



NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

FULL AUTHORITY

WELLAND

AGENDA

FEBRUARY 16, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES

(a) ANNUAL MEETING – January 21, 2011

Attached are the Minutes of the Annual Meeting held January 21, 2011.

(b) FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – January 21, 2011

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held January 21, 2011.

(2) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(3) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(4) CAO'S REPORT

(5) STAFF YEARS OF SERVICE PRESENTATION

Loretta Sawatzky has reached 25 years of service with the Authority and the CAO will be presenting her with a 25th Anniversary gift from the Authority.

(6) DELEGATION

Mr. Kerri Pickering has requested to address the NPCA Board regarding climate change and the NPCA's involvement in information, advice and leadership.

(7) PRESENTATION

Mr. Mark Neufeld, Chairman of the Source Protection Committee, will be making a presentation on the Source Protection Plan, update and status report and the NPCA's role in Source Water Protection Planning.

(8) 2010 OPERATING & CAPITAL BUDGETS – UNAUDITED YEAR END – REPORT NO. 07-11

Attached is Report No. 07-11 regarding the 2010 year end budget. Prior to the presentation of this budget, the CAO will be providing a power point presentation on the budget process.

(9) **APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS FOR 2011 – REPORT NO. 08-11**

Attached is Report No. 08-11 with respect to this matter.

(10) **FINAL REPORT- LAKE ERIE NORTH SHORE WATERSHED PLAN– REPORT NO. 09-11**

Attached is Report No. 09-11 together with the Executive Summary for this Plan.

(11) **FINAL REPORT – CENTRAL WELLAND RIVER WATERSHED PLAN – REPORT NO. 10-11**

Attached is Report No. 10-11 together with the Executive Summary for this Plan.

(12) **PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 11-11**

Attached is Report No. 11-11 outlining the status of Authority Projects/Programs to date.

(13) **OTHER BUSINESS**

(14) **IN-CAMERA**

- (a) Land Sale – Niagara Region – Report No. CR-01-11
- (b) Land Purchase – Wetland in Fort Erie – Report No. CR-02-11
- (c) Complaint and Violation Status Report - Report No. CR-03-11
- (b) Tree By-Law Status Report – Report No. CR-04-11

ADJOURNMENT



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 10, 2011

SUBJECT: 2010 Operating & Capital Budgets – Unaudited Year End - Report No. 07-11

The attached Operating and Capital Budget Summary identifies the unaudited 2010 Year End position for program revenues and expenditures. The summary also illustrates the previously anticipated year end position and 2011 preliminary budget for comparison purposes.

It should be noted that all numbers are approximate and will be finalized at the time when the final audit report is presented to the Board at a subsequent meeting.

Operating Budget

For the 2010 Operating Budget, the Year End program expenditures are generally consistent with those previously noted to the Board. Overall, program expenditures are under the approved budget by approximately \$210,000 with the following significant variances.

Corporate Services

- Miscellaneous Revenues – Anticipated earned interest lower than anticipated due to significant reduction in interest rates. Additional net revenue from a PST rebate (\$86,286) not accounted for. Increases expenses for PST revenue consultant offset by increase miscellaneous revenues.
- Conservation Foundation Revenue – Anticipated amount from the NPCF reduced by \$15,000 due to a reduction in non-specified donations.
- Office Services – Decrease in expenditures from delays in purchasing office equipment and upgrades.
- Corporate Communications – Decrease in expenditures – delays in negotiating charitable rates for services and products – project funding from water smart to be carried forward to 2011.

Resources Inventory and Environmental Monitoring

- Water Quality Monitoring – Increase in cost due to additional work paid for by MOE.

Flood Protection Services

- Higher than anticipated revenues for permit fees. Revenues exceeded budget by \$21,090, however, legal and other expenses increased expenditures \$31,428 over budget.

Environmental Advisory Services

- Higher than anticipate administrative fees received. Revenues exceeded budget by \$27,537. Expenditures \$8,932 above budget.

Environmental Advisory Services

- Lower than anticipated administrative fees received. Allocation of General Levy from savings in other areas required to offset. – Work reduced to reflect the actual revenue received from DFO.

Conservation Land Management

- Less than anticipated expenditure for the Tree Conservation By-Law has resulted in unused Niagara Region special levies of \$57,997. It is recommended that this special levy amount be carried forward into 2011 to finance potential increases in the program costs, including legal fees from violations.

Conservation Land Program

- Lower than anticipated revenues in all parks with the exception of Binbrook.
- Staff implemented mid season changes in Conservation Area operations to assist in offsetting lower revenues as a result of the above. Anticipated revenues for the Thanksgiving Festival as well as the other revenue generating Conservation Areas (exception - Binbrook) are well below budgeted levels. For Niagara Conservation Areas, the anticipation net operating cost will exceed the special levy allocation and user revenues by approximately \$85,232 and accordingly balancing the year end position will require that same amount to be funded through the Niagara Conservation Areas operating reserve or unexpended levy. The 2009 year end balance in that reserve is \$247,812. For the Binbrook Conservation Area, revenues were higher than anticipated and as such it is recommended that approximately \$46,733 be added to the Hamilton Conservation Areas operating reserve (2009 year end balance is \$155,671). The Haldimand Conservation Area expenses were approximately equal to the levy allocation. (2009 year end balance \$11,088).

A summary of unexpended amounts is illustrated below:

General Levy: \$151,573

Recommendation:

- a) Allocate \$100,000 to offset operating loss at Niagara Conservation Areas (\$85,232) with remaining amount to Conservation Areas operating reserves (2009 balance is \$247,812).
- b) Allocated remaining \$51,573 to Regulations and Planning Services Contingency (2009 balance is \$173,202) to offset unanticipated legal and regulation related expenses.

Special Levy – Niagara \$57,998

Recommendation:

- a) Allocate \$57,998 to future year Tree By-law budget to offset unanticipated legal and by-law enforcement related expenses.

Special Levy – Hamilton \$46,733

Recommendation:

- a) Allocate \$46,733 to Hamilton Conservation Area operating reserve (2009 balance is \$155,671)

Net Proceeds from PST Rebate - \$86,286

Recommendation

- a) As the PST rebate was achieved for the most part from the construction of the Centre for Conservation at Ball's Falls within the Twenty Valley System, it is recommended that the rebate be used for further capital works within that same system. In particular, I am recommending that the funds be applied and leveraged for additional funding for approved capital works at the Jordan Harbour Conservation Area.

Capital Budget

For the 2010 Capital Budget, the Year End program expenditures are also generally consistent with those previously noted to the Board with exceptions as noted on the attached Water and Land Management Capital Budget Summary Sheets. Overall, program expenditures are under the approved budget by approximately \$2.25 million.

The proposed carry forward to 2011 amounts as detailed in the Water and Land Management Capital Budget Summary Sheets are recommended.

Attached is a Summary of Unspent Capital Budget with recommended allocations to 2011 as recommended above and to various reserve accounts.

Subject to the approval of the Board, the 2010 Financial Statements and 2011 Budget (final approval pending) will reflect the recommended appropriations.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 07-11 regarding the 2010 Operating and Capital Budgets – Unaudited Year End be received; and

That the recommended appropriations be approved for inclusion in the audited financial statements.

