



NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FULL AUTHORITY

WELLAND AGENDA FEBRUARY 15, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) **MINUTES**

(a) **FULL AUTHORITY ANNUAL MEETING – JANUARY 18, 2012**

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Annual Meeting held January 18, 2012.

(b) **FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – JANUARY 18, 2012**

Attached are the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting held January 18, 2012.

(2) **BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

(3) **CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS**

(4) **CAO'S REMARKS**

(5) **CENTRAL WELLAND RIVER FLOODPLAIN MAPPING – DRAFT FAQ – REPORT NO. 07-12**

(6) **NPCA LEASE TO THE DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD OF NIAGARA – REPORT NO. 08-12**

Attached is Report No. 08-12 together with a copy of the lease agreement with the School Board.

(7) **2011 YEAR END (UNAUDITED) & 2012 OPERATING SUMMARY AND DETAILED BUDGETS - REPORT NO. 09-12**

Attached are the 2011 Year End (unaudited) and 2012 Operating Summary and Detailed Budgets.

(8) **2011 YEAR END (UNAUDITED) & 2012 PROJECT SUMMARY AND DETAILED BUDGETS - REPORT NO. 10-12**

Attached are the 2011 Year End (unaudited) and 2012 Project Summary and Detailed Budgets.

(9) **2012 VEHICLE PURCHASE – REPORT NO. 11-12**

Attached is Report No. 11-12 and summary with respect to quotes received for the Authority's 2012 vehicle purchase.

(10) **2012 MOWER PURCHASE – REPORT NO. 12-12**

Attached is Report No. 12-12 with respect to quotes received for the 2012 mower purchase.

(11) **PFOS COMPONENTS AT THE BINBROOK RESERVOIR (UPDATE) – REPORT NO. 13-12**

Attached is Report No. 13-12 regarding this matter.

(12) **REPRESENTATION ON THE GREATER NIAGARA CIRCLE ROUTE COMMITTEE – REPORT NO. 14-12**

(13) **PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 15-12**

Attached is Report No. 15-12 regarding the status of Authority Projects/Programs to date.

(14) **OTHER BUSINESS**

(15) **IN-CAMERA**

(a) Tree by-law – Report No. CR-01-12

ADJOURNMENT

To: Chairman and Members of the Authority

Date: February 9, 2012

Subject: Central Welland River Floodplain Mapping – Draft FAQ ; Report No. 07-12

The purpose of this memo is to advise the Board of the preparation of an information sheet of Frequently Asked Questions related to the subject project.

Since January NPCA staff have been receiving a significant number of phone and counter enquiries and information requests related to the Welland River Floodplain. Considering that the Water Department is currently short staffed as a result of the recent restructuring, the demands on staff time related to this matter has compromised timelines of other approval files before NPCA. In addition NPCA became aware that municipal staff have also been receiving requests for information in relation to the project.

Accordingly on February 3, 2012, NPCA staff met with Planning officials from the directly affected municipalities (i.e. Wainfleet, Welland, Pelham and West Lincoln) and the Region of Niagara . The purpose of the meeting was to answer questions that municipal staff had with respect to the status of the project, to request their assistance and advice on how to best advise the public of what was occurring and to confirm a protocol to identify the most time sensitive municipal planning files.

As part of this meeting, the Planning officials confirmed NPCA staff's experience in that there appeared to be a void in terms of correct information with respect to the status and intent of the project. At that meeting, it was requested that NPCA staff prepare a brief document addressing frequently asked questions (FAQ), so that a consistent and responsible message could be relayed to the public.

Attached for the Board's information is a copy of the Draft FAQ, that has been forwarded to the Planning officials from the affected local municipalities and Region for comment. Once NPCA staff review the comments from the municipalities, it will be finalized, distributed to the municipalities and posted on the NPCA website.

As a final note, staff is aware that not all of residents questions are addressed in the FAQ and indeed NPCA staff are still waiting for information from the Province and Conservation Ontario with respect to some key matters.. However, the FAQ should clarify some significant misinformation that has been received from some of the public.

Attachments:

1) Draft FAQ – Central Welland River Floodplain Mapping (as circulated to municipal planning staff)

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 07-12 be received for information.

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

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



FAQ

Welland River Floodplain Mapping

Why do Conservation Authorities including NPCA generate floodplain mapping?

Floodplain mapping and floodplain management is a fundamental responsibility of Conservation Authorities. This responsibility was assigned to Conservation Authorities by the Province of Ontario following the devastating property damage and loss of life that occurred from Hurricane Hazel in 1954. The Provincial government had the foresight to enact legislation to manage building activities within floodplain lands to protect the public from avoidable loss of property and life.

What does a 100 Year Flood line represent?

The 100 Year Flood line represents the extent of flooding that would occur from a storm event that has a 1% probability of occurring in any year (i.e. 1 in 100 years). This is the *minimum* standard in Ontario. It is important to note that some jurisdictions in Ontario use a larger storm event.

Why is it necessary to update Floodplain Mapping and when did NPCA begin working on this?

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority is constantly updating floodplain mapping to reflect changes in municipal bridges, culverts, land development and other modifications within the landscape that may have an effect on the extent of the floodplain.

In 2009, as part of the NPCA's capital floodplain mapping update program, the Authority contracted a firm specializing in complex floodplain modelling to re-analyze and remap the floodplain of the Central Welland River extending from the new siphon under the Welland Shipping Canal in Welland to Port Davidson in West Lincoln. Following this, work on the Upper Welland River extending from Port Davidson in West Lincoln to Westbrook Road in the City of Hamilton, and on the Lower Welland River extending from the Niagara River to the new siphon began and is nearing completion.

Why are the new 100 year flood lines on the Welland River different from the old ones?

Comprehensive floodplain mapping for the Welland River was first completed in 1985. Over the last quarter century real time data has been compiled and in the last decade, computer modelling has become more capable at simulating complex flow conditions like those that exist in the Welland River.

What is the status of the new flood lines?

