



NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting
March 27, 2026, 10:00a.m.
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON
AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

The Niagara Peninsula watershed is situated within the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Attiowonderonk (Neutral), and the Anishinaabeg, including the Mississaugas of the Credit—many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties (No. 3, 4, and 381) and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today, the watershed is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

3.1. Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting dated February 27, 2026

Page 1

4. CHAIR'S UPDATE

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1. Correspondence dated March 10, 2026, from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Plan to transition to regional conservation authorities

Page 12

5.2. Correspondence dated March 10, 2026, from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Minister's direction for conservation authorities regarding fee changes associated with planning, development, and permitting fees

Page 14

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative Ally Program

Presented by Chief Operations Officer, Phillipe Murphy-Rhéaume.

6.2. Niagara River Remedial Action Plan Ecosystem Impairment Removed

Presented by Niagara River RAP Coordinator, Jessi Nelson.

7. DELEGATIONS

8. CONSENT ITEMS

- 8.1. Report No. FA-06-26 RE: Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Cities Initiative – Allies Program Membership Page 23
- 8.2. Report No. FA-04-26 RE: Human Resources – 2025 Annual Update Page 28
- 8.3. Report No. FA-07-26 RE: 2025 Planning and Development Statistics Page 32

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- 9.1. Report No. FA-01-26 RE: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment Page 36
- 9.2. Report No. FA-03-26 RE: Appointment of Regulations Officers – Section 30 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* Page 45
- 9.3. Report No. FA-08-26 RE: Delegation of Authority – Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* Page 48
- 9.4. Report No. FA-10-26 RE: St. Johns Centre Heritage Designation Page 52
- 9.5. Report No. FA-09-26 RE: 2026 Corporate Workplan Priorities (*distributed separately*)
- 9.6. Report No. FA-02-26 RE: Provincial Announcement – Next Steps to Improve Ontario’s Conservation Authority System (*distributed separately*)
CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates, will provide a brief presentation related to the report.

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- 10.1. Public Advisory Committee Minutes, dated March 10, 2026 (*distributed separately*)

11. MOTIONS

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

13. NEW BUSINESS

14. CLOSED SESSION

15. ADJOURNMENT

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
February 27, 2026
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Metcalfe, Chair
S. Beattie, Vice Chair
B. Clark
D. Cridland
R. Foster
B. Grant (departed at 9:42a.m.)
P. O'Neill
M. Seaborn
M. Tadeson
A. Witteveen

STAFF PRESENT: L. Lee-Yates, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
N. Bradley, Planning Technician
A. Christie, Director, Conservation Areas
M. Davis, Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
D. Deluce, Director, Planning & Development
J. Diamond, Manager, Watershed Monitoring & Reporting
M. Ferrusi, Manager, People & Performance
L. Gagnon, Director, Corporate Services
N. Green, Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change
T. Lennard, Watershed Planner II
S. Mastroianni, Manager, Planning & Permits
E. Navarro, Communications & Marketing Specialist
A. Parks, Manager, Planning Ecology
G. Shaule, Administrative Assistant
G. Verkade, Senior Manager, Integrated Watershed Strategies
S. Zavarella, Manager, Communications & PR

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Resolution No. FA-01-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the agenda for the Full Authority Board meeting held on February 21, 2025 **BE AMMENDED** to address Item 9.1 immediately following Item 9.2.

CARRIED

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

3. CONCLUSION OF 2025 BUSINESS

- Chair Metcalfe celebrated significant accomplishments achieved throughout 2025, including the launch of the Lake Ontario Coastal Resilience Pilot Project, securing 125 hectares of new protected conservation lands in the watershed, and advancing work in invasive species management.
- Staff, senior leadership, and the Board were recognized for their professionalism and commitment to conservation within the watershed community.
- Chair Metcalfe yielded the floor to CAO Lee-Yates to speak to significant operational milestones achieved in 2025. CAO Lee-Yates noted that NPCA completed significant floodplain mapping work and initiated the Beamer Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan to help guide the future of the space that balances ecological integrity and public use.
- CAO Lee-Yates further recognized the value of NPCA's partnerships on planning matters, Trees for All, and land use planning. Staff, Board Members, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation and partners were recognized for their contributions that strengthen NPCA's impact.

Resolution No. FA-02-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Mark Tadeson

THAT the Board of Directors **CONCLUDE** the business of 2025;

AND FURTHER THAT the Chair and Vice Chair seats **BE DECLARED** vacant.

CARRIED

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer Lee-Yates assumed the Chair and called the 2026 business portion of the meeting to order.

4. ROLL CALL 2026 BOARD MEMBERS

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Stewart Beattie
Brad Clark
Donna Cridland
Robert Foster
Brian Grant
John Metcalfe
Patrick O'Neill
Michelle Seaborn
Mark Tadeson
Albert Witteveen

5. ELECTIONS / APPOINTMENTS OF OFFICERS

5.1. Appointment of Scrutineers

Resolution No. FA-03-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Mark Tadeson

THAT in the event of a vote for the position of Chair and/or Vice Chair, Natalie Green, Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change and David Deluce, Director, Planning & Development will act as scrutineers

CARRIED

5.2. Election of Officers

5.2.1. Chair of the Authority

Nomination

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT Member Robert Foster **BE NOMINATED** as Chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 2026.

Nomination

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

THAT Member Stew Beattie **BE NOMINATED** as Chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 2026.

Close Nominations:

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Albert Witteveen

The election of the Chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 2026 was put to a vote, with Members in person voting by paper ballot and Members attending virtually providing their vote vial email.

The appointed scrutineers tabulated the votes and declared Robert Foster had received a majority vote.

Resolution No. FA-04-2026

Moved by: Michelle Seaborn

Seconded by: Brian Grant

THAT Robert Foster **BE APPOINTED** as Chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 2026.

CARRIED

5.2.2. Vice Chair of the Authority

Nomination

Moved by: Robert Foster

THAT Member John Metcalfe **BE NOMINATED** as Vice Chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 2026.

Close Nominations:

Moved by: Robert Foster

Seconded by: Mark Tadeson

Resolution No. FA-05-2026

Moved by: Mark Tadeson

Seconded by: Albert Witeveen

THAT John Metcalfe **BE APPOINTED** as Vice Chair of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board of Directors for 2026.

CARRIED

5.2.3. Appointments to Conservation Ontario for 2026

Resolution No. FA-06-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Robert Foster

THAT Robert Foster, Chair of NPCA for 2026, or Vice Chair, John Metcalfe, acting as his delegate, **BE** the Authority's voting delegate to Conservation Ontario;

AND FURTHER THAT the Chief Administrative Officer **BE** the alternate delegate.

CARRIED

5.2.4. Appointments to Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation

Resolution No. FA-07-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Brian Grant

THAT the following Board Members **BE APPOINTED** to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation for 2026:

Donna Cridland
Michelle Seaborn
Mark Tadeson (ex-officio)
Robert Foster (ex-officio)

CARRIED

5.2.5. Appointments to Finance Committee

Resolution No. FA-08-2026

Moved by: Brian Grant

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT the following Board Members **BE APPOINTED** to the Finance Committee for 2026:

- Robert Foster
- John Metcalfe
- Donna Cridland
- Brian Grant
- Mark Tadeson

CARRIED

5.2.6. Appointments to Governance Committee

Resolution No. FA-09-2026

Moved by: Brian Grant

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT the following Board Members **BE APPOINTED** to the Governance Committee for 2026:

- Robert Foster
- John Metcalfe
- Donna Cridland
- Michelle Seaborn
- Albert Witteveen

CARRIED

5.2.7. Signing Officers

Resolution No. FA-10-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT the Authority’s Chair, Robert Foster, Vice Chair, John Metcalfe, the Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer Leilani Lee-Yates, and the Director Corporate Services, Lise Gagnon, or any two of them **ARE** hereby **AUTHORIZED** to sign, make, draw, accept, endorse and deliver cheques, promissory notes, bills of exchange, orders for the payment of money and such agreements and instruments as may be necessary or useful in connection with the operation of the said account;

AND FURTHER THAT any one of the above-mentioned officers IS hereby **AUTHORIZED** for and in the name of the Organization to endorse and transfer to the Bank for deposit or discount with or collection by the Bank (but for the credit of the Organization only) cheques, promissory notes, bills of exchange, orders for the payment

of money and other instruments, to arrange, settle, balance and certify all books and accounts with the Bank and to sign receipts for vouchers.

CARRIED

5.2.8. Appointment of Auditors

Resolution No. FA-11-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Robert Foster

THAT the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority **APPOINTS KPMG LLP** as its auditors for the 2025 fiscal year.

CARRIED

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution No. FA-12-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting Minutes and the Closed Session Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting dated December 19, 2025 **BE APPROVED**.