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

TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 9, 2011

SUBJECT: Appointment of Auditors for 2011- Report No. 08-11

This report is a follow-up of a report presented to the Board at their January 21, 2011 meeting.

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. Report 35-07 (attached for reference) represents the most recent process with respect to the tendering of audit services. At that time, the Authority initially participated in a tender call for audit services by the Niagara Region, however based on the costs of the proposals received for the Conservation Authority portion, the Authority at that time chose to remove itself from the Niagara Region tender call and continue with MacGillivray Partners.

A summary of the MacGillivray Partners audit fees by year (since 2005) is provided below for comparison purposes.

DATE	Audit Cost
2005	\$13,800
2006	\$14,000
2007	\$14,900
2008	\$15,200
2009	\$15,500
2010	\$19,500

Anticipated fees for 2010 have increased significantly in 2010 due to the additional work required to set up and report on Capital Assets as required under PSAB.

MacGillivray Partners' full knowledge and experience with the NPCA operations and accounting system allows them to undertake their work very efficiently and below the limit for sole sourcing under the NPCA's current consultant selection policy (\$25,000). Accordingly, it is recommended that the firm of MacGillivray Partners be retained as the Conservation Authority's auditors for 2011.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the firm of MacGillivray Partners be appointed as the Conservation Authority Auditors for 2011.

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



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 15, 2011

RE: **Final Report – Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan – Report No. 09-11**

The Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan Terms of Reference (Report No. 24-07) was reviewed and approved by the Board in March 2007. Attached is the Executive Summary of the final Watershed Plan which provides an overview of the study and its recommended project implementation schedule and associated costs.

Recommended project costs have been identified in the attached tables. These costs include projects that are currently funded through the Authority's Watershed Restoration program as well as projects that may be funded through partnerships with other agencies and/or organizations. It is proposed that these initiatives be addressed over a 10 year time frame with continued funding provided in the Authority's Watershed Restoration program.

It is also recommended that the Authority staff provide technical support to the municipality and community watershed groups to promote and assist in the implementation of measures identified in their specific areas of responsibility.

With approval by this Board, a presentation of the final plan with its various recommendations will be made to the City of Niagara Falls Council, City of Welland Council, City of Port Colborne Council and the Town of Fort Erie Council. Copies of the Watershed Plan will be provided to the steering committee members and will also be made available to the public through the Authority's website, CDs and hard copy. Authority staff would also like to express thanks to the many organizations and members of the public who played a valuable role in guiding the preparation of the watershed plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 09–11 regarding the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan be received and;

That the recommended Conservation Authority restoration works be approved for implementation over a multi-year time frame subject to annual budget approvals; and

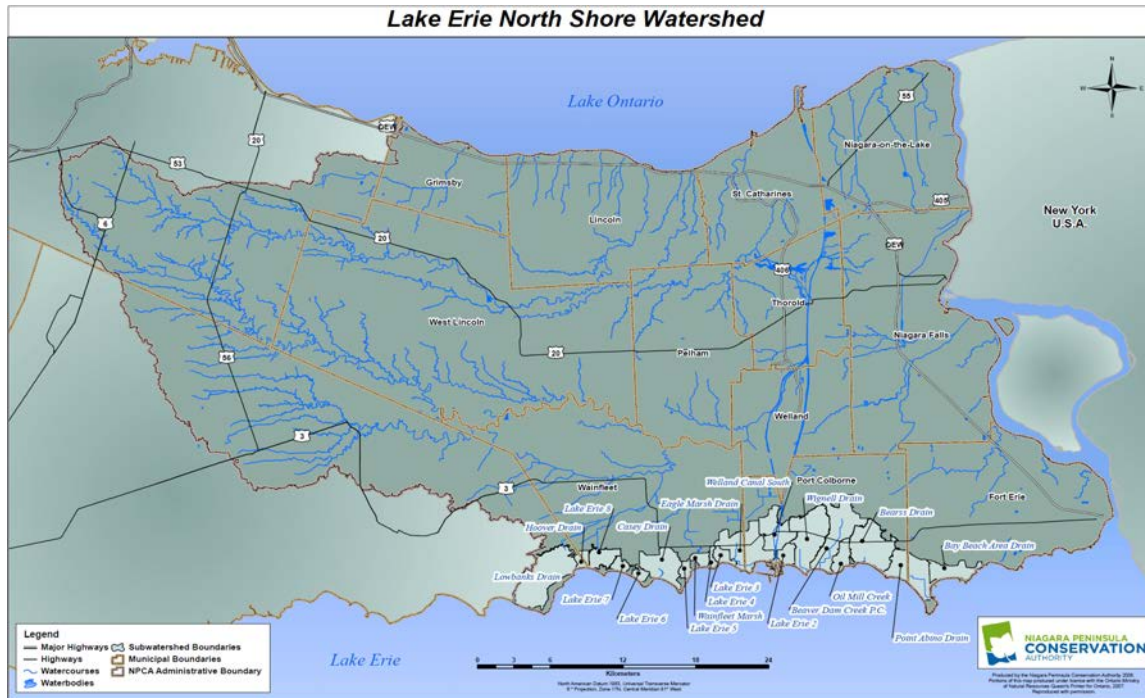
That the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan and its recommendations be submitted to the Town of Fort Erie, City of Port Colborne, Township of Wainfleet and Haldimand County for their consideration in future municipal works budgets.

Prepared by: Tara Metzger, Watershed Planning Specialist

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

Executive Summary

The Lake Erie North Shore study area is a unique and diverse watershed. The study area contains nearly 70 kilometres of Lake Erie shoreline consisting of a series of bays, sandy beaches and dune complexes. The area is home to 29 federally listed Species at Risk by the *Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada*; including the threatened Fowlers toad in which Lake Erie is its only known habitat in Canada. The Onondaga Escarpment runs parallel to the shoreline and is the youngest geological feature in Niagara. The study area is also home to 5 Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest, 4 old growth forests and numerous wooded areas and wetlands.



The Lake Erie North Shore watershed falls within the City of Port Colborne, Township of Wainfleet and small portions of the Town of Fort Erie and Haldimand County. Numerous subwatersheds form the Lake Erie North Shore watershed; these include Bay Beach Area Drain, Point Abino Drain, Bearss Drain, Beaver Dam Creek (P.C.), Oil Mill Creek, Wignell Drain, Welland Canal South, Eagle Marsh Drain, Wainfleet Marsh, Casey Drain, Hoover Drain, Low Banks Drain, and Lake Erie 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Individual restoration strategies have been prepared for each of the main subwatersheds to protect the unique characteristics of each system.

Landuse in the Lake Erie North Shore watershed is characterized primarily by agriculture with a focus on poultry and egg production and grain and oilseed. One major concentration of urban land uses (residential, commercial, industrial) is within the City of Port Colborne; smaller concentrations of residential land uses are present in Crystal Beach of Fort Erie and in strips and nodes along the lakeshore for the extent of the study area. Numerous recreational opportunities are abound throughout the watershed, including 5 Conservation Areas, golf courses, hiking and biking trails, and numerous beach-related activities can be enjoyed such as swimming, fishing and boating.

