



**NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
FULL AUTHORITY**

WELLAND

AGENDA

MAY 16, 2012 – 7:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL

DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

BUSINESS:

(1) MINUTES

(a) FULL AUTHORITY MEETING – April 18, 2012

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

(b) BALL'S FALLS HERITAGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES

Attached are the Minutes of the Balls' Falls Heritage Advisory Committee Meeting held May 9, 2012.

(2) DELEGATION

A representative from the Welland River Floodplain Association to speak on the importance of a full consultation process.

(3) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES

(4) CORRESPONDENCE

(5) CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

(6) CAO'S REMARKS

(7) BLASZYNSKI PROPERTY – REPORT NO. 24-12

Attached is Report 24-12 with sketch regarding this matter.

(8) NATURAL HERITAGE INVENTORY - PRESENTATION

Staff will be making a presentation on the Natural Heritage Inventory and Assessment projects.

(9) REGULATION OFFICERS - REPORT NO. 25-12

Attached is Report No. 25-12 regarding this matter.

(10) BUDGET STATUS REPORT - REPORT NO. 26-12

Attached is Report No. 26-12 regarding this matter, together with the current and capital budget summaries.

(11) LEASE TO FORT ERIE CONSERVATION CLUB – REPORT NO. 27-12

Attached is Report no. 27-12 regarding this matter.

(12) PFOS COMPOUNDS AT BINBROOK RESERVOIR (update) – REPORT NO. 28-12

Attached is Report No. 28-12 updating this matter.

(13) PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – REPORT NO. 29-12

Attached is Report No. 29-12 outlining the status of Authority Projects/Programs to date.

(14) OTHER BUSINESS

(15) IN-CAMERA

(a) Tree By-law – Report No. CR-05-12

(b) NPCA Regulations –Complaint and Violation Status Report - Report No. CR-06-12

SPA MEETING

(1) Minutes of Source Protection Authority Meeting May 16, 2012

(2) Mark Neufeld will present the status of the Source Water Protection Plan.

ADJOURNMENT



To: Chairman and Members of the Authority

Date: May 16, 2012

Re: Chronology – Blaszyński Property, valley of Twenty Mile Creek tributary, 3167 King Street, Town of Lincoln – Report No. 24-12

As the Board will recall Mr. Blaszyński appeared as a delegation at the April 18, 2012 meeting. The purpose of this report is to respond to the Board's request for more background information respecting NPCA's involvement at this property. A chronology of NPCA's primary involvement at the property and with Mr. Blaszyński has been prepared as follows;

- **April 19, 2006:** NPCA staff met on site at the request of Mr. Blaszyński to discuss both short and long term works being contemplated at the property.

- **May 2, 2006:** NPCA sent a letter to Mr. Blaszyński which briefly put, outlined various agency interests surrounding work within the valley lands and watercourse.

- **May 9, 2006:** NPCA received correspondence from Mr. Blaszyński. The letter included a description and sketch of works proposed by the resident including installation of armour stone and rip rap to address drainage concerns and establish a plateau area between his dwelling and the creek; the letter also confirmed a follow up meeting to be held with NPCA on site for May 17, 2006.

- **May 17, 2006:** At the request of Mr. Blaszyński, NPCA staff met on site to discuss plans for completing additional erosion control works within the creek channel at the property. Notes of the meeting were taken and subsequently sent to Mr. Blaszyński.

- **May 23, 2006:** NPCA forwarded 2 pieces of correspondence to Mr. Blaszyński; i) the first was the minutes of the meeting of May 17, 2006 as described above. ii) the second was a clearance letter from NPCA with respect to Mr. Blaszyński's proposed works as laid out in his May 9, 2006 correspondence. The letter advised that NPCA considered the works as "minor" and as such, the resident could undertake the works without a formal permit.

- **May 27, 2006:** NPCA received correspondence from Mr. Blaszyński. This letter included a sketch and outlined works which Mr. Blaszyński wished to undertake including; relocating a section of the watercourse in the valley and placing armour rock and rip rap for erosion protection.

- **June 26, 2006:** NPCA issued a letter including a formal permit to Mr. Blaszyński approving the relocation of a section of the watercourse in the valley and placement of armour stone and rip rap stone for erosion protection as per Mr. Blaszyński's submission. An authorization under the Fisheries Act as per NPCA's designated responsibilities from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans was also included.

