



**NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FULL AUTHORITY**

WELLAND

AGENDA

JULY 21, 2010 – 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES

(a) FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – JUNE 16, 2010

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held June 16, 2010.

(b) BALL'S FALLS HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING – JUNE 16, 2010

Attached are the Minutes of the Ball's Falls Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting held June 16, 2010.

(2) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(3) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(4) CAO'S REPORT

(5) DELEGATIONS

(a) Ray and Liz Kowalik wish to address the Board regarding the Authority's Plan Review fees. Email correspondence in this regard is attached for your information.

(b) Representatives from the Town of Fort Erie and the Canadian Motor Speedway will be in attendance, to make a presentation.

(6) BUDGET STATUS REPORT TO JUNE 30, 2010 - REPORT NO. 44-10

Attached is Report No. 44-10 regarding the budget status to date, together with a summary copy of the operating and capital budgets.

(7) APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR 2010 – REPORT NO. 45-10

Attached is Report No. 45-10 regarding the Appointment of the Authority's auditors for 2010.

(8) 2011 BUDGET SCHEDULE AND GUIDANCE – REPORT NO. 46-10

Attached is Report No. 46-10 with respect to this matter.

(9) **TERMS OF REFERENCE – LOWER WELLAND RIVER WATERSHED CHARACTERIZATION – REPORT NO. 47-10**

Attached is Report No. 47-10 together with a copy of the Terms of Reference regarding this matter.

(10) **LYON'S CREEK EAST - ADMINISTRATIVE CONTROLS PROTOCOL – REPORT NO. 48-10**

Attached is Report No. 48-10 regarding this matter.

(11) **ELM STREET AND STATION ROAD SITE MANAGEMENT – REPORT NO. 49-10**

Attached is Report No. 49-10 with respect to this matter.

(12) **BALL'S FALLS MARKETING PLAN – REPORT NO. 50-10**

Attached is Report No. 50-10 together with a summary copy of the Marketing Plan.

(13) **PROJECT STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 51-10**

Attached is Report No. 51-10 regarding the status of Authority projects.

(14) **IN-CAMERA**

- (a) Complaint and Violation Status Report: Report No. CR-15-10
- (b) Tree By-Law Status Report – Report No. CR-16-10

(15) **OTHER BUSINESS**

ADJOURNMENT



BALL'S FALLS HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Ball's Falls

June 16, 2010

2:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Members Present: M. Hunter
M. Holman
A. Petrie
L. Holmes
E. Mitchinson

Staff Present: D. Baker, Director, Land Management
C. Hayward, Curator

Regrets: D. Ransom
B. Baty
F. High
T. D'Amario, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

BUSINESS:

1) Call to Order

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

2) Minutes of Last Meeting – April 7, 2010

There being no errors or omissions, the following resolution was presented.

MOVED BY: April Petrie

SECONDED BY: Linda Holmes

THAT: the minutes of the last meeting held April 7, 2010 be approved.

"CARRIED"

3) Business Arising From Minutes

The Curator advised that Kathy Powell, Chair of the Ontario Museum Association presented the OMA Corporate Service Award of Excellence to Doug Ransom Mike Hunter at the April 21st Full Authority meeting.

4) Ball's Falls Marketing Plan - Report No. HC- 09- 10

A general discussion took place. The Committee agreed with the core strategic recommendations and the key messages in the plan Specific comments on the report included the following:

- Concurred with the need to improve the NPCA web site – committee felt that NPCA has low presence on the internet –need to investigate appropriate links to

increase profile and twig more web visits. Supported the creation of a Ball's Falls micro-site.

- Agreed that NPCA should actively target additional markets including group tours, corporate functions; pursue partnerships with hotels and development corporate partnerships that are supportive of conservation
- Supported re-naming Sixth Ave to Ball's Falls Boulevard
- Agreed with benefit of being a member of the TVTA; strongly support the need to reduce the financial contribution and current membership category; support the recommendation to analyze and improve membership benefits
- Agree separate lure brochure should be a high priority
- Supported use of technology to enable self-directed interpretation (MP3,ipod)
- Recommend that the NPCA should be included on the letterhead, ensuring a continued presence for the NPCA
- Concurred with use of tagline –“Discover the Undiscovered”

MOVED BY: April Petrie
SECONDED BY: Linda Holmes
THAT: The Ball's Falls Marketing Plan be approved in principle and forwarded to the Full Authority for consideration.

“CARRIED”

5) **Sixth Avenue Projects - Report No. HC-10-10**

MOVED BY: Marion Holman
SECONDED BY: Linda Holmes
THAT: Report NO. HC-10-10 regarding improvements to Sixth Avenue be received for information purposes.

“CARRIED”

6) **Ball's Falls Collections Storage Project - Report No. HC-11-10**

The members were provided an opportunity to tour the new collections storage area.

MOVED BY: April Petrie
SECONDED BY: Marion Holman
THAT: Report No. HC-11-10 on the Ball's Falls Collections Storage Project be received for information.

7) **Status Report – Report No. HC-12-10**

MOVED BY: Linda Holmes
SECONDED BY: Marion Holman
THAT: Report No. HC-12-10 on the status of Ball's Falls Conservation Area Projects be received for information.

“CARRIED”

8) **Other Business**

There was no other business.

9) **Adjournment**

MOVED BY: April Petrie
SECONDED BY: Marion Holman

THAT: this meeting do now adjourn.

Received at 3:50 p.m.

“CARRIED”

C. Hayward, Curator

Mike Hunter, Chair



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 13, 2010, 2010

SUBJECT: Budget Status Report - Report No. 44-10

Attached is the budget status report for the period ending June 30, 2010.

Expenditures in the operating budget are generally in line with the approved budget for 2010 with the following notes.

- Administration fees for the Planning and Regulations program have increased since the previous status report and are approaching anticipated levels. Staff will continue to monitor revenues in this regard.
- Expenditures in the Regulations are above budget levels due primarily to higher than expected legal fees

Capital budget expenditures will increase to budget levels as projects have recently been initiated.

There are no other significant variances to report at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Budget Status Report for the period ending June 30, 2010 be received.

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 12, 2010

SUBJECT: Appointment of Auditors for 2010 - Report No. 45-10

The NPCA has used MacGillivray Partners as its auditors since 1993 and over that time has provided excellent and thorough services to both the NPCA and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation. Their full knowledge and experience with the NPCA operations and accounting system allows them to undertake their work very efficiently.

A summary of their audit fees by year (since 2004) is provided below for comparison purposes. It should be noted that the total cost is below the NPCA current policy consultant selection policy for sole sourcing (\$25,000).

DATE	Audit Cost
2005	\$13,800
2006	\$14,000
2007	\$14,900
2008	\$15,500

Audit fees for 2009 have not been invoiced to date as the firm has only recently completed the financial statements for that time. It is expected that the fees will increase given the additional work required to set up and report on Capital Assets as required under PSAB.

It is recommended that the firm of MacGillivray Partners be retained as the Conservation Authority's auditors for 2010.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the firm of MacGillivray and Partners be appointed as the Conservation Authority Auditors for 2010.

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 12, 2010

SUBJECT: 2011 Budget Schedule and Guidance - Report No. 46-10

The Niagara Region has requested a preliminary budget be submitted by September 30, 2010. Traditionally, the Conservation Authority has formed a Budget Review Committee consisting of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and a minimum of 3 additional Board members to consider a preliminary budget for the concurrence of the Full Board. In order to meet the Niagara Region deadline (no Board meeting in August) the recommended schedule for the 2011 budget preparation is proposed as follows.

July Board Meeting:	Establish Ad Hoc Budget Review Committee.
Late August/Early Sept.	Budget Review Committee to review the preliminary budget and develop a recommendation for the Board's consideration. A convenient meeting date will be arranged with Committee members.
September 15, 2010	Board to consider and approve the 2011 Preliminary Budget for formal submission to the member municipalities and the MNR.
January 19, 2011	Proposed 2011 budget will be developed subject to confirmation of provincial funding, municipal responses to the preliminary budget and the Authority's year end position.
February 16, 2011	Board to adopt the 2011 Operating and Capital Budgets and set levy.

The NPCA has not received official budget direction from the member municipalities at this time. The anticipated guidance from the Niagara Region BRC from their meeting on June 16th was not adopted due to the lack of a quorum. However, to not delay the process the NPCA did receive email correspondence advising that staff should prepare operating budgets based on a maximum 1.4% guidance and that business cases need to be prepared for anything above the target (1.4%).

DISCUSSION

General

The NPCA Operating Budget for 2010 was approved at \$7,525,148 of which \$5,168,540 is funded by the member municipalities. Base levy amount to all member municipalities is \$3,433,740. The

difference between the total municipal contribution and base levy is a Niagara Region contribution amount of \$1,434,800 to repay capital debt charges and \$300,000 from the Niagara Region Water and Wastewater Budget to support the Water Quality Monitoring Program as well as the Children's Water Festival.

Historically, the debt charge repayment amount (Niagara Region only) varied from year to year and depends on the capital budget approved in previous years. The \$300,000 amount for the Water Quality Monitoring Program/Children's Water Festival has not increased over several years and additional program financial needs have been achieved through other sources of revenue (charitable and sponsorship support). These other revenue sources cannot continue to support program increases over the long term.

Given the above, a 1.4% increase in the NPCA's base operating budget represents approximately \$72,400 over 2009; a significant challenge given the potential increases in operating costs for 2011.

Water Quality Program

Recent issues have been brought up in regards to the funding mechanism for the Water Quality Program. The decision to fund this program from the Water and Sewer rates as opposed to general levy was initially made in 2001, prior to the Sustainable Water and Sewage Systems Act, which requires municipalities to ensure that rates are reflective of direct costs to operate, maintain and replace the existing systems. Although this statute has not been put into effect, municipalities are moving toward the type of rate structure called for in the Act.

As previously noted in staff Report 25-10, (attached) in late 2009 the Region staff did advise NPCA staff of concerns with the appropriateness of continuing to fund this program from the Water and Wastewater Rates. NPCA staff believe the Water Quality Monitoring program is a core program of the NPCA and given the broad nature of the monitoring, funding from general levy is more appropriate. The NPCA would be unable to accommodate this program within the general levy budget guidance limits. It is therefore recommended that this need be identified in an appropriate business case to Niagara Region.

Staff Salaries

The Public Sector Compensation Restraint to Protect Public Service Act, 2010 excludes municipalities and local boards of municipalities (including Conservation Authorities). In spite of this, there may be compelling arguments that the NPCA follow in the spirit of this legislation and either freeze or significantly limit salary increases for 2011. Historically the NPCA has followed compensation increase amounts approved at the Niagara Region for non-union staff however this information has not been disclosed at this time. An option would be to include salary increases at the guidance level (1.4%) in the preliminary budget and adjust in the final budget. The Board's direction in this matter is requested.

Legal Fees

The NPCA purchases legal services through Niagara Region to deal with prosecutions under both Section 28 Regulations and the Tree Conservation By-Law. This arrangement is working very well and provides the Authority with excellent service at reasonable cost. Over the past several years, the incidences of violations, especially under Section 28 Regulations has

increased dramatically with a corresponding increase in legal fees. Although the NPCA attempts to resolve violations prior to any prosecution procedures, the lack of cooperation on the part of the violator coupled with a 6 month statute of limitation for laying charges creates situations where NPCA staff are compelled to lay charges. The Province is scheduling to revise the CA Act to extend the statute of limitation to 2 years and it is hoped this change will allow more time for NPCA staff to resolve issues prior to laying charges and reduce the need for legal services. It is recommended that the NPCA put forth an appropriate business case to the Region for interim increases in legal fees to deal with current violations.

NPCA staff will continue to dialogue with the member municipalities with respect to final guidance direction and include additional guidance objectives in the preliminary budget for consideration of the NPCA Budget Review Committee.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Report No. 46-10 regarding the 2011 Budget Schedule and Guidance be received and the recommendations contained therein approved, and;

That the Ad Hoc Budget Review Committee be comprised of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman

_____, _____ and _____

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



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 15, 2010

RE: Terms of Reference – Lower Welland River Watershed Characterization – Report No. 47-10

Attached for the Board's consideration is a request for the proposed Terms of Reference for the Lower Welland River Watershed Characterization study area.

Over the past several decades numerous studies have been conducted on the system and its related ecosystems with two main areas of interest; the hydroelectric operations and the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan. The entire extent of the Lower Welland River in the study area is within the area of influence from hydro operations, and as such has been widely researched. As a result of existing extensive information on the area, the nature of the land use, and the extent of land coverage by existing regulations and policies, it was determined that a Watershed Characterization would be the most valuable resource for this watershed study area as oppose to a Watershed Plan. The Watershed Characterization will provide a complete description and inventory of the watershed and its resources that can be used by NPCA staff and respective stakeholders to assist in land use management and planning decisions in the study area.

This project will produce a complete inventory of the watershed and its resources; including but not limited to, the physical characteristics such as topography, geology, physiography, and soils; land use in the area; groundwater and surface water features and their characteristics; and natural heritage resources in the study area. All available information pertaining to the Lower Welland River watershed will be reviewed and field surveys will be conducted as necessary to produce a current characterization and inventory of the watershed and watercourse conditions. Areas for potential restoration through the NPCA Restoration Program will also be identified.

Floodplain mapping for the lower reaches of the Welland River will be updated as well as for Thompson's Creek which is mapped under the Hurricane Hazel Standard. This component of the work will be outsourced to a Consulting Engineering firm. Assuming adoption of this report, Requests for Proposals will be issued shortly and award made at the September 2010 meeting. The approved 2010 capital budget for this project is \$150,000 and it is anticipated that this component of work can be completed within the budget allocation.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Terms of Reference for the Lower Welland River Watershed Characterization be approved; and

That a copy of this report be forwarded to the Regional Municipality of Niagara, City of Niagara Falls, City of Thorold, and City of Welland.

Prepared by: Tara Metzger, Watershed Planning Specialist

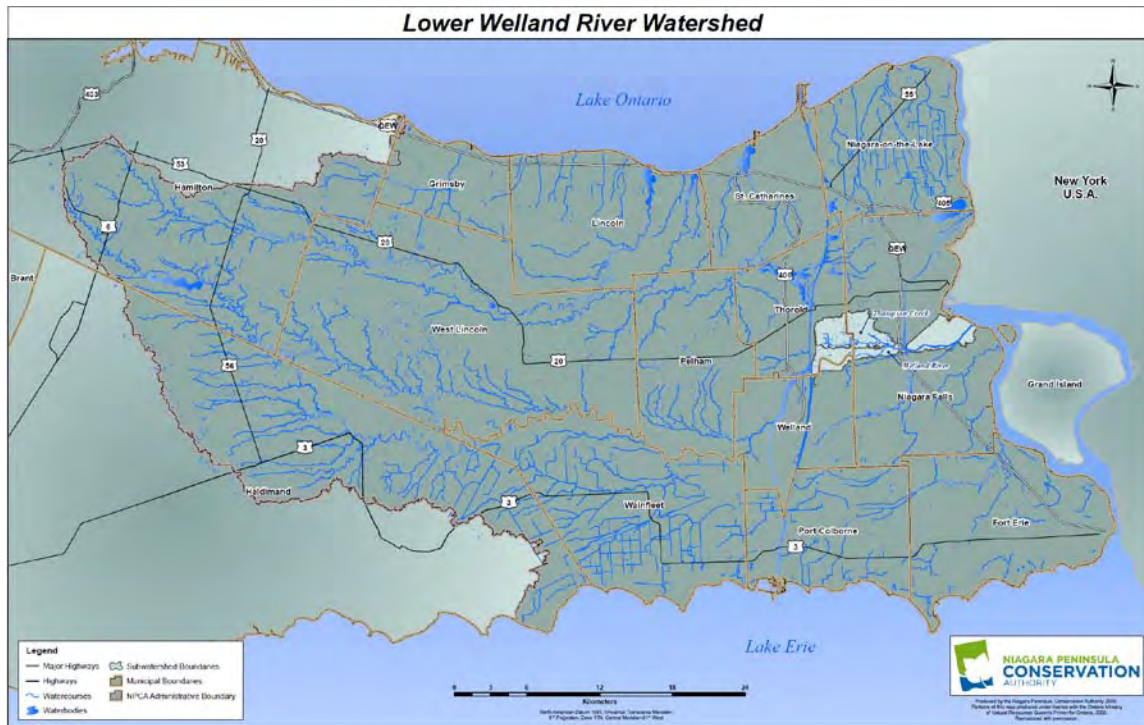
Respectfully Submitted by: _____
Tony D'Amario-P.Eng, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

LOWER WELLAND RIVER WATERSHED CHARACTERIZATION

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

The Lower Welland River stretches from the lower siphon of the Welland Canal to the Niagara River. The Lower Welland River study area includes the Lower Welland River and Thompsons Creek. The study area falls primarily within the municipal boundary of the City of Niagara Falls, with small portions extending into the City of Thorold and the City of Welland.



Lower Welland River Study Area

Land use in the study area is predominately industrial lands with some agriculture and small residential areas. Natural heritage features include over 1500 hectares of provincially significant wetland and wooded areas. The study area is home to 11 listed Species at Risk; listed both nationally and provincially.

Water quality is monitored at two stations in the Lower Welland River study area; station WR010 is located where the Welland River exits the second siphon under the Welland Canal. Station WR010 has a Water Quality Index (WQI) rating of Marginal, which is the highest WQI rating achieved in the Welland River watershed in 2009. Water quality is improved at this site by direct mixing with backflow from the Niagara River as it is redirected up the Welland River as part of the hydroelectric operations (NPCA 2010). Currently benthic invertebrate sampling is not conducted at station WR010 due to access restrictions. The second site, TC001, was added April 2010 and is located at the outlet of Thompsons Creek.

The main channel of the Welland River from the siphon to the confluence of the hydro canal and Welland River has been classified as critical (Type 1) fish habitat according to the Ministry of Natural Resources stream classification data. Type 1 habitat is the most sensitive habitat of the 3 types. As a result, it requires the highest level of protection. Examples of Type 1 habitat include critical spawning and rearing areas, migration routes, over-wintering areas, productive feeding areas and habitats occupied by sensitive species. The remainder of the Welland River to the Niagara River and Thompson's Creek have been delineated as important (Type 2) fish habitat. Type 2 habitat is less sensitive and requires a moderate level of protection. These areas are considered ideal for enhancement or restoration projects and include feeding areas for adult fish and unspecialized spawning habitat.