CARRIED

7. CHAIR'S UPDATE

- Chair Foster expressed gratitude for the support of fellow Board Members and thanked outgoing Chair Metcalfe and Vice Chair Beattie for their exceptional work in the roles over the past two years.
- Chair Foster noted he is looking forward to doing a lot of meaningful work with the Board to navigate transitions throughout the year.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

Resolution No. FA-13-2026

Moved by: Stewart Beattie

Seconded by: Robert Foster

THAT the following correspondence **BE RECEIVED**:

8.1. Correspondence dated December 18, 2025, from the Township of Zorra RE: Bill 68 and Proposed Consolidation of Conservation Authorities;

8.2. Correspondence dated December 16, 2025 from the Township of Alfred and Plantagenet RE: South Nation Conservation – Response to Bill 68 – Conservation Authority Changes;

8.3. Correspondence dated December 5, 2025, from the Town of The Blue Mountains RE: Town of The Blue Mountains Opposition to Bill 68 and the Proposed Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;

- 8.4.** Correspondence dated December 18, 2025, from the Municipality of Meaford RE: Municipality of Meaford Response to the Proposed Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;
- 8.5.** Correspondence dated December 8, 2025, from the Township of Edwardsburgh/Cardinal RE: Conservation Authorities Restructuring;
- 8.6.** Correspondence dated December 8, 2025, from the Township of Conmee RE: Consolidation of Conservation Authorities;
- 8.7.** Correspondence dated December 8, 2025, from The Nation Municipality RE: Request for support from South Nation Conservation regarding the amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act and ERO Posting #025-1257;
- 8.8.** Correspondence dated December 16, 2025, from the Town of Fort Erie RE: Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;
- 8.9.** Correspondence dated November 19, 2025, from the County of Essex RE: Resolution of Essex County Council in Support of Municipalities Vis-à-vis Bill 68;
- 8.10.** Correspondence dated December 17, 2025, from the City of Clarence-Rockland RE: Notice of Council Resolution – Conservation Authorities Act;
- 8.11.** Correspondence dated December 18, 2025, from Grey Sauble Conservation Authority RE: Comments on ERO Posting No. 025-1257 – Proposed Boundaries for Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;
- 8.12.** Correspondence dated December 22, 2025, from Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority RE: Environmental Registry Ontario Posting No. 025-1257;
- 8.13.** Correspondence dated December 19, 2025, from Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority RE: Cataraqui Region Conservation Authority Submission to ERO 025-1257 Consultation (proposed Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities);
- 8.14.** Correspondence dated December 17, 2025, from Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority RE: Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities (ERO#025-1257) Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Submission;
- 8.15.** Correspondence dated December 11, 2025, from Hamilton Conservation Authority RE: Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities (ERO 025-1257);
- 8.16.** Correspondence dated December 19, 2025, from Quinte Conservation RE: Quinte Conservation Board of Directors position on the regional consolidation of Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities;

8.17. Correspondence dated December 4, 2025, from Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority RE: NVCA Board Submission on the Proposed Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;

8.18. Correspondence dated December 4, 2025, from Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority RE: Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Submission to ERO 025-1257 Consultation on Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities;

8.19. Correspondence dated December 19, 2025, from Mattagami Region Conservation Authority RE: Mattagami Region Conservation Authority position on the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities;

8.20. Correspondence dated December 17, 2025, from Lower Trent Conservation Authority RE: ERO number 025-1257;

8.21. Correspondence dated December 11, 2025, from Nickel District Conservation Authority (Conservation Sudbury) RE: Response to ERO # 025-1257, Proposed boundaries for the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities;

8.22. Correspondence dated December 18, 2025, from Biodiversity & Climate Action Niagara RE: ERO 025-1257 Bill 68;

8.23. Correspondence dated December 4, 2025, from Northern Ontario Large Urban Mayors RE: Bill 68, Schedule 3 – Conservation Authority Amalgamations and Regional Boundaries;

8.24. Correspondence dated December 18, 2025, from the Municipality of South Huron RE: Response to Bill 68- Proposed new Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency;

8.25. Correspondence dated December 22, 2025, from the Municipality of West Elgin RE: Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;

8.26. Correspondence dated December 5, 2025, from the Municipality of Neebing RE: Proposed Boundaries for the Regional Consolidation of Ontario's Conservation Authorities;

8.27. Correspondence dated December 16, 2025, from the Municipality of Chatham-Kent RE: Amalgamation of Conservation Authorities – Bill 68;

8.28. Correspondence dated December 10, 2025, from the United Counties of Prescott and Russell RE: Response to Bill 68 – Conservation Authority Changes;

8.29. Correspondence dated January 16, 2026, from the Town of Grimsby RE: Support for NPCA Resolution – NPCA Position on the regional consolidation of Ontario's conservation authorities; and

Correspondence dated February 20, 2026, from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake
RE: Consolidation of NPCA into “Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation
Authority.”

CARRIED

9. PRESENTATIONS

9.2. In Memory of Brian Lee, 1963-2026

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee Yates spoke to the memory of Brian Lee, a long-standing member of NPCA’s GIS team and fond shared memories of him.

Chair Foster expressed condolences to staff and all of Brian’s loved ones in this time of loss.

Resolution No. FA-14-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: John Metcalfe

THAT the presentation In Memory of Brian Lee, 1963-2026 **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

9.1. NPCA Employee Service Recognition 2025

Manager, People & Performance, Misti Ferrusi provided an introductory overview and invited NPCA leadership to speak to staff milestones and accomplishments.

Resolution No. FA-15-2026

Moved by: Brad Clark

Seconded by: Patrick O’Neill

THAT the presentation RE: the presentation regarding NPCA Employee Service Recognition 2025 **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

9.3. 2025 NPCA Year in Review Video

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates, emphasized the importance of collaboration, progress and conservation that are highlighted in NPCA’s 2025 Year in Review Video.

Resolution No. FA-16-2026

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the 2025 Year in Review Video **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

10. DELEGATIONS

10.1. Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation

NPCF Chair, Brett Harrington, provided a brief presentation on 2025 highlights, community engagement initiatives, and priorities for 2026, including a signature event to be held on July 24, 2026.

Resolution No. FA-17-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Foundation Delegation **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

11. CONSENT ITEMS

None.

12. DISCUSSION ITEMS

12.1. Report No. FA-01-26 RE: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment

Discussion among Board members regarding deferring Item 12.1 to the next Full Authority meeting took place.

Resolution No. FA-18-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT Report No. FA-01-26 RE: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment **BE DEFERRED** for consideration at the March 27, 2026 Full Authority meeting.

CARRIED

13. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

14. MOTIONS

None.

15. NOTICES OF MOTION

None.

16. NEW BUSINESS

None.

17. CLOSED SESSION

None.

14. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Foster adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.



Office of the Minister

Bureau du ministre

777 Bay Street, 5th Floor
Toronto ON M7A 2J3
Tel.: 416 314-6790

777, rue Bay, 5^e étage
Toronto ON M7A 2J3
Tél. : 416 314-6790

357-2026-754

March 10, 2026

Dear Chairs:

I am writing to provide an update as we move into the next phase of improving Ontario's conservation authority system. This spring, the government intends to introduce legislative amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) that, if passed, would implement this next phase.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in the consultation process. We listened closely, and the feedback we received directly shaped and strengthened our plan. Based on the feedback, we adjusted the planned regional boundaries—from the originally proposed boundaries that would have created seven regional conservation authorities—and optimized to boundaries that create nine new regional conservation authorities. These planned boundaries would accommodate areas with distinct geographies and development contexts, better balance differing priorities across rural, urban and northern areas and improve alignment with watersheds and with source protection regions.

We are also building in clear mechanisms to ensure local knowledge continues to guide decision-making. The plan is for the newly created regional CAs to create one or more Watershed Councils to ensure watershed planning is guided by local insights. Regional CAs will continue to operate as independent public bodies with municipally appointed boards that maintain strong local representation and oversight.

The planned consolidation to regional conservation authorities is targeted to occur in early 2027 and is designed to strengthen the system—not weaken it—by increasing consistency, modernizing standards, and providing better tools and resources to support the frontline work your teams deliver every day. Under this plan, regional conservation authorities will continue to rely on the deep local expertise, knowledge, and relationships that your staff bring to their communities. Those who know the watershed best will remain central to delivering local programs and on-the-ground support, helping to ensure decisions reflect the unique environmental priorities of each area.

...2

This plan to transition to regional conservation authorities marks the beginning of a renewed relationship—one that builds on local strengths while establishing greater consistency and shared capacity across the province. As part of this plan, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) will lead a gradual, carefully managed transition to ensure stability and continuity. Services, programs, and permitting will continue uninterrupted as planning for transition progresses toward early 2027. There will be no cuts to front line jobs. Protecting local service delivery is a guiding principle of this planned transition, and communities will continue to work with the same local teams at conservation authorities they rely on today.

To ensure a smooth and organized transition, the province is providing \$3 million in annual funding, to be administered by OPCA. These resources are planned to be used by OPCA to support conservation authorities throughout the transition period and, in the longer term, will enable regional conservation authorities to achieve program improvements.

Your leadership is vital as we begin this new chapter. I encourage you to share this message with your staff to provide reassurance that their work, expertise, and community relationships remain at the heart of Ontario's conservation system. In the coming weeks, you will be invited to technical briefings to provide further information on the next steps in the planned transition process.

For questions regarding the planned consolidation and the transition process, please contact CCEO@ontario.ca. If you have questions about the planned legislative amendments or day-to-day CA business, please reach out to MECP staff at ca.office@ontario.ca.

Thank you for your continued partnership and commitment. We look forward to working with you over the next year to make important improvements to Ontario's conservation authority system.