- **September 14, 2011:** In response to a complaint, NPCA inspected the property with Mr. Blaszyński. Staff noted that a structure was being built in the valley lands. He was advised that the works were contrary to Authority policy and that he had two options: i) restore the site or ii) apply for a permit however, as the works were contrary to policy, staff could not issue a permit and as such, he would have to seek approval from the Board.

- **October 24, 2011:** A formal written Notice of Violation (copy appended) was issued to Mr. Blaszyński in relation to a shed/office structure under construction as observed at the September 14, 2011 inspection noted above.

- **November 9, 2011:** Mr. Blaszyński forwarded correspondence in response to the Notice of Violation. The letter outlined Mr. Blaszyński's background/past dealings with NPCA, his opinions as to the impact of his structure works in the valley and concerns about court action proceeding if he were to apply for a permit.

- **November 15, 2011:** NPCA issued correspondence to Mr. Blaszyński which i) outlined the principles behind the current authority policy respecting his current structure construction/violations in the valley land and ii) clarified that if Mr. Blaszyński made application for a permit, NPCA would afford him reasonable time to prepare for a hearing before the NPCA Board before it would consider proceeding with legal action.

- **January 27, 2012:** Mr. Blaszyński forwarded correspondence to NPCA which for the first time raised questions about retaining walls located adjacent to his dwelling. Briefly put, he indicated that the walls were experiencing movement and that staff had prevented him from doing more extensive wall works in 2006. He also suggested that NPCA had an obligation to participate in remediating the movement of his retaining walls, which he estimated would cost \$ 100,000 and he requested that he be exempted from obtaining any permits.

- **February 20, 2012:** NPCA issued correspondence to Mr. Blaszyński. This letter i) clarified that Mr. Blaszyński could undertake works to stabilize his retaining walls as that would be allowed under NPCA Policy, however he would need to make application for a permit.; ii) with regards to the shed/office structure, the letter again clarified NPCA's concerns and iii) the letter requested Mr. Blaszyński advise how he wished to proceed with these two distinct work proposals.

- **March 20, 2012:** NPCA received a letter from Mr. Blaszyński dated March 5, 2012. To summarize, this letter claims that i) With respect to the retaining wall adjacent to his dwelling, at the top of the eastern slope, Mr. Blaszyński indicates that NPCA unlawfully precluded him from building more extensive retaining walls system as recommended to him by an engineering firm and that this has resulted in an unsafe condition. The letter indicates the cost to remedy the situation is in excess of \$100,000; ii) With respect to the current structure violation, Mr. Blaszyński now indicated that he had started that work also in 2006 and that it also was stopped unlawfully at that time and as such, he is of the opinion that an exemption exists for that construction.

Summary:

With respect to Mr. Blaszyński various assertions noted above respecting the financial liability of NPCA and exemptions from permits, NPCA staff have reviewed the matter and advise the Board as follows:

There are currently two separate issue on this property as described in the correspondence from NPCA to Mr. Blaszyński of February 20, 2012.

1) The partially completed structure on the west side of the valley, is located in an area contrary to NPCA policy and for which staff cannot recommend a permit. This is an active violation file pursuant to O.Reg.155/06. Mr. Blaszyński can remove the structure and restore the area to resolve the violation. Alternatively, Mr. Blaszyński can make formal application to the NPCA Board for a permit. As staff cannot issue a permit for works contrary to NPCA Policy, Mr. Blaszyński would be entitled to a Hearing by the Full Authority under Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act. The Board through this hearing process would make the final decision with respect to the permit application.

2) Mr. Blaszyński has indicated to staff and the Board that the retaining wall located adjacent to his dwelling along the top of the eastern top of bank is showing signs of movement/instability and that he wishes to have this rectified. Undertaking measures to stabilize the existing wall structure is allowed under Conservation Authority Policy for obvious reason and a permit can be issued for works to do this. In order to proceed an application would need to be made along with appropriate supporting technical information as outlined in NPCA correspondence.

While the NPCA did issue approvals and clearances to this resident in 2006 for work including erosion control and stability works, staff confirm that the NPCA did not receive and/or issue any correspondence in or about 2006 with regards to the construction or maintenance of the armour stone wall adjacent to the dwelling. If an inquiry (or permit application) in this regard was made at that time, NPCA staff would have indicated a permit would be allowable subject to normal conditions and requirements as indicated above.

Attachments :

1) Sketch of the subject property and works

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be received for information.

