

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

FULL AUTHORITY

WELLAND

AGENDA

AUGUST 17, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – June 22, 2011

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held June 22, 2011.

(2) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(3) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(4) CAO'S REMARKS

(5) HEARING – APPLICATION BY RAYMOND AND ELIZABETH KOWALIK – REPORT NO. 39-11

A hearing will be held with respect to an application under the NPCA'S Regulation for Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourse Regulation (Ontario Regulation 155/06).

(6) CORRESPONDENCE – NIAGARA REGION HIRING FREEZE

Attached is a letter received from the Region of Niagara regarding this matter.

(7) 2010 ANNUAL REPORT – REPORT NO. 40-11

Attached is Report No. 39-11 regarding this matter, together with a copy of the 2010 Annual Report.

(8) BUDGET STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 41-11

Attached is Report No. 40-11 updating the budget to date, together with details and summary copies of the current and capital budgets.

(9) PFOS COMPOUNDS AT THE BINBROOK RESERVOIR (UPDATE) – REPORT NO. 42-11

Attached is Report No. 42-11 updating this matter.

(10) PRELIMINARY 2012 BUDGET – REPORT NO. 43-11

Attached is Report No. 43-11 regarding the 2012 preliminary budget. An in camera session may be required for a portion of this report – to be called by the Chairman.

(11) PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 44-11

Attached is Report No. 44-11 outlining the status of Authority Projects/Programs to date.

(12) OTHER BUSINESS

(13) IN-CAMERA

- (a) Complaint and Violation Status Report - Report No. CR-14-11
- (b) Tree By-Law Status Report – Report No. CR-15-11

ADJOURNMENT



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: August 16, 2011

RE: **2010 Annual Report – Report No. 40-11**

Included in your agenda package is the Authority's recently completed 2010 Annual Report. The intent of the Annual Report is to provide an overview of the Authority's various program activities and to acknowledge the support of our member municipalities, the Province and Federal governments as well as the many NGO's who support the work of the Authority. The report is distributed to all watershed municipalities, MP's, MPP's libraries, universities, colleges, donors and is available at various events throughout the year.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the 2010 Annual Report be received.

Prepared by: Mary Stack, Director of Communications

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: August 11, 2011

SUBJECT: Budget Status Report - Report No. 41-11

Attached is the budget status report for the period ending July 31, 2011.

Expenditures and revenues in the operating budget are generally in line with the approved budget for 2011 with the following notes:

- Day Use revenues for Balls Falls and Long Beach are not true reflections of actual amounts received as staff were unable to finalize these entries in time for the budget status report. These figures will be available for the September 2011 report.

For the capital budget, overall expenditures in the Land Management project budgets are low but work in many areas has begun and will be more reflective of the approved budget over the next 2-3 months.

As previously noted, staff closely monitor expected revenues from non levy sources such as through Provincial and Federal programs with the objective of not incurring expenditures until funding is confirmed and received.

Staff will continually monitor all revenue sources and make appropriate adjustments for any significant variances.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Budget Status Report for the period ending July 31, 2011 be received.

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: August 11, 2011

SUBJECT: PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir (update) – Report No. 42-11

Binbrook Conservation Area staff have noticed a sharp decline in the number of water quality questions by visitors. The swimming beach at Binbrook has been busy during these hot summer months, and it is one of the few beaches in the Hamilton area that has not been impacted by high bacteria counts.

Over the past two months, agencies have continued to characterize the PFOS problem in the headwaters of the Welland River. Additional sediment sampling of Lake Niapenco was conducted by the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) on July 5. Results of this survey are expected in September. Conservation Authority staff are working with the City of Hamilton to conduct another sample of the drinking water system at Binbrook Conservation Area to confirm that it is free of PFOS.

Members will recall that sediment samples were taken by the MOE upstream of the Binbrook Reservoir in May. Results should be available soon and will help show the limits of impact. The Hamilton International Airport is investigating the fire training area and is continuing the process of further delineating the extent of PFOS contamination on their property. It is expected that all of this work will result in a mitigation plan and remediation strategy before the end of the year.

There is a steady line of communication between all agencies involved. NPCA staff will continue to update members, and the public, as information becomes available.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 42-11 regarding PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir be received.

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

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

TO: Chairman and Members of the NPCA Authority

DATE: August 10, 2011

SUBJECT: Preliminary 2012 Operating and Project Budgets – Report No. 43-11

Attached for your review and consideration is the Preliminary 2012 Operating and Project Budgets detailed and summary reports which include the approved 2011 amounts for comparison purposes. This report was presented to the NPCA Budget Review Committee at their meeting of August 9, 2011.

The year end numbers in the reports are the same as the approved budget at this time and will be established further into the fiscal year.

The budget has been set out with the understanding of consolidating the operation and capital (herein referred to as project) budget as suggested by the Niagara Region staff to meet PSAB requirements. I have kept the programs separate for internal use and to provide separate accounts if requested by our other member municipalities (Hamilton and Haldimand).

In addition, given the relatively early process of setting out our next years' budget, I was unable to confirm external support from the Federal, Provincial, Partnership and Special Funding arrangements for many of our programs, specifically in Water Management. Accordingly, the budget assumes what we believe to be reasonable funding expectations based on historical funding for these programs. The preliminary budgets as proposed, however, will set out the municipal levy component of our budget in order to meet the Niagara Region's budget schedule. The final budget, later this year, will have revisions that more accurately reflects other external funding, however, the levy component would remain similar.