There is one series of municipal drains located in the study area; Allanport Drain in Thompson's Creek subwatershed. To better manage these drains, Fisheries and Oceans Canada has developed a classification system based on such variables as flow conditions, temperature, fish species present, and the length of time since the drain was last cleaned out. The Allanport Drain has 2 classifications; the upper branches are Class F drains and the remaining sections are Class C drains. Class F drains are intermittent systems and Class C drains are permanent warm water systems with baitfish present.

BACKGROUND

The Welland River has long been the subject of study. Over the past several decades numerous studies have been conducted on the system and its related ecosystems with two main areas of interest; the hydroelectric operations and the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan.

Hydroelectric Operations

Originally, the Welland River drained directly into the Niagara River; however its flow in its entirety has now been diverted into the Queenston-Chippawa Power Canal. In 1953, the last 7 km of the Welland River was widened and channelized to accommodate Niagara River flows toward the Queenston-Chippawa Power Canal (Phillips Engineering Ltd., 1999). As a result, the lower portion from the Niagara River now flows in reverse, drawing Niagara River water to the Power Canal.

In 1973, an international water control structure located on the Upper Niagara River began regulating the diversion of water flow into the Chippawa Channel (Welland River outlet) and over Niagara Falls by maintaining water levels within a specific elevation range at Grassy Island Pool. These flows are further regulated during tourist season to ensure an attractive water flow over the falls during the day and increase water diversion at night, resulting in a summer daily 0.6m vertical fluctuation in water levels that extends 60 km upstream (westward) in the Welland River to Port Davidson where its effect gradually lessens (Dillon 1965; Phillips Engineering Ltd. 1999). The vertical fluctuation also extends horizontally out from the shoreline of the main river and upstream into every tributary that enters the river within the Grassy Island Pool controlled elevation range (Yagi 1994).

Niagara River Remedial Action Plan

The Lower Welland River watershed falls within the Niagara River Area of Concern. In 1987 the International Joint Commission designated the Niagara River as an Area of Concern (AOC) due

to its degraded water quality impairing complete use of its resources. The AOC includes both the Canadian and American Niagara River watersheds. The Canadian Niagara River AOC includes the 58 kilometre long Niagara River to the international border and the Welland River drainage basin. The Welland River is the largest tributary of the Niagara River and its drainage basin accounts for approximately 80 percent of the AOC (Canada).

In response to concerns over the health of the entire Niagara River watershed and its ecosystem, a *Remedial Action Plan (RAP)* was created with representation from various stakeholders including the federal and provincial governments, resource agencies and the public. The Remedial Action Plan uses an ecosystem approach to environmental decision-making that involves three stages. The first stage, completed in 1993 (*Environmental Conditions and Problem Definition*), included a detailed assessment of environmental problems and their sources in the AOC and the extent of the impairments.

The second stage (*The Cleanup Connection 1995*) identified goals and objectives; made recommendations to achieve the goals; and proposed an implementation strategy to address the recommendations (Niagara River RAP 1995). In addition, the *Implementation Annex* identified responsible stakeholders for the implementation of the recommendations; provided a schedule of activities, timelines and project costs (NPCA 2000). Since the release of the 1995 Stage 2 report, and with various implementation activities completed or ongoing within the AOC, many changes have occurred with regard to environmental conditions within the AOC; remediation technologies; advances in analytical capabilities; advances in scientific understanding of environmental issues; and, the programs and priorities of RAP partners.

In 2004, an update of this report was initiated to determine the status of implementation activities, identify any information gaps that require monitoring and assessment, and to focus all actions under the RAP towards delisting. The resulting product of this review is a report that contains a summary of progress and several significant efforts which have taken place over the past nineteen years. It also contains the current status of impairments in the AOC and a new RAP work plan that includes monitoring and assessment recommendations.

OBJECTIVES

The intent of this project is to produce a watershed characterization that provides a complete description and inventory of the watershed and its resources; including but not limited to, the physical characteristics such as topography, geology, physiography, and soils; land use in the area; groundwater and surface water features and their characteristics; and natural heritage resources in the study area. All available information pertaining to the Lower Welland River watershed will be reviewed and field surveys will be conducted as necessary to produce a complete characterization and inventory of the watershed and watercourse conditions (including natural channels and municipal drains). Areas for potential restoration through the NPCA Water Quality Improvement Program will also be identified.

SPECIFIC COMPONENTS OF THE STUDY

- 1.0 Complete Watershed Characterization with the following components:
 - 1.1 Topography
 - 1.2 Geology
 - 1.3 Physiography
 - 1.4 Soils
 - 1.5 Current Land Use
 - 1.5.1 Agriculture

- 1.5.2 Urban/Rural Residential
 - 1.5.3 Recreation
 - 1.6 Future Land Use
 - 1.6.1 Provincial Tier
 - 1.6.2 Regional Tier
 - 1.6.3 Municipal Tier
 - 1.7 Natural Heritage Resources
 - 1.7.1 Provincially Significant Wetlands
 - 1.7.2 Old Growth Forest
 - 1.7.3 Environmentally Sensitive/Significant Areas
 - 1.8 Species at Risk
 - 1.8.1 National and Provincial Species at Risk
 - 1.8.2 Provincially Rare Species in Study Area
 - 1.9 Aquatic Habitat
 - 1.9.1 Fish Habitat
 - 1.9.2 Fish Community Studies
 - 1.9.3 Municipal Drains
 - 1.10 Water Quality
 - 1.10.1 Water Quality Monitoring Program
 - 1.10.2 Biological Monitoring and Assessment Program
 - 1.10.3 Groundwater Resources
 - 1.10.4 Intake Protection Zone
 - 1.11 Water Quantity
 - 1.11.1 Water Budget
- 2.0 Identify potential restoration projects to be implemented through the NPCA Water Quality Improvement Program:
 - 2.1 Riparian enhancement/creation projects
 - 2.2 Wetland enhancement/creation projects
 - 2.3 Upland and Ecological Linkage enhancement/creation projects
- 3.0 Field Surveys:
 - 3.1 Floodplain Mapping:

This component of the study will be outsourced to a Consulting Engineering firm. The necessary hydrologic and hydraulic analysis in order to generate 100 year return period floodlines for the Welland River and Thompsons Creek with a drainage area greater than 125 hectares will be completed.

This study will also make recommendations for crossing upgrades that are undersized based on the respective regulated flood limit.
 - 3.2 Stream Morphology: This component of the watershed study will confirm reach boundaries and channel sensitivities through a historic observations. During the field survey, any sites where bank erosion is taking place or could potentially occur, will also be identified for all watercourses including municipal drains in the watershed. Recommendations for both structural and non-structural rehabilitation and restoration measures will be provided.
- 4.0 Consultation: The study will be circulated to NPCA staff, respective stakeholders and member municipalities for commenting.

5.0 Timing of Study: The Lower Welland River Watershed Characterization shall be completed within 18 months of initiation.

EXISTING DOCUMENTATION ON THE WELLAND RIVER

The following provides examples of reports, studies and information that has been conducted on the Welland River (fully or in part) and will be reviewed with pertinent information to be included in the Lower Welland River Watershed Characterization:

- **Welland River Water Level Fluctuation Study:** Study to investigate the Welland River's daily water level fluctuations, and determine appropriate mitigation. This study is still in DRAFT form.
- **Niagara Water Strategy:** A strategy composed of a set of prioritized actions that work towards protecting, restoring and managing the water resources within the NPCA jurisdiction.
- **Welland River Strategy:** Provides a general overview of the Welland River watershed; identifies issues in the watershed; and outlines watershed restoration goals and targets.
- **Niagara River Watershed Fish Community Assessment (2003 to 2007):** Provides a synopsis of the various Aquatic Resource Areas in the Niagara River Watershed. The Chippawa Channel Aquatic Resource Area falls in the Lower Welland River study area.
- **Welland River Study for the NPCA, Dillon 1965.:** Documents water problems and causes of water level fluctuations on the Welland River. Contains a Regional flood flow estimate based on a calibrated unit hydrograph technique.
- **Hydraulic Study of the Welland River Siphon in Welland, Dillon 1979:** Details background information reviewed regarding flows and water levels. This study cross-references the HYMO model being prepared by Kilborn, however points out that the HYMO model does not fully account for the complex flow regime of the lower Welland River. Other background flow regime information includes operating practices at the Welland Water Treatment Plant. Documents the flow regimen and presents a correlation of flows and levels.
- **Floodplain Mapping Welland River, Hydraulic Report, Chippawa to Welland, Kilborn 1984:** Details the preparation of the HYMO hydrologic model for the Welland River. Includes two siphon hydraulic assessments, which are then used as input to model both a hydrologic reservoir and a rating curve for the HEC-2 hydraulic model. Calculates the Regulatory flood plain elevations, and maps the lines.
- **Welland River Study (FDRP & Photo Inventory), Dillon 1985:** Created a DWOPER hydrodynamic model from approximately Wellandport to Chippewa. Used Kilborn 1984 HYMO flows, and calibrated to historical flood levels for February 17, 1984. Extremely important hydraulic reference document.
- **Niagara River Hydroelectric Development Environmental Assessment, Ontario Hydro 1991:** Provides a description of the existing environment, including: aquatic environment physical characteristics, hydrology, flow and water level management, soils, vegetation, land use and policy plans, and existing land use coverage



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 14, 2010

SUBJECT: Lyon's Creek East – Administrative Controls Protocol, Report No. 48-10

Canada and the United States entered into the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) in 1987, in an effort to address environmental degradation around the Great Lakes Basin. The main action item pursuant to the GLWQA was the recommendation that Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) be developed for watersheds/areas with contamination problems. The Niagara River is an international waterway and as such, two separate RAPs (i.e. one in Ontario and one in New York State) are underway for the basin.

In Niagara, Canada, the primary Area of Concern (AOC) is the Welland River. The Lyon's Creek East contaminated sediment problem is identified as an action item under the more global Welland River AOC.

Since 1999, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Environment Canada and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority has worked together with the local community to complete Niagara River Remedial Action Plan - Stage 2 Update, which was received by the Board at the May 2010 meeting. This update examined which of the original beneficial use impairments (BUIs) still require addressing before a "delisted" status can be achieved for the Welland River AOC.

In this regard the Lyon's Creek East is one of the locations that remains a concern because contaminant levels, primarily polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) exceed acceptable guidelines. Since 1991 numerous studies were completed in relation to the effects of the contaminated sediments and in August 2008, a comprehensive final study entitled Niagara River AOC Phase IV Report : Sediment Management Options for Lyons Creek East and West was prepared by Golder Associates Ltd. This report examined four main options to remediate the contaminated sediment site, these being: i) Monitored Natural Recovery, ii) Enhanced Natural Recovery, iii) Capping and Removal. The expert study determined that there is a low level of risk to human and ecological health associated with the contaminated sediment, if left undisturbed. Further given that the sediments are located within a Provincially Significant Wetland it was determined that removal would actually do more environmental harm than good.

After considering input from the public at three(3) community open houses, it was concluded that removal was not warranted and that Monitored Natural Recovery was the best approach to manage the contaminated sediment. As part of this solution it is recommended that an administrative controls system be established to ensure human activities do not disturb the top cleaner layer of sediment and expose the deeper, more contaminated material. Activities that have the potential to have negative impacts include: dredging, piling, increasing discharge from the Welland canal, etc.

Details regarding how various proposals would be treated/processed under an administrative controls protocol system are documented in a report entitled Lyon's Creek East Evaluation of Administrative Controls by French Planning Services Inc, dated June 2010. The intent of the

proposed “Administrative Controls Protocol” is to integrate the efforts of agencies that have a mandate to regulate activities in the identified Area of Undertaking (AOU) to ensure that contaminated sediment is not disturbed. The parties to the protocol are as follows:

- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA)
- Environment Canada (EC)
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
- Ministry of the Environment (MOE)
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
- City of Welland (CITY)
- Niagara Region (NR)
- St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC)

Pursuant to the protocol, all partner agencies will apply the specified decision-making process to review projects and activities located in the AOU, and then provide comments to the NPCA within a reasonable time. The NPCA is responsible for coordinating the decision-making process and confirming the involvement of all agencies. Nonetheless, the final decision on whether or not to grant a proponent an approval remains with each agency, pursuant to the legislation they administer. responsibility of all the agencies.

The inter agency coordination will be done by NPCA’s RAP Co-ordinator however, screening functions will also be done by Planning staff. Based on a similar arrangement in Cornwall, Ontario, it is anticipated that less than half a dozen proposals will be subject to full review annually. The Administrative Controls Protocol is appended for the Boards consideration. This document among other things, details the location of the AOU, in which regulated activities will be subject to additional screening and a flow chart outlining the decision making process the partners will use.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1 – Map of Administrative Control Area
- Attachment 2 - Administrative Control – Final Draft

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Authority Board receive the report for information; and

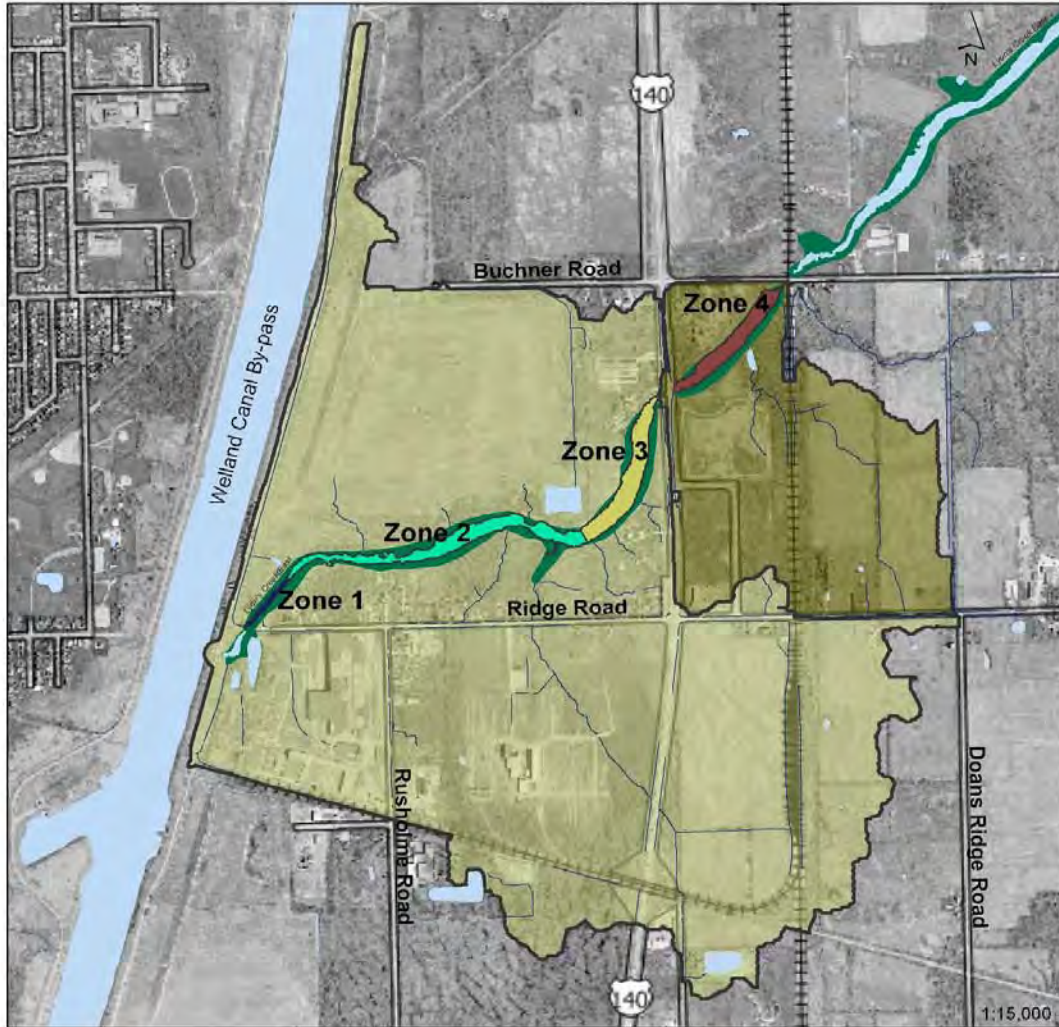
That the Board authorize the Chairman and Chief Administrative Officer to execute the Lyons Creek East Administrative Controls protocol.

Prepared by: John Kukalis, Director, Water Management

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

ATTACHMENT No. 1 - Administrative Control Area fro Lyon's Creek East

- Impacted Area - Includes all land in the creek bed where the contaminated sediment exists (Zones 1, 2, 3, and 4).
- Area of Undertaking - Includes all land within the sub-watershed that drains into the Impacted Area.



Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Railway | Area of Undertaking Zones 1 to 3 |
| NPCA Hydroline: Streams & Ditches | Area of Undertaking Zone 4 |
| Watercourse | Impacted Areas:
Zones with Contaminated
Sediments |
| Lyon's Creek East PSW Boundary | |



Lyon's Creek East

Sediment Strategy

Administrative Controls Protocol

A unique multi-agency and community partnership for the long term environmental protection of Lyon's Creek East

Lyon's Creek East Monitored Natural Recovery Protocol

In 1987, Canada and the United States signed the revised Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA), in which Annex 2 described Remedial Action Plans (RAPs) that are required to address environmental degradation in specific areas around the Great Lakes Basin. The GLWQA identified 43 "Areas of Concern" (AOCs) and recommended that RAPs be developed at the local level and include public participation. The Niagara River is a binational AOC where two RAPs are under development separately - one in Ontario and the other in New York State.

Since 1999, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Environment Canada and the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) have worked together with the local community to complete implement the Niagara River RAP, and achieve AOC delisting. In order to achieve delisting the contaminated sediment issues in the AOC needed to be resolved.

Lyon's Creek East is one of the locations that was identified for further assessment in the Niagara Remedial Action Plan (RAP) because contaminant(s) in sediment exceeded guidelines. As a result of studies and input from the community open houses it was concluded that there is a low level of risk to human and ecological health associated with the contaminated sediment, and that removal was not warranted. Since the sediments of interest are situated within a Provincially Significant Wetland it was determined that removal would actually do more environmental harm than good.