At the January 18th, 2012 meeting of the Board of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority, a decision was made to *suspend implementation* of the new flood lines until further notice.

How will the public be notified?

A Committee comprised of Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board members will oversee the timelines and process for implementation of the new flood lines. The process will include Public Open Houses across the watershed.

What physical attributes are considered in developing floodplain mapping?

Topography, structures across the waterway (i.e. bridges, culverts, etc.), rainfall, soils and land use are all considered.

Why are there no Public Meetings when the NPCA develops or updates flood lines?

Determining flood lines is an engineering exercise that requires knowledge and expertise of scientific principles in hydrology and hydraulics. These lines cannot be arbitrarily assigned or altered. Holding public meetings would not change the *scientific* outcome of the modelling.

What can I do in the 100 year floodplain?

As outlined in the NPCA Policy the following activities are permissible within the Regulatory Floodplain:

- *Reconstruction or minor additions to existing residential dwellings and commercial buildings*
- *Additions or extensions, including new structures, to existing primary agricultural operations that are designed to not incur significant damages or pollute watercourses during a 100 year flood event.*
- *Open space uses, public and private recreational areas (i.e. .boat docks, picnic pavilion)*
- *In ground swimming pools designed with hydrostatic pressure relief and provided excavated material is not placed in the floodplain*
- *Parking lots, driveways, access roads subject to certain flow/depth criteria*
- *Public infrastructure/utilities*
- *Other uses not likely to incur or create damage from floodwaters.*

Why can't I simply place earth fill or retaining walls to raise my land above the floodplain?

In Ontario, a prudent long term preventative approach which limits impacts to floodplains is mandated by the Province. When a floodplain is filled at one location, the water is displaced in a way that other lands outside the floodplain will then be flooded. This is problematic for both public safety and property damage.

Does the increase in floodplain area diminish the development potential of my property?

While there is a possibility that this might be the case, each property is different and is dealt with on a case by case basis. Properties that lie adjacent to rivers are already subject to restrictions due to slope stability setbacks, wetland setbacks, septic bed requirements, municipal zoning restriction and agricultural setbacks. Conservation Authority staff work with watershed municipal officials in an effort to accommodate proposals wherever possible. This is not always achievable in a way that will ensure protection of property and life.

Useful Links:

- Ministry of Natural Resources: Understanding Natural Hazards (2 part PDF link)
http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/Publication/MNR_E002317P.html

- Conservation Ontario: Protecting People And Property
http://www.conservation-ontario.on.ca/projects/floodstatus/pdf/Protecting%20People%20and%20Property%20_Full_Final%20Report_%202009.pdf

- NPCA Policy Document
http://www.npca.ca/wp-content/uploads/Development_LandUsePolicy_Oct2011.pdf

- Related Legislation:
http://www.mnr.gov.on.ca/en/Business/Water/2ColumnSubPage/STEL02_163602.html

For Further Information:

John Kukalis, Director, Water Management
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
250 Thorold Rd. W.; 3rd Floor
Welland, On L3C 3W2
905-788-3135
Email: jkukalis@npca.ca

TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 7, 2012

SUBJECT: NPCA Lease to the District School Board of Niagara – Report No. 08-12

At the January meeting of the Full Authority, board members requested additional information about the existing lease agreement between the NPCA and the District School Board of Niagara (DSBN).

The current lease agreement was negotiated in the early 1990. Authority staff were approached by the Lincoln County School Board (which was eventually merged with the Niagara South Board of Education to create the DSBN) to lease buildings at Woodend Conservation Area for use as an outdoor education facility. The NPCA had operated an outdoor education facility at this location until Provincial funding cutbacks forced its closure.

The Conservation Authority approved the lease, however it would only be allowed to authorize a short term for the agreement. Longer term leases are considered land “disposals” and could only be approved by the Minister of Natural Resources.

In 1991, the NPCA requested an Order in Council that would extend the lease to 21 years less a day beginning January 1st, 1992 and ending on December 30th 2013. The order in council provided the school board with the right to renew the lease for two further terms not exceeding twenty-one years less a day for each term. Should the DSBN wish to exercise their right to renew the lease, they would have use of the site until December of 2055.

The lease agreement and the Order in Council have been attached to this report for information purposes.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 08–12 be received for information purposes.

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

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



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 9, 2012

SUBJECT: Proposed 2012 Operating Budget Report No. 09-12

Enclosed for your review and consideration is the Proposed 2012 Operating Budget (Summary and Detailed Sheets) which includes 2011 Approved Budget and Unaudited Year End Expenditures, Preliminary 2012 Operating Budget and the 2012 Operating Budget with revisions based on year end expenditures and other items as noted below:

Levy amount to member municipalities are identical to the preliminary budget approved at the August 17, 2011 Board meeting with the following exceptions.

As noted to the Board in 2011, the Niagara Region special levy is reduced by \$8,100 to reflect a reduction in the \$300,000 Public Works amount for the Children's Water Festival and Water Quality Monitoring. Initially, this amount was increased to \$308,100 as per the guidance however, following further discussion with Niagara Region staff, the amount was maintained at \$300,000 for 2012.

The Hamilton Special levy is reduced by \$5,694 (approved by the Board at the January 2012 meeting) to reflect the City of Hamilton Guidance of 0% over 2011.

The total revised operating budget has a net revenue and expenditure increase of \$107,224; from \$7,999,200 to \$8,150,147, with the following explanations.

Corporate Services

A decrease in the Corporate Fundraising from \$124,500 to \$0 to reflect the changes in 2012 in the Conservation Foundation expenses.

An increase of \$60,500 in Corporate Management reserves for Human Resources for the anticipated cost of implementing the Water Management restructuring estimated at \$150,000.

An increase of \$25,000 in the Corporate Communications Budget to reflect Water Smart Funding carry over costs outreach programs and displays.

Resource Inventory and Environmental Monitoring

Increase of \$50,000 Miscellaneous Revenues from Water Smart Funding for additional programming and communication for the Children's Water Festival and additional work under the Water Quality Monitoring Program.