Niagara Regional Guidance

As per the attached memo from Brian Hutchings of the Niagara Region, I am recommending that the NPCA adopt the second option that consolidates our budget into a single grant, which encompasses the 2011 approved operating grant, capital grant, debt issue costs and debt charges as a base funding for future years. The debenture payments and interest would continue to be paid by the NPCA as was done in the past with the exception that additional funding for projects would be available if the debt is paid down without incurring any additional debt. I am not recommending that the NPCA approve additional debt for ongoing programs. Accordingly, the proposed preliminary project budget is significantly reduced from our long term plan in order to accommodate this. Planned projects have been deferred and will be brought forth as additional project funding becomes available from debt pay down.

The guidance objectives as set out by the Niagara Region is a total consolidated levy amount of \$8,865,430 which represents 2.7% increase from 2011, or an increase of \$180,493. With reference to the second page of the Niagara Region letter, the second option table of debt payments for 2012 would be less than shown since we would not be incurring additional debt in 2012 as per my recommendation. However, the total amount of levy would be the same. The preliminary budget as set out below, reflects the total guidance levy amount and is summarized in the attached 2011/2012 levy comparison schedule. Overall, the operating/project budget of the NPCA has a consolidated increase of 2.16% with a consolidated amount of 2.7% for Niagara, 1.11% for Hamilton and a -29.78% amount for Haldimand. The Hamilton and Haldimand amounts are less due to the completion of previous capital initiatives although their respective operating costs are significantly higher at 8.13 and 26.44% respectfully. This is primarily due to the adjustment factors for levy apportionment as set out by the Ministry of Natural Resources from time to time.

Salary Considerations

In 2011, the NPCA budget was similar to the Regional Niagara Council direction of a 0% economic

adjustment for all non union staff to reflect Provincial initiatives. I am of the understanding that a similar objective has been requested for the 2012 budget year. Accordingly NPCA preliminary budget has been developed based on no change to the salary schedule. Increases in the salary budgets reflect uncontrollable increases to OMERS contributions and the group benefit plan and step adjustments for staff not at the top of the salary grid (3 in total). It should be noted that the salary components in the budget include approximately 24% for benefits. Salary amounts in the various programs are reflective of the anticipated percentage of time spent on the various programs by all staff.

Attached for information is the 2010 salary schedule that was adopted for 2011 and assumed for 2012. Also attached is a list of the various NPCA positions and current salary amounts, not including benefits. The list is the current staff compliment and does not include the varying contract and summer staff for the conservation areas, gatekeepers as well as maintenance and security staff (approximately 45 part time staff in total) needed during the NPCA operating season.

As indicated above, the preliminary budget for 2012 does not include a salary increase, and would maintain the salary grid to 2010 levels. Where an increase is ultimately approved by the Board, I have estimated a budget of approximately \$50,000 per 1% of increase would be required. Should this be the case, then additional program reductions or cuts will be required to maintain the budget within the guidance.

For information, the following increases were approved for 2011 by adjacent Conservation Authorities:

NPCA	0%	
Grand River	2%	
Hamilton	1%	
Credit	2%	
Long Point	2%	
Halton	0%	

Preliminary Operating Budget

An explanation of the program changes and specific program implications to accomplish the target increases is provided below.

1) Corporate Services

- Interest Income – Reduced (\$40,000) to reflect the reduction in bank and GIC interest as well as the declining balance of reserve funds.
- Conservation Foundation – Similar to 2011, \$35,000 funding revenue from the Conservation Foundation has been allocated to assist in offsetting increased operational costs for Foundation Activities.
- Miscellaneous Revenue – Reduced to reflect completed works for education, communication and outreach program with Niagara Region.
- Reserve Funds – No reserve funds are recommended in the Corporate Services budget, however, additional reserves may be warranted where necessary to complete the Strategic Plan.
- Components of the Corporate Communications budget reduced to accommodate the budgetary challenges.
- The overall program costs show an increase of \$53,800 however this is offset by the increased components for the corporate strategy and the education/communication program increases that are funded separately.

2) Watershed Management and Health Monitoring

a) Resources Inventory and Environmental Monitoring

- The Glanbrook Landfill Monitoring program will continue in 2013 however the John C Munroe Airport monitoring is included and will continue for 2012 once confirmation for this work is received from the parties.
- The popular Niagara Children's Water Festival will continue for 2012 with an increase in external revenues for this program due to the limitations on base funding from the Region.
- Funding for the Watershed Report Card is proposed with offsetting revenues from separate Niagara Region funding under their Water Strategy program. This is subject to verification later this year.
- Overall costs has been reduced slightly due to adjustments in salary allocations to this program to more accurately reflect staff resources for this program.

b) Flood Protection Services

- The overall program costs are increased by \$7,700 with adjustments primarily in staff allocation to the program.
- In order to accommodate the budget within the municipal guidance, legal fees have been reduced by approximately \$9,000 to \$16,100 total for 2012. The cost for prosecutions under the NPCA regulations have increased significantly over the last several years. I do not believe this is a result of an increase in violations but directly a result of an increase in public awareness of the Authority's mandate and the corresponding increase in the number of violations reported to NPCA staff. Changes in the legislation (increase in statute of limitations) allows staff additional time to resolve matters before court proceedings are necessary, and it is hoped that a reduced number of prosecutions will result. It is also recommended for 2012 that further discussions and direction from Board be undertaken to further review legal fees and the number of prosecutions that the NPCA can afford as well as other possible alternatives.

c) Environmental Advisory Services

- Costs for the program are increased by approximately \$10,000 primarily from an increase in staff costs and slight reallocation of staff resources to reflect time spent on this program.
- I have not recommended an increase in planning and regulation review and permit fees for 2012 and accordingly, revenues from those areas have not increased.