As a result, Monitored Natural Recovery was selected as the best approach to manage the contaminated sediment. This approach allows the ongoing burial of contaminated sediment to continue while a monitoring program is developed to periodically assess the natural recovery of the creek, and administrative controls are established to prevent re-suspension of the contaminated sediment.

In support of Monitor Natural Recovery, the parties to this protocol have agreed to act in a cooperative manner to harmonize their approval, permitting and planning process, as outlined in this protocol, to ensure the sediments located in Lyon's Creek East are not disturbed.

The Protocol represents an inter-agency commitment to collaborate on the long-term protection, monitoring and awareness efforts regarding the contaminated sediment.

Signing Authorities

By signing this Protocol the parties confirm their commitment to protect the Lyon's Creek East ecosystem.

Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada (Canada) as represented by:

- The Minister of the Environment, Department of the Environment
Name of who signs on behalf of the Minister
- The Minister of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Department of Fisheries and Oceans
Name of who signs on behalf of the Minister

Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Ontario (Ontario) as represented by:

- The Minister of the Environment, Ministry of the Environment
Name of who signs on behalf of the Minister
- The Minister of Natural Resources, Ministry of Natural Resources
Name of who signs on behalf of the Minister

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, as represented by:

Douglas Ransom, Chairman, Board of Directors
Tony D'Amario, Chief Administrative Officer, Secretary Treasurer

The Regional Municipality of Niagara, as represented by:

Peter Partington, Regional Chair
Mike Trojan, Chief Administrative Officer

The City of Welland, as represented by:

Damian Goulbourne, Mayor
Craig A. Stirtzinger, City Manger

The St Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation, as represented by:

Name of who signs

The Purpose of the Protocol

The Lyon's Creek East Administrative Control Protocol is an administrative tool that establishes principles and procedures to ensure contaminated sediment in the Lyon's Creek East Impacted Area is not disturbed, exposed or re-suspended.

The Protocol guides key agencies in the implementation of Monitored Natural Recovery through the Lyon's Creek Sediment Strategy, which states:

- Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) contaminated sediment is located in the upper portions of the Lyon's Creek East (between the Welland Canal By-pass and Highway 140) and should be left in place, undisturbed, in order to allow natural recovery to take place; and
- Administrative controls and a Community Outreach Program should be put in place to ensure human activities do not disturb the top layer of sediment and expose the deeper, more contaminated material.

As they currently exist, historically contaminated sediment in the Lyon's Creek East Sub-watershed (Area of Undertaking) are stable and covered with a cleaner layer of sediment and therefore do not pose a significant human health or ecological risk. However, certain development, site alteration, emergency and recreational activities that involves dredging, filling/covering, piling/directional drilling, or scouring have the potential to disturb, expose or re-suspend the deeper more contaminated sediment.

The intent of this Protocol is to integrate the efforts of all agencies that have the mandate and authority to regulate activities in the Area of Undertaking to ensure that PCB contaminated sediment is not disturbed, exposed or re-suspended. The Protocol represents an inter-agency commitment to collaborate on the long-term protection, monitoring and awareness efforts regarding the contaminated sediment in Lyon's Creek East.

The parties to this Protocol have agreed to work together in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion and are committed to prevent the disturbance, exposure and re-suspension of contaminated sediment within the Impacted Area and the Area of Undertaking.

The Objectives of the Protocol

The objectives of the protocol are:

- To create a common administrative approach to ensure contaminated sediment is not disturbed, exposed or re-suspended;
- To harmonize agency mandates and to strengthen and coordinate a common review process for regulating activities that have potential to disturb contaminated sediment;

Participating Agencies

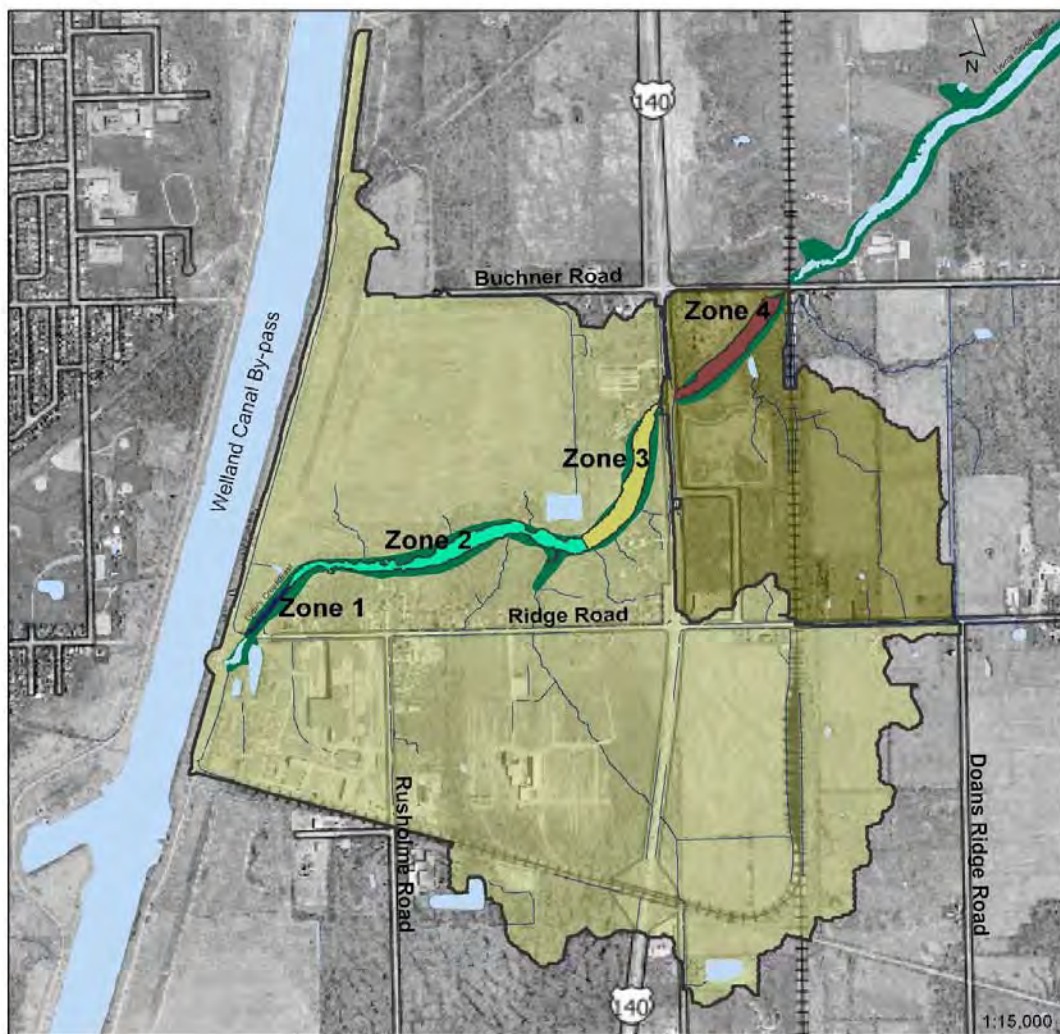
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA)
- Environment Canada (EC)
- Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO)
- Ministry of the Environment (MOE)
- Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR)
- City of Welland (CITY)
- Niagara Region (NR)
- St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation (SLSMC)

- To establish principles that will guide decisions; and
- To clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities of each party to this protocol.

The Geographic Scope of the Protocol

The geographic scope of this protocol includes all lands that drain into the upper portion of Lyon's Creek East between the Welland Canal and the Buchner Road / CN Railway Intersection. Within this area there are two areas of concern:

- Impacted Area - Includes all land in the creek bed where the contaminated sediment exists (Zones 1, 2, 3, and 4).
- Area of Undertaking - Includes all land within the sub-watershed that drains into the Impacted Area.



Legend

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Railway | Area of Undertaking Zones 1 to 3 |
| NPCA Hydroline: Streams & Ditches | Area of Undertaking Zone 4 |
| Watercourse | Impacted Areas: |
| Lyon's Creek East PSW Boundary | Zones with Contaminated Sediments |



The Principles of the Protocol

The following principles will guide the decisions of the parties to this protocol for all activities in the Impacted Area and the Area of Undertaking:

Prevent Disturbance - Prevent disturbance, exposure or re-suspension of contaminated sediment.

Apply Design Making Process - All activities must be assessed based upon the application of the Decision Making Process and the following design criteria in decreasing order of priority: Relocate, Redesign and Remediate.

Mitigate Impacts of Public Service and Utility Projects - Public service and utility projects that cannot be relocated or redesigned and may potentially disturb any sediment must have a mitigation plan that indicates how contaminated sediment will be removed, handled and disposed of in a safe and environmentally protective manner.

Monitor and Mitigate Impacts of Emergency and Disaster Situations - When emergency and disaster situations occur in the Impacted Area, the impacts must be monitored and appropriate actions taken to mitigate further re-suspension of contaminated sediment.

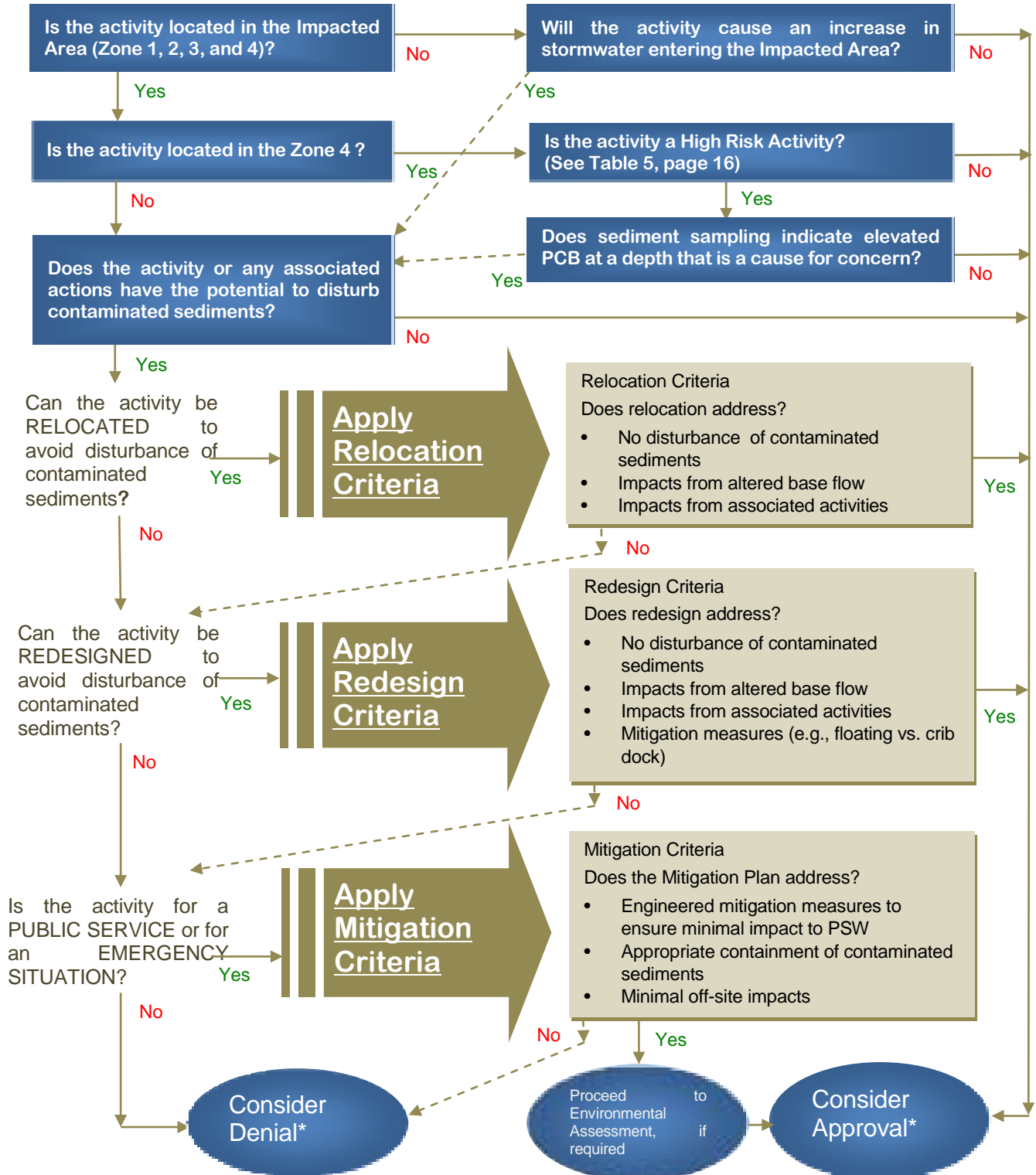
Proponent is Responsible for Costs - The proponent of any activity is responsible for all costs, including engineering reports and the removal, handling and disposal of contaminated sediment and for worker safety.

Continue the Monitored Natural Recovery Process - The Lyon's Creek East contaminated sediment has been undergoing a natural recovery process since it was deposited over 40 years ago. Monitored Natural Recovery is the preferred management option and ensures the continuation of this natural recovery process.

Monitoring of Contaminated Sediment - It will take decades to effectively monitor and determine whether Monitored Natural Recovery is working. The protocol and the Decision Making Process must remain flexible to adapt to new information and circumstances.

Decision Making Process

All partner agencies will apply the following “Decision Making Process” to review projects and activities located in the Area of Undertaking.



* Pending consideration of all other legislation

Roles and Responsibilities for Harmonizing Efforts

Through this protocol the parties confirm their commitment to work in a cooperative, coordinated and integrated fashion in order to harmonize the Decision Making Process. To this end, the parties agree to:

- Recognize the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority as the agency that is responsible for coordinating the Decision Making Process and confirming the involvement of all agencies;
- Review applications in accordance with their own jurisdiction and provide comments to the NPCA in a timely fashion;
- Practice a “No Wrong Point of Contact” approach and provide proponents with a development guidance document to assist them through the process;
- Notify all appropriate parties to this Protocol when applications are received and when infractions of legislation, regulations and instruments related to this protocol are identified; and,
- Promote open communication and facilitate discussion between parties to review applications, exchange new information or to discuss the implementation of the Protocol and a Community Outreach Program.

The Protocol should not affect the normal business of any party or result in an unacceptable burden to any party. The intent of the protocol is to harmonize the Decision Making Process and to identify opportunities to discuss and coordinate decisions. Any party that is participating in an Environmental Assessment review process is responsible to notify all other parties.

The parties to this protocol agree to the roles and responsibilities as outlined in Table 1.

Protocol Administration

While the protocol provides a formal recognition of agency roles and responsibilities, it must also remain adaptive and flexible to deal with new issues, emergency situations, include new parties, and address the results of long-term monitoring programs.

1. Amendments to Protocol and Changes in Parties - Amendments to the Administrative Control Protocol can be made and new parties can be added at any time provided there is consultation with and consent of the other parties.
2. Dispute Avoidance - The parties to this protocol are committed to working collaboratively to avoid and resolve any dispute concerning the implementation of the Protocol.

Table 1 - Roles and Responsibilities of Protocol Parties

Responsibilities	Supporting Partners							
	NPCA	EC	DFO	SLSMC	MOE	MNR	CITY	NR
Coordinate Process								
• Supports implementation of the Administrative Control Protocol	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Enables implementation of a coordinated Decision Making Process	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Initiates meetings with all parties (once a year, if required)	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Participates in meetings and discussions as required	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Notification/Circulation								
• Refers proponents to appropriate agencies	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Provides Development Guideline to assist proponents with the approval process	✓	✓	✓ ¹	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Notifies NPCA and appropriate parties when applications are received or internal activities planned	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Responds to requests for information in a timely manner	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Review Application								
• Coordinates the review of the application and requests input from the appropriate agencies	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Provides input to application, as requested	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Provides scientific information and technical data with respect to the impact of activities on contaminated sediment	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-
• Reports to the NPCA and other parties on the findings of its review and recommendations before making a decision on approval	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• The NPCA coordinates a review by the parties of the partner's findings and recommendations	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Provides notice of final decision to partners and to the proponent	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Monitoring - Activities								
• Monitors activities within the Impacted Area	✓	✓	✓ ¹	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Monitor the effectiveness of the Monitored Natural Recovery Process	✓	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-
• Monitors and reports on effectiveness of administrative controls	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Monitors compliance of activity with conditions of approval, if applicable	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Monitors for illegal activities and informs all parties of any infractions	✓	✓	✓ ¹	-	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Monitors canal pumps and notifies partners of any water flow changes in operation (maintenance and malfunction)	-	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
Monitoring - Sediment								
• Updates to maps as required	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-
• Monitors sediment and biota (benthos, fish and wildlife) to ensure that environmental conditions are improving	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-	-
• Informs all parties of new information as it becomes available	-	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-
Enforcement								
• Enforces own acts and regulations	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communication								
• Ensures work safety of all employees working in the Impacted Area	✓	✓	✓ ¹	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Maintains archive of reports	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-	-
• Implements community outreach program and products to maintain awareness of general public, proponents and agencies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Note 1 - DFO only involved if there is a potential for a HADD

Definitions

Area of Undertaking - Includes all land within the sub-watershed that drains into the Impacted Area.

Activity - refers to construction, demolition, dredging, filling, piling, as well as any action that may cause alteration to water flow.

Adjacent Areas - those areas, contiguous to the zone, where it is likely that development or an activity may disturb or expose contaminated sediment located within the zone, through associated activities or altered flows.

Area of Concern (AOC) - refers to geographic areas where human activities have caused or are likely to cause impairment of beneficial uses or the areas ability to support aquatic life.

Covering - the act of protecting, confining, sheltering or concealing sediments by covering or enveloping them.

Development - the construction of buildings and structures requiring placement on the creek bed or adjacent areas.

Dredging - the physical alteration of the creek bed by the removal of mud, sand and other sediment through suction or scooping by machinery.

Filling - the physical alteration of the Impacted Area or the Area of Undertaking by covering the creek bed or adjacent areas with deposited soil, sediment, concrete, cribs, or any other material or object.

Impacted Area - Includes all land in the creek bed where the contaminated sediment exists (Zones 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Piling - the act of driving of a beam or post into the creek bed.

Remedial Action Plans (RAP) - are developed and implemented for Great Lakes Areas of Concern according to the commitments laid out in Annex 2 of the Canada-US Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA) 1987 Protocol.

Redesign - the process of making a new design or plan for a specific project to prevent the disturbance, exposure or re-suspension of contaminated sediments.