Sincerely,



Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

c: Hassaan Basit, Chief Conservation Executive, MECP
Chloe Stuart, Assistant Deputy Minister, Land and Water Division, MECP



357-2026-736

March 10, 2026

TO: Conservation authorities as listed in Appendix A to the Attachment A
"Minister's Direction Issued Pursuant to Section 21.3 of the *Conservation
Authorities Act*"

SUBJECT: Minister's direction for conservation authorities regarding fee changes
associated with planning, development, and permitting fees

I am writing with regards to conservation authority planning, development and permitting fees. Pursuant to my authority under subsection 21.3 (1) of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, I am issuing a new Direction, attached to this letter as Attachment A. This Direction is consistent with the Directions that were previously in place for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 calendar years.

The purpose of this Direction, which is effective from March 10, 2026, to February 28, 2027, is to require a conservation authority not to change the amount of the fee it charges or the manner in which it determines the fee for any program or service related to reviewing and commenting on planning and development related proposals or land use planning policies, or for permits issued by conservation authorities. This Direction is intended to support less costly approvals in order to help increase housing supply and affordability in Ontario.

This Direction applies to the conservation authorities listed in Appendix A, who are encouraged to make the Direction publicly available on the Governance section of their websites.

If you have any questions regarding this Direction, please contact the ministry at ca.office@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd McCarthy", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the left.

Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

c: The Honourable Rob Flack, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

**Minister’s Direction Issued Pursuant to Section 21.3 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*
(this “Direction”)**

WHEREAS section 21.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* permits a conservation authority to charge a fee for a program or service if the program or service is included in the Minister’s list of classes of programs and services in respect of which a conservation authority may charge a fee;

AND WHEREAS subsections 21.2 (6) and 21.2 (7) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provide that a conservation authority shall adopt a written fee policy that includes a fee schedule listing the programs and services that it provides in respect of which it charges a fee, and the amount of the fee charged for each program or service or the manner in which the fee is determined (a “**Fee Schedule**”);

AND WHEREAS subsection 21.2 (10) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provides that a conservation authority may make a change to the list of fees set out in the fee schedule or to the amount of any fee or the manner in which a fee is determined, provided the authority shall give notice of the proposed change to the public in a manner it considers appropriate;

AND WHEREAS section 21.3 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provides the Minister with the authority to give a written direction to an authority directing it not to change the amount of any fee it charges under subsection 21.2 (10), in respect of a program or service set out in the list referred to in subsection 21.2 (2), for the period specified in the direction;

NOW THEREFORE pursuant to the authority of the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks under section 21.3, the conservation authorities set out under Appendix “A” of this Direction (the “**conservation authorities**” or each, a “**conservation authority**”) are hereby directed as follows:

Fee Changes Prohibition

1. Commencing on the Effective Date and for the duration of the Term of this Direction, a conservation authority is prohibited from making a change under subsection 21.2 (10) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* to the amount of any fee or the manner in which a fee is determined in its fee schedule if such a change would have the effect of changing the fee amount for the programs and services described in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Direction.

Program and Service Fees Impacted

2. This Direction applies to any fee set out in the Fee Schedule of a conservation authority, including without limitation fees for any mandatory program or service (Category 1), municipal program or service (Category 2), or conservation authority recommended program or service (Category 3) related to reviewing and commenting on planning and

Attachment A

development related proposals, applications, or land use planning policies, or for conservation authority permitting.

3. For greater certainty, this Direction applies to any fees in respect of the following programs or services provided under the Mandatory Programs and Services regulation ([O. Reg. 686/21](#)):
 - a. Section 6: programs and services related to reviewing applications and proposals under the *Aggregate Resources Act*, *Drainage Act*, *Environmental Assessment Act*, and the *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act*, for the purpose of commenting on the risks related to natural hazards arising from the proposal,
 - b. Section 7: programs and services related to ensuring that decisions under the *Planning Act* are consistent with the natural hazards policies in the policy statements issued under section 3 of the *Planning Act* and are in conformance with any natural hazard policies included in a provincial plan as defined in section 1 of that Act,
 - c. Section 8: programs and services related to conservation authority duties, functions, and responsibilities to administer and enforce section 28 and its regulations, section 28.0.1, and section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*,
 - d. Paragraph 4 of subsection 13 (3): programs and services related to reviewing and commenting on any proposal made under another Act for the purpose of determining whether the proposal relates to a significant drinking water threat or may impact any drinking water sources protected by a source protection plan, and
 - e. Subparagraph 4 iv of section 15: programs and services related to reviewing and commenting on proposals made under other Acts for the purpose of determining the proposal's impact on the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan and the Lake Simcoe watershed.

Application

4. This Direction, applies to all conservation authorities in Ontario, listed in Appendix "A" to this Direction.
5. For greater certainty, this Direction also applies to the conservation authorities listed in Appendix "A" to this Direction when such conservation authorities are meeting as a source protection authority under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

Effective Date and Term

6. This Direction is effective from March 10, 2026 (the "**Effective Date**").
7. The term of this Direction is the period from the Effective Date to February 28, 2027 (the "**Term**").

Attachment A

Amendments

8. This Direction may be amended in writing from time to time at the sole discretion of the Minister.

**HIS MAJESTY THE KING IN RIGHT OF ONTARIO
as represented by the
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Todd McCarthy", with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the name.

Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
March 10, 2026

APPENDIX A

LIST OF CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES TO WHICH THE DIRECTION APPLIES

Ausable Bayfield CA

R.R. #3
71108 Morrison Line
Exeter ON N0M 1S5
Davin Heinbuck
dheinbuck@abca.on.ca

Cataraqui Region CA

Box 160
1641 Perth Road
Glenburnie ON K0H 1S0
David Ellingwood
dellingwood@crca.ca

Catfish Creek CA

R.R. #5
8079 Springwater Road
Aylmer ON N5H 2R4
Dusty Underhill
generalmanager@catfishcreek.ca

Central Lake Ontario CA

100 Whiting Avenue
Oshawa ON L1H 3T3
Chris Darling
cdarling@cloca.com

Credit Valley CA

1255 Old Derry Rd
Mississauga ON L5N 6R4
Terri LeRoux
terri.leroux@cvc.ca

Crowe Valley CA

Box 416
70 Hughes Lane
Marmora ON K0K 2M0
Janette Loveys Smith
janette.smith@crowevalley.com

Essex Region CA

Suite 311
360 Fairview Ave West
Essex ON N8M 1Y6
Tim Byrne
tbyrne@erca.org

Ganaraska Region CA

Box 328
2216 County Road 28
Port Hope ON L1A 3V8
Linda Laliberte
llaliberte@grca.on.ca

Grand River CA

Box 729
400 Clyde Road
Cambridge ON N1R 5W6
Samantha Lawson
slawson@grandriver.ca

Grey Sauble CA

R.R. #4
237897 Inglis Falls Road
Owen Sound ON N4K 5N6
Tim Lanthier
t.lanthier@greysauble.on.ca

Halton Region CA

2596 Britannia Road West
Burlington ON L7P 0G3
Chandra Sharma
csharma@hrca.on.ca

Hamilton Region CA

P.O. Box 81067
838 Mineral Springs Road
Ancaster ON L9G 4X1
Lisa Burnside
lisa.burnside@conservationhamilton.ca

Kawartha Region CA

277 Kenrei (Park) Road
Lindsay ON K9V 4R1
Mark Majchrowski
mmajchrowski@kawarthaconservation.com

Kettle Creek CA

R.R. #8
44015 Ferguson Line
St. Thomas ON N5P 3T3
Elizabeth VanHooren
elizabeth@kettlecreekconservation.on.ca

Lake Simcoe Region CA

Box 282
120 Bayview Parkway
Newmarket ON L3Y 3W3
Rob Baldwin
r.baldwin@lsrca.on.ca

Lakehead Region CA

Box 10427
130 Conservation Road
Thunder Bay ON P7B 6T8
Tammy Cook
tammy@lakeheadca.com

Long Point Region CA

4 Elm Street
Tillsonburg ON N4G 0C4
Judy Maxwell
jmaxwell@lprca.on.ca

Lower Thames Valley CA

100 Thames Street
Chatham ON N7L 2Y8
Mark Peacock
mark.peacock@ltvca.ca

Lower Trent Region CA

R.R. #1
714 Murray Street
Trenton ON K8V 5P4
Rhonda Bateman
rhonda.bateman@ltc.on.ca

Maitland Valley CA

Box 127
1093 Marietta Street
Wroxeter ON N0G 2X0
Phil Beard
pbeard@mvca.on.ca

Mattagami Region CA

100 Lakeshore Road
Timmins ON P4N 8R5
David Vallier
david.vallier@timmins.ca

Mississippi Valley CA

10970 Highway 7
Carleton Place ON K7C 3P1

Sally McIntyre
smcintyre@mvc.on.ca

Niagara Peninsula CA

250 Thorold Road West, 3rd Floor
Welland ON L3C 3W2
Leilani Lee-Yates
llee-yates@npca.ca

Nickel District CA

199 Larch St
Suite 401
Sudbury ON P3E 5P9
Carl Jorgensen
carl.jorgensen@conservationsudbury.ca

North Bay-Mattawa CA

15 Janey Avenue
North Bay ON P1C 1N1
Liza Vandermeer
liza.vandermeer@nbmca.ca

Nottawasaga Valley CA

8195 Line 8
Utopia ON L0M 1T0
Jennifer Vincent
jvincent@nvca.on.ca

Otonabee Region CA

250 Milroy Drive
Peterborough ON K9H 7M9
Janette Loveys Smith
jsmith@otonabeeconservation.com

Quinte Region CA

R.R. #2
2061 Old Highway #2
Belleville ON K8N 4Z2
Brad McNevin
bmcnevin@quinteconservation.ca