2011 Year End (Unaudited)

Year end expenditures in the Operating Budget are generally in line with the approved 2011 Budget with the following explanation major variances.

Corporate Fundraising costs were increased as a result of termination of the Executive Director of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation.

The special levy allocation to the Conservation Land Programming was increased (from savings in the other program areas) to offset net operation costs for the Conservation Areas.

- 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	\$1,311,000	\$1,130,500	\$1,064,638	\$44,877	\$20,985
Resource Inventory & Monitoring	\$581,661	\$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	\$2,358,286	\$770,206	\$639,100	\$135,000	\$9,900
Vehicles and Equipment	\$188,400	\$97,400	\$91,726	\$3,866	\$1,808
Total	\$8,150,147	\$5,587,806	\$5,171,816	\$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	\$129,306	3.4	\$212,677	\$224,264	5.4
Niagara	\$2,101,876	\$2,252,738	7.2	\$3,069,940	\$3,056,500	-0.4	\$5,171,816	\$5,309,238	2.7
Total	\$2,222,850	\$2,392,100	7.6	\$3,204,590	\$3,195,706	-0.3	\$5,427,440	\$5,587,806	3.0

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).

RECOMMENDATION

That Report No. 09-12 regarding the Proposed 2012 Operating Budget be received; and

That the Proposed 2012 Operating Budget with a total expenditure of \$8,150,147 and a general levy of \$2,392,100 and special levies of \$3,056,500 to the Region of Niagara, \$129,306 to the City of Hamilton and \$9,900 to Haldimand County be approved; and

That the 2012 matching levy in the amount of \$175,000 and the total non-matching levy in the amount of \$2,217,100 for the 2012 Operating Budget be apportioned to the member municipalities on the basis of the 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 No. 63-09); and

That the special levies for the 2012 Operating Budget be assessed in the amount of \$3,056,500 to the Region of Niagara, \$129,306 to the City of Hamilton and \$9,900 to Haldimand County.

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 9, 2012

SUBJECT: Proposed 2012 Project Budget – Report No. 10-12

Enclosed for your review and consideration is the Proposed 2012 Project Budget (Summary and Detailed Sheets) which includes 2011 Approved Budget and Unaudited Year End Expenditures, Preliminary 2012 Project Budget and the 2012 Project Budget with revisions based on year end expenditures and other items as noted below:

Levy amount to member municipalities are identical to the preliminary budget approved at the August 17, 2011 Board meeting. The municipal levy amounts for the project budget have also been approved by Regional Niagara and the City of Hamilton. We did not receive any correspondence from Haldimand County, however they have been made aware of our intent to approve the final budget at the February 15, 2012 meeting.

The budget also includes land acquisition funding as per previous years with total special levy amounts of \$500,000 for Niagara Region and \$100,000 for the City of Hamilton.

The allocation of unspent 2011 Project Funding has been included in the Revised 2012 Project Budget.

The attached Water Management and Land Management Project spread sheets provide full details on the revisions.

Also attached is a summary of unaudited reserve balances for the 2011 year end as well as anticipated year end amounts for 2012.

Summary

- the total expenditure for the proposed 2012 Project Budget is \$4,863,578
- the general levy to be assessed to the member municipalities is \$642,400.
- a program breakdown of the levy to be assessed to each member municipality is as follows:

2012 Preliminary Project Budget

	<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	\$1,881,978	\$833,200	\$759,639	\$65,643	\$7,919
Flood Protection Services	\$416,220	\$215,800	\$203,228	\$8,567	\$4,006
Conservation Land Development	\$1,670,280	\$803,000	\$585,000	\$215,000	\$3,000
Total	\$4,863,578	\$1,852,000	\$1,547,866	\$289,209	\$14,925

A comparison with the 2011 levy is as follows:

Levy Apportionment - Preliminary 2012 Project Budget

<u>Municipality</u>	2011 General Levy	2012 General Levy	% Change	2011 Special Levy	2012 Special Levy	% Change	2011 Total Levy	2012 Total Levy	% Change
Haldimand	\$9,199	\$11,925	30	\$42,165	\$3,000	-92.9	\$51,363	\$14,925	-70.9
Hamilton	\$24,222	\$25,501	5	\$276,574	\$263,708	-4.7	\$300,796	\$289,209	-3.9
Niagara	\$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	\$1,209,600	-3.3	\$1,865,280	\$1,852,000	-0.7

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).

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 10-12 regarding the Proposed 2012 Project Budget be received; and

That the Proposed 2012 Project Budget with a total expenditure of \$4,863,578 and a general levy of \$642,400 and special levies of \$942,892 to the Region of Niagara, \$263,708 to the City of Hamilton and \$3,000 to Haldimand County be approved; and

That the 2012 general levy in the amount of \$642,400 be apportioned to the member municipalities on the basis of the 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 No. 63-09); and

That special levies for the 2012 Project Budget be assessed in the amount of \$942,892 to the Region of Niagara, \$263,708 to the City of Hamilton and \$3,000 to Haldimand County.

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

TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 7, 2012

SUBJECT: 2012 VEHICLE PURCHASE – Report No. 11-12

Funds have been allocated in the 2012 budget for the purchase of a ½-ton pick-up truck, and a 7-passenger vehicle. The new vehicles will replace one 2006 Ford Freestar minivan and one 2006 GMC Sierra Pick-up.

Fleet vehicles are used by staff to attend meetings, site inspections, conduct maintenance and programming activities. Staff assessed the role of the vehicles scheduled for replacement to determine if they were required and if there were other vehicle options to consider. In 2010 the Conservation Authority extended the vehicle rotation period and changed the way the fleet was managed. The end result is a six-year, standard rotation for vehicles, averaging 115,000 km during their service period. This information was used during the analysis of vehicle quotes.