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: May 16, 2012

Re: Appointment of Officers to Enforce the Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (Ontario Regulation 155/06) – Report No. 25-12

The Board will recall the Water Management Department was restructured and reorganized at the beginning of 2012. As part of those changes, responsibilities associated with investigation of complaints related to potential violations of the NPCA's Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses Regulation (Ontario Regulation 155/06) were transferred to newly created positions within the Development Services Division. The new positions which include responsibilities in the areas of investigation and enforcement are as follows: Supervisor, Construction Permit Approvals; Construction Compliance Technician and Fish and Wildlife Technician.

In April of 2012, the positions noted above were filled and in order for the new staff to proceed with investigating complaints and undertaking the necessary follow action on matters of non-compliance, they must be specifically appointed by the Board as Officers in accordance with Section 10 of Ontario Regulation 155/06.

In the broader legislative framework, enforcement activities related to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act are also governed by the Provincial Offences Act and specifically, Part III of that Act. By appointing staff as Officers under the Conservation Authorities Act, they also become recognized by the Courts as Provincial Offences Officers and are therefore required to govern themselves in accordance with other applicable legal requirements (i.e. laying of information/charges, search restrictions, disclosure of evidence, etc.)

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board appoint Lara Widdifield, Supervisor, Construction Permit Approvals as an Officer pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 155/06.

That the Board appoint Kiefer Paton, Construction Compliance Technician as an Officer pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 155/06.

That the Board appoint Amy Brant, Fish and Wildlife Technician as an Officer pursuant to Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 155/06.

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

Respectfully Submitted by:

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: May 9, 2012

SUBJECT: Budget Status Report - Report No. 26 -12

Attached is the budget status report for the period ending April 30, 2012.

There are no significant variances to report at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Budget Status Report for the period ending April 30, 2012 be received.

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



TO: The Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: May 9, 2012

SUBJECT: Lease to Fort Erie Conservation Club – Stevensville C.A. – Report No. 27-12

In April 2011, the Full Authority Board approved a 1-year extension of an existing lease to the Town of Fort Erie for a 4.8 acre parcel of land on the Stevensville Conservation Area. The one-year extension was put in place to allow the Town of Fort Erie, the Fort Erie Conservation Club and the NPCA to consider options for a long-term lease agreement. Full Authority Report No. 21-11 is attached for background information purposes.

After discussions with the Town of Fort Erie and the Conservation Authority's Solicitor, it was agreed that the Fort Erie Conservation Club was a healthy organization, capable of entering into an agreement without the need for additional guarantees, previously provided by the Town of Fort Erie. The Club is a strong supporter of the NPCA, and has been working in partnership for the maintenance and upkeep of the Stevensville Conservation Area for more than 20-years. Entering into another long-term lease agreement with the Club will continue that relationship.

A draft lease agreement, prepared by the NPCA Solicitor, has been attached to this report. It will allow the club to continue operating their clubhouse and related programming, on the 4.8 acre parcel. The term of this lease is one-year, with a provision that the NPCA will work towards obtaining Ministerial Approval for a long term (21 year term) agreement.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report Number 27-12 be approved; and,

That staff be authorized to enter into a 1-year lease agreement with the Fort Erie Conservation Club; and,

That staff be directed to make application with the Ministry of Natural Resources for approval to enter into a lease for a 21-year less one day term.

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: May 9, 2012

SUBJECT: PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir (update) – Report No. 28-12

Staff are awaiting the results for water samples from the supply well at Binbrook Conservation Area. There are no traces of PFOS in the ground water last year. This year samples are being tested once more to confirm that the water is safe for our visitors.

The City of Hamilton will be hosting a Public Information Centre (PIC) meeting on Wednesday, June 20th, 2012 at the Mount Hope Community Centre. NPCA staff will be making a brief presentation about the steps being taken to educate our visitors about PFOS contamination and impacts to fish consumption guidelines. The Hamilton International Airport, Ministry of the Environment and Hamilton Public Health Services will also be presenting.