Raisin Region CA

PO Box 429
18045 County Road 2
Cornwall ON K6H 5T2
Alison MacDonald
alison.macdonald@rrca.on.ca

Rideau Valley CA

Box 599
3889 Rideau Valley Dr.
Manotick ON K4M 1A5
Sommer Casgrain-Robertson
sommer.casgrain-robertson@rvca.ca

Saugeen Valley CA

R.R. #1
1078 Bruce Road #12, Box #150
Formosa ON N0G 1W0
Erik Downing
e.downing@svca.on.ca

Sault Ste. Marie Region CA

1100 Fifth Line East
Sault Ste. Marie ON P6A 6J8
Corrina Barrett
cbarrett@ssmrca.ca

South Nation River CA

38 Victoria Street
P.O. Box 29
Finch ON K0C 1K0
Carl Bickerdike
cbickerdike@nation.on.ca

St. Clair Region CA

205 Mill Pond Crescent
Strathroy ON N7G 3P9
Ken Phillips
kphillips@scrca.on.ca

Toronto and Region CA

101 Exchange Avenue
Vaughan ON L4K 5R6
John MacKenzie
john.mackenzie@trca.ca

Upper Thames River CA

1424 Clarke Road
London ON N5V 5B9
Tracey Annett
annettt@thamesriver.on.ca

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative – Allies Program Membership

Report No: FA-06-26

Date: March 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-06-26 RE: Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative – Allies Program Membership **BE RECEIVED**.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the [Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative](#) (GLSLCI) and the benefits of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) having membership in the Allies Program.

Background:

The GLSLCI (or Cities Initiative) is a multinational coalition of over 400 municipal and regional Canadian and U.S. mayors and local officials working to advance the protection and restoration of the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. The Cities Initiative works to integrate environmental, economic, and social agendas to sustain a resource that represents approximately 20 percent of the world’s surface freshwater supply, provides drinking water for 40 million people and is the foundation upon which a strong regional economy is based.

The Cities Initiative works on many Great Lakes-related issues in partnership with the International Joint Commission, Great Lakes Commission, United States Environmental Protection Agency, and the Canada Water Agency (CWA). GLSLCI also collaborates with several other Great Lakes basin-wide non-governmental organizations, including Alliance for the Great Lakes, the Council of Great Lakes Governors, the Health Our Waters Coalition and, more recently, Ontario Conservation Authorities.

Since 2003, the GLSLCI has grown to include over 120 member municipalities of all sizes from around the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin, representing over 14 million

people. The NPCA watershed municipalities are well represented on the GLSLCI with membership from Niagara Region, City of Hamilton, City of St. Catharines, Town of Lincoln, Town of Grimsby, Town of Fort Erie, Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, City of Niagara Falls, City of Thorold, City of Welland, and City of Port Colborne. The Co-Chair of the Cities Initiative Board of Directors is St. Catharines Mayor Mat Siscoe and Town of Lincoln Mayor, Sandra Easton, serves as a Director on the Board.

Mayor Easton is also a Co-Chair of the Cities Initiative's Mayor's Commission on Community Resilience that supports community-led efforts to equitably adapt to extreme weather and strengthen resilience to climate risks. Through the Memorandum of Collaboration (MOC) between CO and the GLSLCI Mayor's Commission on Coastal Resilience that was signed in 2024, the partners recognize the conservation authority mandate for coastal resilience, share knowledge and collaborate on advocacy, and showcase on-the-ground projects.

While GLSLCI headquarters are in Chicago, they also have staff located in Toronto and Montreal. Funding is generated through membership dues and financial support from foundations and grant programs. Through their [Strategic Plan](#), the Cities Initiative aspires to achieve a sustainable, vibrant, and resilient Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River Basin. They provide a platform for mayors to:

- Advocate for programs, policies and resources;
- Collaborate on issues of shared interest; and
- Educate on solution to common challenges.

Strategic Priorities are organized around:

- Climate Change and Coastal Resilience
- Water Equity
- Blue Economy
- Ecosystem Protection and Restoration
- Organizational Capacity

In 2025, the GLSLCI launched the Allies Program aimed at building deeper partnerships with non-profit organizations, industry associations, and colleges/universities. NPCA joined the Allies Program in November 2025, and along with the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority are currently the only two conservation authorities who are Ally Members. Through our partnership with the Cities Initiative in addition to our other programs/projects, NPCA is advancing impactful work within the Great Lakes Basin that aims to improve coastal resilience and water quality.

Discussion:

NPCA and GLSLCI are partnering on several projects and initiatives to advance collective priorities on the Great Lakes.

Adapting to Coastal Hazards Across the Great Lakes – Lake Ontario Coastal Resilience Pilot Project

In January 2025, Conservation Ontario (CO) announced that it was the successful recipient of \$3.1 million of funding from the Natural Resources Canada's Climate-Resilient Coastal Communities program toward the development of three Great Lakes pilot projects, including \$1.5 million for the Lake Ontario Coastal Resilience Pilot Project led by NPCA, in partnership with Conservation Halton (CH), Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA), CO, and several other partners.

The Cities Initiative participates on the Adapting to Coastal Hazards Across the Great Lakes Project Steering Committee. Through this collaborative network, conservation authorities and GLSLCI are identifying best practices for conservation authorities, municipalities, Indigenous communities, and other interested parties to build coastal resilience.

In November 2025, NPCA CAO/Secretary-Treasurer Lee-Yates, Deputy CAO of HCA, and the CEO of CH were invited to participate in a “fireside chat” at the GLSLCI Water Leadership Summit in the Town of Oakville. The panel discussion focused on the collaborative approach of the Lake Ontario Coastal Resilience Pilot Project and heightened the profile of the project with Canadian and American government and industry representatives, and Indigenous community representatives.

4R Waters

In 2025, the Cities Initiative launched the 4R Waters pilot project, focused on citizen engagement and testing remote sensing technology to improve the health of the Great Lakes through four “R”s as follows:

1. Review – satellite remote sensing and community-based science data to build new scientific knowledge about specific water pollution sources and patterns.
2. Respond – by updating watershed plans, developing policy and permitting recommendations and crafting public engagement strategies.
3. Reconnect – citizens and local leaders to the Great Lakes through public forums, elected leader training, and long-term volunteer watershed monitoring programs.
4. Restore – water quality through direct interventions such as on-the-ground projects, policies and incentive programs.

The 4R Waters pilot project for Lake Ontario in Niagara Region project is supported by \$430,000 investment from the CWA's Great Lakes Freshwater Ecosystem Initiative. The Cities Initiative is partnering with the City of St. Catharines, Town of Lincoln, and NPCA to deliver the first pilot cohort of 4R Waters in the Twelve Mile Creek and Twenty Mile Creek watersheds – areas facing challenges related to sediment, nutrients, and winter road salt. NPCA staff will provide water quality monitoring services to support the goals of this project.

GLSLCI Allies Program

In 2025, NPCA joined the Allies Program to deepen our contribution and engagement with the Cities Initiative members and access additional benefits. For an annual fee of \$2,500, NPCA has access to the following benefits:

1. Preferred Conference Access – Free registration to our Annual Conference and 50% discount for hosting an exhibitor table at the conference.
2. Member Engagement – Access to the Annual Member Meeting as Observers and opportunity to provide short updates during virtual Mid-Year Member Assembly.
3. Increased Visibility – Name and logo featured on the Allies page of the Cities Initiative website.
4. Annual Recognition – Recognition in the Partners newsletter and verbal acknowledgment at the Annual Conference.
5. Amplify Your Voice – Submit events and announcements for inclusion in Cities Initiative newsletters and weekly updates.
6. Access to Regional Events – Invitations to regional events and webinars hosted by the Cities Initiative.

Through our Allies Program membership, NPCA is contributing to a stronger alliance of organizations dedicated to preserving our shared waters and promoting sustainable development.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications with the receipt of this report. The annual membership fee of \$2,500 is accounted for in the operating budget.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 1.1 – Support evidence-based decision-making for climate-resilient watersheds and shorelines

Goal 4.1 – Strengthen government relations toward collective outcomes and impact

Goal 4.2 – Foster relationships with the community, non-government organizations, businesses, agriculture, industry, and academic institutions for collective outcomes and impact.

Related Reports and Appendices:

None.

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by:

Natalie Green, B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Sc., PMP
Director of Watershed Strategies and Climate Change

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Human Resources – 2025 Annual Update

Report No: FA-04-26

Date: March 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-04-26 RE: Human Resources – 2025 Annual Update **BE RECEIVED** for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an update of Human Resources actions during 2025.

Background:

The Board has expressed an interest in understanding the Human Resources actions at the NPCA. As a standard governance practice, staff will provide the Board of Directors with an update on Human Resources actions, initiatives, and basic reporting annually.

Discussion:

Recruitment & Selection

In 2025, the organization continued to strengthen its workforce through targeted recruitment, retention, and internal development efforts. A total of 17 full-time positions were posted and successfully filled, supporting ongoing operational needs and ensuring organizational stability. In addition, seasonal recruitment supporting visitors to our conservation areas as well as employing youth remained strong, with 99 seasonal opportunities posted and staffed, of which 66% were returning employees. This high rate of return demonstrates strong employee engagement and improved seasonal worker experience.