The pick-up truck is used for Conservation Area maintenance. In this capacity, the vehicle will be hauling material and towing equipment. A pick-up with a full-sized box and towing capacity is the most suitable vehicle for the job. The van plays a specialized role as it is frequently used to transport up to 7-individuals to meetings, worksites or tours. Given the changing marketplace for 7-passenger vehicles, quotes were requested for vehicles based on seating capacity, rather than a specific van configuration. This opened the bids to cross-overs and sport utility vehicles. All dealerships were asked to provide alternate fuel options or hybrid models for both vehicles, provided they could meet the specifications.

Quotations were requested from over twenty area dealers. Eleven quotes were received from five dealerships. The details and analysis are provided on the attached spreadsheet.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Conservation Authority approve the quotation, dated February 7 , 2012, received from Niagara Motors, to supply one 2012 GMC Sierra pick-up truck for the price of \$16,385; and,

That the Conservation Authority approve the quotation dated February 6, 2012, received from Performance Toyota, to supply one 2012 Toyota Seanna passenger van for the price of \$27,876.11.

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: February 7, 2012

SUBJECT: 2012 Mower Purchase – Report No. 12-12

Funds have been allocated in the 2012 budget for the purchase of 2 front mount riding mowers to replace two 2006 Kubota mowers in the Authority's equipment fleet. These purchases are in keeping with our equipment rotation, which ensures a safe and efficient fleet.

Nine area equipment dealers were asked to provide quotations by Tuesday, February 7, 2012. Two dealerships sent notification that they were not able to meet the specifications and would not be submitting a quote. A summary of the quotations received is listed below:

	Make	Model	Price	Taxes	Total
Ben Berg Farm Ind.	Kubota \$23,988	F3680	\$21,238	\$2,760	
W.J. Heaslip	Kubota \$29,380	F3680	\$26,000	\$3,380	
Premier Equipment	John Deere \$31,640	1565 – II	\$28,000	\$3,640	

RECOMMENDATION:

That the quote, received from Ben Berg Farm and Industrial, to supply two Kubota F3680 front mount mower for a price of \$23,988 be accepted.

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: February 6, 2012

SUBJECT: PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir (update) – Report No. 13-12

Conservation Authority Staff attended an introductory meeting for the Phase 1 Clean-up of the Hamilton Airport Site on January 24th. The meeting was organized by Tradeport International Corporation, and attended by the Ministry of the Environment and the City of Hamilton.

Representatives from Tradeport outlined their proposal to test soil and groundwater at the airport, then isolate and treat any PFOS to prevent the material from leaving the site. The Ministry of the Environment will be reviewing the proposal and advising on the site investigation. Once the remediation plan is approved, the MOE will be monitoring the progress through every stage of the work. All participants agreed that the process must be clear and transparent with regular public communications. City staff advised the group that Council will be receiving regular updates on the progress of the clean-up.

The City of Hamilton and Tradeport have asked the Federal Government to participate in the clean-up initiative. To date, the Federal Government has not responded to these requests.

During the January 24th meeting, representatives from the MOE indicated that the Ministry will be investigating the possibility of starting a risk assessment study on the lands downstream of the airport. More details will be available following the next Phase 1 Clean-up Meeting, tentatively scheduled for the week of March 19th.

City of Hamilton Councillor Brenda Johnson wishes to establish a public liaison committee that will keep the community informed of the many PFOS related activities taking place. Staff expect to have more information in time for the March 21st Full Authority Meeting.

The MOE informed Conservation Area staff that the 2012 – 2013 Guide to Eating Ontario Sport Fish, will have revised limits for the Binbrook Reservoir. The Guide is published in the early spring of each year. Staff will provide updates as this information becomes available.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 13-12 regarding PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir be received.

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

Respectfully Submitted by: _____



NIAGARA PENINSULA
CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY
Tony D'Amario, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer

TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 6, 2012

SUBJECT: Representation on the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee – Report No. 14-12

The Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee was established as a Sub-Committee of the Planning and Public Works Committee of the Niagara Region. It was formed to implement the Master Plan for the Welland Canals Parkway, which would later develop into The Greater Niagara Circle Route (GNCR), a Circular Drive and Trails system passing through seven of the Region's twelve municipalities.

When the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee was formed, the Conservation Authority was represented by the Chairman, Doug Elliot. In 2003, Mr. Elliot left the NPCA board however the Conservation Authority did not appoint a representative to take his place. Although the Region of Niagara is currently undertaking a functional review of the Greater Niagara Circle Route and its Committee, there may be opportunities for the NPCA to become more involved in future trail initiatives throughout the Niagara Region.

The NPCA's Gord Harry Conservation Trail is the major southern link between the GNCR and the Trans-Canada Trail. Unfortunately, there is no direct trail link between the GNCR and the Gord Harry Trail so users are forced to navigate along the local road network between Wainfleet and Port Colborne.

The 2012 capital budget has allocated funds to link the Gord Harry Conservation Trail with the Welland Canal Trail and the Greater Niagara Circle Route. Staff recommend that the NPCA re-establish a role with the GNCR to help expand the trail system along Niagara's southern shoreline and connect with Haldimand County.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 14-12 regarding the Greater Niagara Circle Route be received; and,

That _____ be put forward to the Region of Niagara as a representative from the NPCA on the Greater Niagara Circle Route Committee.

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

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

TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: February 16, 2012

RE: PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 15-12

WATER MANAGEMENT

I. Watershed Development Services Division

1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review

i) In 2011, NPCA staff reviewed 352 building permits, the most number of permits since the Regulation 155/06 came into place. Staff continue to respond to a steady stream of planning and building permit applications. The number of Niagara Escarpment Plan applications is increasing.

Staff would also advise that activity on many older subdivision and other complex files that have been dormant for the last 5 years is increasing. This can be attributed to a variety of factors (e.g. the availability of new servicing capacity in Fort Erie; Nyon Oil in Port Colborne before the OMB, etc.).