3) Conservation Land Management

- For 2012, the Debt Charges and Servicing Costs for capital projects which are assigned by the Region has been decreased by \$91,900 as per my recommendation to not incur additional debt. This was a special levy to the Niagara Region in the past, however will, starting in 2012 become part the consolidated option as described above.
- The NPCA will continue to implement the Tree Conservation By-Law on behalf of the Region of Niagara as previously endorsed by this Board.

4) Conservation Land Programming

- The Conservation Land Programming budget is consistent with the multi-year Land Management program previously approved by the Board with the area operating/maintenance costs being assessed to the member municipality in which the property is located.
- Program increases an additional \$142,800 in special revenues from the Niagara Region to undertake project and management services at the Glenridge, Elm Street and Station Road landfill restoration areas and the new beach access in Wainfleet, however the amounts have not been confirmed at this time and would be subject to revisions.
- It should be noted that historically, the NPCA has budgeted operational reserves for the Hamilton and Niagara conservation areas to be used for years where actual revenues and/or expenses differ from the approved budget due to various factors. For 2011, the approved budget had anticipated reserves of approximately \$2,000 (Niagara) and \$23,980 (Hamilton). For 2012, the above constraints severely limits the amount that can be allocated to reserves in Niagara and as such there is no proposed reserve amount for Niagara. For Hamilton, the reserve amount is approximately \$25,600.
- The majority of the cost increase is related to non discretionary staff benefit costs. All other cost increases associated with Conservation Land Programming have been maintained to 2011 levels.

5) Vehicles & Equipment

- Funds have been included for the replacement of vehicles as required with no increase from 2011.

6) Summary

- Cost increases not specifically identified throughout the budget are related to inflationary adjustments.
- The total expenditure under the Preliminary 2012 Operating Budget is \$7,999,200, reduced from 2011 level of \$8,042,923.
- Revenue amounts for the Conservation Areas remain optimistic but obtainable subject to weather conditions. Program adjustments will be made throughout the year where revenues are less than anticipated.
- A program breakdown of the levy to be assessed to each member municipality is shown below:

2012 Preliminary Operating Budget

<u>Operating Budget</u>	<u>Total Expenditure</u>	<u>Total Levy</u>	<u>Niagara</u>	<u>Hamilton</u>	<u>Haldimand</u>
Corporate Services	\$1,260,500	\$1,130,500	\$1,064,638	\$44,877	\$20,985
Resource Inventory & Monitoring	\$516,100	\$310,000	\$291,940	\$12,306	\$5,754
Flood Protection Services	\$477,700	\$253,400	\$238,637	\$10,059	\$4,704
Environmental Advisory Services	\$462,900	\$283,900	\$267,360	\$11,270	\$5,270
Conservation Land Management	\$2,770,200	\$2,742,400	\$2,723,938	\$12,580	\$5,882
Conservation Land Programming	\$2,323,400	\$784,000	\$639,100	\$135,000	\$9,900
Vehicles and Equipment	\$188,400	\$97,400	\$91,726	\$3,866	\$1,808
Total	\$7,999,200	\$5,601,600	\$5,317,338	\$229,958	\$54,303

A comparison with the 2011 operating budget is provided below:

Levy Apportionment - 2012 Preliminary Operating Budget

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>2011 General Levy</u>	<u>2012 General Levy</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>2011 Special Levy</u>	<u>2012 Special Levy</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>2011 Total Levy</u>	<u>2012 Total Levy</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Haldimand	\$33,297	\$44,403	33.4	\$9,650	\$9,900	2.6	\$42,947	\$54,303	26.4
Hamilton	\$87,677	\$94,958	8.3	\$125,000	\$135,000	8.0	\$212,677	\$229,958	8.1
Niagara	\$2,101,876	\$2,252,738	7.2	\$3,069,940	\$3,064,600	-0.2	\$5,171,816	\$5,317,338	2.8
Total	\$2,222,850	\$2,392,100	7.6	\$3,204,590	\$3,209,500	0.2	\$5,427,440	\$5,601,600	3.2

Preliminary Project (previously Capital) Budget

Attached for your review and consideration is the Preliminary 2012 Project Budget (detailed and summary).

Also attached are summary sheets outlining the respective capital projects for the Water and Land Management programs which provide a brief description of the projects. The breakdown of costs for each of the projects is available on the detailed project budget sheets.