Internal mobility also remained a positive indicator of organizational health. We saw 47% of our filled roles occur through internal promotions, representing a meaningful development pathway for our workforce. These advancements reflect both the strength of our internal

talent pool and the organization's growing commitment to succession planning. Work is underway to formalize and strengthen our succession approach, with an emphasis on identifying high-potential staff and preparing them for future leadership roles.

Learning and Development

In 2025, the organization placed strong emphasis on building internal capability through comprehensive staff training and development initiatives. Training activities spanned a wide range of operational and professional domains, including trail risk management, climate-change adaptation practices, leadership development, GIS training, erosion and sediment control, equipment operation, natural asset management, financial reporting, and health and safety. Collectively, employees completed over 3,000 hours of training, reflecting both individual commitment and organizational prioritization of skill enhancement.

Our longstanding partnerships with post-secondary institutions also remained a cornerstone of our development strategy. Through cooperative education placements, student engagement, and shared learning opportunities, we contributed to the growth of the next generation of environmental professionals while ensuring our organization remains connected to emerging research, talent, and innovation

Employee/Labour Relations

Employee feedback in 2025 provided valuable insight into how staff are experiencing communication, culture, and workplace conditions during a year of change and increasing operational demands. Overall sentiment showed notable improvement across several key areas, including communication, growth and development, customer service, employment conditions, workspace, health and safety, and wellness. Staff reported a stronger sense of support, clearer expectations, and greater access to tools and resources that enable them to perform effectively.

At the same time, the results identified areas requiring continued focus. Perceptions of organizational culture and overall engagement experienced a decline, reflecting the pressures of a rapidly evolving mandate, shifting legislative landscape, and the pace of work across many teams. Employees expressed concern about the volume and speed of change, particularly in the context of broader sector-wide uncertainties related to potential amalgamations. These challenges underscore the importance of continued communication, transparency, and support for staff during periods of organizational transition.

Despite these pressures, employees consistently emphasized the strength of shared values as one of the most meaningful aspects of working at the NPCA. Staff reported deep pride in contributing to environmental stewardship, community impact, and the mission-driven nature of the work. They also highlighted the positive relationships they have with colleagues, noting that teamwork and a shared sense of purpose are central to their engagement.

As the organization continues to navigate external uncertainties, the dedication and commitment of staff remain evident. Employees have demonstrated resilience, adaptability,

and a steadfast commitment to delivering high-quality service to the communities we serve. This feedback will guide our continued efforts in 2026 to enhance communication, improve work processes, strengthen culture, and support employee wellbeing during a pivotal period for the organization.

Health & Safety

A significant focus this year was on building safety competency through targeted training as well as policy updates and communication to advance the safety culture. The Working Alone policy was modernized and accompanied by staff training to improve adherence and clarity as well as an updated Inclement Weather policy to guide response during severe weather events. Sixteen health and safety newsletters were circulated to staff throughout the year supporting continuous awareness and reinforcing safe work practices.

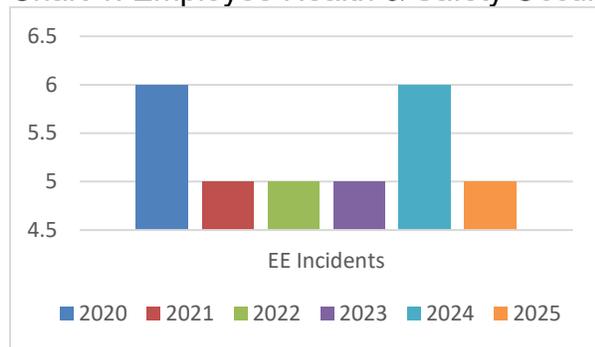
During 2025, Emergency preparedness saw notable improvement as well. The organization conducted emergency drills, refreshed response procedures, and upgraded key emergency equipment. Winter safety driving kits were installed in all NPCA vehicles, reducing seasonal driving risk and ensuring teams are better equipped in adverse conditions.

Importantly, the organization continued to prioritize mental health and wellness as essential components of health and safety. By embedding mental health awareness in training, leadership conversations, and employee supports, the organization reinforced that safety is not limited to physical hazards but includes the psychological wellbeing and resilience of the workforce.

Collectively, the progress made in 2025 reflects a maturing safety culture grounded in prevention, accountability, and continuous improvement. These efforts have strengthened staff confidence, enhanced organizational readiness, and positioned the NPCA to further advance its safety practices in 2026

2025 incident/accidents saw a slight decrease in number of employee injuries/illnesses over last year though total number of incidents remain low. With severe insect bites being the most common occurrence in 2025, this will be one of the education focus topics in 2026 along with water safety and safe driving. Total annual incidents are captured in Chart 1 below.

Chart 1: Employee Health & Safety Occurrences, 2020-2025.



Conclusion

Overall, 2025 was a year of progress, strengthening the NPCA's workforce, enhancing internal capability, and advancing a more cohesive and safety-focused organization. Recruitment, development, and employee support contributed to greater stability and improved workplace conditions, while updated policies and preparedness initiatives reinforced a strong culture of accountability.

As the NPCA looks to 2026, continued attention will be placed on supporting staff through change, enhancing two-way communication opportunities, advancing succession planning, and further strengthening organizational culture. These priorities will help build on the achievements of 2025 and ensure the organization remains resilient, engaged, and well-positioned for the future.

Financial Implications:

This is an update report and there are no financial implications.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan

As a good governance and administrative practice, this report provides updates to the Board on Human Resources practices within the NPCA.

Related Reports and Appendices:

None.

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Misti Ferrusi, CHRL
Manager, People and Performance

Reviewed and Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: 2025 Annual Planning and Permitting Statistics

Report No: FA-07-26

Date: March 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-07-26 RE: 2025 Annual Planning and Permitting Statistics **BE RECEIVED.**

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update the Board of Directors on the planning and permitting activities for 2025. The reporting of statistics within the Planning and Development Division is a requirement of the NPCA Client Service Standards, Conservation Ontario, and the Province of Ontario.

Background:

The Planning and Development Division is responsible for providing a variety of services to our municipal clients as well as the public. This responsibility includes issuing Permits under Section 28.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, reviewing *Planning Act* and *Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act* applications, and municipal Building Permit applications where there is a feature regulated by the NPCA. Planning and Development staff also respond to general phone calls/emails regarding a variety of policy and regulation mapping questions.

As per Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited activities, exemptions and permits, conservation authorities must prepare annual reports on permit review performance and compliance with O. Reg. 41/24.

Discussion:

Over the course of 2025, the Planning and Development Division processed 1375 file types ranging from municipal pre-consultations and Building Permit Clearances to *Planning Act*

application review and NPCA Permit issuance. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the different file types by municipality during 2025.

Table 1: File Type by Municipality in 2025

Municipality	Environmental Assessments	Planning Act/NEC Only	DART*	Municipal Pre-Consultation	Building Permit Clearance	Formal Property Inquiry	Permits
Fort Erie	0	51	3	31	42	8	51
Grimsby	0	17	0	5	7	3	16
Haldimand	0	13	2	1	11	4	12
Hamilton	3	29	0	7	43	9	27
Lincoln	0	17	0	6	27	6	47
Niagara Falls	0	30	0	17	24	13	26
Niagara-on-the-Lake	1	25	2	15	24	6	19
Pelham	0	18	0	14	33	1	28
Port Colborne	0	22	0	10	10	3	26
Region of Niagara	8	0	0	0	0	0	0
St. Catharines	0	25	0	9	42	7	34
Thorold	2	21	0	14	14	5	14
Wainfleet	0	7	2	20	45	3	37
Welland	0	24	0	25	27	6	18
West Lincoln	0	33	1	16	23	1	27
Total	14	332	10	190	372	75	382

*Drainage Act Review Team Maintenance Protocol

Notably, 2025 was the first full year that NPCA (and all conservation authorities) were operating under Ontario Regulation 41/24, requiring conservation authorities to prepare annual reports on permit review performance and compliance with O. Reg. 41/24. This report fulfills that requirement.

Overall Permit activity was slightly higher than in 2024 (382 permits in 2025 compared to 355 in 2024). In 2025, 93 percent of all NPCA Permits were issued within Conservation Ontario (CO) standards. The average time it takes NPCA to issue a Permit once an application is deemed complete is 17 days.

Table 2 provides a summary of Permits issued within/outside of CO timelines for 2025. It is worth pointing out that the CO timelines are tighter (30 days for minor Permits and 90 days for major Permits) than the Provincial 90-day timeframe to make a decision. Based on the Provincial standard, all but one Permit (or 99 percent) would have met the required

timeframe. The average time for the NPCA to determine if a Permit application is complete is 14 days.

Table 2: Permits Issued Within/Outside of CO Timelines in 2025

Permit Type	Within CO Timelines	Outside CO Timelines	Percentage (%)
Minor	345	23	94%
Major	12	2	86%
Total	357	25	95%

Continuous Improvement Initiatives

NPCA Planning and Development staff are working on several continuous improvement initiatives throughout 2026 including:

- Procedural Manual housekeeping update
- Policy Document housekeeping update
- On-going Approximate Regulation Mapping maintenance updates
- Regulatory wetland mapping update
- CityView configuration updates
- Staff training
- Preparation for Regional Conservation Authority consolidation

Most of the initiatives noted above are intended to ensure the NPCA’s policies and procedures are current. With the proposed consolidation of the NPCA with Hamilton Conservation Authority, Halton Conservation, and Credit Valley Conservation, it is understood that Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency will likely standardize permit review policies and procedures for all conservation authorities and introducing a one-window permit portal. In the meantime, staff are focusing on minor updates to NPCA policies and procedures that are out-of-date.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications from this report.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

The daily work of the Planning and Development Division contributes to a healthy and resilient climate and supports sustainable growth by protecting people and properties from natural hazards and climate impacts, and maintaining a high standard of client services, tools and procedures for planning review and permits.