Some municipalities that had been intermittent in requiring preconsultation on Planning Act applications are now requesting NPCA staff to attend meetings to address environmental matters identified in the Niagara Planning Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). This helps applicants understand at the beginning of the process what studies are needed to support their applications.

This is positive, however we are currently short staffed and it is challenging to accommodate all requests in the timelines requested. Staff attempt to provide municipal partners with comments on the applications in a timely way, however, extensions to deadlines have been requested by the NPCA in a number of cases.

ii) Welland River :Staff has been spending a considerable amount of time responding to property inquiries in the office or over the phone from landowners ,real estate agents, etc. regarding floodplain mapping for the Welland River in Wainfleet, West Lincoln, Pelham and Welland.

A meeting was held recently with Planning official from the affected municipalities and we are currently working on an FAQ for them to assist them with answering counter enquiries, etc..

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

i) Permits

In 2011, just over 100 permit applications were processed. Currently permits are being dealt with on an "as needed" basis. To date 15 permit applications have been processed. Indications are that work is going to begin after April 1st are being held until new staff is in place. The Planning Analysts are responding to permit inquiries in the interim.

ii) Violations

Outstanding violations are also being dealt with on an “as required basis” until the new Construction Compliance technician is in place. The Watershed Biologist has been inspecting and advising on critical complaints.

In terms of prosecutions, all but two matters have been resolved via negotiation. One of these matters, the “Barnsfield” has received much media attention and the trial will end this week. The other matter has already been to trial and restoration submissions are pending with the court.

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). In 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. In 2011 staff reviewed 47 work proposals under this agreement. This year the watershed biologist has assumed this role and has been consulted on 3 matters to date.

iv) Municipal Drain Maintenance Review

The NPCA previously represented 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’s role on the Committee is uncertain at this time, however, we will review and/or process work applications in the interim.

3) Natural Heritage System Project

The draft final report went out for review at the end of the year. Stakeholders have made suggestions for comments and suggestions. Staff is currently making edits to the final report that will be available by the end of February.

II. Watershed Technical Services Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

- The MOE approval of the Assessment Report was posted on the Environmental Registry website. The approved AR was then posted on NPCA’s source protection website.
- Source protection staff is finishing drafts of the Source Protection Plan (SPP), and Explanatory Document. The next Source Protection Committee meeting is scheduled for February 21, 2012.
- Work on the IPZ-3 (event-based modelling) is progressing. Event-based modelling was undertaken for the DeCew, Welland and Port Colborne water treatment plant intakes.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

- Staff is currently analyzing the 2011 field and laboratory sampling data for surface and groundwater.

3) Special Projects

- The Technical Working Group for the Welland River Eutrophication Study met in December 2011 to finalize the report. This 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.
- 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.

4) Geographic Information Systems

a) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- Staff facilitated changes to the SWP website based on the Assessment Report approval from MOE.

b) Watershed Development Services Support Activities

- Remodeling continues on the data structures for generic regulation hazard information and mapping. The vendor has almost completed the toe of slope interpretations. The modeling will be updated to automate the development services screening derivatives.
- Additional maps and datasets have been produced to assist planning staff with their reviews.
- The processing logic and code for the Property Information Summary application has been purchased from the Lake Simcoe and Region Conservation Authority. Staff are currently in the process of implementing it here.

c) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- GIS staff has been helping compile the draft final report data deliverables for the NHS project.
- Staff are updating the Natural Areas Inventory ELC mapping so that it will be compatible with the MNR's proposed standard for classifying natural areas in Ontario
- The Large Scale Integrated Hydrology Maintenance Pilot Project for the Water Resources Information Program at MNR is currently being finalized.
- Staff has been helping to troubleshoot the technical problems with the cellular webcam at Binbrook.

5) Flood Control

a) Monitoring & Major Maintenance

- i) Staff continue to monitor the water levels at the Binbrook reservoir on a regular basis and would typically adjust the valve settings as required based on forecast weather and watershed conditions. However, during a routine inspection failure of the valve actuators occurred and the valves are also ceased.

A specialist mechanical contractor has been commissioned to undertake emergency repairs and new actuators and valves assemblies are currently being fabricated. The specialty equipment is to be delivered and installed by the end of March 2012. In an effort to avoid draining the reservoir until the repair is facilitated, all valves have been closed and the operating reservoir water level has been increased to allow the Morning Glory spillway to maintain a constant water level.

ii) Staff continue to routinely monitor the water levels at our 14 stream gauge stations, climactic data at our 15 climate stations, and undertake routine maintenance, calibration, and inspections at all 25 installations, as part of the NPCA's routine flood forecasting and warning duties. It is noted that the public is able to access this real-time water level and rainfall information through the NPCA's website.

iii) Water Quality Stations: (Caistors in West Lincoln and Balls Falls in Lincoln): The Caistors water quality sensor station has been installed and is operational. In order to protect against damage due to ice, the Caistors sensor was removed in the fall and will be installed again in the spring. Construction of the Balls Falls station has been deferred until spring of 2012 in order to address Environment Canada installation requirements.

iv) E.C. Brown Cons. Area Flow and Water Quality Station (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 will be installed in the water in spring in order to protect against damage due to ice.

b) Floodplain Mapping

The Consultant working on the Central Welland River is currently undertaking additional work including an alternative analysis in order to double validate the existing mapping as described in a January report to the Board.. Work to finalize the Lower and Upper Welland River remapping project is "on hold" pending the above.

III. 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 are being planned and implemented this year across all watershed planning areas.

Project Implementation – Watershed Plans

- In total 35 woodland restoration / riparian projects will be implemented across the watershed through partnerships with private landowners, Land Care Niagara (funding provided through Trees Ontario Foundation and 50 Million Tree Program), Ontario Power Generation (bio-diversity and carbon sequestering funding) and the Niagara Restoration Council. Over 100,000 trees and shrubs will be planted. Over 20,000 wildflowers and grass plugs will be planted and over 30 kilograms of native seed will be sowed into restoration project sites.