A recent article in CATCH Hamilton has been attached for information purposes. The article identifies a number of other sites where PFOS has contaminated federal sites across Canada. Two locations in Ontario (London Airport and Trenton Air Base) have strong comparisons to the Hamilton Airport site. NPCA staff contacted colleagues at Upper Thames Conservation Authority (UTRCA) and Lower Trent Conservation (LTC). The UTRCA owns and operates Fanshaw Lake, which is the receiving waterbody for a significant amount of runoff from the London Airport. UTRCA staff are not aware of any PFOS issues affecting their property at this time. The LTC does not own property around the Department of National Defense base, so it is unlikely that they will be involved in any clean-up efforts.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Report No. 28-12 regarding PFOS Compounds at the Binbrook Reservoir be received.

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

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



TO: Chairman and Members of the Authority

DATE: May 9, 2012

RE: PROJECT/PROGRAM STATUS REPORT – Report No. 29-12

WATER MANAGEMENT

1. Watershed Development Services Division

1) Municipal and Development Plan Input and Review

i) Since January staff continue to respond to a steady stream of planning and building permit applications. To the end of April, staff have reviewed and processed 59 planning applications (of various types/complexity) and 92 building permits. In addition staff responds to many general enquires both from local municipalities and the public. Also during the first quarter, staff has been involved in renewed activity on many older subdivision and other development files that had been dormant but for which there is renewed interest.

ii) Staff is directly involved in a number of initiatives (both external and internal) intended to improve Regional, local and NPCA planning processes and procedures including:

-ongoing involvement in a Regional Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guideline review committee involving Regional, Municipal and NPCA staff. The final report of that committee is expected soon.

-ongoing involvement in an "MOU" "Process Review Committee" again involving Regional, Municipal and NPCA staff. That Committee is already implementing process improvements to planning functions covered by the "MOU".

-ongoing involvement in a Regional Planning "Customer Service Needs Review" also involving Regional, Municipal and Authority staff. Report related to that initiative is almost complete.

-ongoing internal review of NPCA planning processes and procedures involving all Development Services staff.

iii) Staff continue to spend a considerable amount of time responding to property inquiries from landowners, real estate agents, etc. regarding floodplain mapping for the Welland River in Wainfleet, West Lincoln, Pelham and Welland.

iv) An Acting "Manager of Development Services" has recently been appointed while the fulltime Manager is away on a medical leave. A new "Coordinator of Development Review" has also been appointed. As a result, we now have a full staff complement in the Development Services section.

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

i) Permits

The new Supervisor, Construction Permit Approvals, started work April and has noticeably reduced the backlog of applications. To date, 27 permits have been issued, almost half of those in the last 4 weeks.

ii) Violations

A separate Confidential Violation Status Report has been prepared for May.

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. This year the watershed biologist has assumed this role and has been consulted on 20 matters to date.

II. Watershed Technical Services Division

1) Source Water Protection Plan

- The first Source Protection Plan (SPP) public consultation period, which included four public meetings, was completed April 10th. The Source Protection Committee (SPC) will review the comments that were received and make revisions to the SPP as it deems appropriate. The SPP will then be released for a second public consultation period before being submitted to the province.

2) Water Quality Monitoring Program:

- Water quality staff is analysing 2011 water quality data (chemistry, biological, temperature, and dissolved oxygen) for the annual water quality report. This report is scheduled to be completed by May 31.
- Surface water quality monitoring has begun at 72 stations in the NPCA watershed. Water samples are collected monthly from April to October. These samples are analysed for bacteria, metals, nutrients and general chemistry.
- Staff is continuing to monitor water levels at all Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network wells. As part of the regular maintenance of this data, a water level correction review will be implemented in the coming months by the NPCA hydrogeologist.
- Staff has completed the Hamilton Airport 2011 Biological Monitoring Report and have submitted the report to airport officials.
- Biological monitoring for Hamilton Airport stations and the Glanbrook Landfill are scheduled for May and possibility early June.

- Two water well decommissioning projects have been approved in April and will be completed by the end of May. To-date four water well decommissioning projects have been approved for 2012.

3) Geographic Information Systems

a) Source Water Protection Support Activities

- Efforts are focused organizing the GIS files supporting the final data products (official cartography for the published technical reports, and the prescribed Assessment Report and Water Quantity databases) as part of the records management requirements of the Clean Water Act.

b) Watershed Development Services Support Activities

- Staff continues with tasks for implementing the Property Info application.
- The Toe of Slope and other features necessary to turn the Riverine Shoreline and Erosion Hazard and Valleyland mapping into a polygon product is complete and staff are running it through a QA/QC process before integrating it into hazards data model..

c) Corporate GIS and Information Management Support Activities

- An RFP is being created to find a vendor to supply an update to the Niagara Watershed's topographic base (1 meter contour supporting Digital Terrain Model) via funding from the Niagara Water Strategy. This is a critical information asset that addresses many Authority and municipal business needs and will specifically enable the continued compilation and maintenance of the NPCA's large scale hydrology base data.
- The Large Scale Integrated Hydrology Data Update Pilot Project continues with its final edits.
- Mapping was created to support the Annual Water Quality Monitoring Program Report.