Upland forest covers 20 percent of the watershed, wetlands another 16 percent and approximately 64 percent of the watercourses have some riparian habitat. Guidelines set by Environment Canada (2004) suggest minimum upland forest cover in a watershed should be 30 percent, wetlands 10 percent or to historic value, and at least 75 percent of the watercourses in the watershed should have riparian habitat with a 10 meter buffer on both sides being ideal. Therefore, measures to create new upland areas and establish riparian habitat, as well as protect existing upland and wetland areas should be implemented to ensure adequate upland, wetland and riparian habitat to sustain minimum viable wildlife populations and maintain ecosystem functions and attributes.

As mentioned, 29 *Species at Risk* as designated by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada fall within the study area boundaries. Twelve of these species are *endangered*, meaning that they are facing imminent extinction or extirpation in Canada; 10 of these species are *threatened* species, which means they are at risk of becoming endangered in Ontario; and 7 of the species are of *special concern* which simply means that they have characteristics that make them sensitive to human activities or natural events. In addition, there are 27 provincially rare flora and fauna found within the Lake Erie North Shore watershed.

The unique environmental character of the subwatersheds has resulted in an assortment of issues related to water resources, fish and aquatic habitat, natural heritage resources, urban development, and communication. The watershed issues, which were derived from extensive public input and past studies, were used to form a set of watershed objectives that guided the development of subwatershed restoration strategies and an implementation plan.

The subwatershed strategies include sites for riparian, wetland and upland habitat restoration that have been derived from detailed restoration suitability mapping in conjunction with Regional Niagara's Core Natural Heritage Mapping and Carolinian Cores 'Big Picture' mapping. In addition, project opportunities have been identified, in part through the NPCA Geomorphic Assessment, on private and public lands, such as erosion control, and shading to reduce water temperatures in the headwaters. Special studies including funding programs and urban water conservation programs have also been proposed. The implementation plan identifies responsible stakeholders for each recommended management action.

The recommended management actions and associated budget have been outlined and include riparian, wetland and upland restoration and creation to enhance water quality, fish habitat and recreation; specific policy tools including municipal and regional official plan amendments; outreach and communication for various aspects of water resources management; and research and monitoring programs to obtain additional data from which the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan can be updated and revised every 5 years.

Overall, it is estimated that an additional \$1.65 million over a 10 year period above existing Conservation Authority program funding is required to implement the recommended management actions in the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan. A general budget outlining recommended management actions and associated project costs has been provided. A detailed breakdown of each watershed plan objective, recommended action and associated funding (existing and required) as well as a time frame of implementation (e.g. long term, short term) has also been provided.

**Budget for the Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan Recommended Management
Actions: NPCA Project Budget**

Category	Recommended Management Action	\$ Cost	\$ Total (1 year)	\$ Total (10 year)
Restoration and Natural Heritage Resources	Upland Reforestation Program	(1,500/acre) (25 acres/year) x 10	37,500	375,000
	Riparian Buffer Planting	(\$5000/250m) (1500m/year) x 10)	30,000	300,000
	Wetland Creation & Enhancement	(10,000/project) x 3	3,000	30,000
Aquatic Resources				
	Continue to Monitor Water Quality to achieve PWQO	15,000 x 10	15,000	150,000
	In-stream Aquatic Improvements	5500 x 10	5,500	55,000
	Implement Recommended Actions Outlined in NPCA Geomorphic Assessment	5000 x 10	5,000	50,000
Education				
	Outreach	5000 x 10	24,000	240,000
NPCA Restoration Budget			120,000	1,200,000
Special Studies				
	Continue comprehensive biological inventory and map of natural heritage areas including wetlands	45,000 x 10 (student wage)	45,000	450,000
Total Watershed Plan Implementation Budget			165,000	1,650,000

Includes materials and NPCA salaries



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 15, 2011

RE: **Final Report – Central Welland River Watershed Plan – Report No. 10-11**

The Central Welland River Watershed Plan Terms of Reference (Report No. 23-07) was reviewed and approved by the Board in March 2007. Attached is the Executive Summary of the final Watershed Plan which provides an overview of the study and its recommended project implementation schedule and associated costs.

Recommended project costs have been identified in the attached table. These costs include projects that are currently funded through the Authority's Watershed Restoration program as well as projects that may be funded through partnerships with other agencies and/or organizations. It is proposed that these initiatives be addressed over a 10 year time frame with continued funding provided in the Authority's Watershed Restoration program.

It is also recommended that the Authority staff provide technical support to the municipality and community watershed groups to promote and assist in the implementation of measures identified in their specific areas of responsibility.

With approval by this Board, a presentation of the final plan with its various recommendations will be made to the Township of West Lincoln Council, Town of Pelham Council, and City of Welland Council. Copies of the Watershed Plan will be provided to the steering committee members and will also be made available to the public through the Authority's website. Authority staff would also like to express thanks to the many organizations and members of the public who played a valuable role in guiding the preparation of the watershed plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 10–11 regarding the Central Welland River Watershed Plan be received and;

That the recommended Conservation Authority restoration works be approved for implementation over a multi-year time frame subject to annual budget approvals; and

That the Central Welland River Watershed Plan Watershed Plan and its recommendations be submitted to the Township of West Lincoln, Town of Pelham, and City of Welland for their consideration in future municipal works budgets.

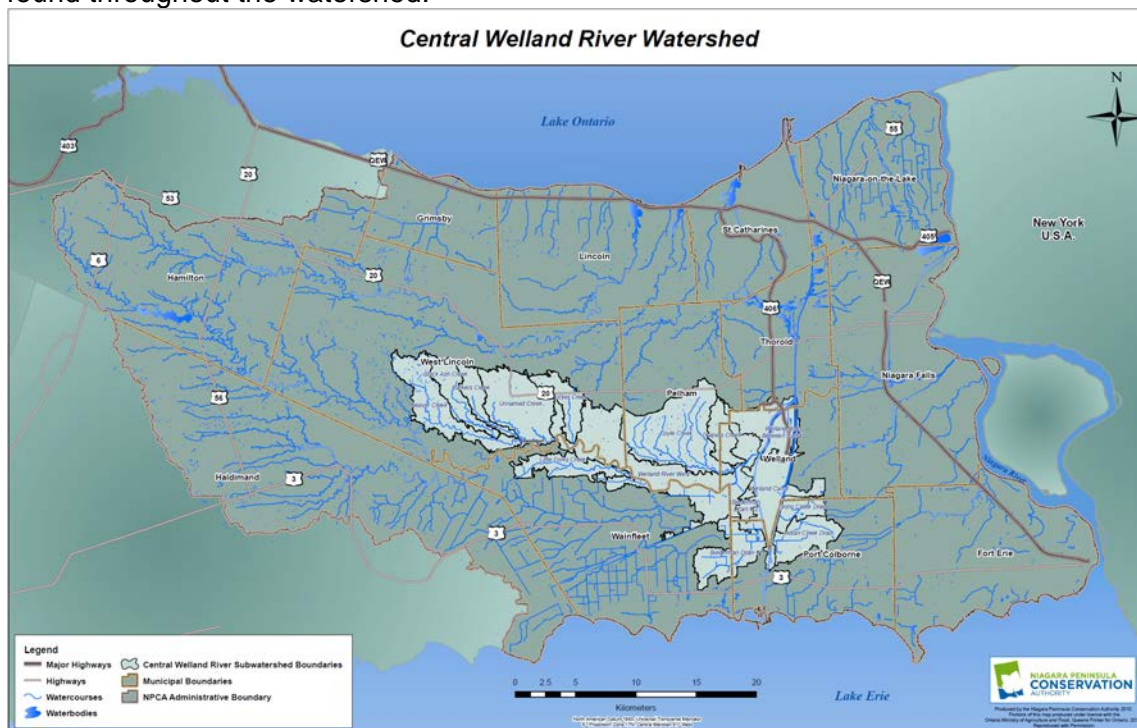
Prepared by: Tara Metzger, Watershed Planning Specialist