Related Reports and Appendices:

None

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

David Deluce, MCIP, RPP
Director of Planning and Development

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by:

Natalie Green, B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Sc., PMP
Director of Watershed Strategies and Climate Change

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment

Report No: FA-01-26

Date: February 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-01-26 RE: Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to proceed with Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee member recruitment;

AND FURTHER THAT staff **REPORT BACK** on progress made by the Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee at progress points established in the Committee's forthcoming work plan.

Purpose:

To obtain board approval of the establishment of NPCA's Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee, associated Terms of Reference, and support for member recruitment.

Background:

Over the past thirty years, the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) has advanced from early recognition of watershed stressors to a data-driven, partnership-based approach to protecting and restoring Twelve Mile Creek, Niagara's only remaining cold-water stream and the last refuge for native Brook Trout.

Prior to 2006, NPCA conducted comprehensive assessments of the watershed to identify and better understand issues the upper Twelve Mile Creek watershed experienced, where rapid urbanization, erosion, sedimentation, and warming temperatures have been degrading habitat and destabilizing natural stream functions. In 2006, NPCA completed its first [Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Plan](#) to protect and enhance the watershed's biological, cultural, agricultural, economic and recreational resources. With a broader emphasis on stewardship

Report No. FA-01-26
Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference and Recruitment

Page 1 of 5

initiatives, NPCA produced the [Twelve Mile Creek Landowner Stewardship Guide](#) in 2016, empowering residents to contribute to habitat restoration on private lands. More recently, NPCA and partners have undertaken significant restoration and bioengineering projects in the headwaters located in the Town of Pelham, at St. John's Conservation Area, and Camp Wetaskiwin which improved habitat, reduced sedimentation, and engaged the community in hands-on recovery efforts.

Despite these long-standing efforts, Twelve Mile Creek continues to experience several interconnected environmental pressures (e.g., thermal stress, sedimentation, water quality degradation) while remaining one of Niagara's most ecologically significant watercourses. Adaptive management, collaboration, and intentional restoration efforts continue to align with NPCA's Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy and are required to achieve a proactive, integrated watershed management approach.

Discussion:

With twenty years having passed since the last official Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Plan, initiating the key first steps toward a comprehensive update is both timely and essential to coordinating watershed action among key partners, community members, and other interested parties.

As per section 2.3 of NPCA's Administrative By-Law (2025), the Authority may strike a standing or *ad hoc* committee to investigate and make recommendations on matters of interest to the Authority. A new standing committee shall not be struck until the Authority approves Terms of Reference for the standing committee.

Staff recommend establishing the Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee to provide collaborative perspective, guidance and expert advice in the development and implementation of integrated watershed-based resource management activities and associated strategies for a healthy and climate-resilient Twelve Mile Creek watershed. This proposed *ad hoc* working committee will serve in an advisory capacity with a focus on providing technical advice and recommendations for consideration by NPCA and watershed partners. The Terms of Reference are attached and summarized below.

Terms of Reference Summary

The multi-stakeholder committee will consist of up to thirteen (13) members from local area municipalities, conservation/naturalist clubs, science/academia, Indigenous representatives as well as NPCA staff.

Members of this Committee are expected to:

- Act as Champions/Ambassadors for the Twelve Mile Creek watershed ecosystem and exemplify principles and practices of an integrated watershed management approach.

- Advise on potential partnership and funding opportunities;
- Provide a conduit to the local community within their sector to facilitate development and implementation of the Twelve Mile Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan;
- Provide advice and input based on their expertise and experience;
- Review meeting materials in advance of the meetings and arrive prepared to provide a broad perspective on the issues under consideration;
- Submit agenda items to staff at a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date for approval;
- Make every effort to attend regularly scheduled meetings. If not available, notify the NPCA staff lead on inability to attend at least one day prior to the meeting date;
- Agree to describe, process, and resolve issues in a professional and respectful manner;
- Provide constructive input to help identify future projects or strategic priorities for consideration, respective of their sector representation; and
- Act as a liaison within their respective sectors with information received at meetings to notify of opportunities to give feedback.

The committee will meet at least twice per year with meetings held in-person at NPCA Main Office, virtually, or hybrid, to be determined by NPCA staff and committee members.

To provide leadership, a senior NPCA staff member will serve as the Facilitator of the Committee. Other NPCA staff will also provide administrative support and services, including preparation and distribution of agendas, recording of meeting records, reports, and general information as required.

Committee Member Recruitment Process

First Nations representatives and identified organizations (i.e. municipal representatives, and Ontario Power Generation) will be invited to participate and can appoint representatives, as desired. Other vacancies will be filled through a Call for Expressions of Interest which will be made public and published via NPCA website, social media channels, and direct email, as needed. Applicants will be assessed and recommended based on their ability to meet expectations of a member as outlined in the Terms of Reference. Seats may remain vacant until candidates with the requisite background and skills can be identified. Table 1 provides an overview of key actions and estimated timing for committee member recruitment.

Applications will be evaluated by staff based on the following criteria:

1. Knowledge and experience related to the sector representation
2. Highest level of education

3. Knowledge of the NPCA
4. Experience working on multi-sector committees
5. Professional/employment background and professional memberships.
6. Relevant volunteer/community service work

Final recommendation of candidates will be presented to the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer for appointment to the committee, pending a background check.

Table 1. Overview of recruitment plan and timing

Estimated Timeline	Description
March 2-9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference and invitation to participate circulated relevant partners • Communication materials finalized (e.g., graphics, application form, and key messages)
March 11-20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Call for Expressions of Interest using digital tools and methods
March 11-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications and appointments being accepted (min. 2 weeks from initial callout)
March 27-April 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of applications by recruitment group
April 13-17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations for committee member appointments brought to CAO/Secretary-Treasurer for approval
April 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification to recommended applicants and background checks

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications as the recruitment process and committee coordination are included as part of regular NPCA operations and existing budget.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 2.2: Lead an integrated watershed management approach to support planning and policy for protecting and enhancing watersheds

Goal 4.1: Strengthen government relations toward collective impact and outcomes

Goal 4.2: Foster relationships with the community, non-government organizations, businesses, agriculture, industry, and academic institutions for collective outcomes and impact

Goal 4.3: Improve engagement with local First Nations, Métis, and Inuit that supports shared stewardship

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee Terms of Reference

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Geoff Verkade
Senior Manager, Integrated Watershed Strategies

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by:

Natalie Green, B.Sc., B.Ed., M.Sc., PMP
Director, Watershed Strategies and Climate Change

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Twelve Mile Creek Watershed Committee

Terms of Reference

Committee Type

Ad-Hoc Working Committee

Purpose

To provide collaborative perspective, guidance and expert advice in the development and implementation of integrated watershed-based resource management activities and associated strategies for a healthy and climate resilient Twelve Mile Creek watershed.

Committee Mandate

The Committee serves in an advisory capacity with a focus on providing technical advice and recommendations for consideration by Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) and watershed partners.

Membership

NPCA recognizes diversity as a source of strength and works to champion inclusive attitudes and encourage adoption of inclusive approaches that lead to full and meaningful participation of all.

The TWELVE MILE CREEK WATERSHED COMMITTEE shall consist of up to THIRTEEN (13) members comprising multi-stakeholder representation including: local area municipalities, conservation/naturalist clubs, science/academia, Indigenous representatives, and NPCA staff. The Committee shall consist of the following representation:

- ONE (1) staff member representing Town of Pelham;
- ONE (1) staff member representing City of St. Catharines;
- ONE (1) staff member representing City of Thorold;
- ONE (1) staff member representing Niagara Region;
- THREE (3) members representing community watershed interests (e.g. resident, citizen-at-large, conservation/naturalist club, or ENGO);
- ONE (1) member representing the agricultural community;
- ONE (1) member representing the science/academia sector;
- ONE (1) member representing Ontario Power Generation;
- ONE (1) member appointed by First Nations with a Treaty or historical affiliation to the watershed;
- ONE (1) NPCA senior staff member as Facilitator.

Internal or external persons (experts) may be invited to attend the meetings at the request of staff, on behalf of the Committee to provide advice and assistance where necessary.

Members may cease to be a member of the Committee if they:

- Resign from the Committee (in writing to NPCA staff);
- No longer objectively represent their respective sector;
- Fail to adhere to NPCA Code of Conduct and Media Protocols;
- Fail to meet their responsibilities, prompting the Committee to recommend their removal to the NPCA's CAO/Secretary-Treasurer.

Note: Indigenous representation on the Committee does not fulfill or replace the NPCA commitments for engaging with Indigenous communities, nor do they affect protocols created by Indigenous Peoples for engaging government, industry or others, or for gathering, documenting, management or sharing Indigenous knowledge.