4) Flood Control

a) Monitoring & Major Maintenance

i) Staff continues to monitor the water levels at the Binbrook reservoir on a regular basis. As noted in the previous monthly status updates, actuators and valves had been replaced and necessary modifications to the on-site PLC have now been completed. The Binbrook Dam valves and controls are now fully operational. The water level in the reservoir has been drawn down and is being maintained at holding level.

ii) Staff continue to routinely monitor the water levels at our 14 stream gauge stations, climatic 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. The public may access this real-time water level and rainfall information through the NPCA's website.

b) Floodplain Mapping

Work to finalize the Lower and Upper Welland River remapping projects is on hold pending completion of the Central Welland River work. The Consultants current scope of work on the Central Welland River Mapping assignment is expected to be fully complete in June.

5) Special Projects

a) Staff assisted in the Ministry of Natural Resources Groundwater Indicator Program for the Low Water Response Program and Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network;

- b) Staff assisted MOE in the Groundwater level analysis for the Balls Falls Climate Station.
- c). A Water Use Survey of Upper Twelve Mile Creek was completed by a Niagara College Intern.

III. Watershed Stewardship 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 75 restoration projects are being planned and implemented this year across all watershed planning areas.

1) Project Implementation – Watershed Plans

- In total 25 woodland restoration / riparian projects will be implemented across the watershed this year. Projects are in the planning phase.
- Over 25 construction projects such as wetland restoration, aquatic in-stream works, erosion and bank stabilization projects are currently being planned.
- Over 20 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.

2) Outreach & Education

Canopies for Kids

- The goal of Canopies for Kids is to engage elementary students from all school boards in the NPCA's jurisdiction 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.

A call for applications was sent out in November of 2011, to all elementary schools in our jurisdiction. Fifty applications were received by the January 27th, 2012 deadline. The following 10 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	Wainfleet:	St. Elizabeth – Catholic
Niagara Falls:	Cardinal Newman – Catholic	Welland:	St. Mary – Catholic
Port Colborne:	St. John Bosco - Catholic		

The Implementation phase of the program has been completed. Each school received their ten large trees and 15 smaller trees for the class planting. The schools will water and care for the trees until the end of June. NPCA will have the trees watered as needed (weather dependant) over the summer.

The intent is to continue this program until all schools with less than 5% canopy cover in the playground area can be accommodated. There are approximately 80 schools in our jurisdiction that are in need of this program. Funding for this program is currently being provided by St. Catharines Green Committee, and the NPCA.

Earth Day

- The NPCA hosted an Earth Day event at Balls Falls on Earth Day, Sunday April 22nd from 10 am – 2 pm. The venue was open to the public, with the price of regular park admission, the public enjoyed value added programming which included building a toad home, interpretive Eco tours, tour of the Grist Mill and the opportunity to build a nesting box, decorate it and take it home. Rona (Welland) donated the material and supplies for the nesting box kits, including the lumber, nails and hammers. E.L. Crossley students prepared the kits (cut the wood) for assembly by the public. Over 100 paid visitors attended and approximately 70 guests from E.L. Crossly, Rona and NPCA staff members (including family) attended as well.

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 5th annual Niagara Envirothon (an outdoor environmental skill testing competition for high school students) began on April 4th at the Jericho House retreat in Wainfleet, where students participated in hands-on learning workshops. Competition day was April 18th, where the 13 teams representing 7 different schools across Niagara competed for regional title. St. Michael Catholic High School won, they moved on to Provincial

completion and placed 7th out of 14 teams from across the Ontario. NPCA staff have been working with the Jericho House on a naturalization project, making it an ideal location to hold our event.

Competing schools included:

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)
Westlane (Niagara Falls)
St. Michael Catholic High School (Niagara Falls)

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.

3. 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. A factsheet outlining the process and the guidance document has been distributed to all the partnering agencies.
- Community Update Newsletter, February 2012 has been published and distributed to the local community.

