

**NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FULL AUTHORITY**

WELLAND

AGENDA

NOVEMBER 16, 2011 – 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – October 19, 2011

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held October 19, 2011.

**(2) MINUTES NIAGARA REGION TREE AND FOREST CONSERVATION BY-LAW
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING – October 20, 2011**

Attached are the Minutes of the Niagara Region Tree and Forest Conservation By-law Advisory Committee meeting held October 20, 2011.

(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(4) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(5) CAO'S REMARKS

(6) DELEGATION – ERICA FROESE

Ms. Froese has requested an opportunity to address the Board regarding the Lorraine Bay Water Quality Group letters dated October 14th and 17th, 2011, which are attached.

**(7) PUBLIC COMMENT – HOUSEKEEPING AMENDMENTS – REGULATION OF
DEVELOPMENT, INTERFERENCE WITH WETLANDS AND ALTERATIONS TO
SHORELINES AND WATERCOURSES REGULATION (ONTARIO REGULATION
155/06, AS AMENDED) – REPORT NO. 60-11**

Attached is Report No. 60-11 with respect to this matter.

**(8) CENTRAL WELLAND RIVER, UPDATED 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN
MODELLING/MAPPING - REPORT NO. 61-11**

Attached is Report No. 61-11 regarding this matter.

**(9) GREEN ENERGY ACT, CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES ACT AND OTHER
PROVINCIAL STATUTES; REPORT NO. 62-11**

Attached is Report No. 62-11 regarding this matter, together with supporting documentation.

**(10) PFOS COMPOUNDS AT THE BINBROOK RESERVOIR (UPDATE) – REPORT NO.
63-11**

Attached is Report No. 63-11 updating this matter.

(11) BUDGET STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 64-11

Attached is Report No. 64-11 regarding this matter. The budget documents are enclosed separately.

(12) PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 65-11

Attached is Report No. 65-11 outlining the status of Authority Projects/Programs to date.

(13) OTHER BUSINESS

(14) IN-CAMERA

- (a) NPCA Regulations – Outstanding Enforcement Matters – Negotiated Compliance and Violation Status Report - Report No. CR-21-11
- (b) Tree By-Law Status Report – Report No. CR-22-11
- (c) Personnel matter – Report No. CR-23-11

ADJOURNMENT

ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
NIAGARA REGION TREE AND FOREST CONSERVATION BY-LAW

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
NPCA Office, Welland October 20, 2011 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES (Draft)

Members Present: R. Miller, Chair
H. Rempel
K. Stayzer
F. Berardi
T. Platts
J. Schonberger
A. Magazzeni

NPCA Staff Present: D. Baker, Director, Land Management
D. Drennan, Forester
A. Brant, Forestry Technician

Absent: M. Anderson
C. Travis
K. Durham
P. Robertson
B. Andres, Vice-chair
B. Atkinson
L. Campbell
D. Heyworth
K. Wiens
A. Witteveen
B. Maves, NPCA Chair
B. Timms, NPCA Vice-chair

BUSINESS:

1) Call to order

The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. at the NPCA Office in Welland.

2) Minutes of previous meeting (April 21, 2011)

MOVED BY: Joe Schonberger
SECONDED BY: Francesca Berardi

THAT: The minutes of the previous meeting, held April 21, 2011, be accepted as circulated.

“CARRIED”

3) Review of Action Items from previous meeting (April 21, 2011)

Action Item 14-2009: Dan Drennan will inquire and set up a presentation from NPCA restoration staff for a presentation to the committee at a future meeting. Dan Drennan will plan this for the next meeting. **(Completed)**

4) Presentation: NPCA Restoration Program

Jocelyn Baker, Coordinator Watershed Restoration at the NPCA provided a presentation on the programs conducted by the CA with particular focus on the Restoration Program.

5) Discussion Items: Proposed Revisions to the Forest Bylaw– Report No. 03-11

Dan Drennan and Amy Brant presented the **Proposed Revisions to the Forest Bylaw: Report Number 03-11** to the advisory committee. The following items were discussed:

- a) Definition of a hazard tree: need to provide the proposed wording to the committee
- b) An exemption to allow clear cut harvesting for 'even-aged' forest management: currently the bylaw does not have a mechanism to allow for clear cut harvest for situations that would require it. Either an exemption is required or the permit condition of "*the injuring or destruction of trees will not reduce the number of trees per hectare below the minimum number of trees per hectare required to be considered a Woodland*" can be removed and replaced with "*Trees which are to be harvested are cut in accordance with Good Forestry Practices, and as described in a Silvicultural Prescription prepared by or prepared under the direction of a qualified OPFA Member.*" This would provide flexibility in the method of harvesting. Good Forestry Practices, as defined in the *Forestry Act*, does not prohibit clear cutting as a harvest method.
- c) Joe Schonberger recommended keeping Section 5 as 'Permits' rather than changing it to 'Good Forestry Practices Permits'. Dan Drennan will research if this is required.
- d) It was recommended to get legal advice on inserting the following clause in Section 6, "*A permit issued under the Bylaw does not relieve the owner of any other applicable property boundary, municipal, provincial, or federal by-laws, regulations or requirements.*" Currently this statement is only included with a Good Forestry Practices permit. The intent of adding it to the Bylaw is to inform the public that there is other conditions/legislation involved with harvesting trees besides a GFP Permit. As an alternative, this topic can be mentioned in the '*Common questions about the bylaw*' section of the Bylaw booklet.
- e) The committee was receptive of the idea of using 'Set Fines' as a way of enforcing the Bylaw for minor offences. More work is required with the involvement of Region legal counsel and a Justice of the Peace to create a list of offences with the amount for applicable fines.
- f) Ken Stayzer recommended that the renewal period be increased under Section 6.5(b). His reason for the increase is to allow woodland owners a longer period of time to harvest marked trees if it will be a gradual removal, such as a fuelwood harvest. New wording will be suggested to accommodate.
- g) The Region legal counsel also has a few possible revisions, mainly in Section 9: Penalties. It has more to do with interpretation problems, not increasing fines.

Action Item 02-2011: Report Number 03-11 will be resubmitted to the committee showing the entire Bylaw with proposed deletions and additions from the Niagara Region's legal counsel and NPCA Bylaw staff.

6) Status Report: Update of activity (April 8 to September 30, 2011)

A copy of the Communications and work Report was circulated to the committee with the agenda package. The floor was opened up to questions regarding specific items.

- a) Helmet Rempel asked why a land owner (NOTL) could not relocate a tree on their property. Response was the tree, an Eastern Flowering Dogwood, is an identified species at risk, therefore it cannot be harmed. Relocating is an unnecessary risk.
- b) The committee inquired why a land owner was discouraged from harvesting a woodland in south Welland. Dan Drennan responded that the majority of the woodland is permanently submerged in water and logging is not possible without causing significant damage. The woodland is the lowest parcel of land in the area.
- c) Joe Schonberger inquired about the location of a phone tower project in Fort Erie. He questioned if it was within a PSW. Dan Drennan responded that the project area is not in a PSW or within a PSW buffer area.

7) Other Business

- a) Emerald Ash Borer: Amy Brant provided a summary & mapping for the 2011 EAB traps & findings. A brief discussion took place about Branch Sampling that will be completed in certain areas in late October and early November. The committee was informed that a report will be circulated to them upon project completion.
- b) Heritage Bylaw Trees: Amy Brant informed that committee that she will be contacting each municipality about Heritage trees, if they have any and if they would like them protected under the bylaw.

8) Scheduling of next meeting

The next meeting will be scheduled in January or February 2012. Members will be notified. Location of the meeting will be the NPCA Administration Office in Welland.

9) Adjournment

MOVED BY: Joe Schonberger

THAT: The meeting be adjourned at 9:30 pm

“CARRIED”

To: Chairman and Members of the Authority

Date: November 16, 2011

Re: Public Comment - Housekeeping Amendments - Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (Ontario Regulation 155/06, as amended) – Report No. 60-11

The Board will recall that at the September 21, 2011 meeting staff brought forward a draft amended Regulation for the Board's endorsement. The draft was prepared as per the template provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources. Adoption of the watershed specific regulations by each Conservation Authority Board was expected to be largely a legal formality in what has been a thorough, multi year process initiated to clarify Conservation Authority roles and improve service delivery. This process saw both the Conservation Authorities Act and the parent Content of Conservation Authority Regulations, revised in October of 2010 and March of 2011 respectively.

The timeline and content for processing the local regulation amendment was determined by the Ministry of Natural Resources in consultation with Conservation Ontario and is in keeping with the recommendations of the Conservation Authorities Liaison Committee (CALC). The CALC included representation from the building industry, the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR), Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), municipalities, Conservation Ontario, and environmental organizations. The plan was that due to the similar nature and consultative approach in developing the amendments, that the Province would consolidate and process the amendments from all 36 Conservation Authorities for final approval, including posting them on the Ontario's Regulatory Registry. Subject to a review of any comments received from the ORR as well as, review of each Authorities amendments for conformity, by the province's legal Counsel, it was anticipated that the amended Regulations would be in place in the spring of 2012.

Nonetheless, at the September meeting, the Board decided to modify the template Regulation and depart from the provincial process to obtain local comments on the draft amended regulation. As per Board direction, ads requesting Public Comment were placed in 8 local papers, on the website and 480 direct mail outs were made. The 30 day comment period ended on October 28, 2011.

In this regard, attached for the Boards information please find copies of all written comments received. In addition, for the Board's information staff has also appended a letter dated June 11, 2007 from the Ministry of Natural Resources that speaks to one of the amendments proposed that some felt was too broad to be considered as "housekeeping". The correspondence addressed proposed modification/deletions to clarify a long outstanding issue with the intent and application of clause 2(e).

In terms of process, the Ministry of Natural Resources has advised that the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority is the only one of the provinces 36 Conservation Authorities that has decided to deviate from the process and template regulation. At this point, the Regulations from the other 35 Conservation Authorities have been presented to the provincial Regulation Committee.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has indicated that due to a change in Ministers', the schedule for final approval/formal adoption of the Regulations from the 35 other CA's has been delayed, which might allow for NPCA to reconcile with the process and changes already endorsed by the larger Conservation Authority community if it wishes to do so.

MNR also advises that any amendments made must be in conformance and show consistency with the templates provided. The Board will recall that the decision was made at the last meeting to remove certain clauses confirming our ability to ask for additional studies. MNR staff advise that this change alone, removes NPCA from conformity and is problematic from a legal perspective.

Finally, MNR advises that there is no specific process in place to deal with modifications not in conformance or consistent with the template provided and endorsed by the 35 other Conservation Authorities.

Senior staff are of the opinion that the changes previously proposed and endorsed by all other Authorities are long overdue and would improve NPCA's ability to deliver it's regulations program. The Regulations are largely a technical legal document and the Board still enjoys far more flexibility than accorded in many other pieces of legislation to address local issues via its Policies and Procedures for Planning and Regulations document.

Staff believe that the most effective way to address local issues is through the NPCA's Policies and Procedures for Planning and Regulations which are within the Board control. As such, staff would recommend adopting the previous draft of the Regulation and using the feedback received from this circulation as input in future revisions to NPCA's Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Administration of Ontario Regulation 155/06 and Land Use Planning Policy Document, dated December 12, 2007

Attachments :

- 1) letter from MNR dated June 11, 2007, Re: intent of clause 2 in CA regulations
- 2) Comments from public

RECOMMENDATION 1

That Report No. 60-11 be received for information.

Further that the feedback obtained from public comments be used as input when developing the future amendments to the NPCA's Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Administration of Ontario Regulation 155/06 and Land Use Planning Policy Document, dated December 12, 2007

RECOMMENDATION 2

Whereas a local Conservation Authorities Act Section 28 'Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation' has been prepared in conformity with the provisions outlined in Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and the amended Ontario Regulation 97/04, and as per the eligible amendments identified by the Ministry of Natural Resources

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority adopts the proposed amendments to the subject regulation

AND THAT the said regulation proposal with eligible amendments be submitted to the Ministry of Natural Resources for review, posting on the Regulatory Registry, and depending on the results of the registry posting, for subsequent consideration for approval by the Minister of Natural Resources.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That staff be directed to prepare a future report which recommends revisions to NPCA Policies, Procedures and Guidelines for Administration of Ontario Regulation 155/06 and Land Use Planning Policy Document, dated December 12, 2007, that addresses to the extent possible, concerns outlined by the Board and to the Board through the public input from both this public circulation and the strategic plan.

Prepared by: John Kukalis, C.E.T.; Director, Water Management

Respectfully Submitted by:

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



To: Chairman and Members of the Authority

Date: November 16, 2011

Subject: Central Welland River, Updated 100 Year Floodplain Modelling/Mapping: Report No. 61-11

The purpose of this memo is to obtain approval from the Board to finalize an interim policy to facilitate implementing the updated flood levels along the main channel of the Welland River.

Floodplain mapping for the Welland River was last completed over a quarter century ago in 1985. Since then, numerous limited studies have been undertaken mostly in relation to hydro operations or the old and new siphons, all with slightly differing approaches and results. In the intervening years a number of both physical and climatic changes have occurred that affect both the hydraulics and hydrology of the system. Also, in the last decade, numerical modelling has become much more capable at simulating flat and complex unsteady flow regimes like that which exists in the Welland River.

In 2010, as part of its ongoing floodplain mapping updates, the Authority began the process of reanalyzing and remapping the floodplain. Due to the complexity of the system the work was outsourced to a consulting engineering firm with specialized expertise in modelling tools used for non standard systems. The first section of remapping to be completed was that extending from the new siphon in the City of Welland to Port Davidson in West Lincoln. These new levels were available in the spring of 2011 and included in NPCA's release of a new public GIS tool that went live in March of this year.

In terms of changes from 1985, flood levels are significantly higher in many areas. To summarize, the level on the upstream side of the new siphon has risen by approximately 0.10 metres and steadily increases to a maximum difference of approximately 1.06 metres at the downstream side of the old siphon. In this reach the floodplain for the most part is contained within the broad incised riverine corridor. At the upstream face of the old siphon this increase drops to 0.77 metres and remains fairly steady being approximately 0.67 metres at the Welland city limits. Beyond this to Wellandport, levels in rural West Lincoln rise steadily with a maximum increase of 1.37 metres. This does not come as a surprise to NPCA staff, as we have observed levels on a number of occasions that have approached or exceeded the old levels generated in 1985. It should be noted that this new model was calibrated to real time events recorded at our gauge stations.

The completion of mapping for the Upper Welland River extending from Port Davidson to the Niagara/Hamilton boundary at Westbrook Road is behind schedule and will not be ready until December of this year.

Although there is no requirement to hold public meetings when updating flood lines and indeed this has not typically been done, in light of the significance of the revisions to what are long established flood lines, staff believe that upon completion of the balance of the river, it would be appropriate to hold two open houses to present the new lines to the public. Also, after working through a number of proposals in these areas over last six months, staff also would propose that an interim policy be adopted for the expanded area, now captured by the updated floodplain lines. This has not been done before by NPCA.

The new policy would be relatively straightforward in that works could be allowed in the "expansion area" subject to appropriate flood proofing measures being undertaken, either structural or by way of properly placed fill. Staff would suggest that the transitional policy be put into effect until February 1, 2013 or for a period of one year.

Normally, a significant amount of additional analysis is necessary before considering implementing a phase in approach, to ensure the hydrologic response of the watershed is not altered. However, assuming the Board is in agreement with the period recommended and considering the limited development potential in the expansion area, the potential for significant floodplain loss will be mitigated, such that another study is not warranted.

Staff believe this is a practical approach to mitigate storage loss and balance the need to implement the updated flood levels with the needs of watershed residents that have projects underway or near commencement in the expansion areas.

The Conservation Authorities Liaison Committee's Policies and Procedures documents recommends undertaking a public consultation process before implementing policy changes. Historically, public meetings around floodplains typically focus more on objections and become more of an educational effort. This is because floodplain levels are derived from well accepted engineering practice and cannot be lowered based on public comments. Therefore, given the permissive nature of what is being recommended and the fact that those affected by the updated levels will be reassured by the flexibility accorded by the policy, deferring the interim policy would be counter productive. Nonetheless, if other practical implementation ideas arise during the public meetings, staff will bring further recommendations to the Board.

Attachments:

- 1) Map of Welland River
- 2) Draft Interim Policy for the Welland River

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 61-11 be received for information.

Further that; the Board authorize staff to finalize the proposed draft interim Welland River Floodplain Policy for adoption at the December meeting;

Further that staff be directed to hold two open house to present the updated Welland River Floodplain Mapping to the public in early 2012.

Prepared by: John Kukalis, C.E.T.; Director, Water Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____

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



To: Chairman and Members of the Authority

Date: November 16, 2011

Subject: Green Energy Act, Conservation Authorities Act and Other Provincial Statutes; Report No. 62-11

Members will recall that at the September 21, 2011 meeting a number of questions were raised with respect to how/if Conservation Authorities Act and subordinate Regulations applied to "green" or renewable energy projects, under the Green Energy Act. There were also a number of questions raised with respect to the applicability of municipal building and planning approvals. The purpose of this report is to attempt to bring further clarity to these questions.

1) Conservation Authorities Act

When the Green Energy Act was approved, changes were also made to other Provincial legislation including the Conservation Authorities Act. Ontario Regulation 15/10 (Attachment 1) pursuant to the Green Energy Act confirms that restrictions under the Conservation Authorities Act do apply to green/renewable energy projects. However, concurrently the Province also inserted a specific section into the Conservation Authorities Act that imposes one unique restriction on the issues a Conservation Authority can consider when deliberating if an approval of a permit for a green/renewable energy work is to be withheld. This stipulation is that Conservation Authorities may only reject approval of a permit/project if control of flooding, erosion, dynamic beaches or pollution will be affected. For all other applications where the Green Energy Act does not apply, Authorities must also consider impacts to "conservation of land", which is a broad consideration that has been established by case law and includes issues such as natural heritage features and habitat corridors.

Appended as Attachments 1) through 6) are a number of excerpts from applicable statutes and guidelines which confirm conservation authorities jurisdiction in green/renewable energy projects.

While green/renewable energy projects are clearly not exempted from conservation authority requirements related to natural hazard lands (i.e. slopes, floodplains, etc.) current NPCA policy which governs how NPCA staff assess these projects makes no distinction or exceptions for any renewable energy projects (i.e. microfit). Nevertheless, staff would advise that it is within the NPCA Board's ability to modify its policies to include special/new provisions lessening restrictions for certain green/renewable energy projects.

Staff would also advise that, larger scale green/renewable energy projects that require a Renewable Energy Permit from the Ministry of Environment must, for the most part, be located outside of areas which conservation authorities are typically concerned with. Therefore, to date the requirements of NPCA have not been "at odds" with these larger projects.

With respect to Provincial oversight, implementation of the Green Energy Act and the Renewable Energy Permit approval process is under the portfolio of the Ministry of Environment. Oversight of the Conservation Authorities Act and its/NPCA's related Regulations, remains with the Ministry of Natural Resources.

2) Building Code Act and Planning Act

Some Board members have advised that considerable confusion exists around how the Building Code Act relates to green/renewable energy projects. While the legislative intricacies are cumbersome to follow, NPCA staff believe that the direct authority of municipal building divisions in relation to green/sustainable energy projects is limited.

While it is very clear that Regulations under the Green Energy Act list the Building Code Act as applicable legislation, (see Attachment No. 6), the "code" itself only contains criteria for governing- solar collectors mounted on a building and having a face area equal to or greater than 5 square metres; and structures that support a wind turbine generator having a rated output of more than 3 kilowatts, which in most cases is a reinforced concrete pad (see Attachment No.7).

This is not entirely surprising since the Building Code Act has traditionally not dealt with many types of specialty "structures" forming parts of various utility and transportation systems (i.e. bridges, retaining walls, electrical transmission towers, free standing pressure vessels); rather other specific statutes/codes have been relied on by the Province to ensure public safety for these more highly specialized structures.

To date, many of the "structures" not covered by the Building Code have been located in utility corridors or within larger industrial/commercial type facilities. The passing of the Green Energy Act has brought with it an emerging concern at the local level regarding how some green/renewable energy projects (i.e. solar panels, small wind turbines, etc.) may impact residential properties in established residential areas. Traditionally, local Councils had tools via the zoning bylaws process to require setbacks, drainage studies, etc. to address local concerns. However, with reference again to Attachment No.1, the green/renewable energy projects are not subject to the requirements of the Planning Act (i.e. Official Plan and Zoning Bylaws have no force). Therefore, local Councils do not have the tools previously relied on to address local residents concerns.

3) The Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act

The situation regarding green/renewable energy projects and the Niagara Escarpment Commission's jurisdiction is very similar to that of NPCA's. Concurrent with the Green Energy Act, the definition of "utility" was revised in the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act to include "generation, transmission and distribution of electrical power" as permitted use in the plan area. Nonetheless, as can be seen in Attachment No.1 & 8, green/renewable energy projects are still subject to the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act and therefore, NEC's development control policies and permit process can be applied.

Attachments:

- 1) Ontario Regulation 15/10 under Green Energy Act; other applicable statutes
- 2) excerpt from Conservation Authorities Act ; section 13.1; re: Grounds for refusing permission for renewable energy projects
- 3) excerpt from Green Energy Act ; re: definition renewable energy project
- 4) Fact Sheet from Conservation Ontario; re: Information for Green Energy Proponents
- 5) excerpt from Conservation Authorities Policy and Procedures Manual, Ministry of Natural Resources; Plan Review and Permitting Activities May 2010; re: Green Energy Act

6) excerpt from Guide: Provincial approvals for Renewable Energy Projects 2011; Ministry of Environment; re: conservation authorities

7) excerpt from Building Code; re: designated structures

8) excerpt from Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act; re;definition

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 62-11 be received for information.

Further that; a copy of the report be forwarded to local municipal Clerks.

Prepared by: John Kukalis, C.E.T.; Director, Water Management

Respectfully Submitted By: _____

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: DATE: November 8, 2011

SUBJECT: PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir (update) – Report No. 63-11

On Thursday, October 27th, the Hamilton Spectator published an article on the Hamilton Airport plans to clean-up Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) contamination on the Mount Hope Airport Site. A copy of the article is attached to this report for information. The article called into question the process that TradePort (a private airport operator) was following in their development of a plan to deal with an historic contamination of PFOS from firefighting exercises at the airport. Conservation Authority staff were quoted in the article as waiting for the “big questions” to be answered by the MOE.

The following day, Authority staff received clarification from the Ministry of the Environment, West Central Region. The MOE wanted to clarify that the TradePort report was only dealing with the Mount Hope Airport site, and did not propose any remedial action on downstream properties. The MOE was not preventing TradePort from circulating the report, however TradePort wanted to make sure that the plan had the City of Hamilton’s support before being widely distributed.

The larger question for the NPCA is the extent of the contamination and the potential impact on lands at Binbrook Conservation Area. In early July, the MOE conducted sediment samples at 9 sites in the Binbrook Reservoir. Staff at the MOE are awaiting the results of these tests so that they can conduct detailed analysis, including spatial and vertical trends. This information will help characterize the problem in the reservoir and begin looking at options to address the problem.

The CAO sent a letter to the Honourable Jim Bradley, Minister of the Environment, requesting that the PFOS matter be given special consideration, and that the MOE direct the resources necessary to remediate the problem in the Welland River.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 63-11 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: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: November 9, 2011

SUBJECT: Budget Status Report - Report No. 64-11

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

Expenditures and revenues in the operating budget are generally in line with the year end estimates as provided in the October Board meeting.

As previously noted, staff closely monitor expected revenues from non levy sources such as through Provincial, Federal programs and self generated revenues and make appropriate adjustments for any significant variances.

There are outstanding Balls Falls Thanksgiving Festival Revenues and Expenditures not reported at this time, however the relative total revenues vs. expenditures appear to be in line with the year end estimates.

RECOMMENDATION:

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

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

TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: November 16, 2011

RE: PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 65-11

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. The wet fall has allowed the water levels in the reservoir to recover. The reservoir water level is presently at standard operating level.

Staff also continue to monitor the water levels and undertake routine maintenance 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 84 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 47 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 11 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) 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 (Wainfleet) 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 climate stations 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 and Utility Locates for both Haldimand (Ruigrok) and Hamilton (Glancaster Road South) installation sites have been completed. Hydro design for the Hamilton site is outstanding from Hydro 1 (to be finalized hopefully by the end of November). All instrumentation has been installed at the Haldimand (Ruigrok) station and it is currently logging rain measurements. Transmissions to the NPCA computer server (via satellite phone) from this station are scheduled to begin by the end of November.
- 2) **Water Quality Stations:** (Caistors in West Lincoln and Balls Falls in Lincoln): The Caistors water quality sensor station has been installed and is operational. Construction of the Balls Falls station is anticipated to be completed by the end of November.
- 3) **Big Forks Creek (Wainfleet):** The Big Forks climate and stream gauge station has been installed and is operational.
- 4) **E.C. Brown Cons. Area (Pelham):** The Region has granted permission to install instrumentation on O'Reilly's Bridge. The conduit mount has been installed on the bridge and the sensor mount will be attached to the bridge pier in November. The housing for logging and communication equipment has now been installed on the post. Hydro 1 is presently completing the design to bring power to the site and is expected to be completed by the end of November as well.

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. To the end of October 211 Planning Act related Applications ranging from complex Zoning Bylaw Amendments to simple Variances have been processed. Review work on local Official Plans for the RMON also continues. In addition, 363 formal Building Permits Reviews and Property Inquiry letters have been issued to date this year.

Staff are also reviewing the Region of Niagara's Draft Water Policies in accordance with the Niagara Area Planning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

2) Natural Areas Inventory/Heritage System

The Scenario Development Team has met twice over the past month to look at the various Learning Scenarios generated by the MARXAN model. Discussion has revolved around how the scenarios have met the teams' vision of a natural heritage system, concerns for end uses, and ideas about how the stakeholder groups might use the information generated. The team is meeting on November the 10th to choose a Preferred Scenario.

Following the choice of a Preferred Scenario, staff will meet with the Steering Committee to discuss the choice.

The final report will be completed by the end of the year.

III. Source Water Protection Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

Source protection staff continue to work on developing the Source Protection Plan (SPP), and Explanatory Document.

Presentations were made to municipal councils for Thorold, Port Colborne, and Niagara Falls, as part of the pre-consultation process to update municipalities and government agencies (including NPCA) that will be responsible for implementing the SPP policies. A presentation to the Niagara Region's Integrated Community Planning (ICP) committee is scheduled for November 9th. Staff are also liaising with adjacent Source Protection Regions as part of the SPP development process.

Work on the IPZ-3 (event-based modelling) is progressing as anticipated. Event-based modelling was undertaken for the Decew, Welland and Port Colborne water treatment plant intakes.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

a) Routine Water Quality Work

- Water quality (WQ) staff are continuing to collect water samples for the 2011 field season. Water chemistry sampling will conclude in November at all 73 stations for 2011. Results from samples are still pending and will be incorporated into the 2012 water quality reports.
- WQ staff will be conducting biological monitoring at 17 stations from September to November. Biological monitoring at Hamilton Airport will also be included.
- WQ staff will be removing temperature data loggers from One Mile Creek, Four Mile Creek, Six Mile Creek and Twelve Mile Creek. These loggers were installed to monitor zones of thermal pollution in watersheds where there is groundwater inputs and sensitive species. The logger data will be further analysed and incorporated into future reports.

b) Groundwater Quantity and Quality

- The NPCA continues to collect groundwater level data at 15 monitoring wells as part of the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network (PGMN). Water quality sampling at 13 PGMN stations will be completed by the end of November.
- The NPCA continues to receive requests for applications for the NPCA Water Well Decommissioning Grant Program.

- WQ staff will be sampling monitoring wells and tributaries at the Balls Falls Centre for Conservation in November as part of the Ministry of the Environment Certificate of Approval.

3) Special Projects

- The Final Draft Report of the Welland River Eutrophication Study was completed by NPCA staff in August 2011. This final report summarizes water quality data collected from 2008 to 2010 for the Welland River watershed as part of the Niagara River Area of Concern Remedial Action Plan. The Technical Working Group will be meeting December 7th to finalize the report.
- WQ staff have been assisting the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and Conservation Ontario with the Niagara Twenty Mile Creek Integrated Climate Change Study. This project will require an upgrade to the Water Survey Canada stream gauge enclosure, installation and deployment of level loggers into groundwater monitoring wells, and installation of a rain gauge. On November 1st NPCA staff assisted in the installation of soil moisture sensors at this site.

Hydrogeology and water resources work in the last month included:

- 4 private servicing or stormwater study reviews/consultations.
- Technical assistance for
 - Niagara Region: abandonment of St.Davids Reservoirs and Integrated Community Planning Water Policies update,
 - City of Pelham Official Plan groundwater policies
 - Ministry of Environment's Niagara Twenty Mile Creek Integrated Climate Change Study
- Facilitating NPCA student interns from Brock University and Niagara College
- Preparation of an Ontario Geological Survey proposal for a 3-D geological investigation

IV. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Division

1) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- Staff has been responding to the MOE request to submit the water budget data into the prescribed water quantity data model for submission to the province as part of the Assessment Report deliverables.

2) Watershed Planning Support Activities

- Analytic support for the Natural Heritage System project over the past month continues to be extensive. Calibration of the decision support tool is complete as anticipated and the learning scenarios for the next Scenario Development Team meeting have been run. Maps and statistics continue to be generated to facilitate the discussion and evaluation of the learning scenarios on route to identify a preferred scenario that stakeholders agree they could integrate their conservation efforts around.
- GIS staff are starting a new project to develop an application that will automate the generation of property information relating to the Authority's planning and regulation review services. The idea comes from the Lake Simcoe and Region Conservation Authority who has already developed a similar product that we will be able to leverage some of the logic and design concepts from. The idea is efficiently identify and summarize potential issues (presence absence kind of approach) with our mapping data ahead of time (ie. parcel contains floodplain) on the parcel base so that planners do not have to view and subjectively interpret that on the fly in our mapping environment. The summary information will hopefully be set up as a tabular 'web service' as well so the information can not only inform and make internal operations more efficient but be consumed by our partners via the web via requests based on civic address, property identification number (PIN), and assessment roll number (ARN).

3) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- Finalizing the report for the Large Scale Integrated Hydrology Pilot Project for the Water Resources Information Program at MNR has taken a back seat to the Natural Heritage System Project this month and will resume in November.

V. Watershed 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 – Watershed Plans

- Staff have completed 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 (biodiversity 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 sown onto restoration sites.
- Construction projects such as wetland restoration, aquatic in-stream works, erosion and bank stabilization projects are currently being implemented. 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 (i.e. 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.

Highlight: All of the actions identified in the One Mile Creek watershed plan have been either completed, or in the process of being completed. Habitat restoration and invasive species removal in Lansdowne Pond and culvert replacements (upgrades for flood conveyance) were the last two actions and are currently being addressed. Riparian buffer and in stream enhancement work will be on-going as well as maintenance activities. The Friends of One Mile Creek have essentially completed their mandate.

2) Ducks Unlimited Partnership

- Staff have been working with Ducks Unlimited (DU) under a formal stewardship agreement since 2000. Each year we complete 3-7 joint wetland projects, the majority of the funding provided by DU. Five large wetland projects were completed this year through this partnership. Two projects are currently in the planning phase for next year. In total we have received approximately \$300,000 dollars for wetland restoration projects in Niagara from DU.

3) Environment Canada's Great Lakes Sustainability Fund

- Staff have been successful in accessing funding from Environment Canada's Great Lakes Sustainability Fund (formerly Great Lakes Clean-up Fund) for water quality and habitat improvement work in the Niagara River Area of Concern (AOC), mainly the Welland River, since 1994. This year we have been approved to receive \$193,000 for the implementation of stewardship projects. To date we have received \$3.5 million dollars from Environment Canada for restoration work in the AOC.

4) Outreach & Education

Canopies for Kids

- There has been high response and interest in this program. The application process for 2012 will begin the last week of November and run until the end of January, 2012. Schools selected to participate in *Canopies for Kids* will be engaged through interactive school assemblies / workshops provided by NPCA program staff. Staff will work with the school teams on planning and site design incorporating both large and small native to Niagara tree species. There is no cost to the participating schools and a maximum of 10 schools per year will be selected for participation.
- The St. Catharines Green Committee has invested \$6,500.00 into the project to offset the expenses for the two selected St. Catharines schools (Connaught and Alexandria).

Yellow Fish Road

- Five groups have participated in the YFR program for 2011. These groups included Girl Guides from Niagara Falls and St. Catharines, the Town of Grimsby, an elementary school and secondary school from Niagara. In total, 60 children and 25 adult volunteers participated. These children painted 116 storm drains and educated over 300 homes by passing out fish shaped hangers with information about the YFR program.

Community Fisheries Program

- Staff are working with MNR to identify common areas of interest for fall fisheries assessments. Staff assisted MNR in September with electrofishing assessments in the Welland River between Chippawa and Port Robinson. In September & October, staff undertook fish seining in the Welland River, Lyons Creek and Frenchman's Creek. The 2011 annual report for this program will be available in January.

Highlight: staff discovered a stinkpot (musk) turtle in Lyons Creek. They are a species at risk (threatened) in Ontario. Environment Canada considers this turtle to be one of the rarest animals in Canada. Lyons Creek is arguably one of our most diverse systems in Niagara in terms of the wetland function.

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. In addition, the St. Catharines Green Committee expressed an interest in participating financially in the printing of this document for distribution to residents living in Walkers Creek (an urban system near Carlton and Niagara St). Ontario Power Generation had also expressed an interest in participating in the production of this guide.

Niagara Envirothon

- The Steering Committee is gearing up for the 5th annual Niagara Envirothon. To celebrate our 5th year of the program, the steering committee is holding an official logo contest. This logo will appear on promotional materials, banners, t-shirts, etc. This year's event will be held at the new Jericho House retreat in Wainfleet. NPCA staff have also been working with the Jericho House on a naturalization project, making it an ideal location to hold our event. Invitations to participate in the Niagara Envirothon have been sent out to all schools in the Niagara Peninsula and we hope to have a great turnout again this year. The Envirothon will be held on April 4th (workshop/review day) and April 18th (competition day).

VI. Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

1) Lyons Creek East

Implementation of the Administrative Controls Protocol for Monitored Natural Recovery of contaminated sediment in Lyons Creek East and the roles and responsibilities of the signatory agencies were confirmed at a meeting hosted by the Conservation Authority on October 20, 2011.

2) RAP Monitoring & Assessment

A GIS landscape assessment for the *Loss of Fish & Wildlife Habitat* in the Area of Concern (AOC) has been completed. The final draft report is under review.

MNR's decision on its assessment approach to address *Degradation of Fish and Wildlife Populations* is pending.

Environment Canada has carried out Microbial Source Tracking at local beaches through the Niagara Water Strategy. Results are pending for Queen's Royal Beach, the only beach in the Niagara River Area of Concern that is impaired. It is anticipated that actions will be taken to identify and address the source of the impairment.

Recommendations from the report following the 3-year Welland River Eutrophication Study will be discussed by the RAP's Technical Working Group (TWG) in early December. It is anticipated that a phosphorus reduction strategy will be developed with local partners and stakeholders to address *Eutrophication and Undesirable Algae* in the Welland River watershed.

Implementation of the long-term monitoring plan as part of the Monitored Natural Recovery for Lyons Creek East is pending.

3) RAP Stage 3:

The RAP Coordinating Committee re-scheduled its next meet to mid-November. The agenda will include a review of the RAP budget, work plan and status of all actions, review of draft communications products, and distribution of the newly printed Stage 2 Update reports to RAP implementation partners and stakeholders.

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 attended the 2011 International Joint Commission (IJC) Great Lakes Biennial meeting at Wayne State University in October, 2011. The highlight of the meeting was an address by Al Gore.

6) Update: Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.

The Governments of Canada and the United States (the Parties) are nearing the end of negotiations to amend the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement (GLWQA). The IJC reported that the new agreement will include annexes on Aquatic Invasive Species, Climate Change and Habitat and Species. For status of negotiations and proposed

LAND MANAGEMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

The "Seeds in Disguise" exhibit closed on November 7th. This was a very popular exhibit, well supported by the local community. This was also our first partnership with Stokes Seeds. The new exhibit "Winter Sports" will run from November 12 – December 23, featuring an exhibit of 1900-1950 clothing on loan from the Fashion History Museum.

There will be a special event at Ball's Falls on December 10, 2011, from 1-2:30 p.m., when noted author Rita Brown will be presenting an illustrated talk focusing on historical sports costume. Tickets are \$15.00 per person at the door and includes admission to Ball's Falls Conservation Area.

The historical buildings closed on November 1st. Staff will be taking the necessary steps to clean and prepare the buildings for the winter season. Some of the buildings will be used during the Christmas in the Country School Program, beginning November 28th. A new event "Christmas with Santa" is being held on December 4th. The fee is \$10 per person, with children under 5 admitted free. The program includes games, letters to Santa, cookies, cider and a private 8 minute visit with Santa.

Signage in the Centre for Conservation has been installed to improve visitor wayfinding through the building. Additional work is proposed over the winter months that will improve the visitor experience throughout the site. Other improvements to the Centre include water bottle filling station, emergency lights and signs to encourage visitors who are cycling in the area.

A number of grant applications were submitted over the past month. The Community Museums Operating Grant and the Jubilee Grant are two of the programs which should assist in the operations and programming at Ball's Falls.

An accessibility Audit was conducted by Linda Crabtree, following up on an earlier audit from 2008. Plans are being made to ensure the site is compliance with new legislation, expected in 2012.

A promotional video was produced for Ball's Falls. It will be used at the Centre and at outreach events. An outreach event at Heritage Community Christmas Gathering in November at the Royal Botanical Gardens, will be the first official outreach using the new media package.

Communities in Bloom, Town of Lincoln

NPCA Staff assist the Town of Lincoln with their annual Communities in Bloom program and provide support services for the judge's tour of the community and our Ball's Falls Conservation Area. This year the Town was pleased to receive a Provincial "5 Bloom" award for their efforts. This level of achievement permits the Town to consider competing nationally against other communities. The committee will be conducting a wrap up meeting in November and discuss whether to take the program to the national level of competition for 2012.

Binbrook Conservation Area

The park water system and splash pad are now winterized.

A media event was held November 6th with staff from TD Bank, Binbrook branch in recognition of a grant bestowed from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation for trail improvements in the park. In attendance were staff from TD Bank Binbrook Branch, Niagara Peninsula

Conservation Foundation, Glanbrook Conservation Committee, and NPCA Staff. An article related to this event will be forthcoming in the Glanbrook Gazette.

Staff are starting to prepare for the 2012 Ice Fishing season along with the annual Ice Fishing Derby

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas

Staff are winterizing the water systems at both parks, getting ready for the winter season. Over the next several weeks, work will continue on drainage improvements, hazard tree assessments and infrastructure upgrades.

When the weather begins to close in, staff will move to the Central Workshop to assist with winter projects.

Stevensville Conservation Area

Staff are preparing design plans for a new bridge to replace the aging wooden bridge in the park, south of the new bridge. This access over Black Creek leads visitors to the extensive network of walking trails in the south west part of the property. Staff will be working with the Fort Erie Conservation Club to demolish and salvage the wood from the old bridge for their use. The NPCA is working with the Town of Fort Erie and the Fort Erie Conservation Club to resolve the matter of the Club's lease. Staff expect to have a report addressing this issue for the December meeting.

Two Mile Creek Conservation Area

The asphalt trail in the conservation area is slated for replacement, weather pending and operation of the asphalt plants at this time of year.

Beamer Conservation Area

The trail re-route completed by the Bruce Trail volunteers is working well and being used by hikers daily. Staff have cleared hazard trees away from this new trail and are periodically monitoring use.

Buckthorn removal/control has been completed. Disturbed areas will be re-planted in late November. Follow up assessments will continue in the spring and over the next 4 years to catch regrowth that may occur from previous years seed in the soil

Chippawa Creek Conservation Area

As part of the design review for the new comfort station, staff visited the new facility built at Warsaw Caves Conservation Area as part of the Conservation Ontario workshop tour. This field review of the building allowed staff to hear first hand from Otonabee CA staff their lessons learned during the design and construction process. Some interesting features of their new building included solar hot water heating and energy efficient fixtures. Staff are preparing notes and specifications from this visit which will help guide the building design plans for Chippawa.

St. Johns Conservation Area

The NPCA was partnering with the City of Thorold resurfacing project to restore the entrance road and parking lot at St. Johns Conservation Area. This week, NPCA staff were notified that Norjohn Contracting will not be able to complete Thorold's contract due to weather constraints and workload. The contract price will be honoured, however the work will not be completed until spring of 2012.

Although this is a setback, there is very little activity in the Conservation Area over the winter months. Staff will endeavour to get this portion of the contract high up on Thorold's priority list when Norjohn begins work in the spring.

Comfort Maple Conservation Area

A small portion of this year's seed crop was harvested and is being propagated to maintain the parent genetics of this heritage tree. A nursery is propagating the seeds and tending the saplings until spring 2014. Approximately 100 saplings will be tended and the NPCA will replant at the Comfort Maple area and in other Conservation Areas.

Rain Gauge Installation

Land Management staff assisted the Water Department with the installation of 3 rain gauge stations.

Species at Risk

The NPCA is helping the recovery of the Eastern Flowering Dogwood. This tree is an endangered tree species, with the greatest threat being dogwood anthracnose, a leaf disease which has decimated many populations. This fungal disease causes massive die-back of leaves causing tree death or compromised flower and fruit production in surviving trees. To help in the recovery of this species and determine ideal site conditions to reduce or resist anthracnose, staff are monitoring moisture and light conditions of poor and healthy Flowering Dogwood species on NPCA lands. These factors have suspected relationship to the severity of the anthracnose disease.

CFWIP funds have provided assistance to acquire moisture monitoring equipment. The 2011 monitoring of moisture and light conditions of Flowering Dogwood will be completed mid November. Monitoring will continue for 1 -2 more full growing seasons. The information will be used for comparison between trees with healthy and poor conditions. Results will be forwarded to the Species Recovery Team, and used in NPCA park management activities and site population recovery (i.e. stand thinning, prescribed burns etc).

NPCA Hunting Program

Staff issued an additional 59 hunting permits in for the NPCA Conservation Area in 2011. To date staff has received and issued 346 hunting permits for 2011. Of this total, 61 permits are issued to individuals residing outside of our administrative area.

The controlled waterfowl hunting program at Mud Lake Conservation Area will close on November 30. The waterfowl hunting program at Binbrook will continue until the second week in December or freeze-up.

Provincial Controlled Shotgun Season for deer takes place November 7-13. Staff will be enforcing park rules/regulations to ensure that the parks are safe for all users.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Conservation Achievement Awards

The 2011 Awards Presentation and Reception will be held on Wednesday, November 23rd, at the Centre for Conservation, Ball's Falls commencing at 7:00 p.m. Invitations have been sent to all nominees. Board members are encouraged to advise staff as soon as possible if they are planning to attend and willing to assist in handing out awards.

Watershed Report Card

Strong and resilient natural ecosystems help us adapt to the many challenges including the impacts of climate change, rapid urbanization, stressed biodiversity and increased pollution. Ontario's Conservation Authorities have been collecting and analyzing environmental data and then using this information to guide the development of local natural resource programs and plans.

Public demand for information about the state of our watersheds and a need to demonstrate accountability led Conservation Authorities to conduct a pilot project to establish guidelines for developing watershed report cards. The report card is an important tool used to transfer information about local watershed conditions to a wider audience including local residents, agencies, and government partners; thus enabling informed decision-making leading to enhanced local protection and remediation actions.

In 2009, a review of the watershed report cards by Conservation Ontario revealed inconsistencies in the way that Conservation Authorities were collecting, analyzing and reporting local technical data, thus preventing a broader application of this important information. It was determined that a more standardized set of indicators and evaluation was needed in order to ensure improved consistency and use of information. As a result, throughout 2009 and 2010 Conservation Authority staff worked together to review and update the current guidelines.

The *2011 Guide to Developing Conservation Authority Watershed Report Cards* was developed under the leadership of staff from Conservation Ontario and the 36 Conservation Authorities. It is a revision of Conservation Ontario's original 2003 pilot project entitled *Watershed Reporting: Improving Public Access to Information*.

While Conservation Authority Watershed Report Cards focus on environmental measures in the resource categories of surface water quality, forest conditions, and groundwater quality; it is recognized that other factors that impact environmental health (e.g., economic, social, agency performance) are important and are reported through other means.

NPCA staff has been involved in developing the new reporting format. The three resource categories measured in the watershed report cards are surface water quality, forest conditions and groundwater quality, with a set of indicators for each.

Conservation Authority experience in delivering Watershed Report Cards to municipalities and other watershed partners has proven a successful means of delivering vast amounts of technical information in an understandable format. The standardized format is particularly beneficial to municipalities that cross two or more watershed boundaries because it allows for a true comparison of local environmental conditions. In addition, Conservation Authorities will encourage other agencies and groups to utilize the outcomes of these Watershed Report Cards to assist with their programs.

The NPCA published watershed report cards in 2005, 2006 and 2007. It is planned that we will publish one in 2012 simultaneously with the new template and reporting system.

Schools in Bloom Program

The Conservation Authority participated in the kick off for the schools in bloom project which will now include a partner elementary school for each of the participating high schools.

Community Relations

Staff worked with region communications on several community engagement sessions geared to help residents understand the 2012 budget process.

Delegation from China

Staff was pleased to host another delegation of officials representing the Standing Committee of the People's Congress of Xuchang Municipality, Henan, Province, China. The group was particularly interested in learning about the structure of the NPCA, how we handle working with invasive species and the various water quality programs.

Community Partnership

On October 26th staff was pleased to host a group of 40 staff from Walker Industries who helped plant over 200 trees at the DeCew project site. Despite the wet weather, the group was very pleased to participate in this exercise and have indicated their interest in continuing to build on this relationship.

Natural Heritage System Project

Staff has worked on refining the newsletter and communications plan for the Natural Heritage System project. The final meeting of the Scenario Development Team is scheduled for November 10th following which a meeting of the Steering committee will be scheduled prior to the wrap-up of the project.

A.D. Latornell Symposium

The 18th Annual A.D. Latornell Conservation Symposium will be held this year in Alliston, Ontario at the Nottawasaga Inn from November 16th to 18th. The A.D. Latornell Symposium is an increasingly popular environmental conference attracting over 1000 delegates from Conservation Authorities, municipalities, environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGO), federal and provincial governments, as well as businesses, consultants, teachers and students of all levels.

Recommendation:

Report No. 65-11 outlining the status of Authority projects/programs be received for information.

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