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

Executive Summary

The Central Welland River watershed is a unique watershed for many reasons. The rich history of the Welland Canal has influenced and shaped the cultural and economic history of the area. The patterns of land use in the region are a result of the early construction of the Welland Canal and the strategic location of settlements and industries that took advantage of the accessibility to markets flourished throughout the last century and a half.

Aside from being rich in cultural history, the Central Welland River watershed study area is also rich in ecological diversity with 3 unique and provincially significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest such as the Wainfleet Bog and the Fonthill Kame-Delta Complex, as well as an additional 5 more regionally significant ANSI's. The study area also boasts 27 listed Species at Risk by the *Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada*, including the eastern massasauga rattlesnake which is the only venomous snake in Ontario. In addition, 17 provincially rare species, numerous provincially significant wetlands and natural areas can be found throughout the watershed.



The study area extends within the boundaries of the Township of West Lincoln, Town of Pelham, City of Welland and small portions of the Township of Wainfleet and City of Port Colborne. Numerous subwatersheds form the Central Welland River watershed including Beaver Creek, Black Ash Creek, Parkers Creek, Unnamed Creek, Sucker Creek, Coyle Creek, Drapers Creek, Little Forks Creek, Lyons Creek Drain, Indian Creek Drain, Biederman Drain #1 and Biederman Drain #2, as well as Welland River Between Canals, Welland Canal and a portion of Welland Canal North (Figure 1). Individual restoration strategies have been prepared for each of the main subwatersheds to protect the unique characteristics of each system. Land use in the Central Welland River watershed is characterized mainly by agriculture with a focus on poultry and egg production, and grain and oilseed. Major concentrations of urban land uses (residential, commercial, industrial) are within the City of Port Colborne and the City of Welland with smaller residential areas in Fenwick and Fonthill of Pelham.

The Central Welland River study area offers numerous recreational opportunities throughout the watershed. There are 5 golf courses in the study area: Riverview Golf and Country Club, and Pelham Hills Golf and Country Club in the Town of Pelham; Lockness Links, The Water Park Golf and Country Club, and Sparrow Lakes Golf Course all of which are located in the City of Welland. Hiking and biking trails can be enjoyed throughout the area, including portions of the Welland Canal Trail, Regional Bicycle Network, Greater Niagara Circle Route and Scenic Bike Loops, and the Thorold-Welland Loop. In addition, there are four conservation areas in the Central Welland River watershed that offer passive recreational opportunities; Port Robinson Conservation Area, E.C Brown Conservation Area, Wainfleet Bog Conservation Area and Mud Lake Conservation Area. The latter two offer seasonal hunting with proper licensing and permits.

Upland forest covers 15 percent of the watershed, wetlands another 10 percent and approximately 43 percent of the watercourses have some riparian habitat. Guidelines set by Environment Canada (2004) suggest minimum upland forest cover in a watershed should be 30 percent, wetlands 10 percent or to historic value, and at least 75 percent of the watercourses in the watershed should have riparian habitat with a 30 meter buffer on both sides being ideal. Therefore, measures to create new upland areas and establish riparian habitat, as well as protect existing upland and wetland areas should be implemented to ensure adequate upland, wetland and riparian habitat to sustain minimum viable wildlife populations and maintain ecosystem functions and attributes.

As mentioned, 27 *Species at Risk* as designated by the *Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada* fall within the study area boundaries. Six of these species are *endangered*, meaning that they are facing imminent extinction or extirpation in Canada; 11 of these species are *threatened* species, which means they are at risk of becoming endangered; and 10 of the species are of *special concern* which simply means that they have characteristics that make them sensitive to human activities or natural events. In addition, there are 17 provincially rare flora and fauna found within the Central Welland River watershed.

The unique environmental character of the subwatersheds has resulted in an assortment of issues related to water resources, fish and aquatic habitat, natural heritage resources, urban development, and communication. The watershed issues, which were derived from extensive public input and past studies, were used to form a set of watershed objectives that guided the development of subwatershed restoration strategies and an implementation plan.

The subwatershed strategies include sites for riparian, wetland and upland habitat restoration that have been derived from detailed restoration suitability mapping in conjunction with Regional Niagara's Core Natural Heritage Mapping and Carolinian Cores 'Big Picture' mapping. In addition, project opportunities have been identified, in part through the NPCA Geomorphic Assessment, on private and public lands, such as erosion control, and shading to reduce water temperatures in the headwaters. Special studies including funding programs and urban water conservation programs have also been proposed. The implementation plan identifies responsible stakeholders for each recommended management action.

The recommended management actions and associated budget have been outlined and include riparian, wetland and upland restoration and creation to enhance water quality and fish habitat; specific policy tools including municipal and regional official plan amendments; outreach and communication for various aspects of water resources management; and research and

monitoring programs to obtain additional data from which the Central Welland River Watershed Plan can be updated and revised.

Overall, it is estimated that an additional \$1.65 million over a 10 year period above existing Conservation Authority program funding is required to implement the recommended management actions in the Central Welland River Watershed Plan. A general budget outlining recommended management actions and associated project costs has been provided. A detailed breakdown of each watershed plan objective, recommended action and associated funding (existing and required) as well as a time frame of implementation (e.g. long term, short term) has also been provided.

**Budget for the Central Welland River Watershed Plan Recommended Management
Actions: NPCA Project Budget**

Category	Recommended Management Action	\$ Cost	\$ Total (1 year)	\$ Total (10 year)
Restoration and Natural Heritage Resources	Upland Reforestation Program	(1,500/acre) (19 acres/year) x 10	28,500	285,000
	Riparian Buffer Planting	(\$5000/250m) (2000m/year) x 10	50,000	500,000
	Wetland Creation & Enhancement	(10,000/project) x 3	3,000	30,000
Aquatic Resources				
Aquatic Resources	In-stream Aquatic Improvements	6500 x 10	6,500	65,000
	Implement Recommended Actions Outlined in NPCA Geomorphic Assessment	5000 x 20	10,000	100,000
	Continue to Monitor Water Quality to achieve PWQO**	N/A	N/A	N/A
Education				
Education	Outreach	22,000 x 10	22,000	220,000
NPCA Restoration Budget			120,000	1,200,000
Special Studies	Continue comprehensive biological inventory and map of natural heritage areas including wetlands	45,000 x 10 (student wage)	45,000	450,000
Total Watershed Plan Implementation Budget			165,000	1,650,000

Includes materials and NPCA salaries

****The Water Quality Monitoring Stations in this study area fall within the Niagara River
Area of Concern and are currently being paid for by the Remedial Action Plan.**



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 15, 2011

RE: PROJECT/EVENTS STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 11-11

UPCOMING EVENTS

Binbrook Ice Fishing Derby – Sunday, February 13th starting at 7:00 a.m.-see attached
Conservation Foundation Elimination Draw & Dinner – Friday, April 1st-see attached

WATER MANAGEMENT

I. Watershed Regulation Division

1) Monitoring

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 10 permit applications for the 2011 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 7 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 3 municipal drain projects during the current calendar year.