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.
- e) Niagara River Area of Concern (Ontario) RAP Update 2012
 - This documents highlights program progress and next steps on what remains to be done.

LAND MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

Thanksgiving Festival Jury has completed the selection process for artisans and food vendors. Several changes will be taking place for this year's festival, including addition of Welcome Banner and movement of main performance stage to new location across creek.

Met with Niagara Here Art Project. Looks very exciting and Ball's Falls wishes to be a part of it. May attract new visitors.

Website and Twitter Feed are being updated regularly. This seems to be a good way to bring current information to a number of followers. Staff have noticed immediate responses when new information is posted.

The Gift Shop will be bringing in new products for the summer. Local artisans and producers will help stock the shelves with local art and food. Staff expect this will help fulfill the Centre's role as a key entry point to the Twenty Valley Tourism Area.

A TD Friends of the Environment Grant was received for the development of an interactive Bee Observation Box to be placed outside the Centre for Conservation. This installation will support an upcoming Bee exhibit.

Staff continue to work on updating exhibits in the Centre and the Grist Mill. Visitors are already responding positively. The new siding on the Barn is complete and the Mill is nearing completion. Foundation stabilization works are proposed in the 2012 capital budget. These works will be carried out during the summer.

The Crystals to Gems Exhibit opened May 5th, and will run through to September 3rd. The Exhibit explores the fascinating world of nature's crystals and shows how they grow and differ in form and colour. Visitors will experience the beauty of gemstones and learn what makes them unique in this travelling exhibit from the National Museum of Nature.

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Two volunteers from Ball's Falls will be getting service awards. Scott Foster and Nancy Kane will be recognized for their many years of service in programming at the site.

Long Beach and Chippawa Creek Conservation Areas

Staff are working hard to ensure that everything is ready for the opening weekend. As in the past, seasonal campers will be allowed to set-up at the site a few days before the public is invited in. This helps to avoid confusion on the Friday of the long weekend.

The winter left the parks largely unscathed, and staff have been making good use of this windfall to make improvements on the site. This includes:

- A number of new underground water valve boxes.

- Tree trimming on campsites / roadways to improve access / appearance.

- Assessment of campsite electrical and water outlet components on a find/fix/repair (or replace) basis to improve campsite services and enhance appearance and function of Infrastructure.

- New doors on the restrooms at LB comfort station #2.

A tool was donated that will allow campground staff to assist visitors who experience problems moving fifth-wheel trailers. This donation is from long-time seasonal campers, Dennis and Jeanette Laliberty of St. Catharines. Park staff are proud of the positive relationships that exists with our visitors; and we wish to publicly acknowledge our appreciation to Dennis and Jeanette by way of this status item.

Campground staff at Long Beach have been asked to assist the efforts of the Region of Niagara with enhanced beach monitoring program for bacteria levels. This will require NPCA staff to conduct 10 recreational beach samples each weekend day for the 2012 season (1 hour per day for two students each weekend). The Region will be sampling at the sites the other days of the week as they have over the past few years. Although this places some extra workload on park staff for the season, we feel it is in our best interest to work towards a new way of beach testing (such as the current trend towards developing predictive modeling for beach conditions). Improved accuracy of beach conditions would enhance our ability to serve the watershed community in terms of public safety, and would also enable us to better showcase our beaches as places people should visit.

Related to the above, Long Beach has also been considered as a site for the placement of sophisticated buoys, Doppler sensors and a shoreline weather station for the beach monitoring program. Currently, two other sites, Lakeside Park (St. C) and Crystal Beach (Ft Erie) are also being identified for this effort. This discussion is ongoing as there are logistical requirements / needs that would have to be resolved beforehand. At a recent meeting on the matter at Regional HQ involving various municipal partners and agencies, as well as MOE, McMaster, and federal Great Lakes staff, we are aware funding had been secured for equipment at two locations.

Camping reservations for "Bolerama" at Long Beach on the weekend of July 14 are picking up. This event packs the park for the weekend with small Boler-type trailers, and represents about \$4000 in direct camping revenue, and additional revenues from attendees who come earlier / stay later. This is the second year for the event at LB, and promises to be busier than in 2011 based on reservation activity to date.

Seasonal Camping reservations have increased by 9 sites since the last status report. This includes recouping losses from a few campers who changed their minds. Although it seems a small number, it represents about \$20,000 in revenue and seems to be busier for the mid-Apr to mid-May period compared to the past few years.

