-up by water test results. The water systems have contingency options to distribute trucked water in the event of water plant malfunction. Should the test results be late, trucked water will be used to fill the tanks, which then supply water throughout the park.

Several drainage improvement projects were completed at Long Beach. This should help to address some of the surface water issues experienced during the wet summer season in 2008.

Recycling services will be continuing at our campgrounds during the 2009 operating season. These services are provided through the continued partnership with the Region of Niagara. Additional signage and recycling flyers will also be tried this year in an attempt to expand the recycling recoveries and increase awareness of environmental benefits.

### **EC Brown Wetland**

The interpretive signs were replaced and repaired, and site work conducted by staff to restore the trails and floating dock on the Welland River. All work was completed before a successful Earth Day planting event with local schools.

### **Hedley Forest Conservation Area**

Two new trail loops were installed on the north side of the creek this spring, to provide 900m of accessible walking trail for the public starting and ending at the parking lot. Trail markers are to be installed later this season for these routes. There is opportunity to install an additional 1.1 Km of trail on the south side of the property once a suitable bridge is built across the creek. The trees along this proposed south trail route are marked to guide future trail work.

### **Ruigrok Tract Conservation Area**

Staff have finished work on a new trail loop that was started two years ago near the parking lot. Gravel has been installed to provide a good walking surface through the woodlot on this 380m loop. This work provides the public with 1.1Km of accessible walking loop starting and ending at the parking lot.

## **Rockway Conservation Area**

Staff have started work on approximately 1.6 Km of trail improvements from the signed gate down into the valley and connecting over to the Bruce Trail. Brush clearing, ditching, culverts, and surface improvements are being implemented to stabilize the trail and limit erosion. The historic salt well and surrounding features are to be protected, a new trail route around this area is planned.

## **St Johns Conservation Area**

Staff are preparing to replace the worn out wood bridges at the trout pond with new metal structures and decking. The new bridges have been constructed at our central workshop in sections for transport to the park. Staff have also inventoried and mapped all the trails in the park with our GPS equipment. A map denoting wet and eroded trail areas that require work has been prepared to help guide field operations.

## **Mountainview Conservation Area**

Staff have completed a GPS mapping exercise reviewing current trails and potential new trail work for the property. There is opportunity to provide two trail loop systems that would take visitors above and below the escarpment, starting and ending at the small parking lot currently on site.

## **Stevensville Conservation Area**

Staff were on site recently with members of the Fort Erie Conservation Club to review and discuss the condition of the existing bridge. Detailed plans are being prepared by staff investigating installation of a new bridge at the same location. These plans would be included in any future tender for new bridge works.

## **Beamer Memorial Conservation Area**

The Good Friday Hawkwatch Open House was held on April 10, 2009. Just under 1000 people attended the event to find out about raptor migration and monitoring program conducted by the Niagara Hawk Watch. This was also an opportunity to celebrate the NPCA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. A BBQ was provided to the public, free with donation. NPCA staff were on hand to promote the membership pass and the other Conservation Areas throughout the watershed. The Hawkwatch's monitoring program at Beamer Memorial finishes up on May 15, 2009. Final counting numbers will be provided next month.

## **St. Johns Conservation Area**

Approximately 250 people were on hand to mark the opening of the Rainbow Trout fishing season at St. Johns Conservation Area. In addition to the fishing season opening NPCA staff were on site to: promote the NPCA with an opening day draw and coupons for discounts on NPCA camping and boat/canoe rentals. Ballots were entered for: first prize 2 free nights of camping at Long Beach or Chippawa Creek Conservation Area; and second prize of a free 1 year NPCA Membership Pass to the existing NPCA Conservation Areas. Staff and Board Members were also present to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the NPCA with a hotdog BBQ for a voluntary donation.

## **Gypsy Moth Surveys on Conservation Area Lands**

Staff has completed the winter surveys portion of the gypsy moth surveys at Chippawa Creek, Ruigrok Tract, St.Johns, Hedley Forest, Comfort Maple, Smith-Ness and Willoughby Marsh Conservation Area. These surveys are used to monitor the population of the gypsy moths and assess if any measures of control are necessary. The number of egg masses and level of defoliation later in the season are assessed and compared with previous years to determine the population levels and effects and if management techniques are required. The results indicated low risk and no spray requirements at Chippawa, Ruigrok and Hedley Forest due to low population counts, low number of preferred host plants. In some areas the cool, wet spring has increased the natural population of the NPV virus and soil bacteria that affect the early and late larvae stages of the caterpillar. The NPCA will be spraying the Smith-Ness and St.Johns Conservation Areas under the 2009 spray program. These sites have been targeted because of proximity to neighbouring woodlots, or because of high egg mass counts. Otherwise, our monitoring suggests moderate to low population and defoliation expected on NPCA lands.

## **COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

### **Schools in Bloom**

Staff attended the launch of the 2009 Schools in Bloom competition on April 8 at St. Paul High School. The Authority is assisting with this program which is coordinated by the City of Niagara Falls and the Niagara Parks Commission.

### **Earth Day**

This year the Authority held its own Earth Day event with a planting at E.C. Brown Conservation Area. The event was attended by school students, MOE staff and some members of the public. The day was very successful. We also supported several Earth Day projects throughout the watershed with materials and prizes.

### **Simply Tree-Mendous**

A media launch of this program was held on April 30<sup>th</sup> at Ball's Falls. The event received widespread media coverage and was attended by Mayors of the Watershed municipalities', Regional Chair Peter Partington and Councillor David Mitchell representing the City of Hamilton. Staff are making presentations to the municipalities on the program and asking for a resolution supporting the challenge.

### **Boundary Waters Treaty Centennial**

Staff has been working with the committee on planning the events to celebrate the centennial of this historic event. On June 13<sup>th</sup> a formal ceremony will take place on the Rainbow Bridge.

### **Annual Report**

The 2008 Annual Report has been completed and will be distributed to watershed stakeholders.

## **50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Events**

St. Johns Trout Season opened on April 25<sup>th</sup> and staff and the Chairman were on hand to enhance the event with a barbeque. It was a beautiful day and the fish were biting. Planning for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary events are continuing with the *Binbrook Great Outdoor Community Festival* planned for May 30. Admission to the Conservation Area is free on that date and staff will be on hand to answer inquiries. The weekend will continue with the Crappie Derby on May 31.

## **NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION**

### **Golf Tournament**

Organization and planning for the 2009 Bob Welch Memorial Charity Golf Classic taking place on Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Whirlpool Golf Course is continuing. To date, 80 golfers are confirmed and \$5,000 in sponsorship has been received. Staff is working to secure items for the silent auction. Events will include a hole-in-one contest, with \$5,000 being awarded to the golfer should they get the hole-in-one and \$5,000 donated to our Foundation. Board members are encouraged to notify staff as soon as possible if they are planning to attend the event and if they have any leads for potential sponsors or donors of silent auction items.

### **Donor Wall Unveiling**

Invitations have been sent for the unveiling of the donor wall and a reception that will take place on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup> from 7-9 pm at the Centre for Conservation at Ball's Falls. Members are encouraged to attend this event that recognizes the financial contributions that have been received from a large number of donors over the years for numerous NPCA projects.

### **Recommendation:**

**Report No. 36-09 outlining the status of Authority projects be received for information.**

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