3) Floodplain Mapping

i) 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.

ii) 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.

iii) Point Abino Drain – Town of Fort Erie

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 Point Abino Drain located in the Town of Fort Erie.

II. Watershed Planning Division

1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review

Staff continue to respond to a steady stream of planning and building permit applications. A significant amount of work continues on the review of locally adopted Official Plans that are currently before the Region of Niagara for approval. Staff have also been working with the Region of Niagara to finalize updates to the Region's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Guidelines. The Guidelines will be circulated to the Niagara Area Planners for discussion at their February 24, 2011 meeting.

2) Watershed Plan Preparation

a) Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan

The Lake Erie North Shore Watershed Plan is complete and has been submitted to the NPCA Board of Directors for approval this month.

b) Central Welland River Watershed Plan

This Central Welland River Watershed Plan is complete and has been submitted to the NPCA Board of Directors for approval this month.

c) Beaverdams and Shriners Creek Watershed Plan

Final updates to the Phase One Report will take place in spring before the Watershed Planning program is terminated. Due to time restraints there will not be a Phase Two: Restoration Strategy for this study area.

d) Upper Welland River Watershed Plan

Research and writing of Phase Two: Restoration Strategy is in full swing and should be distributed for staff commenting early March. There will be no public commenting period due to time restraints before the termination of the Watershed Planning program.

e) Lower Welland River Watershed Plan

Research and writing of the Lower Welland River Characterization Report has been temporarily suspended to focus on the research and writing of Phase Two: Restoration Strategy of the Upper Welland River Watershed Plan.

4) Natural Areas Inventory/Heritage System

The Scenario Development Team has completed the constraint setting portion of the project with meetings on January 6th and 20th. They will begin setting targets related to Hydrologic Function of the Natural Heritage System at their meeting on February 24th.

A communications strategy for the project is in development and will be presented to the Steering Committee in March.

III. Source Water Protection Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

The MOE completed their review of the proposed Assessment Report (AR). The MOE indicated the report was high quality, however there are a few amendments that the MOE have requested. The amendments include changes to the delineation of the Decew Main Intake IPZs, as well as a few other minor areas that needed additional clarification. Since there were relatively few amendments requested, the MOE has indicated these changes should be included with our submission of the Updated Assessment Report in May 2011.

Source protection staff continue to work on developing the Source Protection Plan (SPP), with assistance from Niagara Region, and key SPC members. Staff also continue to work on the Updated Assessment Report tasks.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

Surface water quality and spot-flow monitoring was completed for the 2010 field season. Water quality staff are currently analyzing the 2010 data for the annual water quality report.

The NPCA continues to collect groundwater level data at 15 monitoring wells as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN). Water quality results from the 13 PGMN wells have recently been received by the NPCA. Several exceedance notices for Boron, Nitrate, and Sodium have been sent by the MOE to the NPCA. These exceedances were found in PGMN wells that had previous history of exceeding water quality guidelines. These exceedances have been investigated and discussed by MOE, Region Public Health & NPCA staff. Boron and sodium exceedances are caused by natural conditions in the groundwater, while the nitrate exceedances are caused by localized land use impacts. The nitrate exceedances are confined to the monitoring wells and pose no danger to nearby residents. The MOE have notified to the local Medical Officer of Health with the sodium exceedance.

Biological monitoring using benthic macroinvertebrate have been completed for the Hamilton Airport and the Glanbrook Landfill and work on the annual monitoring reports is underway.

a) Routine Watershed Management Work

- Completed two snow surveys, sent data to SWMC
- Installed new Bell phone line at Kalar precip station
- Installed equipment and phone line at new Welland WWTP precip station (still to be finalized)
- Got quote from Bell, Hydro for set-up at Big Forks Creek station
- Programmed equipment for Big Forks Creek station

3) Special Projects

Water quality staff are working on the Welland River Eutrophication Study Final Report and this project is scheduled for completion by March 2011. A Technical Working Group Meeting is scheduled for Feb 24th to discuss the results of the study.

NPCA Water Well Decommissioning Grant Program: Requests for application continue to be received for this program.

St. David's Well Decommissioning: NPCA staff continue to provide technical expertise and assistance to Niagara Region Public Works for abandoning the former St. David's municipal well field and reservoirs. The project is expected to continue through 2011.

Hydrogeology and water resources work in the last month included:

- 4 private servicing study reviews for Watershed Planning.
- Technical assistance to the Niagara Water Strategy and the Health Unit (PGMN program).
- Niagara College and Brock University Intern Rural Water Use projects.
- 1 development application adjacent a provincially significant wetland; and
- Hydrology consultation for the Natural Heritage System project.

IV. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division

1) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- The MOE prescribed Assessment Report Database (ARDB) for Source Protection has been populated and is already in compliance with the timeline for submission once the Report itself is approved.

2) Watershed Planning Support Activities

- The evaluated wetlands from MNR for Haldimand County have been both finalized and delivered, and staff is currently integrating them into the Authority's Natural Areas mapping.
- The Authority's plan review and regulations screening mapping continues to go through edits based on recently updated hazard inventories such as the Great Lakes Flood and Erosion lines accompanying the recently completed Lake Erie Shoreline Management Plan.
- The datasets are being compiled for the final list of social political constraints approved by the Scenario Development Team for the Natural Heritage System evaluation project.
- Spatial statistics as the current status of potential ecological objectives are being calculated for consideration by the Scenario Development Team of the Natural Heritage System evaluation project.

3) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- The Authority's revised internal (restricted behind regional network firewall, NPCA staff access only) intranet mapping tool called the Niagara Atlas, has been pushed to the production environment for a short test run by staff prior to broader deployment and the retirement of its predecessor.
- The Authority's new external (public access to all via the world wide web) internet mapping tool called the Niagara Navigator was launched earlier this month. This custom site includes NPCA spatial business content pertaining to its plan and permit review services but also showcases data like the extent of Authority monitoring networks, SWP data products, and the new large scale ELC Community Series natural areas mapping developed during the Natural Areas Inventory.
- The SWOOP 2010 orthoimagery and other deliverables are expected to be delivered by the province any day now.
- The Large Scale Hydrology Mapping Maintenance pilot project on Twenty Mile Creek that the Authority is completing in partnership with the Water Resources Information Program from the Ministry of Natural Resources is in full production.
- Staff continue to collaborate with the Region and the Guelph district Ministry of Natural Resources with regards to identifying and recommending a subset of watercourse features from the Authority's large scale surface water inventory for use by the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake as key hydrologic features in its zoning by-law mapping.