Much slower to build are transient camping fees. In the week or two leading up to Victoria Day and subsequent weekends, activity will increase significantly. For the period of March 1 to May 7, we have received \$10,100 and \$7,900 in online camping fee payments on our reservation website for Chippawa Creek and Long beach respectively. This does not include phone-in reservations at the parks. To paint a better picture, in 2011 the totals for the same period were \$7,600 and \$4,400 respectively. This trending increase can be attributed to many things, from visitors becoming more used to the system to a milder spring. However, it is a new public service that is becoming accepted and used by an increasing number of customers.

Binbrook Conservation Area

Binbrook Conservation Area opened its gates to the public on May 1st. Visitor numbers vary, depending on the weather, but the park is in good shape for this time of the year. Conservation Area staff attended the Binbrook Home Show on May 5th and 6th. The event was very successful and allowed staff to promote the site to the local community.

Staff completed a number of capital improvements in the park, including the gatehouse interior, extended phone lines and completed work on the splash pad water treatment system. The pad will be operating on a regular basis once the final inspections are completed.

The Spring Cattie Derby will take place on Saturday, May 12th. This annual event is run by the Glanbrook Conservation Committee and is the main kick-off to the operating season. Staff will be on hand to assist with the event, including promotion of season passes.

This year Binbrook will be operating a season-long tagged fish tournament. Visitors who catch a tagged fish will be able to redeem the tag for a prize. The program is designed to bring more people out to fish in the reservoir. Corporate sponsorship of this event is expected to grow substantially in the following years.

Final commissioning of the splash pad retrofit is on schedule for opening the pad to the public this spring.

Site work will be undertaken by staff to restore the playground area disrupted by the splash pad construction, while also providing for new public trails from the parking lot to the playground and splashpad. These new trails and site work are being planned to support future expansion of the playground area for park visitors as play equipment needs to be replaced.

Two Mile Creek

Construction of the new asphalt walking trail through two mile creek conservation area is near completion. Hazard tree removal and site cleanup will be completed by staff once the contractor has pulled off the site. Staff are also in consultation with the municipality and Parks Canada to discuss and review maintenance of the roadway and drainage culverts near the conservation area and the Parks Canada heritage site.

Jordan Harbour Conservation Area

Staff are working with the contractor for the new open air pavilion to obtain building permits for installation in a new proposed location north of the existing boat ramp. Last spring flooding of the boat ramp and dock area created site problems for the intended pavilion location at the concrete pier. Delays resulted in the contractor having to review his engineering design for the structure and some concern about building in that location. In order for the project to move forward, it has been decided to move the location of the pavilion north of the boat ramp. This will still accommodate the vision for the property, while allowing for future site restoration at the pier and boat ramp area as budget permits. The installation of the new pavilion is slated for completion this summer along with additional floating docks at the boat ramp to support the increased use of the site by paddlers.

St Johns Conservation Area

Staff are following up regularly with City of Thorold staff to determine when tar and chip work on the entrance road and parking lot can be completed under their municipal tender. This contract was

struck last year with the municipality but was carried over this season due to construction delays from their end. The municipality is currently in the process of completing their surface treatment and road tenders and setting work schedules for this construction season.

The Conservation Area pond was opened Saturday April 28, 2012 at 12 noon for rainbow trout fishing. Approximately 140 anglers attended the opening, which was officially opened by Domenic DiFruscio, Thorold NPCA Board representative, and Thorold Mayor Luciani. In addition to fishing, the public had an opportunity to be greeted by NPCA staff and learn more of the park rules/regulations, other NPCA Conservation Areas, and sponsors of the pond fish stocking.

While the public could also measure the fish they caught, this information highlighted most fish were from the 2012 stocking indicating stock survival and fishing demands during the 2011 year. The fishing season will continue at the pond until September 30, 2012 when the provincial fishing season closes.

20 Valley - Jordan Stairs

Staff are working through the final design details and tender package specifications for this complicated stair case to extend behind the Jordan Museum down into the 20 Valley. The elevation drop in this area is 20 metres / 65 feet. A series of stair cases, landings, and boardwalks are being detailed to be installed on the rock face within the footprint of the existing wood stair case. Once the tender package is near completion staff are intending to discuss the project with the community to advise on the project and when the stair would need to be closed off from public use for the new construction.