Member Roles and Responsibilities

Members of this Committee are expected to:

- Act as Champions/Ambassadors for the Twelve Mile Creek watershed ecosystem and exemplify principles and practices of an integrated watershed management approach.
- Advise on potential partnership and funding opportunities;
- Provide a conduit to the local community within their sector to facilitate development and implementation of the Twelve Mile Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plan;
- Provide advice and input based on their expertise and experience;
- Review meeting materials in advance of the meetings and arrive prepared to provide a broad perspective on the issues under consideration;
- Submit agenda items to staff at a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date for approval;
- Make every effort to attend regularly scheduled meetings. If not available, notify the NPCA staff lead on inability to attend at least one day prior to the meeting date;
- Agree to describe, process, and resolve issues in a professional and respectful manner;
- Provide constructive input to help identify future projects or strategic priorities for consideration, respective of their sector representation; and
- Act as a liaison within their respective sectors with information received at meetings to notify of opportunities to give feedback.

Meetings

Meetings will be held *ad hoc*, or a minimum of twice per year. Additional meetings or workshops may be held at the discretion of NPCA staff, if required for timely matters.

Meetings may be held in-person at NPCA Main Office, virtually, or hybrid, to be determined by NPCA staff and committee members.

Meetings are expected to take approximately one and a half (1.5) hours. Exceptions may occur from time to time to deal with significant items.

Agendas and supporting materials will be sent to members at least one (1) week before the scheduled meeting. Meeting records will be sent to Committee members within two (2) weeks following the meeting.

The Committee does not have a decision-making function. Recommendations of the Committee are by consensus and advisory only. No formal voting process is required. Should a consensus not be reached by the Committee on any major topic the topic will be taken to the NPCA CAO, or the Board of Directors as needed, for consideration.

Quorum is not required for meetings to proceed as this group is an *ad hoc* working committee and not a formal decision-making body.

Communications & Confidentiality

All Committee-related communications are the responsibility of NPCA staff.

By participating in the advisory Committee, members will be subject to NPCA volunteer policies, code of conduct, and media protocols.

Members may share information and provide updates to their respective organizations. All media inquiries are to be coordinated with NPCA.

Member Recruitment

First Nations representatives and identified organizations (i.e. municipal representatives, and OPG) will be invited to participate and can appoint representatives, as desired.

Other vacancies will be filled through a Call for Expressions of Interest which may be made public and published via NPCA website, social media venues and local print media, as needed. Applicants will be assessed and recommended based on the applicant's ability to meet expectations of a member as outlined in the Member Roles and Responsibilities section above. Seats may remain vacant until candidates with the requisite background and skills can be identified.

Applications will be evaluated by NPCA staff using standardized criteria relevant for filling positions on the Committee. Final recommendation of candidates will be presented to the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer for appointment. NPCA maintains a strong policy of equal opportunity.

NOTE: Personal member information, other than name and resident municipality, will be kept confidential in accordance with Provincial legislation.

Terms of Appointment and Vacancies

Upon establishment of the Committee, members will be appointed to serve for a term of TWO (2) years beginning in January of that year. Committee Term can be extended for an additional TWO (2) years, if deemed necessary, to complete ongoing work.

Positions vacated will be filled through a "Call for Expression of Interest" to be conducted as required. In the event of a vacancy during a regular term, the vacancy may be filled for the remainder of that term.

Termination

The NPCA may, upon receipt of a recommendation from NPCA staff or CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, terminate a member's appointment based on a careful review of conditions including:

- Breach of NPCA volunteer policies, Code of Conduct, and media protocols;
- Failure to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without satisfactory reason.

Administration

NPCA Staff Leadership

To provide leadership, a senior NPCA staff member will serve as the Facilitator of the Committee. Other NPCA staff will also provide administrative support and services, including preparation and distribution of agendas, recording of meeting records, reports, and general information as required. Staff member responsibilities include:

- Facilitating discussions and building consensus;
- Providing leadership and ensuring the fair and effective functioning of the Committee;
- Scheduling meetings and notifying Committee members;
- Inviting special guests to attend meetings when required;
- Guiding the meeting according to the agenda and time available;
- Ensuring all discussion items end with an action or definite outcome;
- Review and approval of draft meeting record before distribution;
- Coordinating agenda items and correspondence to members; and
- Act as a conduit between the Committee and the NPCA CAO/Secretary-Treasurer and Board of Directors, as required.

Committee Resources & Budget

One senior staff, two supporting staff, and one committee administrative coordinator will be appointed by NPCA in-kind. Other NPCA staff subject matter experts may attend as necessary.

There is no provision of mileage or other reimbursement for committee members. Low-cost meeting expenses may be covered as part of NPCA's regular operating budgets as appropriate at the discretion of senior staff. Facility support for meetings will also be provided in-kind.

Amendments

The Terms of Reference and the role of the Committee shall be reviewed and assessed every TWO (2) years by NPCA staff and presented to the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer for approval.

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Appointment of Regulations Officers – Section 30 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Report No: FA-03-26

Date: March 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-03-26 RE: Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) – Appointment of Regulations Officers **BE RECEIVED**.

AND THAT the NPCA staff named below **BE APPOINTED**, under Section 30 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* for the terms of their employment with the NPCA, as Officers of the NPCA and Provincial Offences Officers.

Purpose:

To appoint Krystal Klinck as an Officer and Provincial Offences Officer for the purposes of compliance and enforcement of Regulations made pursuant to Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the *Trespass to Property Act* by the Board of Directors of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

Further, the purpose of this report is to appoint Lily Piccolo as an Officer and Provincial Offences Officer for the purposes of compliance and enforcement of Regulations made pursuant to Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the *Trespass to Property Act* by the Board of Directors of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

Background:

The *Conservation Authorities Act* provides for a conservation authority to appoint Officers to enforce its regulations. Furthermore, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry has implemented under the authority of Subsection 1(3) of the *Provincial Offences Act*, a class designation process for all conservation authorities whereby a conservation authority Officer appointed under Section 30 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* shall be designated by the Minister simultaneously as a Provincial Offences Officer.

Once appointed, Officers have the authority to enforce offences and Regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act*, in addition to the *Trespass to Property Act*, when carrying out their duties within the jurisdiction of the conservation authority.

The prerequisite to the Minister's Provincial Offences Officer appointment is that all candidate officers:

- I. Be adequately trained in the legislation to be enforced, including the *Provincial Offences Act*;
- II. Have proof of a clean criminal record check, and;
- III. Be appointed as an Officer to enforce conservation authority legislation at an official Board meeting.

Discussion

NPCA Officers are appointed specifically for the sections of the *Conservation Authorities Act* they are responsible for enforcing.

NPCA Regulations Officers are responsible for compliance and enforcement on private and public properties subject to Ontario Regulation 41/24 and Section 28 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

NPCA Operations staff (i.e. Superintendents, Land Care Coordinators) are responsible for compliance and enforcement in active parks and on land owned by the NPCA where the rules of conduct in conservation areas, permitted uses and activities on the property are subject to Ontario Regulation 688/21 and Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Upon the Board approval of the above-noted appointments, all Minister's requirements noted above will be addressed.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications specific to the appointment of NPCA Officers or Provincial Offences Officers.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan

The duties carried out by the Compliance and Enforcement business unit are part of the NPCA's mandate and support NPCA's *Strategic Plan 2021-2031* to protect people and properties from natural hazards and climate impacts.

Related Reports and Appendices:

None.

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Jason Culp, C. Tech., EP
Manager, Compliance and Enforcement

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by:

David Deluce, MCIP, RPP
Director, Planning and Development

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Delegation of Authority – Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Report No: FA-08-26

Date: March 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-08-26 RE: Delegation of Authority – Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the Board **DELEGATE AUTHORITY**, under Section 28.4 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, to the Director, Watershed Strategies and Climate Change as a signatory on Section 29 permits beginning March 27, 2026, for the term of their employment with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA).

Purpose:

To obtain Board approval to delegate permit signatory authority for Section 29 permits to Natalie Green, Director, Watershed Strategies and Climate Change pursuant to Section 28.4 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Regulation (O. Reg. 688/21), in force as of April 1, 2024.

Background:

On April 1, 2024, subsection 29 (1) of the *Conservation Authorities Act* “Regulation by authority re: lands owned by it”, was amended to change the subsection name to “Regulations: public use of authorities property” and authorized the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry to make regulations with respect to land and other property owned by authorities, including regulations prescribing permits, designating privileges in connection with use of the lands, or any part thereof and prescribing fees for permits.

Further, on April 1, 2024, Ontario Regulation (O. Reg.) 688/21: Rules of Conduct in Conservation Areas came into effect and replaced the individual conservation authority regulations.

O. Reg. 688/21 outlines prohibited activities and activities requiring a permit on lands owned by conservation authorities. The enforcement provisions for activities on conservation authority owned lands remain unchanged. Section 5 of the Regulation identifies the following activities in conservation areas that require a permit:

- (a) kill, trap, pursue or disturb a wild bird, reptile or animal;
- (b) possess or ignite fireworks;
- (c) camp;
- (d) make an excavation;
- (e) possess, shoot, discharge or use a spring gun, air gun, firearm, slingshot or any archery equipment;
- (f) erect, paint or affix a sign or notice;
- (g) sell or offer for sale an article, thing or service;
- (h) engage in fund raising;
- (i) advertise or carry on a business or enterprise;
- (j) conduct a public performance of any kind, or bring equipment for public entertainment into the conservation area;
- (k) conduct a public meeting or do anything that is likely to cause persons to congregate; or
- (l) remain in the conservation area after the posted times.