V. Watershed Restoration Division

1) Project Implementation

In total, over 100 restoration projects are being planned and implemented this year across all watershed planning areas. For every restoration project completed on private property, two additional properties (landowners) will be visited in order to provide technical advice, guidance and landowner support. For every NPCA restoration program dollar spent, an additional 5 dollars of matching contribution will be provided through partnerships, including private landowners, for the implementation of the following water quality and habitat biodiversity projects.

2) General Restoration

- In total 35 woodland restoration / riparian projects will be implemented across the watershed through partnerships with private landowners, Land Care Niagara (funding provided through Trees Ontario Foundation and 50 Million Tree Program), Ontario Power Generation (bio-diversity and carbon sequestering funding) and the Niagara Restoration Council. Over 100,000 trees and shrubs will be planted. Over 20,000 wildflowers and grass plugs will be planted and over 30 kilograms of native seed will be sowed into restoration project sites.
- Construction projects such as wetland restoration, aquatic in-stream works, erosion and bank stabilization projects are currently being planned. Over 25 wetland and riparian projects across the watershed will be completed this year with contributions from Ducks Unlimited, Great Lakes Sustainability Fund, Species at Risk Farm Stewardship Program, Niagara Community Foundation, Canadian Tire Financial, St. Catharine's Green Committee, and TD friends of the Environment.
- Best Management Practice (BMP) projects such as nutrient management projects, livestock fencing, cover crops and erosion control projects (such as rock chutes and check point dams) are currently being planned. Over 40 BMP projects will be implemented across the

watershed with contributions from Great Lakes Sustainability Fund, Environmental Farm Plan and Species at Risk Farm Stewardship Program.

- Seven project interpretative signs will be produced and installed at key project sites across the watershed. These signs will provide education and awareness about the work of the NPCA relating to water quality and habitat biodiversity improvement.

3) Special Projects

- The NPCA in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada has been working to restore interior forest at the Lathrop Nature Reserve in Fonthill. Two old agricultural fields have been put back into forest habitat.
- The NPCA in partnership with Ontario Power Generation and the Niagara Region have been working to restore escarpment edge forest habitat on a 14 acre old agricultural field adjacent to the Decew water treatment plant and the Bruce Trail. Two interpretative signs explaining the efforts will be installed this spring at two locations adjacent to the project on the Bruce Trail for hikers to enjoy.
- The NPCA in partnership with Ontario Power Generation, the City of St. Catharines and Niagara College have been working to establish snapping turtle nesting sites in the Twelve Mile Creek valley. Lafarge Inc. donated material and supplies for the project. NPCA staff supplied the invasive species removal and the native plant installation. The Snapping Turtle is a special concern species under Ontario's Endangered Species Act, 2007. It has also been assessed nationally as a special concern species by the federal Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). Funding for this project was secured from the St. Catharine's Green Committee.
- The NPCA in partnership with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and Smart Centre is undertaking a wetland restoration / compensation project on Chanlter Rd in the Coyle Creek watershed. The purpose of this wetland is to provide fisheries compensation as part of the mitigation for the Smart Centre development. This wetland project is a significant undertaking and will provide up to 8 acres of additional wetland habitat in the Welland River and the Niagara River Area of Concern (AOC).
- The NPCA in partnership with Kala Hardware in St. Catharine's has been working to restore 200 metres of riparian stream buffer along a tributary of Richardson's Creek. Funding for this project was secured from the St. Catharine's Green Committee.
- The NPCA in partnership with Big Valley Campground in Lincoln have been working to restore 300 metres of riparian stream buffer along Fifteen Mile Creek.
- The NPCA in partnership with the City of Welland have been continuing restoration efforts along Drapers Creek within Maple Park and at Colbeck Dr. Interpretive Signage was installed at both locations in order to explain the importance of protecting and restoring water quality and biodiversity.
- The NPCA in partnership with the Niagara Restoration Council have been working on a restoration plan for Landsdowne Pond in One Mile Creek in NOTL. Funding has been secured from Eco Action (\$63,000) for the implementation of various biodiversity and water quality improvements such as invasive species removal and sediment catch basins.
- The NPCA in partnership with the Niagara Restoration Council and the Friends of Short Hills Park have been working on a restoration plan for the agricultural land adjacent to Short Hills Park. The 100 year leases around the park are expiring and will be put back to natural areas. Both Eco Action and Trillium will be funding this two year restoration initiative.

4) Yellow Fish Road

It has been five years now that the NPCA has been coordinating the Yellow Fish Road (YFR) program locally on behalf of Trout Unlimited. Since 2006, 38 school groups have been reached, including over 480 students. There have been 1201 drains painted and approximately 4000 door hangers distributed.

In 2010 NPCA received a Shell Canada grant through Trout Unlimited totaling \$2,700.00. This grant was used to create new and exciting promotional materials to deliver the Yellow Fish Road program in Niagara. This grant helped the NPCA create a rack card (pamphlet) that is specific to Niagara, as well as a poster to be used as a teaching aid for participating schools. A floor sign with information about the YFR program was also created to allow people driving or walking by during a painting to read about the event taking place and to obtain the NPCA's contact information.

5) ECO School Program

Since the inception of the program in 2006, 136 schools have participated, more than 4000 students were engaged, 700 trees and shrubs were planted, 28,000 wildflowers were planted and 2400 square metres (25 600 square feet) of green space has been created.

Now at the end of its initial 5 year phase, the ECO School Program will evolve into a school yard tree planting (shade tree) program, called Canopies for Kids. Staff are working with the Niagara Water Smart Program to secure funding for this initiative.

6) Community Fisheries Involvement Programs

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) has been collecting fisheries data in the Welland River Watershed for almost a decade. There are two active programs that allow the NPCA to collect this information, the Angler Catch & Release Program, and the Angler Diary Program. Both programs rely on local anglers to support the data collection. The Fish Tagging Program captures fish through netting and angling, marks the fish with an identification tag, and then relies on anglers to call in to report having caught a tagged fish. The Angler Diary program encourages anglers to record information about their recreational fishing activities. These programs were originally created to monitor the success of the Walleye Stocking Program in the Welland River (partnership with the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Conservation Authority, Fort Erie Conservation Club and the Port Colborne and District Conservation Club) and to assist with the prioritization of restoration work within the Welland River.

7) Earth Day

Staff will be hosting our 3rd annual Earth Day event on April 19th (Earth Day, the 22nd is Good Friday) at the E.C. Brown Wetland Restoration Project site. Several school groups will be on hand to assist in the planting of trees and shrubs as well as assisting with monitoring exercises for both flora and fauna. The event will also be open to public participation.

8) Landowner Stewardship Guide

Building on the success of the One Mile Creek Landowner Stewardship Guide, staff are working to modify this guide to a watershed wide "How to" guide for landowners. Main topic sections will focus on improving water quality and biodiversity. An application to the Niagara Community Foundation is being made in order to secure additional funding for this document. It is anticipated to be completed in mid 2011.