Relocation - the process of selecting another location for a development or an activity to prevent the disturbance, exposure or re-suspension of contaminated sediments.

Remediation - the cleanup or use of other methods to remove or isolate contaminated sediments.

Re-suspension - the remixing of sediment particles and pollutants back into the water column.

Scouring - the moving or scraping of the top layer of the riverbed.

Back Page

The Administrative Controls Protocol was developed by the following agencies:

- *Department of Environment Canada*
- *Fisheries and Oceans Canada*
- *Ontario Ministry of the Environment*
- *Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources*
- *Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority*
- *Regional Municipality of Niagara*
- *City of Welland*
- *St Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation*



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 14, 2010

SUBJECT: Elm Street and Station Road Site Management – Report No. 49-10

Background

Members may recall that the Conservation Authority has been working in partnership with the Region of Niagara to manage the Glenridge Naturalization Site. The site is a naturalized park, developed as part of the closure plan for a former landfill site near the intersection of Glenridge Road and St. David's Road. The project is well supported in the local community and has received a number of awards for innovation.

Under a management agreement, the Conservation Authority looks after trails and other visitor facilities at Glenridge. The Region is responsible for all elements related to the long term operations and maintenance of landfill infrastructure such as leachate and gas collection systems.

Based on the success of our partnership at Glenridge, Regional staff have approached the Conservation Authority requesting our services at two additional landfill restoration projects. The first is at the former Station Road landfill in the Township of Wainfleet. The second is at the Elm Street landfill in Port Colborne.

Station Road Site

The Station Road site is a relatively small project, adjacent to the Gord Harry Conservation Trail. The Region has developed a short trail which passes through a constructed wetland, leading to an observation area on the landfill cap. The landscape is a low maintenance, natural habitat, however the trail component will require regular attention. Staff believe that this work can be added to the existing maintenance requirements for the trail staging area at Station Road.

Elm Street Site

The Elm Street site is being developed as an active community park, located across the road from Mud Lake Conservation Area. The site provides ample parking, extensive nature trails and two "off-leash" dog parks.

Although our staff conduct regular maintenance patrols at Mud Lake, there will be a higher level of maintenance required at the Elm Street site when the property is fully developed. Specifically, the dog park will involve regular visits to inspect for hazards and to remove garbage.

Conclusion

Both of these projects are scheduled to be completed at the end of July. During the first few months, the maintenance requirements will be substantially reduced, since the contractors will be looking after the plant material and most of the landscape. Conservation Authority staff have reviewed our existing work load and believe that the additional maintenance can be accommodated in the remaining 2010 operating season without hiring additional staff.

Authority staff propose that the NPCA enter into a management agreement for the Station Road and Elm Street landfill sites that would extend to the end of 2010. The agreement would be modeled on the Glenridge Management Agreement, where NPCA costs are invoiced to the Region, along with a 10% administration fee. This is consistent with most fee for service agreements between the Region and the NPCA. Over the next several months, Conservation Authority staff will meet with representatives from the Region to discuss the maintenance program at all three sites (Glenridge, Station Road and Elm Street) and draft a new management agreement for consideration by the Region and the Full Authority at their respective meetings in January 2011.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report Number 49-10 be received; and,

That staff be authorized to enter into a management agreement for the Station Road and Elm Street sites for the remainder of the 2010 operating year.

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: July 14, 2010

SUBJECT: Ball's Falls Marketing Plan – Report No. 50-10

Background

Headspring Marketing Design and Quorum Communications recently completed a strategic marketing plan for the Ball's Falls Conservation Area. The plan methodology involved updating recommendations of a previous plan from 2004 and provides a review of the NPCA's current marketing and communication initiatives. This plan is part of the Authority's continuing efforts to enhance the overall awareness and positioning of Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Centre for Conservation.

The consultants conducted a Niagara Region wide telephone survey in the spring 2010 to determine the awareness level of the Ball's Falls, the Centre for Conservation and the NPCA. The ensuing marketing plan provides a strategic approach to promotion and marketing for the Conservation Area, to garner greater awareness and positioning of the conservation area within the Niagara Region. The text for the proposed marketing plan is attached and a summary of recommendations are as follows:

Core Strategic Recommendations:

The plan recommends a need to strengthen relationships with external stakeholders to increase awareness of Ball's Falls in the community and build credibility for Ball's Falls and the Centre for Conservation as a showcase of environmental stewardship and cultural heritage. These include enhancing alliances with local, regional, provincial and national tourism communities and building on current relationships with organizations such as Tourism Niagara and the Twenty Valley Tourism Association. It also notes the great opportunity we have to further develop our current relationships with the education community to enhance programming and research opportunities.

The overall success of the plan will rely on the development and implementation of a fundamental marketing and communications program targeted at specific markets, rather than providing general information intended for a wider marketplace. The plan recommends pursuing the development of a Ball's Falls micro site and utilizing social media applications (twitter, facebook, and blogs) to support the program.

Rounding out these recommendations is the need to aggressively explore and develop new sources of revenue to support the programming and facilities.

Visual Identity



The NPCA has been using the distinct Ball's Falls "logo" since opening the Centre for Conservation in 2008. The logo contains the two words "Ball's" and "Falls", stacked on top of one another with the "l's" linked to symbolize the two cataracts at Ball's Falls.

The marketing plan calls for a stronger "branding" for the site that would include the logo, along with the tagline "*Discover the Undiscovered*" and "*Niagara's other Falls*". These tag lines play on the international recognition of Niagara Falls and positions Ball's Falls as an undiscovered alternative to the highly developed "Clifton Hill" experience. The branding will be supported by visuals of tranquil, natural areas.

The plan strongly recommends the development of specific Ball's Falls and Centre for Conservation marketing pieces such as utility bill inserts, a generic lure brochure, targeted marketing pieces, website presence, and merchandizing.

The plan goes as far as recommending changing the name of Sixth Avenue to "Ball's Falls Boulevard". This is a very significant action that requires input from the Town of Lincoln and other partners in the community.

Corporate Outreach

The Centre for Conservation has merely scratched the surface of the corporate meeting/retreat market. Word of mouth has created steady return customers; however most of the mid-week slots remain vacant. Targeted marketing will help to build this source of revenue, especially when the facility can be promoted as a "green" option for clients. The Centre can offer a meeting with a "smaller carbon footprint" because of the way the facility is constructed, operated and maintained and will appeal to a marketplace looking for ecologically responsible options.

Media Support Program

Many organizations have benefitted from themed series or program of articles in local papers. It builds awareness in the community and provides a unique opportunity to communicate details that may be lost in regular media coverage. The marketing plan recommends working with local newspapers and the Twenty Valley Tourism Association to develop a series of articles promoting Ball's Falls and the greater Twenty Valley. Our alliances with local, regional and national tourism organizations will provide opportunities for a wider circulation of these materials.

Benchmarking

The recent survey conducted in the spring of 2010 establishes a benchmark for comparison. We know the attitudes and awareness of the local community towards Ball's Falls, the Centre for Conservation and NPCA. As the marketing plan is implemented, it will be important to track the outcome to determine if the initiatives are effective. Recommendations include: visitor tracking, website analysis, and visitor satisfaction surveys and frequency of media coverage. The marketing consultants recommended undertaking a subsequent survey in 2011 to compare findings.

Implementation

The recommended timeline for implementation is as follows:

Short Term (next four months)

- Develop generic lure brochure
- Develop website micro site
- Develop RFP for onsite catering services
- Develop corporate facilities promotional package
- Develop blog for Ball's Falls
- Strengthen relationships with external stakeholders including Tourism Niagara and the Twenty Valley Tourism Association
- Advance Branding

Medium Term (next ten months)

- Develop line of merchandising
- Initiate media support program
- Develop on-line products (surveys, downloads, offers)
- Strengthen partnerships with educational institutions
- Presentations to local businesses, groups and chambers of commerce
- Develop new sources of revenue

Long Term (next sixteen months)

- Expand volunteer program
- Conduct a second telephone survey
- Review success of marketing initiatives

The 2010 budget has funds allocated for marketing and promotion of Ball's Falls Conservation Area. Activities in 2011 and beyond will depend on budget allocations and available staff resources.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Ball's Falls Conservation Area Marketing Plan 2010 be received, and;

That the plan be implemented as recommended in Report No. 50-10.

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

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



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: July 15, 2010

RE: PROJECT STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 51-10

WATER MANAGEMENT

I. Watershed Regulation Division

1) Binbrook Reservoir & Gauge Stations

Staff continue to 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 13 gauge stations on a daily basis as part of the NPCA's routine flood forecasting/warning duties. The public is able to access this real-time information through the NPCA's website.

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

i) Permits

The NPCA has approved 42 permit applications for the 2010 calendar year pursuant to the NPCA's 'Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands, and Alteration to Shorelines and Watercourses' regulation (Ontario Regulation 155/06).

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 41 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 16 municipal drain projects during the current calendar year.

3) Floodplain Mapping

i) Bearss Drain – City of Port Colborne

The NPCA has completed the 100 year floodplain mapping for the Bearss Drain located in the City of Port Colborne.

ii) West Dick's Creek – City of St. Catharines

The owners of the plaza at 198 Glenridge Avenue had retained Lamarre Consulting to update the old floodplain mapping through their site. During early discussions between Lamarre and the NPCA, it was apparent that the floodplain update would impact the entire western portion of Dick's Creek. As such, the NPCA has worked in conjunction with Lamarre Consulting to update and finalize the 100 year floodplain mapping for approximately 5km of West Dick's Creek in the City of St. Catharines.

iii) Eagle Marsh Drain – City of Port Colborne

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 the Eagle Marsh Drain located in the City of Port Colborne.

iv) Wignall Drain – City of Port Colborne

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 the Wignall Drain located in the City of Port Colborne.

v) Beaver Dam Drain – City of Port Colborne

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 the Beaver Dam Drain located in the City of Port Colborne.

II. Watershed Planning Division

1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review

Although new site plan and subdivision submissions are lower than anticipated, plan review activity has remained brisk, with the majority of work involving either existing files of record or smaller private dwelling proposals. This is directly attributed to the Authority's expanded mandate related to protection of wetlands. Staff continue to spend a considerable amount of time reviewing updated municipal official plans. Staff are currently reviewing the St. Catharines, Pelham, West Lincoln and Lincoln Official Plans.

2) Watershed Plan Preparation

a) Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan

Edits to the Draft Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan are complete and just waiting for the completion of the Lake Erie Shoreline study so the results can be incorporated into respective

sections in the Watershed Plan. Once complete, the Watershed Plan will be submitted to the Board of Directors for approval.

b) Central Welland River Watershed Plan

Work on the Restoration Strategy has been temporarily suspended until the completion of several studies that will be incorporated into the Watershed Plan. Work on this Watershed Plan will resume later this year.

c) Beaverdams and Shriners Creek Watershed Plan

Updates and finalization of Phase One are nearly complete to reflect comments submitted by the Steering Committee and members of the public.

d) Upper Welland River Watershed Plan

The Final Phase One: Watershed Characterization and Issues Identification Report is complete and has been posted on the NPCA website.

d) Lower Welland River Watershed Plan

A Terms of Reference for this study area has been submitted to the NPCA Board of Directors for their consideration. As a result of existing extensive information on the area, the nature of the land use, and the extent of land coverage by existing regulations and policies, it was determined that a Watershed Characterization would be the most valuable resource for this watershed study area as oppose to a Watershed Plan. The Watershed Characterization will provide a complete description and inventory of the watershed and its resources that can be used by NPCA staff and respective stakeholders to assist in land use management and planning decisions in the study area.

Field work for the NPCA Fluvial Geomorphology Study has begun with the completion of a field assessment on the Cytex property. Cytex is one of the largest land holders in the study area and granted NPCA permission to access their property as long as staff attended a 30 minute safety course prior to being on the property.

4) Natural Areas Inventory/Heritage System

The Project Management Team has completed the first draft of the Terms of Reference for the Natural Heritage Systems Project. It has been circulated for comment.

The first meeting of the Steering Committee took place in June.

III. Source Water Protection Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

The Proposed AR was posted on the internet on June 4, 2010 for a 30-day public viewing and commenting period which ended on July 5, 2010. Any comments that were received during the 30-day public commenting period must be forwarded to the MOE along with the Proposed Assessment Report.

At the June 2010 Source Protection Authority (SPA) meeting, Mr. Drew Semple was appointed to the Source Protection Committee (SPC) to represent the public. Mr. Semple retires this month from his position as a senior planner in the Regional Policy Division at Niagara Region.

Ontario Regulation 246/10, (the Source Protection Plan (SPP) regulation) was passed by provincial cabinet and became law in June 2010. This regulation prescribes how the SPP should be developed, and what must be included in the SPP. The regulation also outlines a detailed consultation process for the SPP.

The importance of protecting our drinking water sources was high-lighted this past month when a diesel spill occurred in the Welland Canal in Port Colborne, upstream of the Water Treatment Plant (WTP). Fortunately the spill was quickly contained. However, clean-up took several hours and the WTP intake was shut down for about 12 hours as a precaution against contaminants getting into the WTP. During the WTP shut down, Port Colborne residents were asked to conserve water as much as possible.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

a) Routine Water Quality Work

Routine surface water quality monitoring continues at all NPCA stations until November 2010. The NPCA continues to collect groundwater level data at 15 monitoring wells as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN).

Spot-flow monitoring, to compliment water quality sampling, is completed monthly at seventeen (17) stations in Forty, Twenty, Eighteen, Sixteen and Twelve Mile Creeks until November 2010.

Spring benthic invertebrate sampling was completed at 11 stations, including Hamilton Airport, the Glanbrook Landfill, Frenchman's Creek, and Thompson Creek.

b) Special Water Quality Projects

The Welland River Eutrophication Study is still underway. Weekly sampling and flow monitoring continues at the three problem tributaries identified by the Technical Working Group.

The NPCA continues to work in partnership with the Region of Niagara and the Canadian Centre for Inland Waters in the study to determine the sources of *E. coli* at beaches located along Lake Ontario and Lake Erie.

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

3) Other Special Projects in the Source Water Protection Division:

NPCA staff have been providing technical expertise and assistance to Niagara Region Public Works for a project which entails abandoning the former St. David's Municipal Well field.

IV. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division

1) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- Support requirements for this business area are now focused on populating the Assessment Report Database (ARDB) as the standard for submission of technical data back up to the provincial level, as well as organizing the overwhelming amount of technical data that was accumulated and crunched throughout the development of the report and contributing studies.

2) Watershed Planning Support Activities

- The final QA/QC pass of the ELC Community Series fabric continues in West Lincoln, which is nearly completed. Haldimand and Fort Erie need the full QA/QC pass yet as well, and Haldimand is dependent upon the delivery of finalized wetland evaluations from the MNR. Hamilton also needs to be captured yet and is next on the list so that there is at least complete coverage of the product in DRAFT form across the watershed for use in the Natural Heritage System Design project.
- Site specific ELC Vegetation Type mapping continues as well with 90% of the visited sites being mapped, the remainder of which falls in Haldimand.
- Capture of the toe of slope features for the riverine erosion hazard continues.
- Edits to the hazard mapping inventories are underway again based on the recent completion of several internal flood plain mapping studies (Bearss Drain in Port Colborne and Dick's Creek West in St. Catharines) and several minor amendments to existing mapping based upon review by the Authority watershed regulations department. The Niagara Escarpment will be captured and included as a valley/erosion hazard as well.

3) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- GIS staff met with Regional GIS Services staff for an overview of the new enterprise data management environment that the Authority is getting through the existing GIS Shared Services agreement. The new protocol gives Authority GIS staff more control over the management of the Authority's data in the database and web environments which will ultimately lead to faster turnaround times for the delivery of information to staff.
- Migration of the NPCA Niagara Atlas web mapping application from its current underlying technology to the new ArcServer platform that the Region has switched to, is currently underway. The publicly available Niagara Navigator web mapping application will follow.
- Staff has completed the cumulative totals view of the spatially distributed precipitation data based on our real time radar service in SQL Server and is working on debugging the application before including its contents in the new Niagara Atlas web mapping tool that staff use.

V. Watershed Restoration Division

1) General Watershed Restoration

The following are the restoration projects that are currently being implemented:

- A landowner that completed the first phase of a riparian buffer/habitat enhancement project in 2009 has now completed applications for a manure storage improvement, a water well decommissioning project and further riparian buffer/habitat for 2010.
- 800 bare root trees were planted in the Vineland Drain watershed as part of a pit and mound reforestation project. Site preparation for wildflowers has also been completed on this site. Over 550 wildflowers will be planted on this site this summer. 400 bare root trees were planted in a wetland enhancement/ creation project on 40 mile creek in Hamilton. 3 lbs of wetland seed was hand broadcasted in the wetland area. A second wetland will be excavated this summer to create a larger wetland complex. Once excavation has been completed, 280 potted trees and shrubs and more than 500 wildflower plugs will be planted.
- Site preparation and wildflower planting at a second site in Vineland Drain will also be completed during the month of June.
- Excavation was completed to create a cattail filter swale to filter sediment and nutrients from farm field run – off flowing into a newly constructed wetland in Hamilton.

- A woodland habitat restoration project was completed on 4 acres in the 40 Mile Creek watershed upstream of Beamer Memorial CA.
- White Pine and a variety of native shrubs were planted in 2 acres of naturally regenerating area of predominately Green Ash to enhance forest and wildlife diversity with a landowner that completed the first phase of forest habitat restoration project in 2009 in 40 Mile Creek.
- Staff continues to work with Niagara College and students from the Post-graduate Ecosystem Restoration Program testing the response of native plant species to a natural soil amendment called biochar. Herbaceous forest species and tree seeds have been added to the trials which are being monitored by Niagara College students.
- In consultation with a landowner in the Welland Canal North Watershed, 350 Native trees and shrubs were supplied to assist with the land owners reforestation and habitat improvement efforts. This project improves connectivity with a Provincially Significant Wetland and increases canopy cover.
- The adjacent landowner in the Welland Canal North Watershed completed the first phase of a riparian buffer/habitat enhancement project in 2009 has now completed several 2010 projects including a Best Management Practices project involving a manure storage improvement, a water well decommissioning project and further riparian buffer/habitat enhancement

2) Niagara River RAP/ Welland River Restoration

The spring 2010 planting season is on the verge of being completed, the following are the restoration projects that are currently being implemented:

- Two riparian buffer restoration projects including one in the Coyle subwatershed and another in Draper's Creek which is the completion of a project started in the fall in Maple Park to reduce erosion and protect fish habitat.
- A 10ac upland restoration project in the Welland River watershed
- Three upland restoration and wetland enhancement projects in Welland River West, Oswego Creek and Beaver Creek watersheds totaling 11ac.
- A 7 acre pit and mound restoration project has been planted with trees and shrubs and seeded with native grasses and wildflowers
- Site visits and project design are underway for the 3rd year of the NPCA and Ducks Unlimited Canada wetland restoration partnership. Project construction will be completed in the fall and winter of 2010/2011. These projects will greatly benefit wildlife in the form of pairing, nesting and brooding habitat.
- Two Best Management Practices project involving manure management systems are underway in the Welland River watershed
- A Conservation Tillage project to reduce runoff, erosion to improve water quality and habitat potential in the Welland River watershed.
- Two riparian restoration projects along the Welland River. One project involves the installation of flow control Aquamats to reduce wave action and shoreline erosion, thereby improving aquatic habitat. The other project includes the establishment of 2ac of grassland habitat and improvements to past riparian projects.