- Construction projects such as wetland restoration, aquatic in-stream works, erosion and bank stabilization projects are currently being planned. Over 25 wetland and riparian projects across the watershed will be completed this year with contributions from Ducks Unlimited, Great Lakes Sustainability Fund, Species at Risk Farm Stewardship Program, Niagara Community Foundation, Canadian Tire Financial, St. Catharine's Green Committee, and TD friends of the Environment.
- Best Management Practice (BMP) projects such as nutrient management projects, livestock fencing, cover crops and erosion control projects (rock chutes and check point dams) are currently being planned. Over 40 BMP projects will be implemented across the watershed with contributions from Great Lakes Sustainability Fund, Environmental Farm Plan and Species at Risk Farm Stewardship Program.

1) Outreach & Education

Canopies for Kids

- The Canopies for Kids program was well received in 2011, and will continue to plant shade trees in school grounds. The goal of Canopies for Kids is to engage young students to learn through hands-on involvement, the benefits that trees provide. The science-based program is adapted for grades 1 to 8 and meets the Life Systems Strand of the Ontario curriculum. The program will provide a deeper look at how trees improve biodiversity, water quality and air quality. Studies have shown that trees can reduce asthma rates related to poor air quality, contribute to increased physical activity, mood improvement and promote psychological well-being. Students will learn about the benefits of trees and forests and how they help our ecological, economic and social environment.

This year, 50 applications from across the watershed were received by the January 27th, 2012 deadline. The following schools were selected by the review committee to participate in the program:

Fort Erie:	St. Joseph – Catholic Crystal Beach - Public		St. Catharines:	Apple Wood – Public Burleigh Hill – Public St. Anthony – Catholic
Grimsby:	Lakeview – Public			
Niagara Falls:	Cardinal Newman – Catholic		Wainfleet:	St. Elizabeth – Catholic
Port Colborne:	St. John Bosco - Catholic		Welland:	St. Mary – Catholic

Landowner Stewardship Guide

- Building on the success of the One Mile Creek Landowner Stewardship Guide, staff are working to modify this guide to a watershed wide “How to” guide for landowners. Main topic sections will focus on improving water quality and biodiversity. The guide is currently undergoing final edits. The St. Catharine's Green Committee is interested in funding a portion of the printing costs; negotiations are underway, with the ultimate goal of launching the document in the Walkers Creek Watershed in partnership with the Committee and the Walkers Creek Residents Association.

Yellow Fish Road Program

- This year will be the 12th year that the NPCA has been coordinating the Yellow Fish Road (YFR) program locally on behalf of Trout Unlimited. Since 2006, 38 school groups have been reached, including over 480 students. There have been 1201 drains painted and approximately 4000 door hangers distributed. The NPCA will be distributing the new YFR brochures to all watershed schools in the spring 2012 to try to increase participation in the program this season. NPCA staff continue to liaise with Trout Unlimited for ordering supplies and tracking participants. Trout Unlimited is hoping to have their annual Yellow Fish Road Day on Friday June 8th. The NPCA will seek out a community group or school to participate in the YFR program that day to celebrate YFR Day here in Niagara.

Niagara Envirothon

- The Steering Committee is gearing up for the 7th annual Niagara Envirothon, an outdoor environmental skill testing competition for high school students. To celebrate our 5th year of the program, the steering committee held an official logo contest and chose the winning logo in December 2011 from E.L. Crossley Secondary School. 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 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 currently have 13 teams registered from 7 different schools across Niagara. The Envirothon will be held on April 4th (workshop/review day) and April 18th (competition day). The Steering Committee is assembling a team of professionals from across the Niagara region to host the various ecostations at the workshop.

Registered schools include:

Beamsville District Secondary School (Lincoln)
Ridgeway Crystal Beach High School (Fort Erie)
Denis Morris Catholic High School (St. Catharines)
E.L. Crossley Secondary School (Pelham)
Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School (St. Catharines)
Stamford Collegiate (Niagara Falls)
Lakeshore Catholic High School (Port Colborne)

Community Fisheries Involvement Programs

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

Authority, Fort Erie Conservation Club and the Port Colborne and District Conservation Club) and to assist with the prioritization of restoration work within the Welland River.

V. Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

a) Lyons Creek East – Contaminated Sediment

- All agencies who have a responsibility / jurisdiction regarding permissions and approvals in the Lyons Creek East Study Area, have had the proper training regarding the implementation of the Administrative Controls Protocol for Monitored Natural Recovery of contaminated sediment. The roles and responsibilities of the signatory agencies have been confirmed and the protocol is now active.

b) Monitoring & Assessment

- The Welland River Eutrophication Study is complete. 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.

c) 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).

d) 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.

LAND MANAGEMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

Plans are underway for new wayfinding signs in and around the Centre for Conservation. A new small sign has been placed at the forks of the Upper Falls. First conceptual drawings for overhead signs of the galleries, rental rooms, gift shop and admissions have been looked at.

Staff are awaiting results from a Museums Assistance Program grant application aimed at supporting the Crystals to Gems Exhibit in 2012. Follow up was conducted for a Museums and Technology Fund grant prepared in 2011. The application was successful and brought in approx. \$18,000 for museum computerization starting in February 2012.

Comments have been gathered from participants and NPCA staff and plans are being made to improve the layout of the Thanksgiving Festival. Vendor and musician applications are coming in. The Site Administrator met with grounds staff to consider modifications to the musical stage that will open up the pedestrian bridge entrance and encourage more traffic to the Centre for Conservation. Application Packages were sent out to potential vendors and the information package was added to the Ball's Falls website.

Plans are being made for a tactical battle re-enactment at Ball's Falls commemorating the War of 1812.

Press Releases, posters and flyers have been submitted for approval to Marketing and/or produced in part and distributed through Ball's Falls and NPCA Marketing for Bi-centennial of the War of 1812 events, March Break, Family Day and Crystals to Gems exhibit.