Summary

- the total expenditure under the Preliminary 2012 Capital Budget is \$4,150,300, a decrease from the 2011 budget of \$5,366,816
- the general levy to be assessed to the member municipalities is \$642,400, an increase of \$28,300 from 2011.
- a program breakdown of the levy to be assessed to each member municipality is as follows:

	<u>2012 Preliminary Project Budget</u>				
	<u>Total Expenditure</u>	<u>Total levy</u>	<u>Niagara</u>	<u>Hamilton</u>	<u>Haldimand</u>
Watershed Studies	\$895,100	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Resource Inventory & Monitoring	\$1,738,300	\$833,200	\$759,639	\$65,643	\$7,919
Flood Protection Services	\$345,400	\$215,800	\$203,228	\$8,567	\$4,006
Conservation Land Development	\$1,171,500	\$800,000	\$585,000	\$215,000	\$0
Total	\$4,150,300	\$1,849,000	\$1,547,866	\$289,209	\$11,925

A comparison with the 2011 levy is as follows:

Levy Apportionment - Preliminary 2012 Project Budget

<u>Municipality</u>	<u>2011</u> <u>General</u> <u>Levy</u>	<u>2012</u> <u>General</u> <u>Levy</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>2011</u> <u>Special</u> <u>Levy</u>	<u>2012</u> <u>Special</u> <u>Levy</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>2011</u> <u>Total</u> <u>Levy</u>	<u>2012</u> <u>Total</u> <u>Levy</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Change</u>
<u>Haldimand</u>	\$9,199	\$11,925	30	\$42,164	\$0	-100.0	\$51,363	\$11,925	-76.8
<u>Hamilton</u>	\$24,222	\$25,501	5	\$276,574	\$263,708	-4.7	\$300,796	\$289,209	-3.9
<u>Niagara</u>	\$580,679	\$604,974	4	\$932,442	\$942,892	1.1	\$1,513,121	\$1,547,866	2.3
Total	\$614,100	\$642,400	5	\$1,251,180	\$1,206,600	-3.6	\$1,865,280	\$1,849,000	-0.9

The General Levy apportionments are based on CA Levy Regulation (O. Reg. 670/2000) for the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority modified in accordance with the 4 Year Levy Implementation Plan for the Years 2010-2013 (NPCA Report 63-09).

For information, the general levy apportionment amounts are as follows:

Municipality	2011 Apportionment	2012 Apportionment
Niagara	94.5577%	94.17408%
Hamilton	3.94435%	3.969675%
Haldimand	1.49795%	1.85625%

RECOMMENDATION

That the Proposed Preliminary 2012 Operating and Project Budget and corresponding municipal general and special levy allocations as detailed in the report be approved for distribution to member municipalities.

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

TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: August 16, 2011

RE: PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 44-11

WATER MANAGEMENT

I. Watershed Regulation Division

1) Monitoring

i) 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. Due to the prolonged dry conditions, maintaining standard operating level at the reservoir has been challenging. The reservoir water level is presently approximately 6 inches (150mm) below standard operating level.

Staff also continue to monitor the water levels and undertake routine repairs at our 13 gauge stations, as part of the NPCA's routine flood forecasting/warning duties.

The public is able to access this real-time level and rainfall information through the NPCA's website.

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

i) Permits

To date, the NPCA has approved 62 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 38 applications under this agreement.

iv) Municipal Drain Maintenance Review

The NPCA continues to represent Conservation Authorities located in Central Ontario on the DART Committee with representatives of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, Drainage Superintendents Association of Ontario, Ontario Society of Professional Engineers (Land Drainage Committee), Association of Municipalities of Ontario – Rural Caucus, OMAFRA, MNR and Conservation Ontario. The purpose of the DART is to develop a consistent approach and technical direction with regard to municipal drainage project review under Conservation Authority Regulations. NPCA staff has reviewed 8 municipal drain projects during the current calendar year.

3) Floodplain Mapping

i) Lower Welland & Thompson Creek – City of Niagara Falls

The NPCA is continuing to work with our consultant AMEC Engineering to undertake the work necessary to generate the 100 year regulatory floodplain mapping for the Lower Welland River and Thompson Creek.

ii) Singers Drain – City of Thorold

AMEC Engineering has completed the Singers Drain Floodplain Mapping Report to the satisfaction of the NPCA.

iii) Wignall Drain – City of Port Colborne

The NPCA has finalized the 100 year flood elevations for the Wignall Drain located in the City of Port Colborne.

iv) Shriner's & Beaverdams Creeks – Cities of Niagara Falls & Thorold

The NPCA is currently undertaking the necessary field work, computer modeling, and calculations in order to generate the regulatory floodplain mapping for the Shriner's Creek and Beaverdams Creek systems.

4) Gauge Station Expansion

In 2010, the NPCA received funding from the Niagara Water Strategy to undertake gauge station network improvements/expansion to both rainfall and water quality monitoring. By the end of 2011;

- nine (9) rainfall stations will be integrated into NPCA system (6 RMON & 3 new);
- three(3) permanent water quality monitoring units will be installed;
- an abandoned gauge station on Big Forks Creek will be recommissioned;
- a new "state of the art" flow and water quality station will be built on the Welland River adjacent to E.C. Brown.