O. Reg. 688/21 allows for the issuance of a permit by the Secretary-Treasurer of the authority, or another person appointed by the authority. Section 28.4 Delegation of Power under the *Conservation Authorities Act* allows a conservation authority to delegate any of its powers related to the issuance or cancellation of permits under the Act or its regulations to any other person or body, subject to any limitations or requirements that may be prescribed by regulation.

At the April 19, 2024 Full Authority Meeting, the Board passed Resolution No. FA-51-24, delegating authority under Section 28.4 to the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer and appropriate Directors and Managers as signatories on Section 29 permits. Director Green was hired into the position of Director, Watershed Strategies and Climate Change in November 2024, and may be required to sign Section 29 permits relevant to her division, such as Research Permits and Access Permits.

As a standard best practice, many conservation authorities have delegated powers to their staff related to the granting of permits for the use of their lands.

Discussion:

NPCA allows for a variety of forms of access and use of its 43 Conservation Areas. This includes passive recreation such as walking, hiking, and birdwatching, as well as more active forms of recreation such as paddling, swimming, and cross-country skiing. In addition, the NPCA offers various forms of programs and services at its four primary conservation

areas such as natural and cultural heritage tours and hikes, special events, facilities rentals, and educational programs.

These different types of access are permitted through a variety of methods including signage, and communication channels such as the NPCA's website that outline park hours and what recreation activities are permitted. The NPCA also uses a reservation system to permit more active recreation such as camping, weddings and special events.

The NPCA requires the issuance of permits for the following uses:

1. Hunting Permits – allows access to hunt at identified conservation areas. Hunting permits allow the NPCA to provide regulations, gather data through harvest reports, and promote safety by controlling the number of permits.
2. Research Permits – to grant authorization for activities and access that are otherwise prohibited (e.g. temporary structures or instruments; off-trail or after-hours environmental investigations). Permitted research activities are authorized for the purpose of improving collective knowledge and understanding of the NPCA's natural and cultural heritage.
3. Film and photography permits –enables the organized execution of filming and photography on conservation area properties. These permits support regulations aimed at safeguarding public safety, preserving environmentally sensitive areas, and preventing disturbances to regular recreational activities within the conservation area.
4. Business Permits – NPCA provides business permits to a variety of 3rd party recreation providers to improve the visitor experience at certain conservation areas.
5. Access Permits – necessary when public organizations or private landowners require temporary use of NPCA lands to install a variety of infrastructure for essential services (e.g. water/wastewater, septic, hydro, etc.). These Section 29 permits accompany any Section 28 permit requirements to ensure the regulatory and land ownership responsibilities of NPCA are protected.

The NPCA has an internal research permit procedure that once a permit is requested an NPCA employee that specializes in the requested field reviews the requests and offers recommendations to approve or deny the permit and where applicable, any conditions that should be imposed. Once the permit has been reviewed by NPCA staff specializing in that area, the permit is forwarded to an NPCA staff with signatory approval for signature.

It is recommended that Natalie Green, Director, Watershed Strategies and Climate Change, be delegated authority under Section 28.4 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* as a signatory

of Section 29 permits. This is a routine recommendation in line with the duties of the role to ensure permits are processed and executed efficiently.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications associated with recommendations included in this report.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 1.1 – Support evidence-based decision making for climate resilient watersheds and shorelines.

Goal 1.4 – Manage NPCA lands to increase biodiversity, habitat connectivity, and natural cover.

Goal 2.1 – Maintain a high standard of client services, tools and procedures for planning review and permits.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Report No. FA-09-24 RE: *New Conservation Authorities Act* Legislative and Regulatory Requirements – NPCA Housekeeping Policy Amendments and Transition Plan

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Melanie Davis, M.A.
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board

Reviewed by:

Original Signed by:

Adam Christie
Director, Conservation Areas

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: St. Johns Centre Heritage Designation

Report No: FA- 10-26

Date: March 27, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-10-26 RE: St. Johns Centre Heritage Designation **BE RECEIVED;**

AND THAT the NPCA Board of Directors **ENDORSE** the City of Thorold's issuance of a Notice of Intention to Designate St. Johns Centre Conservation Area as a property of cultural heritage value or interest under Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*;

AND FURTHER THAT Report No. FA-10-26 **BE CIRCULATED** to the City of Thorold.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the NPCA Board of Directors following the completion of the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) for St. Johns Centre Conservation Area and receipt of a Notice of Intention to Designate from the City of Thorold. The proposed designation, recommended by the City of Thorold's Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee, is being advanced in accordance with Part IV, Section 29 of the *Ontario Heritage Act*.

Background:

St. Johns Valley Centre Conservation Area is a 7.3-hectare parcel situated within Thorold, Ontario, along the Twelve Mile Creek, which is the only cold-water creek within the Niagara Peninsula watershed. The site is located within the Carolinian forest zone, within the Niagara Escarpment, and nestled adjacent to Short Hills Provincial Park. The conservation area represents a very important ecological area and is a significant habitat for migratory birds, bats, as well as many diverse mammals and insect types.

The site was originally settled in 1792 by an entrepreneur named Benjamin Canby, who was granted the lands on which the village is situated as part of a Crown Grant. Canby, alongside John Darling and John Street, developed a busy industrial village with several

saw and gristmill operations. By 1799, the hamlet was known as St. Johns and was well-known within the area for its production and as one of the most important settlements in Upper Canada. In 1831, a post office was established to support the many business ventures and enterprises at work within the village, including a woolen mill, a foundry and tannery, and the existing grist and sawmills.

On March 25, 2025, the City of Thorold's Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee (MHAC) passed a motion:

“That the Heritage Advisory Committee RECOMMENDS a cultural heritage evaluation report be commissioned for St. John's Schoolhouse and the surrounding area once the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) has approved endorsing proceeding with the designation”

At the May 23, 2025 NPCA Board Meeting the NPCA Board of Directors endorsed the City of Thorold's decision to conduct a cultural heritage evaluation of St Johns Centre Conservation Area as a property of cultural heritage value or interest. Further, staff were directed to report back to the Full Authority Board upon receipt of a Notice of Intention to Designate as a property of cultural heritage value or interest.

On October 13, 2025, the NPCA received the Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report (CHER) from the City of Thorold's Municipal Heritage Advisory Committee. NPCA staff completed a comprehensive review of the document, which included a legal review by NPCA's legal counsel. The final Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report was finalized on March 4, 2026, and NPCA staff fully support the findings and conclusions of the report.

Discussion

The Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report concluded that only two buildings within St. Johns Centre Conservation Area meet the criteria for cultural heritage significance under Ontario Regulation 9/06. These structures are the St. Johns Mill and the St. Johns Common Schoolhouse, both of which were identified as contributing heritage resources based on their historical, associative, and contextual value. No other buildings or site features within the conservation area were determined to possess sufficient cultural heritage value to warrant inclusion in the proposed designation. As a result, heritage protection under the proposed designation would apply exclusively to these two structures.

The Notice of Intention outlines the significance of the St. Johns Common School and the Mill as tangible representations of the interconnected social and economic history of rural life in the former Thorold Township. Together, these buildings illustrate the critical roles of education and industry in supporting early settlement patterns and community development in the area.

The continued active use of both structures as living classrooms by the Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) represents more than a contemporary programming

function; it is a direct extension of the site's longstanding educational legacy. This form of adaptive reuse aligns with best practices in cultural heritage conservation by maintaining the buildings' original purpose while ensuring their ongoing relevance, vitality, and financial sustainability. The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority's stewardship provides the broader environmental and operational context necessary to protect and manage these heritage resources within their natural landscape setting.

The Notice of Intention further identifies specific heritage attributes associated with each structure. These attributes must be conserved and respected to ensure that any future restoration, alteration, or maintenance work preserves the cultural heritage value of the properties.

Identified Heritage Attributes

1. St. Johns Common School (c. 1850)
 - Wood facade similar to the style of wood available in the 1800s
 - Cedar shingle style roof
 - Wooden sash windows
 - Open bell tower consistent with use as a common school
2. John Street (Street/Haney/Miller) Mill (c. 1855/76)
 - Timber frame with wood facade similar to the style of wood available in the 1800s
 - Stone foundation consistent with its use as a mill
 - Wooden sash windows

Next Steps

To complete the designation process, a Notice of Intention to Designate will be brought forward for consideration at the March 24, 2026 meeting of the City of Thorold Council. If approved, the Notice of Intention will be posted on the City of Thorold's website for a 30-day period, during which time members of the public may submit objections to Council.

Should no objections be received, a Designation By-law will be prepared and presented to City Council for approval at the May 12, 2026 Council meeting.

Following passage of the Designation By-law, a further 30-day appeal period applies in accordance with the Ontario Heritage Act. If no appeals are filed within this timeframe, the by-law comes into force and is then registered on title for the property and provided to the Ontario Heritage Trust.

Financial Implications:

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan

Goal 3.1 – Improve services and visitor experiences at NPCA properties.

Goal 3.3 – Improve cultural connections and heritage appreciations including working with municipalities on heritage listing and the designation of NPCA’s buildings and properties.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: Notice of Intent to Designate

Report No. FA-24-25 RE: St. Johns Centre Heritage Designation

[Cultural Heritage Evaluation Report, prepared for Heritage Thorold, City of Thorold](#)

Authored by:

Original signed by:

Adam Christie
Director, Conservation Areas

Reviewed and submitted by:

Original signed by:

Leilani Lee-Yates, BES, MSPL.RPD., MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer/Secretary-Treasurer