The General Video designed to promote Ball's Falls has been updated with winter scenes and are currently on Youtube and the Ball's Falls Face Book page. The updated video was used at the Jordan Ice Wine Outreach in January. The Ball's Falls web site, Facebook page, and Twitter are being updated regularly.

The Jordan Wine Festival Outreach on January 14th and 15th went very well, highlighting Ball's Falls among the community, as well as, the visiting public numbering 5,000. Pictures of the Outreach made several local newspapers and may be in several periodicals.

Ball's Falls Conservation Area's application to be part of the Ontario Welcomes Cyclists was accepted. Ball's Falls is now on their web site listing and has made preparations on site to meet their requirements ie. Bicycle repair kit etc. This market accounts for 15 percent of visitors to Niagara and is the fastest growing visitor segment.

The Winter Sports Exhibit has been removed and the Pathways to Peace exhibit has been installed. It opened with a lecture on the subject of Women and the War of 1812 on Jan. 7.

The Ball barn residing has been completed. Grounds staff have been doing additional ongoing maintenance and winter preparations. Current maintenance includes the productions of new windows for the Mill, a UV system mandated by health regulations for the Barn, the completion of a new floor for the Field Centre, new doors for the Barn and ongoing work for the septic system at the Centre for Conservation.

Binbrook Conservation Area

The mild weather and poor ice conditions forced staff to cancel the 2012 Ice Fishing Derby. Staff continue to monitor ice conditions and provide updates to the new NPCA website, Ice News Forum, Voicemail, and Facebook, however it is doubtful that there will be an ice fishing season at all.

Staff are working with contractors to develop a new recycling initiative at the Conservation Area. Since this property is outside of Niagara, it is not able to take advantage of the partnerships that Long Beach, Chippawa Creek and Ball's Falls have developed with the Region of Niagara.

Upgrades to the splash pad water treatment system are in the works. The project will be completed by the end of April, allowing ample time for testing and commissioning of the new system.

The Binbrook Triathlon is scheduled for June 9th, 2012. The Glanbrook Conservation Committee Spring Crappie Derby is set for May 12th, 2012.

In anticipation of the need for a new play structure at Binbrook staff are exploring the concept of natural play areas and natural playgrounds. This concept is a good fit with our natural areas and a new emerging recreational trend to promote healthy childhood development. Staff toured the

installation of a new natural playground at St Catharines Regional Child Care Centre and spoke with early childhood educators about their experiences connecting children with nature through play. Staff also attended a professional development workshop hosted by the Early Learning and Child Resource Centre in St Catharines on Preschool Outdoor Environment Measurement Scale (POEMS). A tour of the new and extensive natural play garden at Scanlon Creek Conservation Area, Bradford was also conducted by staff with their administration and operations staff at Lake Simcoe CA. This was a valuable tour to learn best practices and techniques which can be directly applied to all of our day use areas programmes and play spaces.

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek

The parks have had a mild winter so far. No significant storm damage to date, and all looks good for spring startup.

Work is on schedule to start taking public reservations for 2012 beginning March 1. Upgrades currently in progress for the reservation system include opening up online reservations for stays up to four weeks (28 nights). In 2011, the maximum online stay was only 5 nights. Callers looking to stay longer than 4 weeks begin to fall in the “seasonal” price categories; and these requests are best managed by contacting each park directly for personalized service. Other key upgrades intended to improve background accounting functions within the system are also underway to enable faster and more accurate accounting information.

To date, both campgrounds are in good shape for returning seasonal campers. Turnover rates are at or below what is usual. Waiting list requests remain present, but not enough 30 amp (primarily) to fulfill them.

The 2011 camping revenue was the highest-ever gross revenue total for the program; and comes on the heels of gross revenue totals that have shown consistently trending increases over the past decade. Notwithstanding, these excellent revenues have been impacted by increasing costs to utilities, fuel, materials, and even Ontario student wages. To that end, staff have recognized the need to improve financial self-reliance and have taken many steps to manage this from both the revenue and cost perspectives.

Long Beach Sewage Lagoon

With the halt of the Wainfleet Water / Sewer Project, the Ministry of the Environment has requested that NPCA look at developing a long-term plan for wastewater / sewage disposal at Long Beach. The original Certificate of Approval for the existing sewage lagoon dates back to the 1960's and does not meet Ontario's wastewater objectives. Despite this, MOE staff took into consideration the status of the pending water / wastewater project and the fact that NPCA staff have consistently exercised due diligence by exceeding the requirements of the original C of A as it relates to the monitoring, testing and operation of the lagoon (and therefore voluntarily met Ontario Effluent Guidelines for the site). Nonetheless, at this juncture, MOE has concerns that sludge buildup and age need to be assessed, and have asked that NPCA undertake an engineering assessment of the site; to be followed by an appropriate action plan. At this time, staff are developing a short Terms of Reference to take to prospective engineers on the matter.

Chippawa Creek Comfort Station

Staff have consulted other Conservation Authorities to get design options for a new comfort station at Chippawa Creek. Recommend that we look at “phasing in” the construction of the Comfort Station over two (or three) years. This facility is “head and shoulders” beyond others in the campgrounds. It is consistent with the class of facilities the NPCA has recently built, including the Centre for Conservation, the Binbrook gatehouse, the workshops at Binbrook and Chippawa Creek, the pavilion/store at Binbrook.

Property Assessments

The property assessments from MPAC for all of our conservation lands have been received in our office and analyzed by staff. Where possible, our properties are enrolled in the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program (CLTIP) and Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) for tax breaks. Our current assessment roll contains 67 land parcels, 7,035 acres of land in Niagara, Hamilton, and Haldimand with a total value of 10.07 million dollars. In the past year we have acquired 57 new acres of property and on average our property values have risen 7% from 2010. Staff will be reviewing our new land holdings for consideration in the CLTIP or MFTIP programs.