- 1) **Rain Stations:** All six Regional co-operative are constructed, running and reporting at this time. The stations include: Crystal Beach, Lincoln Town Hall, Port Dalhousie, Chippawa-Niagara Falls, Seaway-Port Colborne and Welland WWTP. Permission from City of Hamilton has been granted but waiting for Locates for both Haldimand (Ruigrok) and Hamilton installation sites. Locates should be completed by June 17th, and contractors will be employed at that time to erect posts at the chosen locations.
- 2) **Water Quality Stations:** (Caistors and Balls Falls): Bases have been constructed for both units. Caistors will be installed on June 16th, Water Survey Canada will connect to the logger the next time they're available. Awaiting permission from the Town of Lincoln to run conduit along the bottom of the bridge at Balls Falls. Installation for this station must be conducted during low water conditions.
- 3) **Big Forks:** Hydro and Bell installations are complete. The rain gauge and conduit have been installed. The rest of the equipment for Big Forks should arrive by the end of the month, at which time the station will come online.
- 4) **E.C. Brown:** Preliminary permission has been granted by the Region for the installation, awaiting final comments at this time. A design has been agreed upon and contractors are ready to build the sensor mount. Sensors will be mounted on piers during low water conditions. Conduit will be installed by contractor this summer while they complete the O'Reilly's Bridge.

II. Watershed Planning Division

1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review

- i) 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. To date, approximately 370 matters have been reviewed ranging from complex Zoning Bylaw Amendments to simple Variances.

ii) Work on the Planning Brochure for municipalities continues. A 2nd draft incorporating comments from municipalities is expected to be finalized shortly.

2) Natural Areas Inventory/Heritage System

The Scenario Development Team (SDT) has completed the constraint and target setting portion of the project. This information will now be inputted into the MARXAN model and the learning scenarios will be generated over the course of the summer. The Scenario Development Team will reconvene in the fall to come to consensus on a Preferred Scenario.

The Outreach and Education Committee is working on the communications strategy for the project. The Plan will be finalized with the Steering Committee later this summer.

III. Source Water Protection Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

Source protection staff continue to work on developing the policies for the Source Protection Plan (SPP). The draft policies were reviewed by the SPP working group in July 2011 and then presented to the SPC on August 9th where they were received with some amendments.

The next task will be to pre-consult with the municipalities and provincial agencies that are affected by the policies. A number of early engagement meetings have already been held with key stakeholders and some municipalities over the summer to discuss the policy approaches.

The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) have informed us the *Amended Assessment Report* that was submitted in May 2011 has been approved. A notice should be posted on the environmental registry soon.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

a) Routine Water Quality Work

Water quality (WQ) staff are currently sampling for the 2011 field season. NPCA staff are also completing the laboratory portion of the biological monitoring that was completed at WQ stations this spring.

b) Special Projects

- Water quality staff completed the final draft of the Report on the Welland River Eutrophication Study and submitted it to the Technical Working Group and the RAP Coordinating Committee. Completion of the report was delayed to accommodate comments from provincial and federal technical staff.
- Water quality staff have been assisting the Ministry of the Environment and Conservation Ontario with the Niagara 20 Mile Creek Integrated Climate Change. A site visit was held June 17th to finalize details for this project.
- NPCA Water Well Decommissioning Grant Program: Requests for applications continue to be received for this program. .

Hydrogeology and water resources work in the last two months included:

- 6 private servicing study reviews/consultation.
- 1 development application review adjacent to provincially significant wetlands;
- 1 development monitoring program review;
- 2 record of site condition criteria reviews;
- Technical assistance for Niagara Region Water Policies /Road Salt Management /Biosolids Master Plan, Town of Grimsby Official Plan, Town of Lincoln Campden servicing, Watershed Planning and the Niagara Water Strategy ;and
- Technical assistance for the Ministry of the Environment
 - Provincial groundwater monitoring program water levels
 - Climate Change Monitoring at Balls Falls.
- Information requests for data (water well records, source water protection certificate of approval details, water quality, climate change, gas wells)

IV. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division

1) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- Staff has been making sure data submission requirements to the MOE for the Assessment Report Database are in compliance now that the Assessment Report has been approved.

2) Watershed Planning Support Activities

- Analytic support for the Natural Heritage System project over the past month has been extensive and focused on data compilation for model preparation. Decisions from the scenario development team are being implemented into the appropriate datasets that the model will use to achieve the set targets while adhering to the social political constraints identified.
- An update to the Niagara Natural Environment Information Screening Layer has been posted and circulated to the member municipalities and other partners based on several technical floodplain mapping studies that have been completed.

3) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- The Large Scale Hydrology Mapping Maintenance pilot project has also been a priority. The Authority is completing this project in partnership with the Water Resources Information Program from the Ministry of Natural Resources with the objective of determining how to keep the critical large scale surface water inventory that drives both our hydrologic and hydraulic analysis capabilities current and provides base data for land use screening.

V. Watershed Restoration Division

Restoration Division

The Watershed Restoration Program is responsible for improving water quality, water quantity and biodiversity within the NPCA Watershed. The Restoration Program advances these areas through the implementation of a comprehensive cost-sharing program that offers local landowners financial incentives to implement water quality and habitat improvement projects on their properties, thereby, rewarding the private landowner who conserves the public interest. In total, over 100 restoration projects will be completed in 2011.

1) Project Implementation

- Staff have completed the woodland reforestation and riparian planting projects. In total 35 woodland restoration / riparian projects were 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. Well over 100,000 trees and shrubs were planted. Over 10,000 native wildflowers and grass plugs were planted and over 10 kilograms of native seed was planted into restoration sites.
- Construction projects such as wetland restoration, aquatic in-stream works, erosion and bank stabilization projects are currently in implementation. Over 15 wetland projects across the watershed are scheduled for completion this season.
- 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 implemented. In total over 40 BMP projects are being implemented across the watershed.
- Staff are researching opportunities to work with landowners who live adjacent to the Welland River between the Old Welland Canal Siphon and HWY 24. The goal is to locate riparian wetland restoration opportunities in this location as it is the most affected by water level and flow reversal issues. These projects will advance our commitments under our OPG agreement.

2) Source Water Protection Stewardship

- Staff are working with several producers in the Decew Source Water Protection Area on early Action projects such as farm runoff and buffer projects.
- A runoff diversion project was completed in February at the Summers farm on Beaverdams Road. The landowner undertook an earth works project to redirect agricultural surface runoff from the farm operation away from the Decew Water Works Canal (IPZ -1). The runoff is now directed via a swale and berm through a vegetative filter of extensive cattail and wetland type growth to a slue drain outleting to Lake Gibson which is an IPZ-2. As a result, the agricultural activities on these lands are now reduced from a significant threat level to a moderate threat level.

3) Outreach & Education

Canopies for Kids

The *Canopies for Kids Program*, is a new NPCA program aimed at planting shade trees in school grounds to engage young students and volunteers in environmental learning. The goal is to learn through hands-on involvement, the benefits that trees provide, not only for a healthy environment, but also to recognize the important contribution trees make to our health.

The ten schools were planted in May, each received 10 large sized (60 mm calibre) shade trees native to Niagara including Silver Maple, Tulip, Freemans' Maple, Red Maple, and Sugar Maple. In addition, each school received up to 30 smaller trees (10 gallon pots) for students to hand plant. The entire student body participated in the planting day and have been left with the task of watering the trees and caring for them (staff have contracted out the watering over the summer).

To date, all large trees are thriving. There has been some vandalism to the smaller trees which was anticipated. Site monitoring and maintenance by both staff and students will be on-going.

The application process for 2012 will begin in late fall, early winter.

Yellow Fish Road

Requests to participate from volunteers continues, although with less frequency in the summer months. Information will be circulated to schools and community groups in early September to encourage fall participation.

Community Fisheries Involvement Programs

- The Angler Diary Program continues to collect data from anglers in the Welland River and Twelve Mile Creek watersheds.
- Staff are working with MNR to identify common areas of interest for fall fisheries assessments. Staff will also be assisting MNR staff with their electrofishing sampling (to determine diversity and populations) and to obtain data for the Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish.

Landowner Stewardship Guides

- 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 topics sections will focus on improving water quality and biodiversity. It is anticipated to be completed in September. A grant for \$2,000.00 was secured from the Niagara Community Foundation for the production of this document.
- The NPCA was a partner on the production of a Stewardship Guide for American Water-Willow, which is a Species at Risk in Niagara. This important riparian plant, stabilizes banks, prevents erosion and promotes improved water quality and clarity. In addition, it is important to the life cycles of many local aquatic species, and as a flowering plant it is important to pollinators. As with many riparian plants, the water-willow is vulnerable to shoreline clearing to accommodate agriculture and development. This guide promotes how humans and this species can happily coexist.

VI. Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

1) Lyons Creek East

The Lyons Creek East Administrative Controls Protocol hard copy documents have been distributed to all of the representatives of the participating agencies. Plans are underway for the Conservation Authority, as the lead coordinating agency in implementing the Protocol, to host the first meeting of the participants in mid-September.

2) RAP Monitoring & Assessment

Conclusions and recommendations are being prepared for the RAP's BUI assessment report for the *Loss of Fish & Wildlife Habitat* in the Area of Concern (AOC). A follow-up meeting to the multi-stakeholder habitat workshop in March was held by the RAP Coordinating Committee in mid-July to address concerns raised by MNR, and to provide clarification on the focus and priorities of the RAP for delisting the AOC. A response is anticipated from MNR with regards to their strategy for habitat issues, as well as to confirm their choice of approach to address a delisting criterion for BUI: *Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations*.

The draft report from the Welland River Eutrophication Study, which contains results from the last 3 years of monitoring water quality in the Welland River watershed, has been submitted to the RAP Coordinating Committee. The NPCA was the lead agency in helping to characterize and assess the problem for the BUI: *Eutrophication and Undesirable Algae*. The next steps will involve developing a strategy with local stakeholders to address nutrient issues in the Welland River watershed.

From the results of Microbial Source Tracking at beaches in the Niagara Region, Queen's Royal Beach in Niagara-on-the-Lake was found to be one of the three beaches with the highest level of contamination. It is the only beach in the AOC that needs to be addressed for the BUI: *Beach Closings*. Further monitoring to determine the source is being carried out and it may provide the information needed for an implementation plan.

3) RAP Stage 3:

The RAP Coordinating Committee met mid-July 2011. A draft Table of Contents for the Stage 3 (and final) RAP report has been developed.

The 2011 RAP Update is under preparation and it will contain an update on Lyons Creek East.

RAP input was provided at the Niagara Region's *Water Resources Policy Update* hop (June).

The final draft of bi-national AOC delisting guidelines for Ontario and New York is ready for sign-off by the respective agencies.

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

The 2007 Canada-Ontario Agreement Respecting the Great Lakes Basin Ecosystem (COA) has been extended until June 24, 2012.

5) International Liaison

The RAP Coordinator will attend the 2011 International Joint Commission Great Lakes Biennial meeting at Wayne State University on October 12-14, 2011.

The State of the Lakes Ecosystem Conference (SOLEC) 2011 will be held on October 26 & 27 in Erie Pennsylvania. The theme is: "Linking Land to the Lakes".

The Lyons Creek East Administrative Controls Protocol for Monitored Natural Recovery of contaminated sediments has been nominated as a SOLEC success story.

6) Update: Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The Governments of Canada and the United States (the Parties) recognize the importance of engaging the Great Lakes community as they proceed with the negotiations to amend the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA).

To ensure broad and meaningful public engagement, the Parties would like to provide one more opportunity for the public to input into this process as the negotiations between the Canada and the United States near conclusion.

There will be a Binational Public Forum on the evening of September 8 in Toronto. (Details forthcoming).

LAND MANAGEMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

The summer day camps at Ball's Falls continue to be popular with new and returning campers alike. Camps will run to the end of August. The programs even attract visitors from other nearby day camps. On August 4th campers from Eva Rothwell Resource Centre participated in the Nature's Nurturers program. They went on a guided hike, made a craft and participated in a campfire and game. Two other Mini-Adventures are scheduled in August.

Many attended the family activities organized around the July 1st long weekend. 45 people registered for a bat program on July 12th. The "Our Feathered Friends" exhibit from the Canadian Museum of Nature continues until September 5th. The next exhibit "Seeds in Disguise" has received sponsorship support from Stokes Seeds. The sponsorship will assist with school programming and promotional materials for the exhibit.

The Communities in Bloom Committee visited Ball's Falls on July 12th. Although the group only had 30 minutes to visit the site, they received a brief historical overview, a short visit to the mill (a last minute request), a tour of the cabin gardens (by Ellen Mitchinson) and a brief introduction to the gardens surrounding the Ball Home.

The Mill is receiving new cedar siding. The south (front) installation is almost complete. When the Ball's first built the mill, they used cedar on the exterior, so the installation is an authentic representation of what would have originally been there.

Binbrook Conservation Area

Attendance has been very strong throughout July and into early August. Pavilion bookings are high through to the end of September. Watercraft rentals continue to grow in popularity. The watercraft rental fleet was doubled in 2011 to meet this demand.

The beach water quality has remained good throughout the summer. Concerns regarding lake water quality and testing have dropped, however staff continue to receive questions related to the PFOS contaminant study.

The Hamilton Astronomers Club is organizing a public viewing night for Friday, August 12th to coincide with the annual Perseid Meteor Shower. The event will be covered by K-Lite FM and CH News. Staff expect 200-300 visitors to attend this free event.

Binbrook served as a setting for filming of the Mayday Productions television program for the Discovery Channel in Canada. One episode filmed in July and another will be filmed in late-August.

Retrofit of the recirculation system for the splash pad is complete and was inspected by the Health Unit for compliance with the new water quality guidelines. The NCPA is being pro-active in putting new filtration equipment in place to bring our systems up to new standards that are being implemented in phases throughout the province. The re-circulating splash pad operating at Binbrook is one of a few in the province, and our staff have the challenge of operating a leading edge. The system at Binbrook recirculates water rather than pushing it down a municipal sewage system. Water demands are heavy on a busy summer day and staff are working to keep the water flowing for our visitors. For now the pad is at minimal operation in the park until we work the kinks out of the new equipment. Staff will continue to work with our suppliers, contractor, and plumber to get the pad back into operation in the park with the new disinfection system in place.

Upgrades to the gatehouse trail are near completion and the remainder of the work to upgrade the surface will be done with the support of our volunteers. A media event with TD Canada Trust is being planned to recognize their contribution to this project.

Trail Work

The trail crew has been busy restoring trails at a number of Conservation Areas. These capital improvements are appreciated by visitors, who provide frequent comments on the new trail work.

To date, upgrades have taken place at Virgil, Mountainview, E.C. Brown, Rockway and Beamer Conservation Areas.

Jordan Stairs – Twenty Valley Trail

In early July, NPCA staff received several calls about a “fish kill” at the ponds in the Twenty Valley, behind Jordan Village. Authority staff visited the site and determined that the problem was most likely a virus, specific to the non-native goldfish living in the ponds. All other wildlife in the area seemed unaffected by the problem. Staff from the Central Workshop visited the area three times over the next two weeks to remove dead and decaying fish from the pond.

Staff are preparing design plans for stair replacement of the wooden stairs behind the Jordan Museum. Constructed in the late 1990s', these stairs are deteriorating due to the damp, shaded location along the slope of the Twenty Mile Creek. The new designs will incorporate materials that are easier to maintain and longer lasting.

EC Brown Conservation Area

Trail work is completed on a walking loop through the woodlot at the 'old' EC Brown site. Discussions are underway with the airport to negotiate trail access across their land to connect the EC Brown boat ramp site with the wetland site near O'Reilly's bridge. Once this is negotiated, the final clearing for access onto the trail and across the airport property will be finished.

Mountainview Conservation Area

Staff are cutting a new access trail up the escarpment to connect to the Bruce Trail. This new trail follows the route of what appears to be an old overgrown logging or equipment access trail and provides a good access grade and trail bed for hiking. When a new parking lot is installed in future in the open grassy area off Mountain Road, this trail will become the primary hiking route to get on to the Bruce Trail.

Beamer Memorial

Staff met with members of the Iroquoia Bruce Trail Club to walk a portion of the Bruce Trail below the escarpment near Gibson Street. Natural erosion of the slope in one area is threatening trail safety, a new trail to re-route around this area is now completed by the Bruce Trail. NPCA staff have been on site to cut the hazardous trees in the area of the new trail. This area will continue to be monitored by the club and CA staff to assess public safety.

A number of non-native, invasive Buckthorn trees are being removed from the area north of the bird monitoring tower. An outside contractor is removing the material (cutting and mulching) and staff are monitoring and applying herbicide to the freshly cut stumps to prevent regrowth. The project will be completed by mid September, with follow up for the next 5 years to capture re-growth and seedlings.

Mud Lake Conservation Area

Annual benthic monitoring was completed by staff in late June. This monitoring program assesses the diversity and abundance of benthic organisms to track their change overtime in relation to the water management activities. These organisms provide a valuable food source for waterfowl, and other species.

The Shorthills Cycling Club Committee held a mountain bike race event through Mud Lake Conservation Area on July 31st. Existing trails were used. During this time the park was closed to other users. The event was reported to go well with no incidence. Should any trail impacts have been experienced the club would repair them.

NPCA Hunting Program

Staff issued an additional 39 hunting permits in for the NPCA Conservation Area in 2011. To date staff received and issued 190 hunting permits/permission for 2011. Of this total, hunting permits are issued to 31 individuals residing outside of our administrative area.

The hunting lottery is running again in 2011 for the hunting blinds during the first two weeks of the duck hunting season at Mud Lake and Binbrook Conservation Areas. Information and application forms were put on line and mailed to 2011 and 2010 waterfowl hunting permit applicants. Deadline for completed forms is August 31st, with the draw to take place September 1st. All successful applicants will be notified by email or mail.

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek Campgrounds

Both July and August long weekends were busy at the campgrounds. The web-based reservation system is allowing visitors to book sites well in advance, resulting in full campgrounds at both Conservation Areas.

In July, a Russian Folk Festival was held at Chippawa Creek. This is the third year for this event which draws a crowd from across Ontario and New York State. These special events help increase day-use revenues and camping at slower times in the summer.

On July 15th, Long Beach hosted the 11th Annual “Bolerama” event where Boler Trailer owners hold a rally and campout. This year involved more than 100 trailers from across Canada and the United States. The event was so successful that arrangements have already been made to host the gathering again in 2012.

The hot summer weather has resulted in good business for our campgrounds and day-use. Long Beach in particular, has seen a steady increase in day-use visitors in spite of sporadic beach closures due to high bacteria levels in the lake water.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Niagara Children’s Water Festival

The 2011 school program is completely booked with six schools currently on the waiting list. The public day is scheduled for Sunday, September 18 from 12:00 to 4:00. This is always a popular event and provides an opportunity for families to come out to learn about our water resources. The new website has been completed and is now live. This is a great resource for teachers and students to continue learning about water resources throughout the year.

Community Outreach

Staff has participated in several community initiatives to promote the work of the Conservation Authority and our various conservation areas. An updated Conservation Areas booklet has been completed and distributed to tourism centres and is available at various Conservation Areas, libraries, municipal offices and hotels.

Niagara Natural Heritage System Project

Staff is developing public outreach and education materials as part of the communications component of the program. A newsletter is currently being worked on and should be completed in early September.

GLSLCI Annual Meeting and Conference

The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Annual Meeting and Conference (The Power of Shared Waters) was held June 15 - 17 in Niagara Falls. The event was well attended and many positive comments were received by those attending.

Annual Report

The 2010 Annual Report has been published and is being distributed.

Source Water Protection

The Working Group is continuing their work on policy approaches to deal with significant drinking water threats. No written policies are completed at this time.

2011 Latornell 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 18th annual A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium – **Water: The Future of the Source** looks at the current state of our water resources in Ontario and attempts to forecast the quality and quantity of our water resources (subject to various stressors) that will be available in the upcoming years.

Delegates at this year's A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium will discuss Ontario's water issues in the context of climate change, future demands, relationship of natural and built infrastructure and how it all relates to human health and water management.

The theme of water will be explored through the various Symposiums' sessions including: Communications, Outreach and Education, Community Stewardship, Geospatial Technology, Great Lakes, Green Infrastructure, Inspiring Sustainability, Natural Heritage, Resource Management (Fisheries), Resource Management (Forestry) Water Watershed Management.

Recommendation:

Report No. 44-11 outlining the status of Authority projects/programs be received for information.

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