3) Fort Erie Creeks Watershed Restoration

The following are the restoration projects that are currently being implemented:

- The planting of a riparian buffer on a restoration project that was completed in the Black Creek watershed in the fall of 2009 is underway. The project involved the use of 5 single stone bendway weirs to relocate the stream thalweg to reduce erosion and create fish habitat.

- A partnership with the Niagara Parks Commission to help complete a riparian restoration project along the Niagara River was completed in early 2010.
- The establishment of a riparian buffer, including native shrubs and grasses along Black Creek is currently being completed.
- The establishment of a 35m windbreak to reduce soil erosion and improve connectivity to a large forested area has been completed.
- Staff continue to work with landowners and conduct sites visits to plan restoration projects for 2010 and the spring of 2011.
- Staff is preparing to start up the Fort Erie Creeks Watershed Implementation Committee.

4) Twenty Mile Creek Restoration

The following are the restoration projects and initiatives that are currently being implemented:

- Three acres of upland forest restoration were completed in conjunction with a large wetland habitat project in West Lincoln. Riparian and wetland plantings are scheduled for spring 2011.
- Staff are designing a snake hibernaculum (snake hibernation habitat) for construction later this summer. This cost-effective project will be constructed with strategically buried concrete rubble that allows snakes to hibernate and breed below the frost line.
- 400 meters of riparian habitat have been planted in West Lincoln.
- 650 meters of riparian habitat and 0.75 acres of upland forest restoration have also been completed in West Lincoln. These plantings will be followed by a much larger 12 acre restoration scheduled for 2011.
- Staff continue to participate in Hamilton ReLeaf Committee's Natural Heritage Systems Planning and the "Scenario Development Team." The June 11th meeting is set to cover: socio-political constraints, land-uses and Hamilton's biodiversity representation and ecological functions. A work-plan for the fall will also be determined.

5) Twelve Mile Creek Restoration

The following are the restoration projects that are currently being implemented:

- Stream buffer and bank stabilization project at Kala Hardware, funding support received from the St. Catharines Green Committee.
- Stream buffer and bank stabilization at Assumption Catholic School, funding support received from the St. Catharines Green Committee. This project is a continuation of our ECO School partnership.
- A cattle fencing project to protect sensitive coldwater stream resources and sensitive Carolinian forest habitat is being designed.
- Staff completed a bank stabilization and riparian buffer project with a private landowner in the Upper Twelve on half of a kilometer of stream.
- A public tree planting event was hosted by the NPCA and the Lion's Club of Fonthill in conjunction with Scout Trees and Zehr's. Volunteers planted 650 trees.
- The annual Twelve Mile Creek Implementation Committee meeting was also held this month and highlighted the projects completed last year by NPCA and the watershed partners and laid out the proposed projects for the coming year.
- After the successful implementation of pre-winter repairs and maintenance, further maintenance and repairs to the deer exclosures in Short Hills Provincial Park have been completed in partnership with the Friends of Short Hills Park and the Niagara Restoration Council.
- Staff worked with teachers and students from Assumption Elementary School to control weeds on a restoration project completed on school grounds in 2009. Staff also surveyed

damage to the restoration project by vandals since the projects completion and is working with the school to improve the site.

6) Niagara-on-the-Lake Restoration

The following are the restoration projects and initiatives that are currently being implemented:

- 1 manure storage project has been approved and will be implemented this summer within the 6 Mile Creek Watershed
- 1 nutrient management project has been approved and is currently underway at a greenhouse operation within the Lake Ontario #4 Watershed.
- A 10 m riparian planting is currently underway. Invasive species are being removed and replaced with appropriate native species within the One Mile Creek Watershed
- A 135 m riparian planting native tree and shrubs species was completed this spring along 4 Mile Creek.
- 1 ac along 4 Mile Creek was enhanced with pit and mound topography and a small wetland feature which has all been seeded and planted with native grass, wildflower, shrub and tree species. Additional wildflower planting will occur in June.
- A nearly 5 ac livestock restriction project is currently underway along the Routh Drain in order to keep cattle out of a watercourse feeding the drain.
- 2 riparian stabilization projects are currently being developed for implementation along 145 m consisting of 2 neighbouring properties on 4 Mile Creek.
- The design for the NOTL Natural Channel Design Demonstration project in partnership with the Town of NOTL was completed in January 2010 and is ready for implementation on the Harrison Drain 1 (2 Mile Creek) at the beginning of July 2010. Support for this project has also been expressed from the MNR and Trout Unlimited Canada.

The One Mile Creek Watershed Study Implementation Committee met on March 23rd. Topics of discussion at the meeting included:

- One Mile Creek Landowner Stewardship Guide delivery and Public Open House
- Results from the NPCA 2009 water quality monitoring and dates for the upcoming 2010 monitoring
- NPCA Water Quality Improvement Projects for 2010
- Activities of the Friends of One Mile Creek since the last meeting as well as upcoming planned activities for 2010.
- Town of NOTL water quality monitoring downstream of the William Street Park.
- Town of NOTL subsidies for residents to improve water quality (rain barrels and disconnections from sanitary sewers)

The NOTL Watershed Study Implementation Committee met on May 11th. Topics of discussion at the meeting included:

- Clarification on Committee members role
- Upgrades to the NOTL irrigation network
- NPCA 2010 Water Quality Improvement Program Projects
- NPCA education in the community
- Results from the NPCA 2009 water quality monitoring and dates for the upcoming 2010 monitoring
- Update on Trout Unlimited monitoring activities for 2010
- Town of NOTL tour of piped sections of the irrigation network
- Town of NOTL master servicing plan for the Glendale area
- The NOTL Natural Channel Design Demonstration project

- Debris jams along natural sections of creeks within NOTL

Staff have also been meeting with landowners to discuss and develop projects for the 2011 program year. Projects for next year include:

- A 120 m Shelterbelt planting within the 2 Mile Creek Watershed.

7) 15,16,18 Mile Creeks Restoration

The following are the restoration projects that are currently being implemented:

- 1 wetland planted with 750 native trees and shrubs, wildflowers to follow.
- 1 Livestock restriction fencing project in 16 mile creek.
- 950 trees planted in a habitat enhancement project in 15 mile creek watershed. (
- Turtle hatching improvement project completed in 16 mile creek watershed. (Town of Pelham)
- 600 trees and shrubs being planted in June as part of a windbreak creation in 18 mile creek watershed, as well as a riparian buffer with Bayview Greenhouses.
- 1 Riparian buffer and naturalized area in 16 Mile Creek being planted in June.
- 200 native trees and shrubs planted for wetland and floodplain naturalization in 16 mile creek watershed.
- Native plant seeding has been completed at a newly constructed vineyard in 18 mile creek with the intention to attract beneficial insects to the property. Bird and bat boxes have been installed to help curb unwanted insect populations.

Staff have also been meeting with landowners to discuss and develop projects for the remainder of the 2010 program year. Projects for the remainder of the year include:

- Excavation and planting of a new wetland complex in 16 mile creek watershed.
- Excavation and planting of a second wetland to create a larger wetland complex in 15 mile creek.
- Potential buffer planting and bank stabilization project in 18 mile creek (Big Valley Campground))
- Potential sediment and erosion control project in 15 mile creek near 4th avenue. (Whitty Farms)
- Habitat creation project on newly created wetland pond on 18 mile creek.
- Wetland creation and natural channel design in 18 mile creek watershed
- 1 Riparian buffer being created in 16 mile creek watershed.
- Potential in 18 mile creek (Big Valley)

8) ECO School Program

- Staff have approved the 2010 ECO School program participants. 23 applications were received, with 14 of these being first time applicants. Letters of approval will be sent out by the third week of March and site visits will begin at the end of April. Site prep will take place in May and planting in June.
- Program evolution – as the last year in the original five year program, staff are working with the Niagara Smart Program to evolve this program into a school yard tree planting initiative. Currently, there is very limited funding for the planting of large scale trees on school yards, however; the demand is high.

9) Yellow Fish Road

- Staff are working to promote and enhance the delivery of the Yellow Fish Road program with the use of the Trout Unlimited Canada / Shell Canada grant received in 2010. Over

80 storm drains have been marked so far and requests to participate from teachers and parents are continuing to come in.

10) Community Fisheries Involvement Programs

- The Angler Diary Program continues to collect data from anglers in the Welland River and Twelve Mile Creek watersheds. Over 45 Angler Diaries for both watersheds have been sent out thus far. Staff have most recently been in contact with a member of the Port Colborne Conservation Club as members are keen to be involved.
- Our 9th annual Angler Derby is being planned again for Saturday July 10th as part of Family Fishing Week. This year we will be hosting it with the City of Niagara Falls and the Welland River Keepers at George Bukator Park located on the Welland River near Chippawa. Our intent is to encourage new participation, obtain fisheries information from a different part of the Welland River and assist the WRK in expanding their membership.

11) Ecological Restoration (Native Plant) Workshop

- Plans are underway for our 2nd Native Plant Workshop. This year it will be a full day venue with the morning at the Balls Falls Centre for Conservation and the afternoon spent touring 3 restoration project sites including the E.C. Brown wetland site, Maple Park and Drapers Creek. The focus will be a common sense approach to water quality and habitat improvement with a focus on native plants. The date has been set for Tuesday July 20th.

12) Niagara Envirothon

- Staff assisted the Niagara Envirothon Organizing Committee in completing another successful Envirothon Workshop and Competition for 2010. 13 teams registered this year including 65 students. Saint Michael Catholic High School being this year's winner represented Niagara at the Ontario Envirothon Competition. Many partners and sponsors came together to make the Niagara Envirothon happen including the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, Niagara Falls Nature Club, Bert Miller Nature Club, Heartland Forest, Ontario Forestry Association, Friends of Fort Erie Creeks, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation, Niagara Community Foundation, Land Care Niagara, Outdoors Oriented, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation and Ontario Power Generation.
- The organizing committee has started to plan for next year's event and preliminary funding resources have been identified.

VI. Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

1) Lyons Creek East

The next Contaminated Sediments Technical Advisory Group (TAG) meeting date will be set upon completion of the Protocol and Development Guidance Documents. The agenda will also include the results of the Lyon's Creek East Sediment Transport Study and proposed the Long-Term Monitoring Plan.

Next steps for Lyon's Creek East involve establishing a Management Framework Agreement between the stakeholders and the NPCA and a public communication strategy.

2) Stage 2 RAP Update

The Niagara River (Ontario) RAP Stage 2 Update report & Update 2010 fact sheets are posted on the NPCA web site.

A presentation on the RAP status, priority issues and next steps was provided by the RAP Coordinator to the NPCA Board of Directors on May 19. This was followed by a similar presentation to the Niagara Region's ICP Committee on May 26 where a recommendation to endorse the Stage 2 Update was approved. The recommendation was subsequently ratified during the June 3 Council meeting.

A RAP public event ("Night of Good News") was held on June 3 at the NPC's Butterfly Conservatory classroom. Presentations on projects that have contributed towards RAP goals were provided as well as the status of upstream/downstream monitoring in the Niagara River. Certificates of Appreciation were presented to the NPCA and the NRC.

The next RAP Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for June 29.

3) Update: Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Ecosystem (COA).

Since 1971, the Parties (Canada and Ontario) have worked together through a series of Canada-Ontario Agreements (COA) Respecting the Great Lakes Ecosystem that have guided their efforts to improve the environmental quality of the Basin and contributed to meeting Canada's obligations under the Canada-United States Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). The current COA is in effect until March 2011.

4) International Liaison

The next U.S. Remedial Advisory Committee (RAC) is scheduled for June 18, 2010 in Buffalo.

5) Update: Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The current GLWQA is the revised Agreement of 1978 as amended by Protocol in 1987. A review of the Agreement and its Annexes has been underway since 2006. The process included extensive stakeholder and public consultation efforts, culminating in the submission of a report to the governments of Canada and the United States in December 2008.

Most recently, the Governments of Canada and the United States (the Parties) are inviting Great Lakes partners, First Nations and Métis peoples, stakeholders and the public to participate in a series of binational public Webinars on substantive issues being addressed during the negotiations to amend the GLWQA. These binational public Webinars have been scheduled for June 7th, 8th and 9th. Visit http://binational.net/glwqa_2010_comments_e.html for further information, to register for the Webinars and for the opportunity to provide written comments on the issues.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

June was a busy month with close to 800 students participating in NPCA directed education programs such as Spring Awakening, Native Drum workshops, Celebration of Aboriginal Heritage, Stray Squirrel, Ontario Frogs and guided hikes. Many of the schools stayed for a full day and also did self-directed activities.

The return of the exhibit "Ontario Frogs – "The Ribbet Exhibit Returns" (with the inclusion of new elements) for a 12 week period proved successful with 5800 visitors, compared to 958 visitors to the previous 4 week "Ontario Frogs" exhibit. In general, attendance this year has increased substantially. In 2009, 3 exhibits were offered from mid March – early July with 2966 visitors, compared to 2 exhibits in the same period this year and a total of 5863 visitors.

Summer Camp is ready to go. Themes this year include Time travelers, Woodland Wonders, Water Wizards, and Mad Eco Scientists. Many new activities as well as some favourites will be offered. Registration has been steady. We have many children returning from previous summer camps and from March Break camp. We currently have sufficient registration to run camps for all of July and most of August.

Every year we have several requests to register children who are 11 & 12 years of age and our current limit is 10 years of age. Staff will investigate offering an intermediate camp as well as the feasibility of developing a junior volunteer camp for older children if additional seasonal staff can be hired to facilitate this.

Linda Vickers, our intern from Mount St. Vincent University is making good progress with her project that will introduce Ball's Falls to interactive social media marketing. The major elements of the project include the development of a blog, as well as participation on face book and twitter to engage the public and generate interest in Ball's Falls.

Updates are underway on the exhibits in the grist mill and the display barn. Copies of several new photographs recently located in the Niagara Historical Society Museum will be featured in the Ball genealogical exhibit in the Display Barn.

The Community Museum Operating Grant application was submitted to the Ministry of Culture. The final report on the Collections Storage project has been submitted and the final payment from Canadian Heritage should arrive shortly.

The NPCA application for funding through the Summer Jobs Service program has been approved. The NPCA is eligible for a \$2 per hour wage subsidy for up to 34 students for 16 weeks and a total of \$27,000.

Work on the trail at the upper falls is now completed, this rounds out our capital improvements to trails in the park for this season. The temporary trail signs will be replaced once the permanent signs are ready.

Construction is underway on the 6th Avenue road bridge and staff are adjusting operations around the road closure in the park. The Town of Lincoln was consulted on the detour signage and agreed to our request for additional signs to direct our visitors to the Centre, Barn and Church to help direct our visitors and wedding groups.

Site improvements will be undertaken in front of the Ball Home when 6th Avenue is closed this month. The work will include changes to the picket fencing and service gate, and a reinforced turf area for temporary wedding parking in front of the church. It is our intent with these changes to restrict the on-road parking in the area near the bridge, while enhancing our property and services to our visitors.

Binbrook Conservation Area

On June 13th, Binbrook was home to the Binbrook Triathlon. This was the largest event yet, with 516 athletes in attendance.

Pavilion reservations are going well. As of June 30 Pavilion #1 is 90% booked (3 dates open), Pavilion #2 is 100% booked and Pavilion #3 is 90% booked for all weekends and holiday Mondays through to Labour Day. Memberships crossed the 200 mark on June 13th. As of July 2nd, the gatehouse sold 257 memberships.

A new recycling program has been put into place by staff. This should help to reduce the amount of material making its way to the landfill site.

The new pavilion is open to the public and the store is already doing brisk business in the warmer weather. Boat rentals have increased now that the rental operation has moved from the gate house to the store near the beach.

The Hamilton public health unit has been working with staff on permits for the store operation, and in the process has reviewed our water plant and splash pad in the park. We have been advised by the health unit that changes in government regulations for pools and splash pads are in process. Over the next year some adjustments to our water equipment and water operations in the park will need to be implemented to come into compliance with the new regulations.

Staff have reviewed our docking needs in the park and are contemplating locating the handicapped fishing platform near the new boat ramp by the dam. This location will take advantage of the parking and trails already in place, while providing fishing opportunities on shore at a popular fishing area on the reservoir.

Staff are in ongoing discussion with Tourism Hamilton and CTODS on our new highway billboard signs, summer vacation schedules are delaying our meetings with municipal staff. A meeting date with Hamilton Tourism and traffic staff is being arranged for later this month.

Chippawa Creek – Long Beach Conservation Areas

The heat that started at the end of June has brought out campers in great numbers. The long weekend saw visitation at levels last seen in 2007.

Parks in Wainfleet suffered from brownouts during the July 4 - 8 heat wave. In particular, internet postings on July 7 showed that OPG was producing 500mw less than provincial demand. Long Beach suffered the worst: 50v in the 120v system across the board to all park facilities / campsites / water plants (pumps) and even internet service; while Chippawa voltage dropped below 100v. This is typical for this rural area, where this last occurred in 2007, and has been planned for in design / development / and maintenance upgrades: As a result, expensive / integral park electrical equipment was protected by surge arrestors and fault breakers. Surge equipment took the brunt, some of which burned out and will need to be replaced.

The anticipated "final" Ministry of the Environment Certificate of Approval for the Chippawa sewage system has been concluded and presented for the signature of the MOE Director. Minor changes to the system's area bed had to be made at the last minute due to changes to a Provincially Significant Wetland boundary near the development. NPCA staff caught this change in June and were able to make a minor adjustment to the plan that would ensure the PSW was

protected. Staff are now transplanting trees from the site to other areas of the park, fences and signs are being installed for public / worksite safety, tank / materials delivery is scheduled, and work will be commencing within days.

Canada Geese activity at the Chippawa Creek swimming beach is becoming a problem again. Staff obtained a permit to scare geese off the beach and direct them to non-public areas.

The 23rd Annual Bass Derby was held at Chippawa Creek Conservation Area on Saturday July 10, 2010. More than 110 individuals participated in the event. The winning fish in the adults category 1st prize was a 1.87 kg largemouth bass and the children's category 1st prize was a 0.93 kg largemouth bass. Catch and release and live well use were encouraged at the event. All fished weighted appeared to be in healthy condition.

Jordan Marina Conservation Area

A successful opening event was held June 20th with favourable weather and a good turnout from the public. Many took advantage of the opportunity to get out on the water in personal watercraft or the dragon boats to experience the area. Since the opening event, staff are noticing a number of visitors coming in to the property to view the facilities. More permanent entrance signs to the property are being produced to mark the entrance driveway into the site.

Town of Lincoln Communities in Bloom

Our support for this program continues in its third year at the Town of Lincoln, with assistance to the steering committee and events for the judging. At time of this writing we are preparing for the judges tour with a presentation July 12th at the Town of Lincoln, and judges tour of the area on July 13th in the NPCA van. More information on the tour will be available at the next report.

Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP)

Our annual application to the MNR for this program is due end of July and staff are preparing the documents for submission. We currently have a roster of 45 land parcels enrolled in this program, with 88% of our total acreage on these parcels eligible for tax relief under this program.

Staff also reviewed the contemplated changes for this program announced by MNR and are in agreement with Conservation Ontario's letter challenging the MNR on a number of issues with the program.

Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)

A new managed forest plan for Binbrook Conservation Area has been completed by the NCPA Forester and submitted to this program.

Conservation Area Plans

The land department has acquired new AutoCAD Map3D 2011 mapping software that our Conservation Planner will be using to update the mapping and plans for our Conservation Areas. The software allows for full integration of our mapping work with our in-house GIS database and seamless information sharing between the land and water departments mapping

work. The updating of the conservation area plans for our revenue generating properties will be given first priority while we integrate the software into our current operations.

NPCA Hunting Program

Staff issued 6 hunting permits over the past month. To date staff have received and issued 169 hunting permits for 2010. Of these, 27 permits are issued to individuals residing outside of our administrative area.

Federal waterfowl season confirmed. Waterfowl hunting information for Binbrook Program is being finalized. Upon completion, the NPCA Lottery Information will be mailed out.

Family Fishing Weekend

In Ontario, July 3rd through 11 was 'Family Fishing Weekend' where Ontario residents were able to fish without a licence, using the Conservation Licence fishing limits. Both Binbrook and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas were promoted as destinations for fishing in this 'Family Fishing Weekend' campaign. Binbrook was advertised as a fishing destination with rental and a fishing equipment lending program for the public, while Chippawa's 'Bass Derby' was promoted as a one day event.

Species at Risk

Staff continue to monitor Red Mulberry and Butternut trees, and Spoon-leaved moss on Conservation Authority lands. Canker/stress has been identified as a potential threat to the present Red Mulberry population. A propagation program is being completed for a measure of continued existence. Butternut assessment of canker has been completed. There is on-going monitoring of the growth and health of Spoon-leaved moss populations.

External Research on NPCA lands

Permission was given to the Regional Niagara- Public Health Unit for continuing the study of presence/ absence of black legged tick study in Niagara. Several Conservation Areas are being looked at in their study of public lands.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Niagara Children's Water Festival

The 8th Niagara Children's Water Festival is booked to capacity for the week of September 13th – 17th. A Public Day will take place on Sunday, September 12 (this is Grandparents Day). This year we have 12 schools attending for the first time.

A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium

The A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium is one of Ontario's *premier* annual environmental events. It provides a forum for practitioners, policy makers, nongovernment organizations, academics and businesses to network and discuss the challenges and opportunities in Ontario's conservation field.

The **theme** of the 2010 Symposium is **Biodiversity: Connecting People, Land and Water**. Biodiversity is the rich mix of ecosystems and species found all across Ontario. As we face

increasing competition for limited resources due to population and development pressures and continuous change to our various environments, we strive to better understand what biodiversity represents, why it is important and how it contributes to human health. Our natural environment provides a healthy foundation for all forms of life such as clean and sustainable water, good air quality, and renewable land resources.

In declaring 2010 to be the International Year of Biodiversity, the United Nations (UN) has challenged the world to safeguard the variety of life on earth. With biodiversity as this year's symposium theme we hope to stimulate thinking and see how in Ontario we can take actions that meet the UN challenge and the needs of our society.

The theme of biodiversity will be explored through the various Symposium's sessions including: Watershed Management; Water; Biodiversity; Inspiring Sustainability; Natural Heritage; Community Stewardship; Fish and Fish Habitat; Geospatial Technology; Environmental Communications.

The Keynotes speakers for 2010 include:

Dr. Richard Louv; Author of "Last Child in the Woods"

Dr. Mathis Wackernagel, Sustainability Advocate; Global Footprint Network

Dr. Wayne Roberts, Author and Food Innovator; Toronto Food Policy Council

Dr. Bill Dennison, Marine Scientist; University of Maryland - Center for Environmental Science

Gord Miller, Environmental Commissioner of Ontario

Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival

The 36th annual festival will be held October 8 -11, 2010. This event is recognized as a Niagara Classic tradition. Members are encouraged to mark your calendars.

Environmental Commissioner

The NPCA was pleased to host Gord Miller, Environmental Commissioner and 15 members of his advisory committee. The group was treated to a brief tour of Ball's Falls, followed by staff presentations regarding the NPCA's programs.

Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Conference 2011

Niagara Region will host this conference scheduled for June 15 – 17, 2011. NPCA staff is assisting as part of the steering committee. The conference will bring together municipalities, NGO's, practitioners and academia, as well as, private sector partners to address issues surrounding the following themes: Beaches and Shorelines; Governance; Invasive/Rare species; Economy and Tourism; Shipping and Navigation.

Biennial Tour

Every two years, the 36 Conservation Authorities in Ontario get together to "tour" a different part of this amazing province of ours in order to learn, share and network with their colleagues in different geographic and municipal situations.

The 2010 Biennial Tour will be hosted by the Rideau Valley and Mississippi Valley Conservation Authorities from September 19 – 22, 2010. The theme will concentrate on Reducing Our Footprint – Balancing the Environment and Human Needs. Below is a tentative schedule:

Sunday September 19, 2010

- Registration
- Meet and Greet Dinner at the Monterey Inn Resort and Conference Centre

Monday, September 20, 2010

- Travel to the heart of the Ottawa Valley and the Town of Almonte. Nestled along the Mississippi River, learn about the development challenges of an historical village dealing with modern demands.
- Visit Almonte's hydro-electric station that carries on the Town's proud tradition of waterpower and provides a modern source of "green power."
- Experience the natural beauty and historic grandeur of the Mill of Kintail Conservation Area and continue through the Maple Syrup Capital of Lanark County.
- Enjoy lunch in the Town of Perth, known as the "Prettiest Town in Ontario," where the streets are lined with heritage homes and shops — all within a stone's throw of the lovely Tay River.
- Stroll through Perth's Stewart and Code Parks to the Haggart Island Dams to learn about the challenges of this dam reconstruction project.

Tuesday, September 21, 2010

- Wind your way through the Village of Manotick to view and discuss shoreline development issues.
- Enjoy a paddle on the Rideau Canal — a National Historic Site of Canada, a Canadian Heritage River and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- View one of Lt.-Col. John By's lock stations — an engineering marvel from the nineteenth century.
- Investigate and learn about the Baxter Conservation Area and the Ontario Rural Wastewater Centre
- Inspect Ottawa's first gold LEED certified building and home of the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority, the Ottawa Septic System Office, Ottawa Stewardship Council and the Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation.
- Explore the heritage, natural attractions, delightful shops and the small town hospitality of Merrickville — the "Jewel of the Rideau."
- Enjoy an evening boat cruise along the Ottawa River in our Nation's Capital.

Wednesday, September 22

- Breakfast Wrap-up

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Jordan Harbour Conservation Area

The official opening took place on June 20th and was well attended. Many positive comments were received about the area and the work that has been done. Almost \$400 in voluntary

donations was received on opening day; to date \$46,000 has been raised by the Foundation for the redevelopment of this site.

Conservation Education Bursaries

The Foundation Chairman and staff discussed applications received this year to determine their eligibility for a bursary. Supporting students from Fort Erie and surrounding area that are pursuing a post-secondary education in a field related to conservation and resource management, this year there were four successful applicants that will receive \$1,000 each. Since 1992, 115 bursaries totaling \$114,600 have been awarded as a result of the conservation education bursary program.

Rock 'N Ribs

In celebration of the winery's tenth anniversary, they will once again be hosting this event, featuring a rib dinner and private concert with renowned Canadian rock band April Wine. It will take place on September 11th at Harbour Estates Winery. The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation will be given the opportunity to host a silent auction table at this event. Over the past four years of this event, more than \$10,000 has been raised. Staff is currently working to secure items and Board members are asked to assist where possible.

Thanksgiving Festival

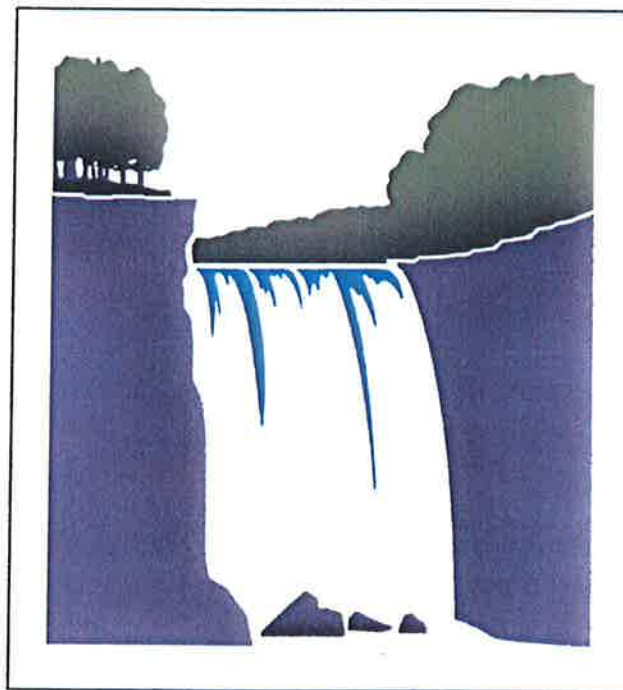
The Foundation will be holding its annual raffle at this year's Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival taking place October 8th through 11th. As in the past, festival artisans have been solicited for donations to include into themed gift baskets. Board members are asked to consider volunteering their time to help with ticket sales and encourage others to assist where possible, confirming any commitments with staff.

Recommendation:

Report No. 51-10 outlining the status of Authority projects be received for information.

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

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
Ball's Falls Conservation Area
2010 MARKETING PLAN



Prepared by:
Headspring Marketing Design & Quorum Communications
June 2010

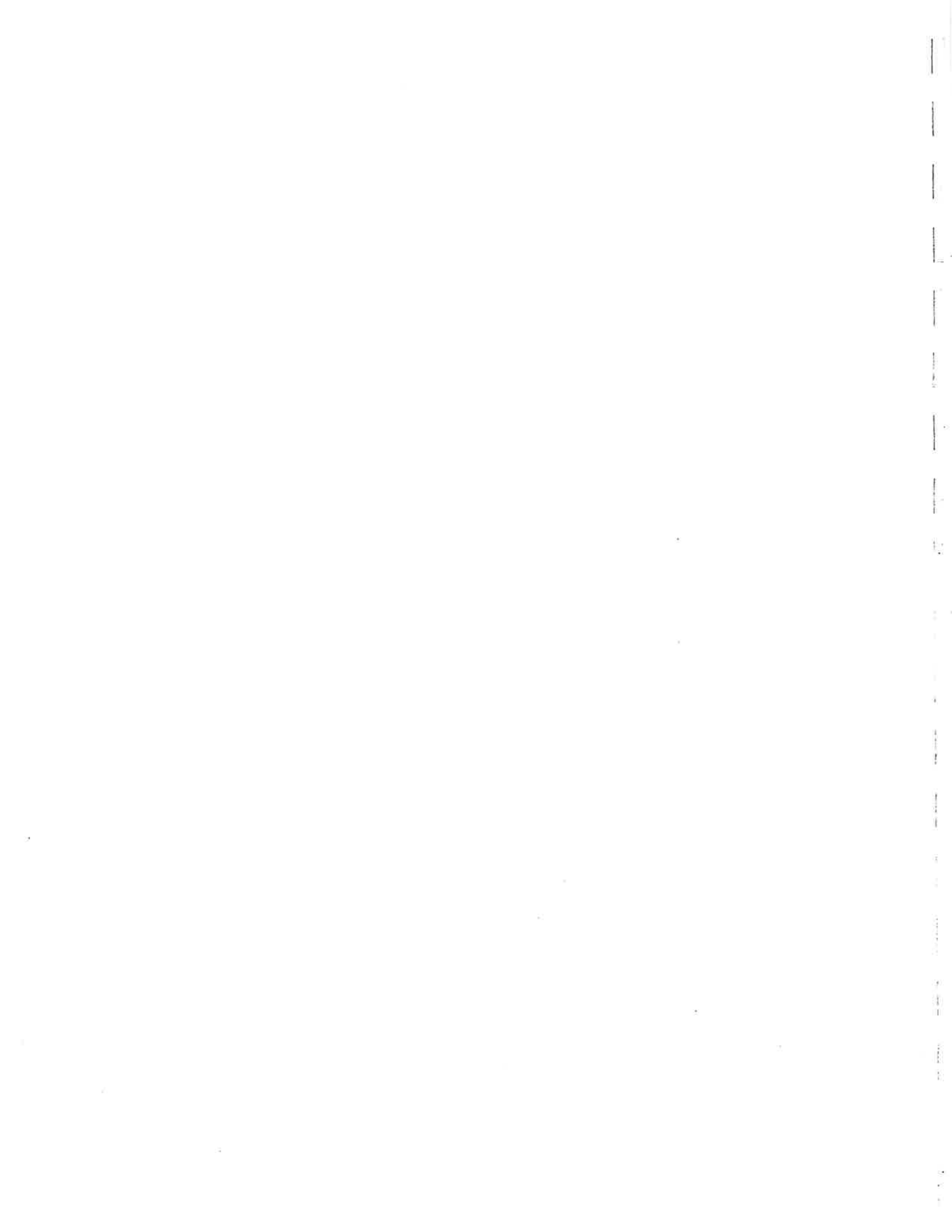




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**Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
Marketing Plan for Ball's Falls Conservation Area
Headspring Marketing Design | Quorum**



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2004 Ball's Falls Conservation Area marketing plan has been revised by the communications consulting team of Headspring Marketing Design and Quorum Communications together with Ball's Falls (NPCA) management staff. Its purpose is to guide the NPCA in enhancing the overall awareness and positioning of Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation.

The published goals of the marketing (plan) planning process are to:

- Identify the key marketing elements to support Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation;
- Outline key measurable communication objectives;
- Facilitate market readiness of the Ball's Falls Conservation Area to provide enhanced visitor experiences for existing and new audiences/markets;
- Develop specific marketing communications for identified target audiences/markets.

METHODOLOGY

2004 Research

The development of the original marketing plan (2004) included a tour of the Ball's Falls Conservation Area site, a review of relevant documentation and previous studies such as but not limited to the Ball's Falls Heritage Conservation Area Master Plan and Twenty Valley/Jordan Harbour Tourism Development Project – Tourism Strategy & Development Vision. In addition, the consultants also:

- Held a series of 10 confidential one-to-one interviews with key internal stakeholders;
- Held a discussion session with these same stakeholders to review the results of these interviews;
- Held a further series of 8 confidential one-to-one interviews with key external stakeholders;
- Reviewed the results of these interviews with NPCA staff and identified any gaps in responses between stakeholder groups; and,
- Conducted a search of best practices and a review of other relevant environmental and heritage parks and attractions.

2009-2010 Research

During the revision phase, meetings and interviews were held with NPCA/BFCA management and frontline staff. A review was conducted of current marketing communications materials, the (Mitchell Westlake) NPCA marketing and communications plan, Twenty Valley Tourism Association marketing efforts, available media coverage, visitor tracking and remarks, NPCA website, as well as



websites and organizational doctrine (i.e., vision, mission statements and strategic plans) of other southern Ontario-area conservation authorities.

Summary of 2010 Benchmarking Survey Poll Results

A Niagara region-wide survey poll was conducted in March 2010 to determine the awareness levels of NPCA and Ball's Falls Conservation Area (see survey questions and poll results in appendices). The complete report of the survey results and cross tab data is contained in the appendices.

A total of 333 interviews were completed between March 2 and March 8. The margin of error for the survey is plus or minus 5.4%, 19/20 times (95% confidence interval). This means that if the surveys were conducted 100 times, the data or findings would fall within 5.4 percentage points above or below the percentage reported in 95 of the 100 surveys.

Strengths

Awareness levels of Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority are good in Niagara region community. Balls Falls has the strongest visitor attendance (most visited) of all NPCA sites. The highest rated activities included hiking, outdoor activities and the Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival. The highest rated workshops that residents would consider attending included the following topics — hiking, fish, wildlife, birds, Niagara Escarpment, water resources and conservation.

Weaknesses

Overall, despite the general awareness level, the NPCA has a weak public profile in Niagara region community. There is a lack of awareness of NPCA-sponsored activities and little awareness of the Foundation. The NPCA's website also has very poor awareness – access and activity are extremely low.

The Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation lacks awareness in general; its state-of-the-art architectural and environmental-friendly elements are virtually unknown in the community. Private events, programs, workshops and lectures also lack awareness amongst residents. The NPCA does not seem to be engaged with the Niagara media and consequently, coverage of NPCA, Ball's Falls programs and events, or related eco-conservation-focused stories is minimal at best.



2. CORE STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

MOST CRITICAL SHORT-TERM ACTIVITIES ARE:

- *Relationship building*: the establishment of strong working relationships with external stakeholder groups across Niagara region (and beyond where appropriate)
- *Awareness building*: a campaign to raise the awareness of Ball's Falls Conservation Area, and particularly the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation (and what this "brand" represents)
- *Credibility building*: a series of activities to ensure that the credibility of NPCA and the Ball's Falls Conservation Area are maintained and enhanced so that new stakeholder relationships and alliances can be created and sustained.

FOCUS ON FUNDAMENTALS

- Success lies in focusing on implementing fundamental marketing and communications programs and tactics/vehicles, such as: high quality publications and/or brochures that are targeted and evaluated; content-rich, interactive website/blog and a social media presence; signage that is highly visible, high quality and abundant; development of tourism marketing skills through participation in industry associations and workshops, effective event marketing, and demonstrating industry leadership.

NPCA CANNOT ACHIEVE ITS GOALS ON ITS OWN

- Important to establish strategic alliances with key organizations in the local, regional, provincial and national tourism communities. These organizations have the interest, resources, and customer bases to help NPCA meet its attendance and revenue goals/needs.
- Ensure a strong relationship with the Twenty Valley Tourism Association evolves at all levels within its organization. Be prepared to demonstrate leadership and go "above and beyond" what it may consider a reasonable investment of time, energy, and money to create a relationship with the organization and its major players that can create opportunities.

CREATE NEW SOURCES OF REVENUE

- In addition to re-evaluating entrance fees, NPCA should consider aggressively exploring new sources of revenue.



3. THE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITIES *

- **Provide leadership** role to co-ordinate and align the marketing efforts of the Niagara eco-tourism.
- **Develop and manage** the Ball's Falls Conservation Area, Centre for Conservation (and NPCA) brands, and provide opportunities for local business and community organizations to leverage positive brand attributes.
- **Partner** with local business, community organizations, Niagara Region, Twenty Valley Tourism Association, the 12 Niagara municipalities to promote near-by outdoor experiences to a broad audience.
- **Leverage partnerships** with key Niagara region organizations (i.e., Niagara Region, Niagara Region's "Smart Gardening" program; 12 municipalities, Tourism Niagara, Niagara Economic Development, Twenty Valley Tourism Association, Niagara Escarpment Commission, Niagara Parks Commission, and other community ecological, environmental organizations) wherever possible and appropriate to expand NPCA's awareness inside the region and its presence outside the region in a coordinated, cost-effective manner that benefits all partners.
- **Work collaboratively** with above organizations to better align common marketing efforts/goals.

** Adopted in part from and in support of Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership 2010-2011 OTMPC Marketing Plan*

COMMUNICATION OBJECTIVES

Short Term | Immediate (3 to 18 months)

1. Raise the level of awareness of the heritage, ecological, archeological and environmental aspects of Ball's Falls Conservation Area and Centre for Conservation (amongst Niagara residents).
 - **FOCUS** – branding, utility bill inserts, media/corporate kit, brochure, website/mico-site, media relations — the overall goal is to drive people to the Ball's Fall micro-site, offer them a free day pass for completing online conservation awareness survey, then get them to Conservation Area and/or Centre for Conservation
2. Raise the level of awareness of the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation and its role in enhancing the Ball's Falls Conservation Area and Twenty Valley experience (amongst Niagara residents).



- Position Ball's Falls Conservation Area as a major asset and destination in the Twenty Valley Tourism Area.
- *FOCUS* – marketing campaign to corporate/business, educational, professional, government, not-for-profit organizations highlighting possible uses of Centre for Conservation (i.e., workshops, retreats, small conferences and special events, etc.)
- Position Ball's Falls Conservation Area as an alternative visitor/tourist destination in the Niagara region (and a less commercialized waterfall) — *Niagara's Other Falls*.

Mid-Long Term (6 to 36 months)

- Invite participation by key stakeholders in addressing educational, recreational, corporate/professional and tourism development issues, and create avenues for participation by these same stakeholders.
- Sustain existing visitor groups/levels, and increase visitor/tourist attendance levels and Ball's Falls Conservation Area revenue streams.

STRATEGIES

Public Awareness

- Identify and prioritize local/regional tourism development issues and programs that can provide Ball's Falls Conservation Area with the greatest short-term awareness gains;
- Associate Ball's Falls Conservation Area as a vital component in all activities, projects, programs, and any other undertakings by key stakeholders in Twenty Valley tourism development;
- Make the tourism development issues facing Ball's Falls (and the Twenty Valley) more visible and immediate to the residents of the Jordan Valley area and Niagara region, and to the other key stakeholders as defined herein.

Education & Scientific/Professional Communities

- Strengthen/expand existing relationships and partnerships with the key educational institutions in the Niagara region (i.e., Niagara Region and its 12 municipalities; Niagara District School Board, Niagara Catholic District School Board, Brock University, Niagara College, Niagara Escarpment Commission, Niagara Parks Commission) and develop variety of joint-programs (multi-partner



opportunities) to support the heritage, ecological environmental and archeological aspects of Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Centre for Discovery. Secure external sponsorship and media support for all.

STAKEHOLDERS (AUDIENCES, MARKETS)

The local and regional market areas should be top priorities for awareness initiatives. Concurrently, the education community, media and local business and professional community should also be a primary focus.

Audience/Market 1

- Target audiences/markets can be segmented into three geographical groups:
 - i. Local market area – local residents within a 15-20-minute driving radius (e.g., residents of Niagara Region); all other Niagara residents, including “outdoor enthusiasts.”
 - ii. Regional market area, being locations between 20- to 60 minute-drive, e.g., residents of the Greater Bay Area (Hamilton-Halton). Some of the more than two million annual visitors to the Twenty Valley tourism area, including visitors to Niagara Falls and Niagara-on-the-Lake; and, visitors to every member of Twenty Valley Tourism Association
 - iii. Tourist market area: being any origin more 60-minute drive from the site (e.g., Toronto/GTA, Western New York).
 - Visiting Family and Relatives (VFRs) market
 - Coach Tours
 - iv. The education community, including Niagara District School Board, Niagara Catholic District School Board, Brock University, and Niagara College

Audience/Market 2

- Niagara Region business and professional community (e.g., chambers of commerce, Venture Niagara, HR and related professional associations, union locals, retailers, BIAs, Mountain Co-op Store)
- Priority 1/ongoing — Media



Audience/Market 3

- Niagara tourism industry (including wine industry)
- Twenty Valley Tourism Association
- Niagara Region and 12 municipalities
- Environmental/Ecological Organizations/Clubs/Associations
- Partner Conservation Authorities
- Education community, including Niagara District School Board, Niagara Catholic District School Board, Brock University, and Niagara College.

KEY MESSAGES (anticipated)

1. Ball's Falls Conservation Area is a showcase of environmental stewardship and heritage.
2. The Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation is the premier destination for learning about conservation in Niagara region.
3. Ball's Falls is Niagara region's other famous but non-commercial waterfall.
4. The Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation is a state-of-the-art facility for learning, discovery and events/activities.
5. Ball's Falls, through the NPCA, is a leader in conservation in Niagara region.

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS | PROGRAMS & TACTICS

BRANDING

Name | Corporate Identity & Brand

- Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation

Definition

- Ball's Falls Conservation Area is a natural showcase of environmental stewardship and heritage on the Niagara Escarpment, past and present.
- Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation is the premiere destination in the Niagara region to learn about all aspects of conservation.



Market Positioning

- Critical to not over-sell, yet deliver a compelling message.
- Brand character is a pristine, quiet place, a waterfall that is beautiful yet 180 degrees different from Niagara Falls
- Compared to Niagara Falls, Ball's Falls is a more environmental, non-commercial experience, an experience with more genuine natural heritage, and an experience that allows for genuine personal discovery. Ball's Falls is quieter, gentler, and slower paced.
- Ball's Falls is much, much less touristy and has two falls to discover

NPCA may want to secure the URL www.niagaraundiscovered.com should it want to adopt this tagline for the entire conservation area's programs and activities

Corporate Identity & Branding Program

- Adopt the positioning statement of "Niagara's Other Falls" as a subtle but permanent theme for all of Ball's Falls communications, events, etc.
- Recommended marketing tagline for Ball's Falls programs and activities: ***discover the undiscovered.***
- Change name of entry road (6th Avenue) to Ball's Fall's Boulevard

NOTE: See corporate identity samples in Visual Identity Guide.

Logo | Positioning Statement

**Ball's
Falls**

CONSERVATION AREA

Niagara's Other Falls



Wordmark Rationale – Building a powerful perception of a quality experience

For the corporate identity of the Ball's Falls Conservation Area, the final design was derived from its physical characteristics. The two waterfalls of Ball's Falls are reflected in the wordmark by linking the two letter "I's", cascading from one word to the other. The result is a fluid design that tells the story of the upper and lower falls at a glance. This creates a sophisticated design with wit. It intrigues the viewer who has not experienced Ball's Falls to investigate further. To the visitor who has experienced Ball's Falls it is a symbol that something has changed.

Most people have heard of Niagara Falls, but they may be totally unaware of other waterfalls in the Niagara Region. The tagline "Niagara's Other Falls" is used to draw the viewer in and entices them to explore a Niagara *falls* they may never have heard about. It also functions as a point of pride for local residents who are aware of the unique natural beauty of Ball's Falls.

Blue was chosen for the design because it is the colour of both water and leadership (think blue ribbon awards etc.). Positioning it as strong and confident. The letterforms chosen are sans serif and lend a contemporary look to the wordmark. A gradation has been added to the cascading "I's" to visually communicate the dimensional aspect of the falls.

The colour palette has been intentionally restricted to a dark shade to have maximum impact against a white background. The secondary colour for use on signage was chosen because of its strong contrast. It is used to strongly articulate information for the visitor.

Marketing Tagline

Discover the Undiscovered

The marketing tagline "*Discover the Undiscovered*" is recommended to accompany all Ball's Falls marketing communications and programs. The playful phrase is used to encourage and entice Niagara residents to visit both Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation. The tagline suggests to residents and other potential visitors that there may be many things unknown to them at the Ball's Fall site, and it also plays into the NPCA's "Discover, Connect, Understand" branding, as well as the province of Ontario's "Yours to discover" marketing tagline.



Signage

Landmark maps at Ball's Falls, Jordan Village, Prudhommes Landing to show and identify area amenities, etc. and to establish a presence. Hamilton Harbour Bay Area Access Maps and the Waterfront Trail system are excellent examples of well-designed, informative signage.

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MATERIALS

Priority Items *

▪ Corporate "Media" Kit *

Develop a range of print materials (and e-formats) that provide overview of Ball's Falls Conservation Area attractions – heritage, archeological, environmental and natural/ecological. Kits can be customized for each target stakeholder group, e.g., education community, media, corporate sector for events, activities and sponsorship, etc.

Launch a corporate/organizational initiative to raise awareness of Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation rental opportunities — media kit to include letter, overview of Centre facilities (rooms, capacity, etc.), article from professional journal, Ball's Falls/NPCA information)

RFP the catering for Centre for Conservation and select three finalists from which users may choose (need to establish specific criteria)

▪ Utility Bill Inserts *

Develop small flyers to be inserted in bimonthly utility bills of all 12 municipalities of Niagara region. Inserts to include key messages about energy and water conservation, the NPCA or Ball's Falls micro website URLs, and tagline: discover the undiscovered.

▪ Generic Lure Brochure *

Lure brochure on Ball's Falls Conservation Area with all the activities, etc. (as well as a possible separate brochure for the Centre for Conservation) —suitable for placement in tourism racks and mailings.



- **Postcard Series ***

Develop a 6 to 10 postcard series (i.e., print and electronic) for various audiences to raise awareness of Ball's Falls Conservation Area in general, and to promote specific activities, events, seasonal attractions, programs, etc.



- **Website | Micro-site ***

Develop a Ball's Falls Conservation Area micro-website (within NPCA site) and position the website as an information-rich, interactive community resource. The NPCA website, particularly as it relates to Ball's Falls Conservation Area, is under-utilized as a communication resource. On the Internet, there is a very limited amount of information available about Ball's Falls, and they are from a limited number of private, unendorsed sources (e.g., academics, local businesses, recreational organizations, students). Consequently, outside organizations and/or persons are "defining" Ball's Falls and the Ball's Falls experience – instead of the NPCA and Ball's Fall staff. They also define the "online" perception of Ball's Falls as a potential destination. NPCA must take advantage of the opportunity of become the authoritative and all-encompassing online information source about Ball's Falls Conservation Area (e.g., secure www.ballsfalls.ca and www.ballsfalls.com).

Information about Ball's Falls Conservation Area (and Twenty Valley) on the Internet is fragmented and widely dispersed. Although a Google search on the World Wide Web using the words "Ball's Falls" or "Twenty Valley" resulted in a long list of web addresses, the NPCA's search result was 10th. None of these websites had hyperlinks to the NPCA website.



The website should be one of the primary resources and destinations for information on conservation and related issues. Links to related organizations and site should be included as secondary pop-up windows. News and announcements should be uploaded frequently.

Develop a 10 to 20-question online knowledge survey that visitors can complete to evaluate their awareness/understanding levels of conservation. Once completed, participants get a score and also a one-day free pass to visit Ball's Falls and the Centre for Conservation. Demographic information collected would include gender, age group and their municipality in which they live. The free pass would be sent to their email address where they can print out. Each pass would be numbered to prevent duplication.

Launch an NPCA and/or Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation YouTube channel. In addition, social media should be incorporated into the overall marketing of Ball's Falls and the Centre for Conservation (i.e., Facebook).

- **Media Support Program ***

Explore opportunity to have major daily newspaper(s) of Niagara region produce a special series on Ball's Falls Conservation Area/Twenty Valley similar to The Hamilton Spectator's series on the restoration of Hamilton Harbour (Bringing Back the Bay, November 2002).



- **Branding Program ***

Implement Ball's Falls branding to begin awareness campaign (e.g., *Niagara's Other Falls and Discover the undiscovered*)



- **Merchandising ***

Establish new revenue streams through the sale of key items/clothing:

Suggested items for initial development: t-shirts, sweatshirts, socks, hats, touques and/or baseball caps; refillable beverage containers (no throw-away *plastic* containers, rather recyclable glass containers if any). High-quality, nature-related items, as well as books, CDs/DVDs, music, postcards, posters, garden ornaments and nature-related crafts, art, clothing, small accessories, and rocks and minerals (try to select ecologically-made products, i.e., hemp clothing).



- **Interpretative Materials**

Ball's Falls Conservation Area nature guides (e.g., one-page, self-guides) for visitors (i.e., water, birds, trees and plants, animals/wildlife, fish and water life), example: The Kortright Centre.



Ball's Falls Conservation Area/Twenty Valley Trail and Outdoors Guidebooks – Small guidebooks can be developed and produced with financial support from corporate and organizational sponsorships.

Maps – General Ball's Falls Conservation Area

maps (both hard copy and online interactive maps that can be downloaded) for key outdoor signage, in addition to a variety of maps for educational activities, online visitor/tourism development, etc. Examples of various maps developed for education, public awareness and tourism for Hamilton Harbour by HCA and BARC.



- **Organizational Planning/Doctrine ***

Hold a strategic planning session to develop key organizational doctrine (i.e., vision, mission and values statement) for Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority and Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation

- Session to include NPCA and Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation senior management and NPCA board executive committee
- Session to be led by experienced outside facilitator
- Final outcome to help frame all initiatives and programs of the NPCA.

STAKEHOLDER PROGRAMS

Priority Items *

RE-FOCUS STRATEGIC ALLIANCE WITH TWENTY VALLEY *

Maintain and enhance partnerships and establish new ones (e.g., TVTA, Niagara Region Water Alliance)

- NPCA must ensure a strong relationship with the Twenty Valley Tourism Association evolves at all levels within its organization. The NPCA must be prepared to demonstrate leadership and go "above and beyond" what it may consider a reasonable investment of time, energy, and money to create a relationship with the organization and its major players that can create opportunities.

ESTABLISH STRATEGIC ALLIANCES WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS *

- The NPCA operates its most successful event, the Thanksgiving Festival, without media or corporate sponsors. Local/regional organizations can provide valuable cash and gifts-in-kind. The following national and international organizations may offer unique program and/or partnership opportunities.
 - *Nature Conservancy Canada* — organization that works to secure or improve conservation areas, and a good resource for various foundation initiatives (the NPCA could take a page from their gift giving structure)
 - *Sierra Club* — various water programs: awareness; conservation/energy programs; protection of wildlife; and there may be opportunities for high profile guest speakers
 - *David Suzuki Foundation* — science based education; climate protection, protecting nature, conservation practices, reconnecting with nature, building community



- *Mountain Equipment Co-op (MEC)* — opportunity to list events (outdoor nature themed activities) for free; link to discovery centre website if permitted.
- *Ontario Water Conservation Alliance* — coalition of citizens, non-governmental organizations and business working on a comprehensive water conservation and efficiency strategy; advocates for a water conservation and opportunities Act for Ontario; Conservation Ontario is already a member as well as many other high profile organizations (www.conserveourwater.ca); there may be many opportunities to work cooperatively with this organization and use the Centre for Conservation as a showcase for various initiatives
- *Toronto.hiking.ca; Canadian Geographic Society; Audubon Society; National Geographic Society*
- *Note:* While the Audubon and National Geographic Society are U.S.-based, it may be worthwhile to investigate possible opportunities, e.g., displays, speakers, educational materials, etc.

Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation Corporate Program *

A corporate event program could be developed to entice local and regional organizations (private, public and not-for-profit) to utilize the Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Centre for Conservation facilities for short retreats (i.e., one-day or less), off-site meetings, visitors tours, events, etc. Open houses could be held to engage members of the business community to come out and see what the Centre for Conservation offers.

Volunteer Program *

Develop a new volunteer program, e.g., Friends of Ball's Falls Conservation Area, perhaps also with a donations mandate.

Although Ball's Falls has an active volunteer base, many volunteers are worn out from intensive events and efforts at peak periods such as Christmas. Younger volunteers and cross-training of volunteers is needed, particularly to cover illness. Ball's Falls relies on its volunteer complement heavily. Volunteers need to be trained to deal with safety issues, dialogue with parents, and be familiar with current policies to deal with various "situations" on site. The limited staff compliment for Ball's Falls continually puts pressure on the planning of events or educational programming. No volunteer coordinator or education coordinator exists at Ball's Falls but do at other Authorities' facilities (perhaps do a comparative review/analysis of other Conservation Areas and best practices).



Educational Programs *

Educational programs and facilities could be closely (and formally) linked to Brock University, Niagara College, as well as secondary and community education programming. Programs must be tailored to suit the education system curriculum and to suit the teachers' needs that this would increase participation and attendance levels.

- Education Community brochure/information kit (e.g., to support curriculum, outdoor education, trips, events, etc.)
- Trails Program – A seasonal trail program used some years ago could be reinstated to establish a trail program for schools, one for each season (summer, fall, autumn, winter), as well as a teacher handbook and student guides. Potential for seniors' tours (tapping a Niagara market) and creating corporate getaways geared to recreational and educational facilities were highlighted. An idea for an elder hostel program with educational programs (training) was also discussed. *Opportunity to engage post-secondary institutions (students and professors) as program partners.*
- NPCA Student Scholarship/Research Grants for studies focused on some aspect of Ball's Falls Conservation Area/Twenty Valley issue/asset (e.g., natural, environmental or earth sciences, watershed management, tourism, etc.) Co-operative or major project component required for both the scholarship criteria and the student's post-secondary program. Brock and McMaster universities and Niagara College to be target partners. Solicit corporate or organizational sponsorship of scholarships/program.
- Explore opportunity to expand Centre for Conservation — establish outdoor education classes at Ball's Falls through partnership with boards of education/Region of Niagara.
- Expand secondary school student involvement through co-op programs, volunteer graduation requirements; expanded day camp.
- “Discover the undiscovered” elementary school orientation program. Coordinate amongst all Niagara region elementary schools (i.e., grades 6 to 8, and possibly a similar high school program). Students must seek out and discover various ecological items (i.e., trees, plants, wildlife, water-related topics, geological and geographical landmarks, etc.), as well as heritage and archeological landmarks (i.e., Ball homestead, etc.), take photos of their discoveries, research them, and develop a report and/or presentation for class.



Partnership Program *

Establish new partnerships with Jordan/Niagara region community organizations, including business and wineries, environmental and ecological organizations, service clubs, recreational organizations, arts and professional organizations. Sponsor or co-sponsor a special forum or speaker series on tourism development for the TVTA and Jordan business community. Could be held in spring or early autumn at Ball's Falls Conservation Area barn, catered by area establishments.

Establish a partnership with local organizations that are associated with people with disabilities. The development and construction of wheelchair accessible trails will not only be newsworthy and a valuable asset to the community, it will also create significant new revenue opportunities.

Resource Development (Fundraising) Program *

To enhance revenue opportunities, develop a Resource Development Program, including donation and sponsorship initiatives, and fundraising. Partner with the NPC Foundation if/where appropriate, and other service clubs. Special attention should be paid to opportunities with the Ontario Trillium Foundation – a potential source of funding. Target other foundations and institutions for grants/donations for capital projects, short-term staffing, marketing communications programs, etc. Launch a “high-end” speaker series (e.g., 4 to 8 events throughout year) to be held at the Centre for Conservation to raise funds, awareness, etc. Each speaker event could include a full tour of the Centre prior to speaker.

Joint Venture Marketing Program

Establish a joint programs committee or establish a process to have regular meetings between marketing and communications staff from key stakeholders/partners (e.g., NPCA, Twenty Valley Tourism Association, Niagara Escarpment Commission, Tourism Niagara, Hamilton Conservation Authority, Conservation Halton, Royal Botanical Gardens), to identify common issues/challenges and to determine opportunities for shared or co-operative communications programs, special events, media relations, key message development, political lobbying.

Dry River Program

Establish a summer-long dry river program focusing on up-close visits to the Ball's Falls rock strata and watershed management programs that reflect the changes to the water table since the time of the Ball family's establishment of the mill. The program could be called “A Waterfall for All Seasons.”



Event Management Program

Develop event sponsorship program (media and corporate programs):

- *"Art in the Park"* — Establish program to feature local, Niagara-area artists weekly or bi-weekly in a gallery fashion to enhance ambience, experience of Centre, therefore, extending event life year-round.
- *"Music and Mother Nature"* — Have summer series of classical music concerts or theatre on certain days of the week in July/August (with members of orchestral or small theatre groups from Niagara region, including Shaw and students).
- Twenty Valley Winterfest Ice Wine Festival – In conjunction with *Twenty Valley Tourism Association* (and Twenty Valley wineries), develop an outdoor ice wine festival parallel to Niagara region's larger festival, but focus on Twenty Valley-area wineries this could eventually be held in Centre for Conservation, at Prudhommes Landing or somewhere in Jordan (if a location/facility exists).
- Sponsor an annual "Water" and/or "Watershed Management" conference, speaker series, etc. in conjunction with partner stakeholders in both private and public sectors. Possible partnership opportunity with the Ontario Water Conservation Alliance.
- A wine and/or a waterfall tour with a shuttle to the lake, partnered with *Hamilton Region Conservation Authority*

Sporting and Outdoors Activities

- *"Ball's Falls Annual Trail Hike"* — Develop/launch an annual fundraising event. Event could begin/end at Ball's Falls and/or Prudhommes Landing/Jordan Harbour. Mountain Co-op Store is an example of a possible sponsor for such an event.
- Have *NPC Foundation* develop plan/events to raise funds for restoration/revamping of Ball house, barn, and other structures (e.g., conversion of Ball house into a gift shop and/or on-site café).
- Partner with *Athletics Ontario* and *Athletics Canada* to host and promote the Ontario Cross Country Championships, the Canadian Cross Country Championships, and eventually the World Cross Country Championships.



CREATE NEW SOURCES OF REVENUE

In addition to re-evaluating entrance fees, we recommend that NPCA consider aggressively exploring new sources of revenue, such as:

- Inclusion of a café/gift shop in the Ball Family home/garden area during peak periods and special events (run by same vendor(s) who win RFP for catering and/or the gift shop)
- Sale of Ball's Falls, NPCA merchandise and selected area crafts and tourist-specific products
- Sponsorship program
- Donations
- Fundraising events
- Education market fees
- Vending of water, juices, and soft drinks (but *not* in plastic containers of any kind)

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY & HUMAN RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS

In our opinion, NPCA does not currently have the organizational capacity to implement the marketing plan detailed herein. The current management staff of the organization has no more time available to implement the plan with existing priorities and workloads, despite having some expertise in this area and a deep commitment to the property. Without the addition of experienced staff to implement this plan, the stated goals and objectives are unlikely to be achieved with success.

We recommend the creation of at least one to assist in the development and implementation of marketing programs and activities. However, if budget does not allow for additional staff, external support from a marketing and communications firm with experience in conservation and the environment should be sought to help develop and implement many of the plan's recommended priority programs.



BENCHMARKS & EVALUATIONS

- Visitor tracking and surveys (select benchmark dates)
- Number of paid visitors, by market, audience, demographic category
- Admission fees revenue
- NPCA/BFCA/Twenty Valley Awareness Survey and Focus Groups (i.e., follow up telephone survey poll 12 to 18 months from 2010 survey)
- Website analysis (e.g., unique visits, visitations (repeat visits), online survey participation rates, inquiries, downloaded documents, visited pages, membership registration)
- Media coverage (e.g., volume, content, tone, audience reach)
- Tracking of general inquiries to NPCA, Tourism Niagara, etc.



4. RESEARCH SUMMARY

A. 2010 Regional Survey Poll

Awareness

A total of 77% of residents surveyed stated that they were aware of the NPCA compared to only 23% that were unaware. When asked, a similar 77% also agreed that the NPCA and conservation areas play an important role in their community, while only 10% did not and 13% were unsure. However, a lesser 38% agreed that the NPCA has a strong public profile in their community, 44% did not and 18% did not know.

Slightly more than a quarter or 26% of residents interviewed said that they were aware of a NPCA sponsored activity or event in their community. Only 11% also said that they have visited the NPCA website.

A total of 19% or one in five residents claimed that they were aware of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation and its work to support NPCA programs through fundraising, compared to 81% that were not aware of the Foundation.

More than a third or 35% of respondents claimed that they were aware of the new Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation. Those aware (35%) were then asked if they knew of the green eco-friendly technology that went into the Centre of which 53% were and 47% were not.

Visitations

Respondents were then asked in an open-ended question format to name a conservation area in Ontario. The most cited was Ball's Falls at 13%, followed by Niagara at 9%, St Johns at 8%, Grand River Conservation Area at 6%, Algonquin Park at 4%, Christies at 4%, and Woodend, Short Hills, Dundas and Hamilton – all at 3%. A total of 28% stated that they could not name an area and a further 3% did not know.

Residents surveyed were asked if they have visited each of the individual NPCA conservation areas in the past year, and then whether they planned to visit the areas over the next six months.

The most visited area was Ball's Falls and it will continue to be so over the course of the next six months. Next most visited and most likely to be so in the next half-year were: Chippawa Creek, followed by Long Beach, Woodend and St. Johns.



A total of 25% of respondents that they, or a family member, have visited the Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation in the past year. Respondents were then asked if they participated in various activities at the Centre. The most participated in activity was hiking and outdoor activities by 75%, followed by the Annual Thanksgiving Weekend Festival (56%), private events (21%) and programs (19%). When asked if they or a family member plan to visit Ball's Falls and or the Centre for Conservation in 2010, 53% said yes, 35% no, while 12% did not know.

All respondents were read a series of workshops and questioned whether they should be offered by the NPCA. There was strong interest shown for all of the workshops surveyed, with the strongest support given for the hiking trails, fish, wildlife and birds of Niagara.

B. Organizational & Communications Review

Weaknesses

Organizational Doctrine/Mandate

- An organization's marketing and public relations efforts (i.e., goals, objectives, strategies) must support and flow down from organizational goals and objectives — they usually begin with organization's business or strategic plan — NPCA does not have a business or strategic plan so consequently, marketing and communications goals/objectives for Ball's Falls Conservation Area are being developed in a vacuum.
- After reviewing websites of other southern Ontario conservation authorities, it seems NPCA provides much less "corporate information" to visitors — NPCA appears to have no stated vision, mission statement, values, or other organizational doctrine elements that delineates the organization's focus, direction, and mandate.
- Overall, there are no established strategic benchmarks to evaluate achievement/success of any Ball's Falls Conservation Area initiatives and programs. As a result, a region-wide telephone survey poll was recommended to be conducted to determine awareness levels of NPCA in general, Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Centre for Conservation, and to establish a benchmark/baseline for future evaluation.

Media & Public Awareness

- Very little media coverage (i.e., editorial) of NPCA and/or Ball's Falls Conservation Area exists from the past few years. The consultants were only provided with media releases but no tracking of actual coverage (e.g., no clipping service or collection of media articles is in place) — so traditional media analysis was not an option.



- A major effort to engage Niagara media is necessary to begin to raise awareness of Ball's Falls Conservation Area attractions, activities, programs, as well as the Centre for Conservation.
- Several marketing plans have been developed over the past few years, however, none have been fully implemented, nor has any formal evaluation measures/tracking been conducted. A more recent marketing and communications plan that was developed for NPCA by Mitchell Westlake provides lots of discussion items but is very generic in content and details (i.e., not strategic or specific in terms of how to implement) —there is also no research or analysis to support this plan's recommendations.

Among the recommendations, the use of billboards/outdoor advertising seems inappropriate/ineffective considering the small budget available for marketing, and the critical need to raise awareness and establish benchmarks. This plan does not contain measurable goals/objectives. The budget appears out of sync with NPCA's budget realities. It offers no rationale or analysis for identified target markets, nor does it address tourist or niche markets beyond Niagara region — other areas missing in the plan include, visitor experience, website effectiveness, use of Internet, and partnership development.

Tracking/Measurement Achievement of Goals

- In terms of evaluating traffic to the Centre for Conservation, some information is collected on visitors, users, events, etc., however, the information is not categorized or centralized in any database for ongoing analysis — there is a need to develop templates for tracking demographics, paid visitors, corporate events/retreats, revenues, etc.

Twenty Valley Tourism Association (TVTA)

- Twenty Valley Tourism Association receives \$10,000 from NPCA to support its marketing efforts yet no TVTA marketing or communications plan exists, nor is the value for the money tracked/reported. There does not appear to be any measurable value for the \$10,000. NPCA should discontinue this annual contribution or reduce it substantially and redirect the funds into marketing and communications for Ball's Falls and other NPCA marketing programs.
- The last four issues of TVTA newsletter were reviewed — and concluded that nothing of value or substance was published to support Ball's Falls Conservation Area, Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation or the NPCA in general.



- Twenty Valley newsletters carry little or no content of any value in support of Ball's Falls or NPCA, but rather promote the wineries, Jordan Village merchants and private sector members more so — the only significant reference to Ball's Falls was the Fall newsletter with a small story about the annual Thanksgiving Festival.
- News releases do not give Ball's Falls any focus or positioning, and consequently there has been little or no media coverage in any of Niagara's newspapers, publications or broadcast media. There seems to be little engagement with the Niagara media in general.

Website

- The NPCA website is sparse in terms of content compared to other conservation areas (e.g., Hamilton, Halton, Grand Bend, Credit Valley, Essex Region). While the website design is attractive, it could use a make-over and incorporate a more interactive, micro-site. A blog could be added to engage Niagara region residents, NPCA/Ball's Falls visitors and tourists alike who visit NPCA destinations.
- Metrics should be established to evaluate website activity (i.e., unique visitors, visitations, key pages, downloads, etc.). Ball's Falls Conservation Area should also have its own micro site domain within NPCA site (e.g., www.ballsfalls.ca and/or www.ballsfalls.com)

Branding

- “Discover, Connect, Understand” tagline for NPCA may be too generic and inappropriate for Ball's Falls — there is no “call to action” to bring people to Centre for Conservation or the NPCA website for more information on programs and activities. There are three separate actions in the tagline as opposed to a single call to action.

Opportunities

Benchmarking

- Establish benchmarks for a range of issues (i.e., awareness/understanding of NPCA, destinations (Ball's Falls) through telephone poll and/or survey with Niagara Region employees (representing microcosm of Niagara Region)
- Collaborate with Niagara Region (i.e., Smart Gardening program, eco-green programs/policies, Niagara Parks Commission, etc. to “spread costs” of regular/annual polling/survey over larger stakeholder group with similar interests/need for public perception on environment-related issues



- The Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation can be positioned as the best centre for information regarding all aspects of conservation, environmental heritage (i.e., develop a self-assessment tool for website visitors that enables them to evaluate their awareness, understanding, etc. of the environment, green living, etc.
- Tracking book (with templates) — provide visitors with a “visitor card” that enables them to complete an online survey and receive a “temporary pass” for their next visit to Ball's Falls (i.e., a thank you for completing survey).

Public Relations | Media Relations

- Diverse and more consistent public relations, including a major focus on media relations with Niagara region's three daily newspapers, Niagara This Week, and VIEW Magazine (formerly PULSE), as well as TVCOGECO and CHCH TV.
- Strengthen relationship with Niagara media representative, e.g., Matthew Van Dongeon at St. Catharines Standard (the Environment and Region beat reporter as well as Osprey Media Environmental Green Team)
- Establish a “Friends of Ball's Falls” program on Facebook, other appropriate social media
- Greater awareness through more and better positioning of signage throughout the region and within the Ball's Falls Conservation Area.
- Encourage use of Centre for Conservation for Niagara “public announcements” relating to green initiatives, the environment, etc. by all levels of government, not-for-profit organizations, private sector, etc.

Revenue-Event Generation

- Review of admission fees — Visitors coming for outdoor activities such as hiking and trails should receive a reduced rate or a special card that enables them to visit frequently without regular fees.
- Increase awareness of Centre for Conservation facility for corporate and organizational meetings, events, parties, etc. through organizational planning “kits.”
- Increase business and corporate meetings, retreats, workshops, Christmas parties, etc. (i.e., a push marketing campaign to include letters, media kit, etc. via chambers of commerce, professional associations, union locals, community organizations and clubs, boards of education, libraries, municipalities, Niagara College and Brock University, not-for-profit organizations, LIHN/healthcare, etc.) — conduct a major targeted



mail/marketing program, including a follow-up telephone campaign to ensure kits were received, etc.

- Generating revenue through the gift store: coffee/beverages, guides, nature-related books, selected clothing, etc. — perhaps outsource/RFP gift shop to outdoors/nature retailer and receive a percentage of sales/revenue as staffing/purchasing items is better done by those with experience/in the business.
- RFP for caterers to generate revenue and have consistent quality — could perhaps have a group of caterers to choose from (e.g., three different establishments/business). Criteria for selecting final caterers should reflect not only the ability to provide a variety of food and beverage offerings, but also reflect the “green and environmental-friendly” values of NPCA and Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation. The contracts could be for a three-year period and then be tendered for the next three-year period.
- Develop a tiered rental pricing strategy for various types of events, organizations; corporate, public sector, not-for-profit, individuals — e.g., special discounted programs for not-for-profits, students, public sector, nature-environmental groups
- Develop or partner with organizations to create annual community-wide fundraising event.

Partnerships

- Enhance existing and build new partnerships: Twenty Valley, NEC, Bruce Trail, Niagara Parks Commission, Niagara Region and its 12 municipalities, boards of education, Brock University and Niagara College, sports and outdoors organizations, nature-related associations, etc.
- Promote Ball's Falls Centre for Conservation as “the” centre in Niagara region for “green” initiatives, community workshops, public and/or government announcements, activities, conferences, special events, etc.
- Increase educational programming: new educational program kits (e.g., Brock, Niagara, boards of education); partner with curriculum developers and the boards of education
- Establish a volunteer program to develop and recruit volunteers.

Communications

- More standardized print communication materials (e.g., posters, brochures, flyer design); critical to develop standard templates for all print and electronic marketing



communications materials to ensure consistency, professionalism and audience identification.

- Develop a “speakers series” event (e.g., variety of topics such as: climate change, Smart Gardening practices, recycling, water conservation, etc.). Seek community/corporate partnership and media sponsorship.
- Revamp website information content; launch a micro site for Ball's Falls
- Ball's Falls Conservation Area adopt the original branding positioning proposed in 2004 — *Niagara's Other Falls*.
- Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Centre for Conservation incorporate the marketing tagline, “*Discover the undiscovered*” in all of its marketing of programs and activities.



5. APPENDICES