Stevensville Conservation Area

Staff Ecologist is assisting the Fort Erie Conservation Club with establishing a prairie site within the Stevensville Conservation Area. The project will focus on habitat forage and nesting for wild turkey, with some benefits to their pheasant focus as well. Staff will assist with site preparation and plant species including native prairie plant species. Staff are also in discussions with Pheasants Forever, a national conservation group, to determine if funding is available for this project.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Earth Day Activities

The Authority held a very successful Earth Day at Ball's Falls on April 22. About 150 people attended and were treated to a number of activities included building bird boxes and toad homes. Both children and adults Staff participated in an Earth Day event organized by the Ministry of Transportation on April 23. About 800 people attended. Both events were great outreach opportunities.

St. Johns Conservation Area Trout Season Opening

Mayor Ted Luciani and member Mickey DiFruscio were on hand for the opening day of Trout Season On April 28th. About 150 visitors participated in the event. The weather was perfect and visitors had a wonderful day. Staff attended a dinner meeting at the Fonthill Lions Club on May 1. The club donated \$250.00 to assist with the stocking of the fish.

Source Water Protection

The Committee is scheduled to meet on May 8th to approve the Draft Proposed Source Protection Plan. Once the plan is approved staff will format it in preparation for the next public consultation session. Although it is not mandatory, a public Open House will be scheduled. The plan will be forward to the Minister of Environment in August as required.

Town of Lincoln Communities in Bloom

NPCA staff is continuing to work with Town of Lincoln on the Communities in Bloom competition.

Niagara Children's Water Festival

2012 marks the 10th anniversary of this program and a number of initiatives are planned to mark the occasion. The demand for attendance continues to grow and the committee is devising a number of new activities to accommodate increased numbers. Currently 40 schools comprising 1,849 students are pre-registered for the program; this is prior to registration packages being sent out. Registration packages are being sent in the next couple of weeks.

A.D. Latornell 2012 Symposium

The 2012 Latornell Symposium is scheduled for November 14-16 and the theme is Prescription for a Healthy Environment. A number of keynote speakers have been lined up including Terry O'Reilly, CBC Radio Host - Under the Influence; Ed Begley Jr., Environmentalist and Actor - Living with Ed; Dr. William Bird, Physician and Author; Dr. John Howard, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment; Dr. Samina Raja, Author and Associate Professor at the University of Buffalo. Registration information will be available soon.

Bob Welch Memorial Golf Tournament

The tournament is taking place on June 5th at Whirlpool Golf Course in Niagara Falls. Over 450 packages have been distributed. To date 26 golfers are registered; 10 hole sponsors and 3 prizes have been received. We are targeting for a sell out this year.

Binbrook Fishing Derby

The annual Crappie Derby will be held on Saturday May 12. The event begins at 7:00 a.m. and will run until 1:00. The recognition event will take place at 1:30 with prizes to follow.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee Event

Staff will be participating in a special Queen's Diamond Jubilee event occurring on Monday, May 21st from 10 am to 4 pm. The event is a FREE community day. The itinerary is as follows:

10 a.m. Citizenship Ceremony will take place at the Centre for Conservation. The Ceremony starts at 10 am sharp. The public is welcome to attend. There will also be an opportunity to everyone, as a group, to renew their citizenship. After 10 am people will not be admitted into the room. There will be a reception after the Ceremony.

12:00 p.m. Opening Ceremony will take place at the Ball Family Home. The Royal Canadian Legion Colour Party will be marching the flags from the east side of the pedestrian bridge to the

front porch of the Ball Family home. Delegates from the Loyalists, Monarchist League and Vintage Car group will have an opportunity to speak.

Activities:

The Monarchist League will have a table in the barn.

The Loyalists will be leading historic games.

12:30 Potato sack races

1:00 Hula Hoop competition

1:30 Hoop and Stick races

2:00 Bean bag toss competition

2:30 Sack Races

3:00 Hula Hoop competition

There will be crafts in the big barn, a scavenger hunt in the Centre For Conservation and on the grounds and select buildings will be open for tours.

There will be approximately 10-15 Vintage British Cars on display.

Cake will be served at 1 p.m. Hot dogs and drinks will be available (by donation) to the south of the Big Barn from Noon to 3 pm (or until we run out).

RECOMMENDATION:

Report No. 29-12 outlining the status of Authority projects / programs be received for information.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Tony D'Amario, CAO/ Secretary-Treasurer