9) Niagara Envirothon

The Canon Envirothon is a North American wide competition that gets high school students in an outdoor setting to learn about soils/landuse, aquatics, forestry and wildlife, as well as a current issue. Teams start at the local level and the winning team moves on to the Provincial level. From there the winning team goes on to compete on an international level at the Canon Envirothon. The NPCA helps to coordinate this locally, in partnership with Land Care Niagara and the Bert Miller Nature Club.

VI. Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

1) Lyons Creek East

The Contaminated Sediments Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is scheduled to meet in mid-February, 2011. The agenda will include update presentations on the Sediment Transport Study (Golder Assoc.) and the Lyons Creek East Contaminated Sediment Long-Term Monitoring Plan (Environment Canada) and receipt of the signed Administrative Controls Protocol document. Discussion will also take place on the roles and name of the new committee that will oversee the long-term monitoring.

Next steps for Lyons 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) Remedial Action Plan (RAP) Stage 2 Update report (Dec.2009) and RAP Update 2010 fact sheets are posted on the NPCA web site.

The RAP Stage 2 Update report was forwarded to the International Joint Commission for review in December 2010.

3) RAP Monitoring & Assessment

The RAP Assessment & Monitoring Plan (final draft – December 2010) has been circulated to the Science Committee. The NPCA is the lead agency for the Welland River Eutrophication Study that has been underway since 2008. The purpose of the project is to help develop delisting criteria for the BUI: *Eutrophication & Undesirable Algae*. The technical working group is scheduled to meet in late February to discuss the data collected over the past three years and the final report for the study.

The RAP Coordinating Committee met in mid-January to discuss issues under water quality, habitat, outreach and work planning for the next fiscal year. A workshop is being planned in March to address the BUI: *Loss of Fish & Wildlife Habitat*. The main outcome of the workshop will be a draft RAP habitat implementation strategy.

The next RAP Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for mid-April 2011.

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

A Proposal Notice to extend the current Agreement through to June 24, 2012 has been posted on the Environmental Registry.

5) International Liaison

The International Association for Great Lakes Research (IAGLR) Conference will be held in Duluth, Minnesota, May 30 – June 3, 2011.

6) Update: Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The current GLWQA is the revised Agreement of 1978 as amended by Protocol in 1987. An extensive review process culminated in the submission of a report to the governments of Canada and the United States in December 2008. A recent update indicates that negotiations between the governments for renewal of the Agreement are moving slowly and may extend into 2012.

LAND MANAGEMENT STATUS

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

The 2010 Christmas in the Country education program was successful with 1,070 students attending this year, a 35% increase in attendance from 2009. There were 9 volunteers involved in set up and decorating and 20 volunteers assisted staff in implementing the program over 3 weeks. A post-program review meeting was held with staff and volunteers present. Staff will consider comments received when planning for 2011.

Staff continue to research and develop a full schedule of programs and exhibits for 2011, geared to families, youth, adults and schools and community organizations. An Exhibit Schedule and Programming Schedule have been prepared; this information was circulated to members at the Annual meeting. Some dates are still tentative and have been noted as such in the schedule. Further details will follow as program and exhibit dates approach. Exhibit budgets for 2012 and 2013 are being developed.

The temporary exhibit, "War on the Lakes, 1812-1814", (November 20, 2010 - February 4, 2011) garnered significant interest both locally and internationally. MP Niagara West Glanbrook, Dean Allison visited with Exhibit Curator, Linda Stanley and Molly Quakenbush of the Theodore Roosevelt Inaugural Institute also visited as their site is interested in booking the exhibit. From opening in November to the end of January, site visitation including both public and school visits totaled 2,621.

A new initiative this year, "P A Day camps" is proving successful. On January 31, the first camp had 18 children. Volunteers assisted staff to maintain the proper ratio for supervision. The camps follow the same format for pricing as our March Break and summer camps. The camps will be offered on PA Days and statutory holidays for 2011.

Exhibit Cases have been installed throughout the Centre to highlight the upcoming "Child's Play" exhibit. This travelling exhibit from Haldimand Museums runs from February 10 – April 25. Turtle Pond Toys, from St. Catharines is graciously providing sponsorship, assisting with the exhibit and providing toys and prizes.

Marketing initiatives continue for Ball's Falls. The development of a web-site (www.ballsfalls.ca) for Ball's Falls is progressing. Staff are reviewing two formats for a corporate marketing package to promote rentals at the Centre. We have had positive feedback from local catering companies with regard to offering menu options for clients to facilitate arrangements for seminars, workshops and retreats. The focus is on achieving a consistent look for all promotional material pertaining to the site.

Maintenance staff are working on two major projects over the winter months, refurbishing the windows of the mill and stabilizing the frame of the Big Barn.

The Ministry of Culture CMOG survey was completed and forwarded to the Ministry prior to the February 4 deadline. The Ministry extended the deadline by one week in response to concerns expressed by participating museums across Ontario.

Our Brock University interns are researching the feasibility of developing a "Junior Volunteer Program, working on the Ball's Falls blog and assisting with exhibits and programs.

Comments in the War on the Lakes Reflections on the exhibit book from Nov. to Feb:
Keewatin, Dundas, St. Catharines, Welland, York, Stoney Creek, Virginia (U.S), Zeeland (Michigan), Grimsby, Hamilton, Jordan Harbour, Vineland Station, Niagara on the Lake, Thorold, Nanimo (B.C.), Wainfleet, Toronto, Oakville, Amherst (NY), Oelde (GER), Rockway, Niagara Falls, Buffalo

Love the ships, great, Wow! Put it on the web, very nice exhibit, well done!! An impressive exhibit! Great Exhibit, Thank You!, Wonderful, Great Presentation, excellent, An Amazing Exhibit, Awesome, Impressive, Put more about Fort George in it, Breathtaking and informative, great work, impressive work, Not just a story but a very impressive part of Canadian History!, Interesting and impressive, Great History; well done!, Very informative, great paintings, Interesting & Informative – Great!, Following the War of 1812 Trail, Beautiful paintings add more knowledge to the war! They're great, Awesome, Bravo Excellent Presentation, Thank you , Exceptional, Fantastic Research, Historically enjoyable, Beautiful- powerful- stunning, Thanks for interesting history!, It was nice to go back over our history and we both enjoyed this very much, Thank you., incredible!

Binbrook Conservation Area

The Binbrook "hard water" derby will take place on Sunday, February 13th. The event is being widely promoted and expected to be very popular this year. Fishing World, a local fishing store, has agreed to sponsor the event again this year with \$5,000 in retail prizes.

Ice fishing opened January 4th, with 7 ½ inches of ice on the reservoir. An extended snow cover slowed ice development, and huts did not go out until January 22nd. Hut rentals are popular on weekends, however our weekday market continues to be slow.

Staff have been working with Environment Canada and the Ministry of the Environment on contaminant monitoring in the Binbrook Reservoir. This past year a compound commonly used in fire suppression foam, was identified in the flesh of fish from the reservoir. The study findings will result in new consumption limits for fish at Binbrook. Conservation Authority staff have been working to get the information into the hands of our visitors prior to the official release of fish consumption guidelines this spring.