Stevensville Conservation Area

A new pre-engineered steel and wood bridge is scheduled for installation over Black Creek to provide access to the trail network in the south west area of the property. Staff are meeting with the contractor to begin site works in advance of the new bridge arriving on site. Pending weather, this bridge is anticipated to be in place by early spring. Once the bridge is installed, staff will work with the local conservation club on site cleanup and trail restoration works.

Beamer Conservation Area

The Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch group is donating funds for the installation of two memorial benches at the viewing platform. Staff are preparing the benches for installation before this year’s hawkwatch event.

Twenty Valley Trail

Replacement of the stairs down the escarpment behind the Jordan museum is scheduled for this year. Staff are gathering geotechnical information on the site area to include in the bid packages to contractors. A public tender for this work is anticipated to be called in the next few months, for installation to proceed this summer.

Gypsy Moth Monitoring

Monitoring of gypsy moth populations continues with staff completing standardized monitoring of permanent plots in several Conservation Areas. With no ground snow cover this work is conducted in the late fall and winter. Surveys were completed at Chippawa Creek, Hedley Forest, Ruigrok Tract, Smith-Ness, St. Johns, Willoughby Marsh and Comfort Maple. St. Johns, Willoughby Mash, Smith-Ness and the Comfort Maple. The remaining Conservation Areas will be completed in the next few months and the assessment of population control needs will be made. Defoliation surveys will also be conducted in the summer to assess the population forecasts.

NPCA Hunting Program

Staff issued 368 hunting permits in 2011. As of February 4th, staff have issued 62 hunting permits for the 2012 season. These permits are required for any individuals hunting on NPCA properties.

Marsh Monitoring Program

Staff are continuing to partner with Birds Studies Canada for the Marsh Monitoring Program in assessing amphibians and waterfowl for wetland health and diversity. Staff help co-ordinate the volunteers in our watershed, assigning them and training them on the monitoring protocol. This information helps to maintain a data.

NPCA Volunteer Opportunity List

The 2012 list of volunteer events has been drafted. The final corporate format will be put on the website shortly and mailed to high schools, libraries, interested groups and individuals for canvassing of volunteers.

Ecological Education

Application has been made for educational funding for materials at Balls Falls to continue to increase the awareness of biodiversity and enhance land stewardship. This material will be incorporated in the long-term programming for school and site visitors as well and aid in providing tactile items for enhanced learning. Further information will be provided when the funding has been approved. A decision will be heard in April 2012.

Central Workshop

The mild winter is allowing staff to catch-up on equipment maintenance. Conservation area patrols continue along with our maintenance responsibilities at the Elm Street, Glenridge Quarry and Station Road Naturalization Sites.

Staff are building memorial benches for installation this spring at various Conservation Area sites.

Wainfleet Wetlands

The quarry pumps have been operating non-stop since January. The mild weather and heavy rainfall continue to impact water levels at Wainfleet Wetlands. Staff will continue to monitor the situation closely.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Source Water Protection Program

Staff is continuing to work on the DRAFT policies. A series of public consultation meetings will be held in the early spring. The plan will need to be submitted to the Minister of Environment in August 2012.

Annual Report

Staff is coordinating the production of the Annual Report summarizing the highlights of 2011.

Binbrook Ice Fishing Derby

The annual Binbrook Ice Fishing Derby is scheduled for Sunday, February 12th. With the mild weather the event is unlikely to be held as planned.

Hawkwatch Season

Hawkwatch season runs March 1 to May 15 at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area. The annual public open house will take place on Good Friday, April 6, 2012. The Open House is hosted in conjunction with the Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch.

WaterSmart Niagara

Staff attended at Niagara Water Strategy ACT (Action Coordinating Team) meeting in December. Mary Lou Tanner provided a summary of the Report that was approved by Regional Council in 2011. The main focus is on ensuring meaningful education and exchange of information with the public and political officials and on data management. The report was well received by Council. It is anticipated that two reports will go to Council each year – the first in the spring describing the program and Actions completed and the second in the fall that will plan 18 months in advance for budgeting purposes. The team reviewed a number of action items (originally 350+ actions were identified) to determine which items should be considered as priority projects for 2012-2014 and who the lead partner should be. Ron Scheckenberger provided background information to the process used in revisiting and updating the NWS and associated actions. A review of the original 350+ actions was undertaken with key stakeholders including the Action Coordination Team (February 22, 2010), NPCA Source Protection Planning Group (April 21, 2010) and OMAFRA (June 22, 2010 and July 15, 2010) and Water and Wastewater (2010) and others.

Ball's Falls Events

A number of events have been planned for the calendar year at Ball's Falls. On March 31, a special War of 1812 event Traitor, Treason and Tunes with a special performance by the band 'Muddy York' will be held and it is hoped that a number of dignitaries will be in attendance to mark the occasion. Members are encouraged to mark their calendars for this event.

Nature for Niagara's Future

This project wrapped up in December and staff is finalizing the report. A series of communication documents including a public friendly newsletter outlining the project will be prepared.

Regional Tourism Organization

The Tourism Partnership of Niagara (TPNC) was created as a not for profit, industry led, collaboratively managed organization whose mandate is to support and grow Niagara tourism through the provision of strategic leadership and active, effective partnership with government and key stakeholders. Our industry interests are being represented through the Twenty Valley Tourism organization and we have been able to utilize and leverage services to promote our conservation areas.

Fundraising Activities

Due to scheduling, no meeting of the NPCF has been held since November and staff is responding to any inquiries as they occur. The annual Bob Welch Memorial Golf Tournament is scheduled to take place on June 4th at Whirlpool Golf Course. Staff is also preparing to send out Bursary notices to local schools within the Fort Erie/Port Colborne portion of the watershed as per the terms of a fund set up through the Fort Erie Conservation Women's Auxiliary. Bursaries are awarded to students pursuing a degree/diploma in the environmental/conservation field. A committee will be formed to review the applications and determine eligibility and awards in the spring. The Nevada sites are continuing to operate as per the terms of the license.

Recommendation:

Report No. 15-12 outlining the status of Authority projects/programs be received for information.

Respectfully Submitted by: _____

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