Work on the gatehouse trail has begun to remove hazard trees, limbs, and brush from the trail shoulders. This well used trail will receive trail surface and drainage improvements this year thanks to the support of our volunteers in the Glanbrook Conservation Club, and a grant from TD Canada Trust Friends of the Environment.

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas

Staff are taking advantage of the winter season to conduct major maintenance on equipment and facilities for our campgrounds. In addition, mandated training for drinking water facilities is being completed to ensure compliance for our water treatment plants.

Hazard tree removal is proceeding at Chippawa Creek.

The new on-line reservation system will start on March 1st. This service will allow visitors to look at campground maps, check availability and make reservations over the internet. This system is expected to increase traffic to our site and make the campgrounds more friendly to the traveling public.

Communities in Bloom, Town of Lincoln

Communities in Bloom is a Canadian non-profit organization committed to fostering civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community participation and the challenge of friendly competition. Trained volunteer judges travel across Canada during July and August to evaluate communities and the overall contributions of municipal council and departments, industry, businesses and the private sector, including volunteer efforts in regards to eight criteria: Tidiness, Environmental Awareness, Community Involvement, Natural and Cultural Heritage Conservation, Tree/Urban Forest Management, Landscaped Areas, Floral Displays, Turf and Groundcovers.

The NPCA is in partnership again this year with the Town of Lincoln for their Communities in Bloom participation. We are represented by staff on the programme committee and assist in the judges tour which includes a stop at Ball's Falls. The judges tour usually takes place mid July. Promotion of the program will be rolled out in the local media starting in April.

2010 Capital Asset Inventories

Inventories of capital assets at our properties have been taken by staff to update our records. Examples of some of the major items added to our inventory include the pedestrian bridge at Stevensville Conservation Area; opening of the pavilion and park store at Binbrook Conservation Area; additional picket fencing and walking trails at Ball's Falls Conservation Area; and a floating dock for Jordan Harbour Conservation Area. New property acquisitions added in to this inventory include land parcels now on our assessment roll at Beamer, Woodend, and Cave Springs.

Jordan Harbour Pavilion

Staff are reviewing the site location, design and construction requirements for a proposed new open air pavilion for the property. Preliminary investigations are leaning towards placement of the structure south of the boat launch between the roadway and concrete dock. This area is sufficient to allow for a 20ft x 30 ft pavilion structure with new concrete paving extending to the concrete dock.

Beamer Memorial Conservation Area

Hawkwatch Season 2011 is approaching running from March 1 through May 15 at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area. During this season, the raptors migrating north are counted and environmental health assessed (North/Central and South America). This includes the daily counting of raptor species population by the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch Group (NPH). This information will then be combined with remaining North America data and used to assess raptor population trends. The public are welcome to visit the site and see this natural phenomena. The NPH is also on site daily to assist the public with any questions on the migration or raptors.

Staff will be meeting the NPH this month to finalize administrative details for their annual Hawkwatch Open House at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area. As in previous years this is an opportunity for the public to visit the site and see and learn about the raptors, how they are used as indicators and their role in the environment.

Mud Lake Conservation Area

New entrance sign and map highlighting the sites significance and welcoming site visitors are presently in graphic layout stage with signs to be completed and installed by late Spring 2011.

NPCA Hunting Program

Staff have issued an additional 51 hunting permits for the NPCA Conservation Areas in 2011. To date staff have received and issued 55 hunting permits for 2011. Of these, 9 are issued to individuals residing outside of our administrative area.

Conservation Area Highway Signs

New highway signs were recently installed by Regional staff for Ball's Falls Conservation Area and the Comfort Maple. Next to be replaced will be the signs for Chippawa Creek and Long Beach campgrounds.

Ontario Trails Council Conference

The Ontario Trails Council and Sustainable Trails Ltd are planning a trail conference and trail building workshop to be held in Niagara Falls late April. Our staff were approached to discuss partnership opportunities to host the trail building workshop on conservation authority land in exchange for trail work to be completed on the property by workshop participants. This event is in the preliminary discussion stage. Staff are meeting with the conference representatives to show them Woodend Conservation Area and Stevensville Conservation Area as potential event sites within an easy bus ride of the main conference venue in Niagara Falls. If all is agreeable, we look forward to hosting the participants for two days at one of our conservation sites for the trail building workshop.

Seaway Naturalization Project

Authority staff have been in discussions with representatives from L3K Restoration, St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and the Region of Niagara regarding a potential restoration initiative along the Welland Canal Corridor. The proposal involves establishing native plants in the clay spoils and other sites along the canal. These plantings would provide habitat and a food source for bees and other pollinators.

The discussions are preliminary at this point. Staff will bring a report to the board for consideration once the scope and details of the project have been worked out.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Source Protection Program

Notification has been received from the Ministry of Environment with regards to the Assessment Report. Staff and the committee will work to address the deficiencies within the allotted timelines.

Annual Report

Staff is coordinating the production of the 2010 Annual Report.

Niagara Heritage Study

Staff is attending the Scenario Development Team sessions in anticipation of public communication regarding the project.

Regional Tourism Organization

The Tourism Partnership of Niagara (TPNC) was created in May 2010 pursuant to the Ontario Ministry of Tourism's request to create a not for profit, industry led, collaboratively managed organization whose mandate is to support and grow Niagara tourism through the provision of strategic leadership and through active, effective partnership with government and key stakeholders.

Binbrook Ice Fishing Derby

The annual Binbrook Ice Fishing Derby is scheduled to take place on Sunday, February 13th. This is a great event for the avid angler.

Hawkwatch Season

While it may be snowing outside, a sure sign that spring is around the corner, is the arrival of Hawkwatch season. The season runs March 1 to May 15 at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area. The annual public open house will take place on Good Friday, April 22, 2011, coinciding with earth Day. The Open House is hosted in conjunction with the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch. This date is also Earth Day

Great lakes St. Lawrence Cities Conference

The Great Lakes & St. Lawrence Cities Initiatives 8th Annual General Meeting and Conference, being held at the Sheraton Fallsview Hotel and Conference Centre, Niagara Falls, Ontario begins Wednesday, June 15th, 2011. Mayors of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative will gather for three days to discuss efforts regarding protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River. The planning committee is meeting regularly to coordinated the conference which takes place in Niagara Falls June 15-17, 2011. A sponsorship package is being developed to secure funding to help with costs.

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Elimination Draw & Dinner

Board members are encouraged to attend and help spread the word about the Foundation's upcoming 'fun'draising event taking place on Friday, April 1st at the Welland Lions Community Centre on River Road. For only \$65 a ticket, guests will be treated to a delicious five-course dinner, all beverages and the chance to win more than \$1,000 in cash prizes. Please notify staff if flyers or tickets are needed.

Golf Tournament

The *2011 Bob Welch Memorial Classic* will be taking place on Tuesday, June 7th at the Whirlpool Golf Course. Registration and sponsorship packages are being prepared and will be sent to previous golfers and new prospects in the near future. Staff will continue to work on securing sponsors and donations for this annual fundraising tournament.

Recommendation:

Report No. 11-11 outlining the status of Authority projects and events be received for information.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____

Tony D'Amario, P.Eng.
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer