

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting
July 24, 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, June 26, 2026

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3.2. Closed Session Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting dated June 26, 2026 (*distributed separately*)

4. CHAIR'S UPDATE

5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1. Correspondence dated June 26, 2026 from the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks RE: Minister's direction under section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* with respect to budget and apportionment matters

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5.2. Correspondence dated July 10, 2026 from Credit Valley Conservation RE: Regional Consolidation

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5.3. Correspondence dated July 15, 2026 from Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency RE: Appointment of Project Executives for Regional Transition Committees

Page 15

**5.4. Correspondence dated July 15, 2026 from the City of Thorold RE:
Resolution Respecting Support for Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants
Rules to Protect Taxpayers and Municipal Lands**

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6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Transition to Regional Conservation Authorities Update
Presented by CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates.

7. DELEGATIONS

8. CONSENT ITEMS

**8.1. Report No. FA-17-26 RE: Compliance and Enforcement 2020-2025 Program
Statistics**

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8.2. Report No. FC-08-26 RE: Financial Report – June 2026

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9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

**9.1. Report No. FA-20-26 RE: Wetland Conservation Agreement with Ducks
Unlimited Canada**

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**9.2. Report No. FA-19-26 RE: Long-term Meadow Habitat Stewardship
Agreement with Metrolinx**

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9.3. Report No. FC-07-26 RE: 2027 Budget Assumptions and Process

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10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

10.1. Minutes of the Governance Committee meeting, dated June 26, 2026

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11. MOTIONS

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

13. NEW BUSINESS

14. CLOSED SESSION

15. ADJOURNMENT

NIAGARA PENINSULA CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
June 26, 2026, 10:00a.m.
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON

MEMBERS PRESENT: R. Foster, Chair
S. Beattie
D. Cridland
J. Metcalfe, Vice Chair
P. O'Neill
M. Seaborn
M. Tadeson (arrived at 10:09a.m.)
A. Witteveen

REGRETS: B. Grant
B. Clark

STAFF PRESENT: L. Lee-Yates, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
A. Christie, Director, Conservation Areas
M. Davis, Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
D. Deluce, Director, Planning & Development
L. Gagnon, Director, Corporate Services
N. Green, Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change
E. Navarro, Communications and Marketing Specialist
G. Shaule, Administrative Assistant
S. Zavarella, Manager, Communications & Public Relations

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Resolution No. FA-60-2026

Moved by: Stew Beattie

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT the agenda for the Full Authority Board meeting held on June 26, 2026 **BE APPROVED.**

CARRIED

2. DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Resolution No. FA-61-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Patrick O'Neill

THAT the Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting dated May 22, 2026 and the Closed Session Minutes of the Full Authority Meeting dated May 22, 2026 **BE APPROVED.**

CARRIED

4. CHAIRS UPDATE

- Earlier this week, CAO Lee-Yates and I attended Conservation Ontario's Council meeting. CO continues to represent the collective of conservation authorities across Ontario and their efforts continue to be greatly appreciated by the CA community.
- There is significant momentum on the campground electrical upgrades project at Long Beach and Chippawa Creek. A dedicated page has been launched on our Get Involved portal where people can learn more about the project, review FAQs, ask questions, and stay up to date.
- The 12 Mile Creek Watershed Committee has now been formed and held its inaugural meeting on June 23. Chair Foster noted that NPCA is pleased to have such a passionate and engaged group of community members at the table.
- On June 17, we hosted a public session in Niagara-on-the-Lake for the Four Mile Creek project. A second open house for the Beamer Management Plan in Grimsby on June 16, and two engagement sessions for the Upper Welland River floodplain mapping project on June 22 and 23.
- Chair Foster extended gratitude to residents for all of their engagement, Mayor Jordan of Grimsby, and Councillor Borroughs and O'Connor of Niagara-on-the-Lake for taking time out of their busy schedules to attend these public sessions.
- Chair Foster yielded the floor to Member Cridland for a Foundation update. Member Cridland announced the successful launch of the Cheers to Conservation program and thanked founding partners, Bench Brewing Company and Chateau des Charmes for their support unlocking local biodiversity in Niagara.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Transition to Regional Conservation Authorities Update

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates, provided an update presentation on the transition to regional conservation authorities. Discussion regarding implications for potential land acquisitions ensued.

Resolution No. FA-62-2026
Moved by: Mark Tadeson
Seconded by: John Metcalfe

THAT the Transition to Regional Conservation Authorities Update presentation
BE RECEIVED.

CARRIED

7. DELEGATIONS

None.

8. CONSENT ITEMS

Resolution No. FA-63-2026
Moved by: Stew Beattie
Seconded by: Donna Cridland

THAT Report No. FA-16-26 RE: Status and Progress Update on Agreement of Services **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

8. DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.1. Report No. FA-14-26 RE: Agreement of Services between the Corporation of the City of Welland and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

Resolution No. FA-64-2026
Moved by: Michelle Seaborn
Seconded by: John Metcalfe

THAT Report No. FA-14-26 RE: Agreement of Services between the Corporation of the City of Welland and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority **BE RECEIVED;**

AND THAT the Agreement of Services between the Corporation of the City of Welland and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority including Schedule “D” (Trees for All Program) and Schedule “E” (St. George Park Wetland Restoration Project) **BE APPROVED;**

AND THAT the CAO/Secretary – Treasurer and NPCA Chair **BE AUTHORIZED** to sign required documents to execute said agreement;

AND FURTHER THAT the final executed Agreement of Services between the Corporation of the City of Welland and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority **BE MADE PUBLICLY AVAILABLE** on NPCA’s website in accordance with the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

CARRIED

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

11. MOTIONS

None.

12. NOTICES OF MOTION

None.

13. NEW BUSINESS

None.

14. CLOSED SESSION

Resolution No. FA-65-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the Full Authority Meeting scheduled on June 26, 2026 **NOW** move into closed session at 10:32 a.m.

CARRIED

Resolution No. FA-66-26

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Stew Beattie

THAT the Full Authority meeting scheduled on June 26, 2026 **RESUME** open session at 10:50 p.m.

CARRIED

14.1. Business arising from Closed Session pertaining to Confidential Report No. FA-18-26

Resolution No. FA-67-26

Moved by: John Metcalfe

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT Confidential Report No. FA-18-26 RE: OPSEU Collective Bargaining Agreement (2026-2027) **BE RECEIVED** for information;

THAT the Board of Directors **APPROVES** the Collective Bargaining Agreement between NPCA and OPSEU – Local 212;

AND THAT the Board of Directors **APPROVES** that the negotiated Collective Agreement be applied to full-time, permanent non-union employees in the areas of

“Vacation”, “Sick Days”, “Uniforms – Safety Boots”, “Benefits” and “Wages” in order to afford non-union employees the same benefits and avoid wage compression.

CARRIED

15. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Foster adjourned the meeting at 10:52 a.m.



357-2026-1745

June 26, 2026

TO: Conservation Authorities Chairs, GMs/CAOs, and municipalities

SUBJECT: Minister's direction under section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* with respect to budget and apportionment matters

I am writing with regards to the transition of Ontario's conservation authority system to a consolidated regional model. Pursuant to my authority under section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA), I am issuing a direction ("Direction") to conservation authorities on budget and apportionment matters leading up to the transition date – please see attached Direction.

The purpose of this Direction, effective from June 26, 2026 to the transition date under the CAA (i.e., February 1, 2027, or such later date as may be prescribed by the regulations), is to require conservation authorities to complete the budgetary process for the 2027 calendar year budget before the transition date, and in accordance with the CAA and applicable budget and apportionment regulations.

This Direction establishes deadlines for key budget process milestones, including the holding of meetings to approve apportionment amounts and final budgets, and the sending of notices of apportionment to participating municipalities. Conservation authorities are also required to notify the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks and the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) as certain steps of the budget process are completed. This Direction applies to all conservation authorities listed in Appendix A, with additional guidance set out in Appendix B of the attachment.

The Direction is intended to ensure that the transition to consolidation is successful with minimal disruptions to conservation authorities' governance, programs and services.

If you have any questions regarding this Direction, please contact the Conservation Authorities Section of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks at ca.office@ontario.ca.

...2

Conservation Authorities Chairs, GMs/CAOs, and municipalities
Page 2.

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

Enclosures

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

ATTACHMENT A

Minister's Direction Issued Pursuant to Section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (this "Direction")

Section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (CAA) provides the Minister with the authority to issue a direction to a conservation authority in relation to various matters for the purpose of facilitating the transition to a regional watershed-based framework for conservation authorities. The types of directions that can be issued by the Minister are set out in clauses 1.14(1)(a) to (d):

- (a) prohibiting the authority from making a decision in relation to its exercise of any of its powers under this Act or any other Act in the circumstances specified in the direction and subject to any specified conditions;
- (b) requiring the authority to give notice, in accordance with the direction, of a decision that it has made;
- (c) requiring the authority to send notices under subsection 25 (2), 27 (3) or 27.2 (3) by the date specified in the direction;
- (d) governing budgetary and apportionment matters relating to the authority that are otherwise addressed in a regulation made under clause 40 (1) (c), (e) or (f) or clause 40 (3) (k).

Section 1.14 further provides that an authority that receives such a direction shall comply with the direction within the time specified in the direction.

Pursuant to the authority of the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks under clauses 1.14(1)(c) and (d), the conservation authorities set out under Appendix "A" of this Direction (the "**authorities**" or each, an "**authority**") are hereby directed as follows:

1. Each authority shall take all necessary steps to develop and approve its budget for the 2027 calendar year, in accordance with the CAA, to ensure that the authority complies with paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Direction.
2. No later than thirty (30) calendar days prior to the transition date, each authority shall:
 - i. Hold a meeting to approve apportionment amounts for its participating and specified municipalities as required by section 16 of O. Reg. 402/22.
 - ii. Hold a meeting to approve a final budget as required by section 22 of O. Reg. 402/22.
3. Prior to the transition date, each authority shall:
 - i. Provide a copy of its final budget to the Minister and each of its participating and specified municipalities in accordance with section 24 of O. Reg. 402/22, and in addition, provide a copy of the approved final budget to the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA).
 - ii. Send notices to the authority's participating and specified municipalities in accordance with subsections 25(2) (notices of apportionment of capital

costs), 27(3) (notices of apportionment of operating expenses) and 27.2(3) (notices of amounts owed by specified municipalities) of the CAA.

4. Upon completion of each of the following steps, each authority shall provide written notice of the completion of the step to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation, and Parks and the OPCA:
 - i. Approval of a draft budget for consultation purposes in accordance with section 14 of O. Reg. 402/22.
 - ii. Approval of apportionment amounts for participating and specified municipalities in accordance with section 18 of O. Reg. 402/22.
 - iii. Approval of a final budget in accordance with section 23 of O. Reg. 402/22.
 - iv. Sending of notices to participating and specified municipalities in accordance with subsections 25 (2), 27(3) and 27.2(3) of the CAA.

General

5. This Direction applies to the authorities listed in Appendix “A” to this Direction.
6. This Direction is effective from the date of its issuance to the transition date, within the meaning of the CAA (i.e., February 1, 2027 or such later date as may be prescribed by the regulations).
7. This Direction may be amended in writing from time to time at the sole discretion of the Minister.



Todd McCarthy
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
[June 26, 2026]

APPENDIX A

LIST OF CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES TO WHICH THE DIRECTION APPLIES

Ausable Bayfield CA	Lower Trent Region CA
Cataraqui Region CA	Maitland Valley CA
Catfish Creek CA	Mattagami Region CA
Central Lake Ontario CA	Mississippi Valley CA
Credit Valley CA	Niagara Peninsula CA
Crowe Valley CA	Nickel District CA
Essex Region CA	North Bay-Mattawa CA
Ganaraska Region CA	Nottawasaga Valley CA
Grand River CA	Otonabee Region CA
Grey Sauble CA	Quinte Region CA
Halton Region CA	Raisin Region CA
Hamilton Region CA	Rideau Valley CA
Kawartha Region CA	Saugeen Valley CA
Kettle Creek CA	Sault Ste. Marie Region CA
Lake Simcoe Region CA	South Nation River CA
Long Point Region CA	St. Clair Region CA
Lower Thames Valley CA	Toronto and Region CA
	Upper Thames River CA

APPENDIX B

Guidance document for the Minister's Direction issued under section 1.14 of the CAA with respect to budget and apportionment matters

The Minister's Direction issued June 26, 2026 under s.1.14 of the CAA aims to preserve operational and budget process continuity through the transition to a regional governance model for conservation authorities.

While Ontario Regulation 402/22 (Budget and Apportionment) does not set out specific dates or deadlines for the completion of the various phases of the budget and apportionment process, this Direction sets the following timing requirements and additional notification requirements:

Item/Task	Deadline
i. Holding of meeting to approve apportionment amounts for participating and specified municipalities (s. 16 of O. Reg. 402/22)	No later than 30 calendar days
ii. Holding of meeting to approve final budget (s. 22 of O. Reg. 402/22)	before the transition date
i. Providing copies of the approved final budget (s. 24 of O. Reg. 402/22)	Prior to the transition date
ii. Sending of notices to participating and specified municipalities (s. 25(2), 27(3), and 27.2(3) of the CAA)	
i. Providing a notice to the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) and Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) when each of the following steps is completed: a. Approval of a draft budget for consultation purposes b. Approval of apportionment amounts c. Approval of the final budget d. Sending of notices to participating and specified municipalities	Upon completion of each step

With respect to any documents and notice required to be given to the MECP and OPCA (e.g., approved final budget and notice of completion of various steps), please send those documents and notices to MECP at ca.office@ontario.ca and OPCA at CCEO@ontario.ca.

2027 Annual Budget

Conservation authorities will carry out the 2027 calendar year budget process in accordance with Ministers Directions, the CAA and its regulations. The determination of revenue, expenses and costs under Section 5 of O. Reg. 402/22 and determination of reduced amounts to be apportioned under Section 6 of O. Reg. 402/22 should reflect continuity of normal operations of an authority according to current organization's

governance, financial structures, and programs and services. Any anticipated impacts from regional consolidation should not be considered or incorporated into the preparation of the budget for the 2027 calendar year under this direction.

Municipal Consultation

Current participating and specified municipalities are to be consulted on the draft budget for the 2027 calendar year, in accordance with existing legislative/regulatory requirements.

Voting

Budget-related votes are conducted using current authority membership and existing governance rules and in accordance with regulations, where that is set out.

Final Approval and Posting

Authorities approve, post, and provide copies of the final budget for the 2027 calendar year in accordance with existing requirements and the Minister's Direction.

Municipal Apportionment

The approach to municipal apportionment will not change for 2027 calendar year budgets and will follow the existing methods set out in O. Reg. 402/22 and O. Reg. 401/22 (Determination of Amounts Under Subsection 27.2 (2) of the Act) and apply to the current participating and specified municipalities of each authority per the apportionment percentages distributed by the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks.

Once apportioned amounts are determined and approved by authorities, notices of apportionment are sent to each participating municipality and notices setting out amounts owing are sent to each specified municipality. Each municipality shall be required to pay the amount apportioned to it even after the transition date under the CAA, at which point the payment will be due to the regional conservation authority.

Future Annual Budget

Budget alignment across regional conservation authorities will occur following the transition date.

The ministry will assess whether any changes need to be made to the budgeting process as set out in the budget and apportionment regulations as a result of the regional consolidation of authorities and will consider amendments to those regulations in Fall 2026, where appropriate.

Resolution

Date: July 10, 2026
Resolution No. #78/26

Moved By: Alvin Tedjo
Seconded By: Michael Palleschi

#70/26

WHEREAS the Province of Ontario may consider opportunities to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of conservation authority governance and service delivery, through the consolidation of conservation authorities; and

WHEREAS a proposed Western Lake Ontario Conservation Authority model would consolidate Credit Valley Conservation, Conservation Halton, Conservation Hamilton, and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority into a single conservation authority; and

WHEREAS Credit Valley Conservation and Conservation Halton share significant geographic, municipal, operational, and watershed management interests and have established a history of successful collaboration; and

WHEREAS the inclusion of Conservation Hamilton and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority in a broader Western Lake Ontario Conservation Authority would create a substantially larger and more complex organization spanning multiple distinct watersheds, municipal partners, and service delivery environments; and

WHEREAS the Board of Directors of Credit Valley Conservation believes that a consolidation limited to Credit Valley Conservation and Conservation Halton would better support effective watershed-based management, local municipal representation, operational integration, and accountability to participating municipalities;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Directors of Credit Valley Conservation supports the Province of Ontario considering the consolidation of Credit Valley Conservation and Conservation Halton as a standalone conservation authority.

THAT the Board respectfully requests that the Province not proceed with a broader Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority model that would include Conservation Hamilton and Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority.

Date: July 10, 2026
Resolution No. #78/26

Page 2

THAT the Board is of the opinion that compared to the provincial four conservation authority Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority, a Credit Valley Conservation–Conservation Halton consolidation would help to:

- maintain a strong watershed-based approach to conservation and natural hazard management;
- support efficient and effective governance and service delivery;
- preserve meaningful local municipal representation;
- facilitate operational integration through existing partnerships and common interests; and
- minimize the complexity, costs, and risks associated with a larger multi-authority consolidation; and

THAT the Chair and Chief Administrative Officer are authorized and directed to communicate the Board's position to the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, local Members of Provincial Parliament, participating municipalities, and other relevant provincial decision-makers.

THAT staff are directed to prepare and submit correspondence, briefing materials, and advocacy documents necessary to advance the Board's position.

Original signed Michael Palleschi
CARRIED

July 15, 2026

Dear Conservation Authority Board Chairs:

I am writing to follow up on the recent announcement of Project Executives who will guide and support the transition to regional conservation authorities.

While your local CAO/GM may not have been selected for this position, I want to underscore that they will continue to play a critical leadership role throughout the transition activities ahead, both up to and following regional consolidation.

A strengthened conservation authority system depends on strong local leadership, informed input, and ongoing collaboration across all CAs. Your CAO/GM's knowledge, relationships, and experience will be essential to shaping and supporting this work.

The Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency team will be relying on their continued focus, engagement, and leadership as transition activities progress over the coming months.

Looking ahead, regional consolidation will also bring new organizational structures and evolving senior leadership roles. This will create additional opportunities for experienced leaders to contribute at a regional level as we move into and beyond consolidation.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Sincerely,



Hassaan Basit
CEO
Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

From: [Foster, Robert](#)
To: [Melanie Davis](#)
Subject: Fw: Follow up on the Project Executive appointment process
Date: July 17, 2026 5:17:35 PM

From: CCEO (MECP) <CCEO@ontario.ca>
Sent: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 12:25:00 PM
To:

[REDACTED]

Foster, Robert <Robert.Foster@niagararegion.ca>;

[REDACTED]

Subject: RE: Follow up on the Project Executive appointment process

**Niagara Region
Security Warning:**

This is an external email, use caution when opening attachments or clicking links

Good afternoon,

As a follow up to the previous email, please see below for the list of the eight successful Project Executives:

- Davin Heinbuck – Western Lake Erie RCA
- Samantha Lawson – Eastern Lake Erie RCA
- Sommer Casgrain-Robertson – St. Lawrence River RCA
- Alison McDonald – Eastern Lake Ontario RCA
- Don Goodyear – Lake Huron RCA

- Tim Commisso – Northeastern Ontario RCA
- Jacqueline Johnson – Western Lake Ontario RCA
- Robert Baldwin – Central Lake Ontario RCA

Thank you,
OCCE

From: CCEO (MECP)

Sent: July 15, 2026 11:02 AM

To: [REDACTED]
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Subject: Follow up on the Project Executive appointment process

Good morning,

Please find attached a follow up on the Project Executive Appointment process.

Thank you,
OCCE



July 15, 2026

SENT ELECTRONICALLY

To the Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario,

Re: 12.2 Resolution Respecting Support for Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants Rules to Protect Taxpayers and Municipal Lands

Please be advised that the Council of the Corporation of the City of Thorold, at its meeting held on July 14, 2026, considered the aforementioned topic and passed the following resolution:

1. That the Corporation of the City of Thorold **SUPPORTS** the Township of Puslinch and the Town of Halton Hills' resolution regarding Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants Rules to Protect Taxpayers, Municipal Lands; and
2. That a copy of this resolution **BE CIRCULATED** to the following:
 - Ontario Minister of Natural Resources
 - Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
 - Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
 - Ontario Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
 - Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change
 - Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
 - Niagara area MPs and MPPs
 - Niagara Region
 - OFA
 - Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
 - AMO
 - ROMA
 - FCM
 - Ontario Invasive Plant Council
 - Landscape Ontario
 - Canadian Nursery Landscape Association

Thank you,



Nicholas Debono
City Clerk, City of Thorold

Appendix

- CWCD 271-2026 – Township of Puslinch resolution 2026-202
- CWCD 271-2026 – Town of Halton Hills Support Resolution regarding Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plant Rules



City of Thorold
P.O. Box 1044, 3540 Schmon Parkway,
Thorold, Ontario L2V 4A7
Tel: 905-227-6613

Page 2 of 2



Hon. Mike Harris
Ministry of Natural
Resources
Suite 1802
438 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5G 2K8
VIA EMAIL:
mike.harrisco@pc.ola.org

Hon. Trevor Jones
Minister of Agriculture,
Food and Agribusiness
11th Floor
77 Grenville St.
Toronto, ON M7A 1B3VIA
EMAIL:
trevor.jones@pc.ola.org

Township of Puslinch
7404 Wellington Road 34
Puslinch, ON N0B 2J0
www.puslinch.ca

June 30, 2026

Hon. Rob Flack
Ministry of Municipal
Affairs and Housing
17th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
VIA EMAIL:
rob.flack@pc.ola.org

Hon. Todd J. McCarthy
Ministry of Environment,
Conservation and Parks
5th Floor
777 Bay St.
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3
VIA EMAIL:
todd.mccarthy@pc.ola.org

RE: 6.16 Halton Hills Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants Rules to Protect Taxpayers, Municipal Lands, Agriculture, Natural Heritage and Local Gardens

Please be advised that Township of Puslinch Council, at its meeting held on March 24, 2021 considered the aforementioned topic and subsequent to discussion, the following was resolved:

Resolution No. 2026-202:

S

Moved by Councillor Bailey and
Seconded by Councillor Sepulis

That the Consent Agenda item 6.16 be received for information; and

Whereas Council supports the Towns of Halton Hills' resolution;

That Council direct staff to send a support resolution accordingly.

CARRIED



As per the above resolution, please accept a copy of this correspondence for your information and consideration.

Sincerely,

Justine Brotherston
Municipal Clerk

June 5, 2026

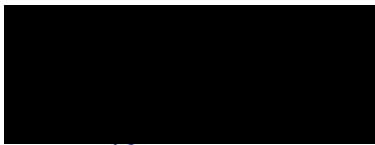
Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario
Via Email

Re: Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants Rules to Protect Taxpayers, Municipal Lands, Agriculture, Natural Heritage and Local Gardens

Please be advised that Council of the Town of Halton Hills at its meeting of Monday June 1, 2026, adopted Resolution No. 2026-0107 regarding Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants Rules to Protect Taxpayers, Municipal Lands, Agriculture, Natural Heritage and Local Gardens.

Attached for your information is a copy of Resolution No. 2026-0107.

Respectfully,



Melissa Lawr, AMP, Dipl.M.A.
Deputy Clerk – Legislation

cc. Ontario Minister of Natural Resources
Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness
Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Ontario Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks
Federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change
Federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
Halton area MPs and MPPs
Region of Halton
HRFA
OFA
Conservation Halton
Credit Valley Conservation
Grand River Conservation Authority
AMO
ROMA
FCM
Ontario Invasive Plant Council
Landscape Ontario
Canadian Nursery Landscape Association
All Ontario municipalities



THE CORPORATION
OF
THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS

Resolution No.: 2026-0107

Title: Modernizing Ontario's Invasive Plants Rules to Protect Taxpayers, Municipal Lands, Agriculture, Natural Heritage and Local Gardens

Date: June 1, 2026

Moved by: Councillor J. Brass

Seconded by: Councillor C. Garneau

Item No. 12.3

WHEREAS invasive plants, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, ornamental species, seeds and nursery stock can cause significant damage to municipal infrastructure, roadsides, stormwater systems, parks, trails, natural heritage areas, agricultural lands, woodlots, shorelines, private property and local biodiversity;

AND WHEREAS Ontario municipalities and conservation authorities are estimated to spend approximately \$50.8 million annually managing invasive species, and the average annual cost per Ontario municipality has been estimated at \$218,148, with approximately 80% of expenditures directed toward control and management rather than prevention; (Invasive Species Centre)

AND WHEREAS these costs are ultimately borne by local taxpayers, conservation authorities, property owners, farmers, volunteers and community groups who are often left to manage invasive species after they have already been introduced, sold, planted, escaped cultivation and spread;

AND WHEREAS the Province of Ontario, through the Invasive Species Act, 2015, which allows species to be listed as prohibited or restricted, and which can make it illegal to import, possess, transport, propagate, buy, sell, lease or trade listed invasive species; (Invasive Species Centre)

AND WHEREAS the concern is not with plants that are already clearly prohibited or restricted, but with invasive species and seeds and nursery stock that may

continue to be sold or distributed before modernized provincial rules, public guidance and retail practices have fully caught up with current science and local experience;

AND WHEREAS garden centres, nurseries, landscape suppliers, seed distributors, online retailers, landscapers and residents all have an important role to play in preventing the spread of invasive plants before they become a costly municipal and environmental problem;

AND WHEREAS the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Grow Me Instead program promotes native and non-invasive alternatives for healthy, diverse and wildlife-friendly gardens, and its updated Southern Ontario guide includes additional invasive plants and alternatives to help residents, gardeners and landscapers make better choices; (Ontario Invasive Plant Council)

AND WHEREAS recent local reporting in Halton Hills has highlighted the importance of choosing native alternatives to invasive garden plants, including through Grow Native Halton and the Ontario Invasive Plant Council's Grow Me Instead resources;

AND WHEREAS the continued sale and distribution of invasive ornamental plants undermine the work of municipalities, conservation authorities, environmental organizations, horticultural societies, local volunteers and residents who are investing time and taxpayer dollars to remove and manage these same species;

AND WHEREAS prevention at the point of sale is more cost-effective, more practical and more respectful of taxpayers than asking municipalities and property owners to pay for removal after invasive species have spread across property lines and municipal boundaries;

AND WHEREAS invasive plants do not recognize municipal boundaries, and effective prevention requires coordinated action by the Province of Ontario, the Government of Canada, municipalities, conservation authorities, Indigenous communities, agricultural organizations, the nursery and landscape sector, retailers, landowners and residents;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council for the Town of Halton Hills respectfully request that the Province of Ontario, in consultation with municipalities, AMO, ROMA, conservation authorities, the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, Indigenous communities, agricultural organizations, environmental organizations, horticultural societies, the nursery and landscape sector, garden centres and other relevant stakeholders, undertake a review and modernization of Ontario's invasive plant regulatory framework;

AND FURTHER THAT this review include consideration of expanding and regularly updating the list of prohibited and restricted invasive plant species, including invasive plants, shrubs, vines, groundcovers, ornamental species,

seeds and nursery stock that pose a risk to Ontario's natural heritage, agriculture, municipal infrastructure, parks, trails, roadsides, stormwater systems and private property;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province of Ontario be requested to prohibit the sale, distribution, propagation and trade of listed invasive plant species through garden centres, nurseries, landscaping suppliers, online retailers, seed distributors and other commercial pathways;

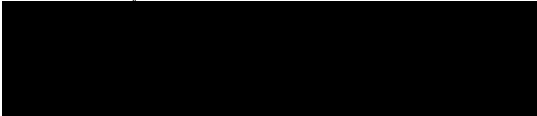
AND FURTHER THAT the Province of Ontario be requested to develop clear labelling, public education and retailer guidance requirements so that residents, gardeners, landscapers and retailers can easily identify invasive species and choose native or non-invasive alternatives;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province of Ontario be requested to work with the nursery, garden centre and landscape sectors on a practical transition plan that supports compliance, protects small businesses, promotes native and non-invasive alternatives, and prevents invasive plants from continuing to enter communities through ordinary consumer purchases;

AND FURTHER THAT the Government of Canada be requested to review and strengthen, where appropriate, federal import, border, labelling and online sales rules related to invasive plants, seeds and nursery stock entering Canada, so that provincial prevention efforts are not undermined by interprovincial or international trade;

AND FURTHER THAT the Province of Ontario and Government of Canada be requested to support municipalities, conservation authorities and community partners with stronger prevention tools, updated science-based lists, public education materials and funding programs that prioritize prevention over costly long-term control and removal;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Premier of Ontario, the Ontario Minister of Natural Resources, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, the Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, the Ontario Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the federal Minister of Environment and Climate Change, the federal Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Halton-area MPs and MPPs, the Region of Halton, HRFA, OFA, Conservation Halton, Credit Valley Conservation, Grand River Conservation Authority, AMO, ROMA, FCM, the Ontario Invasive Plant Council, Landscape Ontario, the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association, and all Ontario municipalities for their consideration and support.



Mayor Ann Lawlor

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Compliance and Enforcement 2020-2025 Program Statistics

Report No: FA-17-26

Date: July 24, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FA-17-26 RE: Compliance and Enforcement 2020-2025 Program Statistics **BE RECEIVED.**

Purpose:

Since 2020, the NPCA has reported quarterly on Compliance and Enforcement activity. The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an overview of trends and observations for the Section 28 Compliance and Enforcement Program between 2020-2025..

Background:

The Compliance and Enforcement Service Area of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) plays a pivotal role in the protection of wetlands, watercourses, shorelines, and hazardous lands within the NPCA's jurisdiction. An overall goal is to protect the health and safety of persons, and property from damage or destruction as a result of development activities that are affected or impacted by natural hazards, such as flooding and erosion.

This service area deals with unauthorized works on private and public lands where review and approval from the NPCA is required prior to undertaking any development or interference activities under the *Conservation Authorities Act* as defined by *Ontario Regulation 41/24*, as well as site inspections to ensure compliance with issued Section 28 permits. To meet these requirements, the NPCA has a dedicated Section 28 regulations team including a manager and three Provincial Offences Officers who investigate and work to resolve hundreds of incidents each year, with the dedicated support of planning and technical staff.

Discussion:

From 2020 to 2025, NPCA has focused on enhancing the enforcement and compliance program through staff training, process improvements and efficient prioritization. As a result, the NPCA is now recognized as a leader among conservation authorities in its delivery of

the Section 28 program. NPCA has worked with multiple other leading CAs on the development of policies, procedural manuals, standard operating procedures and internal processes often cited as examples to follow. NPCA staff have assisted with the training of other Officers from across the province, sharing best practices that strengthen conservation efforts beyond NPCA's own watershed.

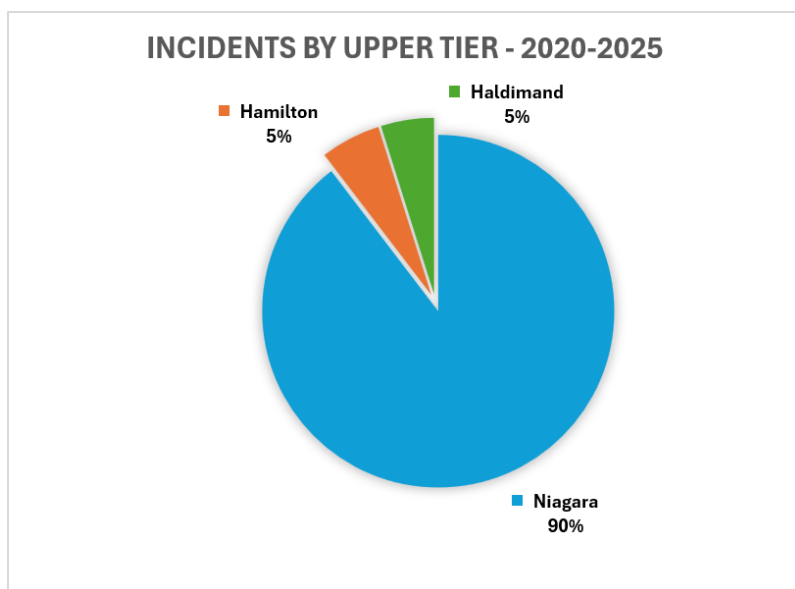
During this time, the regulations team has also focused on the resolution of existing court Orders and compliance matters, abatement activities for issued NPCA work permits and prioritizing effective partnerships with municipal bylaw staff and other regulatory agencies. These elements will continue to encourage continuous improvement with the program area.

Table 1: Compliance & Enforcement Activities, 2020-2025

Category	Details
Corporate Improvements	Section 28 Procedural Manual – in coordination with staff at the Lake Simcoe Conservation Authority, developed the Board approved procedural manual for the Section 28 compliance and enforcement program in 2022 and updated in 2025. Multiple other Conservation Authorities have since followed this procedural template.
	Standard Operating Procedures – developed internal procedures to support compliance and enforcement activities and process improvements. As a member of the RCC, participated in the development of additional SOPs as a resource library for Conservation Authority enforcement programs province wide.
	Officer On-Boarding Resources – focused on Officer safety with appropriate training, the adoption of formal NPCA branded uniforms, field resources, soft body armour and PPE.
	Training – formal Level 1 training, search warrant training, Level 2 advanced Officer training and de-escalation training are required for all staff on the regulation team.
	CityView – participated in the development and implementation of a dedicated enforcement module, portal and mobile applications to improve process efficiencies and documentation capture.
Partnerships	Participate in monthly meetings with Niagara municipalities by-law working group.
	Assist with the on-going development and delivery of Conservation Ontario's annual Level 1 Officer training program.
	Member of the Regulatory Compliance Committee of Conservation Ontario.
	Participate in the provincial Regulatory Compliance Ontario manager meetings with other regulatory agencies.

2020-2025 Compliance and Enforcement Program Statistics

Compliance and Enforcement staff track a significant amount of data in relation to each complaint, reported incident and potential offences reported to and investigated by staff, as well as each prosecution and the restoration and remediation efforts that result from those activities. This is done both to support progressive compliance or enforcement actions if required, provide all regulations staff with access to pertinent file data, identify and assess on-going or continuing concerns, trends, and resourcing requirements and ensure public confidence in the service area by demonstrating progressive enforcement and prosecutorial successes when appropriate and required. These statistics are



only for Section 28 complaints and violations and do not include activities or offences in relation to Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* (i.e., Conservation Authority properties).

Table 2: Incidents Reported by Upper Tier Municipality

Municipality	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Niagara	188	305	280	320	372	338	1803
Hamilton	17	14	16	18	26	20	111
Haldimand	9	11	24	19	17	18	98
TOTAL	214	330	320	357	415	376	2012

The regulations team utilizes a variety of tools to collect information and details regarding potential offences including encouraging the public to report concerns through available options such as the dedicated enforcement extension 255, the online form and dedicated email at TIPS@npca.ca.

As illustrated by the accompanying chart, public complaints accounted for over 40% of the incidents reported to the NPCA regulations team.

Since 2020, the NPCA has expanded how complaints and concerns can be reported, refined the prioritization process for incidents and updated public communications to provide clear guidance on how and when to report concerns. These improvements have helped to focus resources on matters that pose the greatest risks to the watershed, while effectively reducing and redirecting complaints that fall outside of the NPCA's jurisdiction.

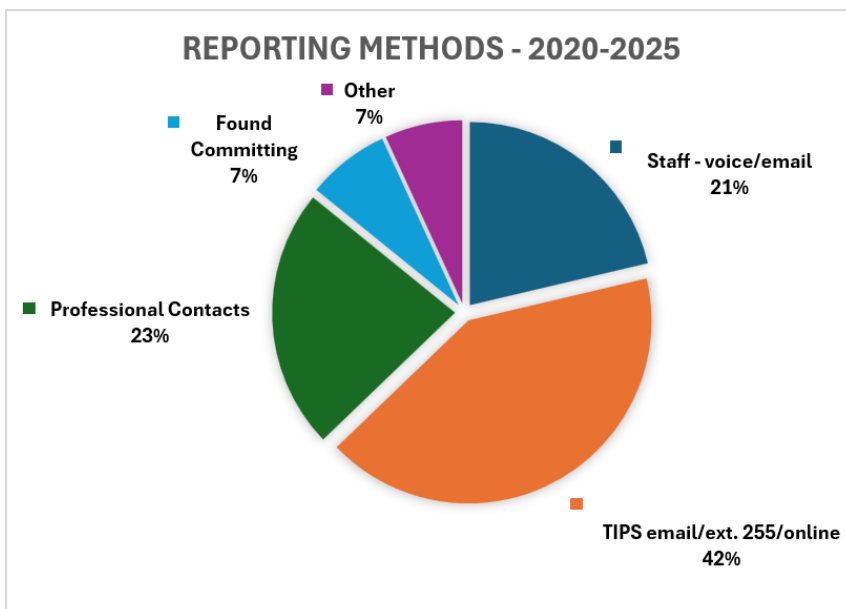
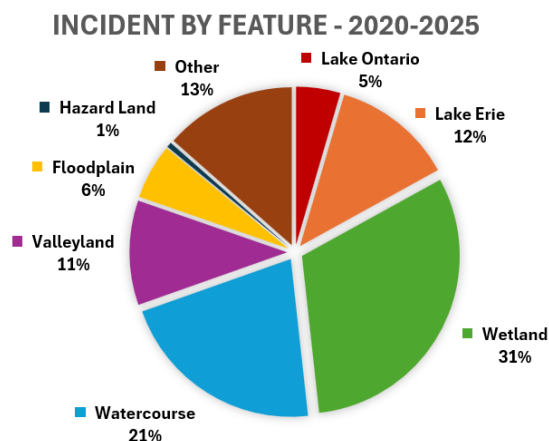


Table 3: Incidents by Regulated Feature

	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Lake Ontario	3	15	34	52
Lake Erie	65	45	33	143
Wetland	113	141	105	359
Watercourse	82	88	75	245
Valley Land	18	50	55	123
Floodplain	31	18	16	65
Hazard Land	1	0	5	6
Other	44	58	53	155
TOTAL	357	415	376	1148

Note: Regulated Features was not specifically tracked in related data until 2023.



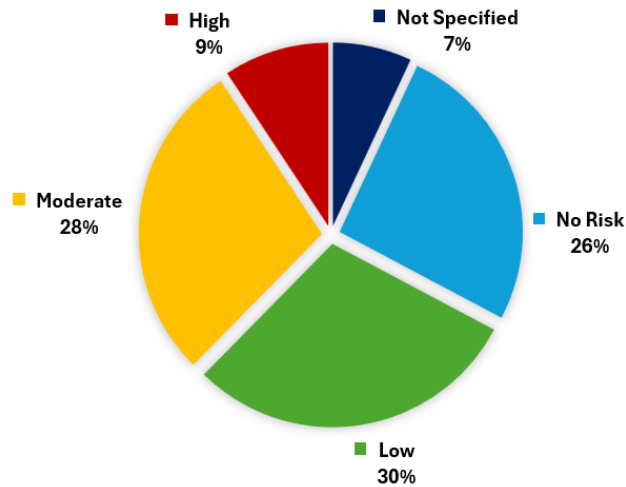
Risk Assessment and Response

The NPCA Section 28 Procedural Manual was completed and approved by the Board of Directors in July of 2022, with associated standard operating procedures (SOPs) developed after Board approval. Table 4 provides additional details with regards to the Risk and Response levels being reported for 2020-2025 as outlined in the procedural manual. Many potential offences involve more than one regulated feature (e.g., wetland and watercourse) with the feature presenting the highest element of risk being considered the primary offence in relation to the appropriate level of response.

Table 4: Assessed Risk and Response Levels

Low Priority Response	Regulations staff may not investigate these matters depending on volume. Focus will be on education and outreach, deterrence and possible restoration or approval if time and resources are available.
Moderate Priority Response	Regulations staff will investigate these matters as time and resources allow usually within the timeframes under the <i>Provincial Offences Act</i> . Voluntary compliance through approval for unauthorized works, remediation or restoration are required outcomes. Court proceedings may be warranted depending on the level of landowner compliance and nature of the potential violation.
High Priority Response	Regulations staff will endeavour to investigate all matters deemed a high priority within the timelines of the <i>Provincial Offences Act</i> . Focus will be on likely court proceedings, remediation/restoration in the public interest, deterrence, and risk reduction.
No Risk	Regulations staff will not respond to frivolous or vexatious complaints, incidents with insufficient information provided, or not clearly within the jurisdiction of the Conservation Authority.

INCIDENT RISK LEVELS - 2023-2025



Risk and response levels are determined through validation of the information received by the Officers, consultation with NPCA technical staff, the landowner's willingness to participate in voluntary compliance and the potential or occurring risk posed to people and property by the unauthorized works in relation to the regulated hazard. Officers endeavor to ascertain an appropriate risk and response level in a timely manner to prioritize workloads and inspection requirements. Assessed risk and response levels may be revised as files progress or in consultation with management or other regulatory partners.

Table 5: Risk and Response Levels (as per Section 28 Procedural Manual)

Risk Level	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Not Specified	21	29	30	80
No Risk	95	106	95	296
Low	96	129	115	340
Moderate	123	106	96	325
High	22	45	40	107
TOTAL	357	415	376	1148

Note: Risk Assessment Level was not tracked in related data until 2023.

Resolution and Compliance Pathways

The NPCA regulations team takes a compliance forward approach to all complaints, reported incidents and potential violations. This is achieved by utilizing a number of discretionary, administrative, enforcement and legal options to achieve compliance. This includes a variety of tools and resources including education letters, on-site inspections, voluntary compliance options, retroactive approvals, negotiated and legal agreements, and laying charges when necessary.

Table 6: Resolution Options Descriptions

Compliance / Education	Incidents that are reported, validated and resolved through compliance options such as Officer coordinated acknowledgement or resolution with landowners and education letters to property owners and agents.
Voluntary Compliance	Incidents that are reported, formally investigated and result in compliance through some form of formalized corrective actions, retroactive approvals with fees and negotiated agreements with the property owners.
Legal/Court Proceedings	Incidents that are reported, formally investigated and require progressive enforcement actions often including legal services and laying charges including court and probation Orders, Minutes of Settlement and negotiated resolutions with documented required outcomes.

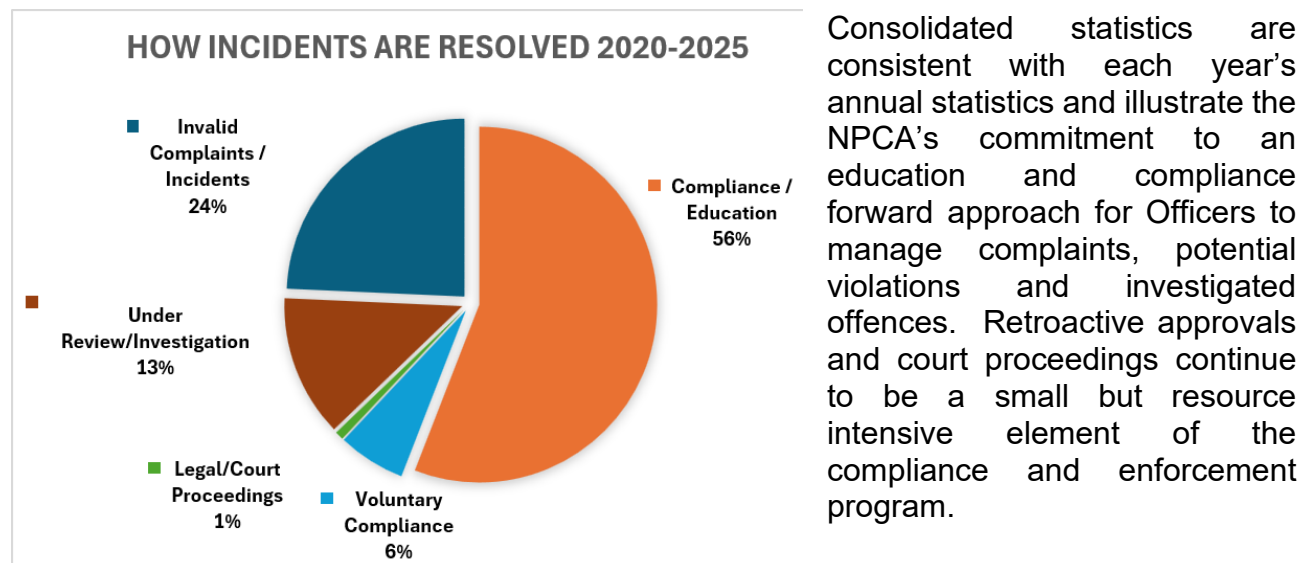
Table 7: Resolution Pathways

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
Compliance / Education	78	93	171	236	261	245	1084
Voluntary Compliance	21	35	3	12	21	27	119
Legal / Court Proceedings	1	3	4	3	4	0	15
Under Review / Investigation	73	71	1	30	44	31	250
Invalid Complaints	41	128	141	76	85	73	544
TOTAL	214	330	320	357	415	376	2012

For reporting purposes, the “Legal/Court Proceedings” category numbers are recorded within the year the offence was first investigated, once charges are laid. For 2025, there are several offences that remain under investigation and may proceed to charges but have not yet progressed to court at the time of this report. The “Under Review/Investigation” category includes files that are still under investigation at the end of each calendar year for reporting purposes. These numbers will shift into other categories over multiple reporting cycles but are not currently tracked in that manner for this report.

Analysis has shown that the high numbers of invalid complaints in 2021 and 2022 were due to two factors. In January 2021, the NPCA was no longer responsible for administering and

enforcing the Niagara Region's Woodland Bylaw. However, the NPCA did continue to receive significant numbers of tree cutting complaints. Additionally, as noted by many regulatory agencies, there was a significant increase in the public's reporting of potential incidents during the first phases of the COVID-19 pandemic.



From 2020 to 2025 the NPCA regulations team received and reviewed 2,012 complaints regarding potential violations and incidents throughout the watershed. The chart above shows the relative relationship between how these files were investigated and resolved through the various options available.

Throughout 2020-2025, 1,084 files were resolved through educational approaches including letters, notices and informal compliance led by the NPCA's Regulations Officers with support from staff within the division when needed.

Voluntary compliance was achieved for 119 files throughout 2020-2025 through formal retroactive approvals and agreements negotiated by the NPCA regulations team with support from planning and technical expertise within the broader division. 15 alleged violations led to Officers progressing to court proceedings and laying charges for offences under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. Of those 15 files, 5 remain active in court proceedings and 10 have been successfully prosecuted or resolved to the satisfaction of the NPCA.

A more detailed breakdown is as follows:

- Two matters are currently set for trial.
- Three matters are actively progressing through court proceedings and may still result in negotiated resolution.
- One matter was successfully tried but is currently being appealed on grounds not related to the NPCA's investigation.
- Four matters were resolved after laying charges through negotiated settlements and the charges were withdrawn.

- Five matters were successfully prosecuted with negotiated pleas, fines (\$12,500 to the court) and court Orders for remediation without having to progress to a trial and are completed or are working towards completion.

Financial Implications:

There are no additional financial implications related to the statistics and activities in this report for the operations of the Compliance and Enforcement business unit as the work is accounted for in the annual budgets. Regulations Officers are able to apply additional fees for permits required to bring development activity into compliance and a violation surcharge to help off-set the operating costs associated with this mandatory natural hazard management program. Additionally, the NPCA regulations staff will continue to employ prioritization strategies including the NPCA Section 28 Procedural Manual to allocate the resources to appropriately respond to the more significant and high-risk contraventions of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Compliance and Enforcement staff are committed to continued statistical reporting, recording and analysis of compliance and enforcement related data, which will continue to assist in accurately measuring program trends, resource and staffing requirements moving forward.

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: Finance Committee

Subject: Financial Report – June 2026

Report No: FC-08-26

Date: July 15, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report FC-08-26 RE: Financial Report – June 2026 BE **RECEIVED** for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Finance Committee with a summary of operating and capital expenditures and to provide a comparison of actual results to the budget as approved by the Board.

Discussion:

The report confirms the general financial oversight and compliance with Public Sector Accounting Board Standards, as shown in Appendix 1 (2026 Operating Statement – June 2026) and Appendix 2 (2026 Capital and Special Projects – June 2026).

Financial Implications:

The Revenue and Expenditure lines are within budget allocations identified during the budget preparation and approval cycle.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: 2026 Operating Statement – June 2026

Appendix 2: 2026 Capital and Special Projects – June 2026

Prepared by:

Original Signed by:

Lise Gagnon, CPA, CGA
Director, Corporate Services

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

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

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority 2026 CONSOLIDATED OPERATING STATEMENT - JANUARY 1 TO JUNE 30, 2026						
Appendix 1 - Report No. FC-08-26	Year to date				Annual Budget	Comments
	Actual	Budget	\$ Variance	% Variance		
Source of Funds						
Municipal Funding	4,249,903	4,249,908	-5	0.0%	8,499,805	Variance not material
Provincial Funding	105,092	307,522	-202,430	-65.83%	577,845	Grant funding revenue inconsistent with budget timing (RAP) - will self-correct
Federal Funding	529,793	480,631	49,162	10.23%	1,021,985	Grant funding revenue inconsistent with budget timing (2BT) - will self-correct
Program Revenue	1,471,364	1,507,142	-35,778	-2.37%	4,299,539	CAS rev overperforming 1% (\$11K) - Plan/Perm'g underperforming 10.5% (\$47K)
Other	310,840	477,884	-167,044	-34.95%	1,838,670	Timing of 2BT & Restoration revenues relative to budget (munic/OPG/CSJ)
Total Revenues/Source of Funds	\$ 6,666,992	\$ 7,023,087	-\$ 356,095	-5.07%	\$ 16,237,844	
Use of Funds						
Salaries and Benefits, Employee Related	5,424,859	5,749,190	324,331	(5.6%)	11,629,798	Provision for COLA - retro will be paid in July.
Governance	4,650	17,178	12,528	72.93%	34,354	Timing of recognition of Board expenses
Professional Fees, Contractor Services	343,520	460,317	116,797	(25.4%)	864,689	Timing of expenses relative to budget (\$86K) & fully funded activity (\$31K)
Materials & Supplies, Vehicles & Equipment	441,389	421,869	-19,520	-4.63%	817,731	Timing of fully funded disbursement relative to budget (2BT) - will self-correct
Occupancy Costs	530,129	367,069	-163,060	44.4%	801,310	Offsetting revenues: prop tax rebate, rent donation, event space rental
Park Maintenance	277,697	326,645	48,948	14.99%	691,493	Calendarization of land care disbursements (weather driven) - should self-correct
Information Management/GIS	325,733	332,879	7,146	(2.1%)	698,097	Variance not material
Marketing, Advertising, Printing, Signs	39,945	58,553	18,608	31.78%	118,964	Timing of outreach and partnership expenses for fully funded activity (CRCCP)
Special Events (Festival, Holiday Trail)	18,026	35,398	17,372	(49.1%)	197,212	Positive variance in advertising for CAS division - timing
Flood Forecasting & Water Quality	50,543	51,045	502	0.98%	159,700	Variance not material
Miscellaneous	127,314	136,960	9,646	(7.0%)	224,496	Timing of comms services expenses for fully funded activity (CRCCP)
Total Expenses/Use of Funds	\$ 7,583,805	\$ 7,957,103	\$ 373,298	4.69%	\$ 16,237,844	
Net Surplus/Deficit as at June 30, 2026	-\$ 916,813	-\$ 934,016	\$ 17,203	1.84%	-	

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority - 2026 CAPITAL AND SPECIAL PROJECTS

Appendix 2 - Report No.FC-08-26

Project Name	Location	Budget Carried Forward	Funding 2026	Total Project Budget	YTD Spend at 31-DEC-2025	YTD Spend 01 JAN-2026 to 30-JUN-2026	Total Project Spend - YTD
Corporate Services							
Annual PC replacements and Acquisition	Various	-	70,894	70,894	-	54,034	54,034
Information Technology Infrastructure Maintenance	Various	-	27,156	27,156	-	23,115	23,115
IT Considerations	Various	-	18,551	18,551	-	479	479
Leasehold Improvements - financing of leasehold improvements	Various	-	111,348	111,348	-	55,674	55,674
Office Furniture	Various	-	10,650	10,650	-	883	883
Sustainment - Stream Gauge Equipment	Various	-	31,948	31,948	-	23,255	23,255
Shriner's Creek Dam A Repair	Niagara	-	154,871	154,871	-	2,062	2,062
TOTAL - Corporate Services		\$ -	\$ 425,418	\$ 425,418	\$ -	\$ 159,502	\$ 159,502
Conservation Area Services							
Binbrook - New Washroom Building (Phase 1)	Binbrook	901,465	-	901,465	287,565	413,202	700,767
Long Beach - Workshop (Phase 2)	Long Beach	1,010,129	-	1,010,129	776,384	304,096	1,080,480
Equipment Sustainment	Various	-	220,296	220,296	-	186,350	186,350
Campgrounds Electrical Enhancement Phase 1	Various	-	159,742	159,742	-	105,745	105,745
Historical Restoration	Ball's Falls	-	186,366	186,366	-	167,216	167,216
Wedding Enhancements	Ball's Falls	-	106,495	106,495	-	6,685	6,685
Park Facilities Rehabilitaion and Upgrades	Various	-	273,543	273,543	-	141,022	141,022
Parks Feasibility and Design Study	Various	52,099	-	52,099	32,907	10,583	43,490
Park Signage Phase 1	Various	-	53,247	53,247	-	34,192	34,192
St. John's Centre House and Post Office Scoping	St. John's	-	53,247	53,247	-	5,038	5,038
Camp House Demolition	Ball's Falls	-	53,247	53,247	-	2,108	2,108
Binbrook Roadway Immediate Repair/Concept Design	Binbrook	-	30,402	30,402	-	803	803
Hazard Tree Removal and Reforestation	Various	-	53,247	53,247	-	10,355	10,355
Total - Conservation Area Services		\$ 1,963,693	\$ 1,189,832	\$ 3,153,525	\$ 1,096,856	\$ 1,387,395	\$ 2,484,251
Watershed							
Shoreline Hazard Mapping Update - Lake Ontario	Various	369,530	-	369,530	98,997	160,967	259,964
Welland River Water Quality Non Point Source Model	Various	159,486	-	159,486	109,487	50,000	159,487
Sustainment - Water Quality Monitoring Equipment	Various	-	26,623	26,623	-	687	687
Floodplain Mapping - Four Mile Creek	Niagara	-	203,247	203,247	-	1,375	1,375
Shoreline Hazard Mapping Update - Lake Erie	Various	-	53,247	53,247	-	7,011	7,011
Land Management Plans	Various	188,531	-	188,531	29,140	5,037	34,177
Land Securement - All	Various	-	412,800	412,800	-	-	-
Total - Watershed		\$ 717,547	\$ 695,917	\$ 1,413,464	\$ 237,624	\$ 225,077	\$ 462,701
GRAND TOTAL		\$ 2,681,240	\$ 2,311,167	\$ 4,992,407	\$ 1,334,480	\$ 1,771,974	\$ 3,106,454

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Wetland Conservation Agreement with Ducks Unlimited Canada

Report No: FA-20-26

Date: July 24, 2026

Recommendation:

WHEREAS NPCA acquired agricultural lands adjacent to Binbrook Conservation in 2025 with the intention of completing habitat restoration and enhancement work;

WHEREAS long-term monitoring and stewardship are critical components of ensuring the success of restoration work;

WHEREAS conservation authorities are temporarily prohibited from providing a service where the duration of the provision of service exceeds two years in length, unless authorization is obtained from the Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA);

WHEREAS a resolution of the authority supporting the proposed decision must be submitted to OPCA for consideration of such requests;

THAT Report No. FA-20-26 RE: Wetland Conservation Agreement with Ducks Unlimited Canada **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT staff be **DIRECTED** to seek authorization from OPCA as per the Minister's Direction regarding temporary restrictions provided on May 1, 2026;

AND THAT staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to enter into an agreement with Ducks Unlimited Canada to formalize collaboration and long-term stewardship of the wetland restoration project at Binbrook Conservation Area;

AND FURTHER THAT staff **EXECUTE** necessary documents upon authorization, if received.

Purpose:

To seek Board direction on submitting an authorization request to the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) regarding a 20-year Conservation Agreement with Ducks Unlimited Canada for the implementation and long-term and maintenance of an upcoming wetland habitat restoration project at Binbrook Conservation Area.

Background:

Amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* in April 2026 include the addition of Section 1.14, providing the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) the authority to issue a Direction to a conservation authority in relation to various matters facilitating the transition to a regional conservation authority framework. Section 1.14 further provides that an authority that receives such a direction shall comply with the direction within the time specified.

The types of directions that can be issued by the Minister are set out in clauses 1.14 (1) (a) to (d), as follows:

- (a) prohibiting the authority from making a decision in relation to its exercise of any of its powers under this Act or any other Act in the circumstances specified in the direction and subject to any specified conditions;
- (b) requiring the authority to give notice, in accordance with the direction, of a decision that it has made;
- (c) requiring the authority to send notices under subsection 25 (2), 27 (3) or 27.2 (3) by the date specified in the direction;
- (d) governing budgetary and apportionment matters relating to the authority that are otherwise addressed in a regulation made under clause 40 (1) (c), (e) or (f) or clause 40 (3) (k).

Effective May 1, 2026, the MECP issued a Minister's Direction regarding temporary restrictions on significant financial, asset, or employment decisions to mitigate risk and ensure a stable transition to the new regional conservation authority structure, pursuant to the revised *Conservation Authorities Act*. For the decisions specified in this Direction, conservation authorities are required to seek authorization from the Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) before the authority can make the decision.

In accordance with the Minister's Direction, authorization from OPCA is required when a conservation authority is:

- vi. Providing a service to a person or body where:
 - a. the duration of the provision of the service exceeds 2 years in length,
or
 - b. the total amount to be charged for the service exceeds the lesser of \$500,000 and 5% of the authority's revenues, as reported in the authority's most recent audited financial statement.

This does not include a decision to renew or extend an agreement for a service that the authority was providing to the person or body prior to the Effective Date.

In order to proceed with a decision, the authority must request written authorization from the OPCA CEO and include the following information:

- i. A description of the decision that the authority is seeking authorization to make, including details of the proposed decision and why the proposed decision is a decision that is subject to paragraph 1 of the Direction.
- ii. A resolution of the authority supporting the proposed decision.
- iii. An explanation for why authorization should be granted, including any risks associated with deferring the proposed decision until after the transition date.
- iv. Any information about relevant dates for the proposed decision, including any considerations around urgency or the time-sensitive nature of the proposed decision.

Discussion:

In 2025, NPCA successfully acquired a 28-hectare parcel of agricultural land located at 5299 Chippewa Road in the City of Hamilton. Located adjacent to the Binbrook Conservation Area, the parcel is ideal for restoration and habitat enhancement to improve natural heritage features on the north shore of Lake Niapenco while providing opportunity to manage and improve surface water quality draining into the lake through natural assets like forests and wetlands. The overall restoration plan for this site advances watershed-based resource management objectives by improving biodiversity, hydrologic function, and ecological resilience in alignment with NPCA's [Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy](#).

In 2026, with external funding confirmed from various sources, NPCA will begin implementing a phased restoration for this site, including tree plantings, 4 ha meadow habitat feature, 0.8 ha shrub thicket, and 1.18 ha wetland enhancement. Planning and partner coordination are currently underway, with site preparation and wetland construction beginning in late summer 2026 followed by tree planting in fall 2026 and additional habitat enhancements in the spring of 2027.

For more than two decades, NPCA has partnered with Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) on numerous wetland restoration projects across the watershed. For the Binbrook Conservation Area wetland restoration project, DUC will contribute \$10,000 toward wetland construction costs and has provided engineered drawings as an in-kind contribution. As part of this partnership with DUC, a signed Conservation Agreement (Appendix 1) is required.

Through this agreement, NPCA will be responsible for securing a contractor, implementing the project in accordance with the DUC engineered plans, and maintaining the wetland feature for a 20-year term. This type of long-term natural asset management is not uncommon for NPCA and would be included in operational work plans and future management plans, as appropriate.

Given the temporary restrictions under the Minister's Direction, the decision to proceed with providing a service to a person or body where the duration of the provision of the service exceeds two years in length is prohibited unless the NPCA receives authorization from OPCA. NPCA staff recommend requesting authorization from OPCA to ensure the ecosystem restoration project can begin in 2026 as planned.

Without authorization to proceed with the DUC Conservation Agreement, NPCA is at risk of the following impacts:

- losing funding support for the restoration work;
- potential delays with project implementation;
- not achieving other external funding commitments and deliverables; and
- harm to partner / public reputation.

Financial Implications:

The cost of the wetland restoration project at Binbrook Conservation Area is estimated at approximately \$100,000. External funding to cover the full cost for this project is confirmed from Ontario Power Generation and Ducks Unlimited Canada. NPCA contributions will be in-kind, including staff resources to support project coordination, implementation, and post-implementation monitoring and adaptive management.

Given long-term stewardship responsibilities of the DUC Conservation Agreement extend beyond the initial funding period, staff will ensure these future activities to maintain and monitor the wetland are managed within future operational budgets and ongoing land stewardship activities.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 1.3: Restore and enhance natural habitat, water resources, and forest cover.

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

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:

Appendix 1: Draft DUC agreement

Appendix 2: Proposed restoration design

Authored by:

Original Signed by:

Natalie Green, M.Sc., PMP
Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change

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

SMALL WETLAND CONSERVATION AGREEMENT

THIS CONSERVATION AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is entered into effective on _____ ("Effective Date"), by:

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
3350 Merritville Highway
Thorold, ON, L2V 4Y6
("Grantor")

and

Ducks Unlimited Canada
92 Caplan Ave. Suite 636
Barrie, ON L4N 9J2
("DUC")

AS the Grantor is the owner of the following lands, located in the Province of Ontario and legally described as:

PART LOT 15, CONCESSION 7 GLANFORD, PART 2, PLAN 62R22514; GLANBROOK CITY OF HAMILTON
(the "Lands")

AND AS both Grantor and DUC wish to develop the Land in order to maintain and improve it as a habitat for wildlife and waterfowl (the "Project");

AND AS the Grantor and DUC agree that mutual benefits will result from the Project, and in consideration of the sum of 50% of the total construction costs up to a maximum of \$10,000 and other good and valuable consideration paid to the Grantor upon the completion of the Project to the satisfaction of DUC staff or a DUC appointed designate, the parties agree as follows:

For a term of 20 years from the Effective Date, the Grantor will manage and maintain the Project as outlined in the Management Plan (attached as Schedule "C") for the life of the Agreement.

The Grantor agrees to:

- 1) With notice to the Grantor, DUC employees, volunteers, or agents (and any required vehicles and equipment) enter and on the Land, including a right of way along and over the Land, for the purposes of this Agreement.
- 2) Ensure the Project is constructed according to DUC specification and as shown on a sketch plan prepared by DUC, a copy of which is attached to this agreement as Schedule "B".
- 3) To receive prior notification of any change in Land ownership.
- 4) To hold all required permits and approvals, including (but not limited to) Provincial regulatory approvals and Conservation Authority approvals, as required.
- 5) DUC may share and register the name and address of the Grantor and the Project location with project funders including the federal and/or provincial government where applicable.
- 6) DUC review of the Project for compliance with the Ontario Species Conservation Act (SCA). If required, DUC will assist the Grantor in developing an SCA mitigation plan and in registration of the project location with the province.
- 7) Permission for DUC to use photographs and/or video footage of the Project and Land in print, digital, video or web-based format, with the understanding that DUC will not disclose my/landowner name and/or specific address details without my written consent.

Initial

The Grantor releases, indemnifies, and saves harmless, DUC, their employees, volunteers, directors, and all of their partners in this Project from and against all actions, claims, loss, damage and liability connected with the said Project, works or the provisions or preservation thereof as contemplated herein, arising directly or indirectly out of the Project in any way.

At the end of the Term, this Agreement will automatically renew on a year-to-year basis unless terminated by either party upon one calendar year's written notice.

Notice by email or phone is provided as follows, which details may be amended by written notice to the other party:

DUC Office/ontario@ducks.ca/(705) 721-4444

Geoff Verkade (Senior Manager)

DUCKS UNLIMITED CANADA

Administration

Head, Conservation Programs

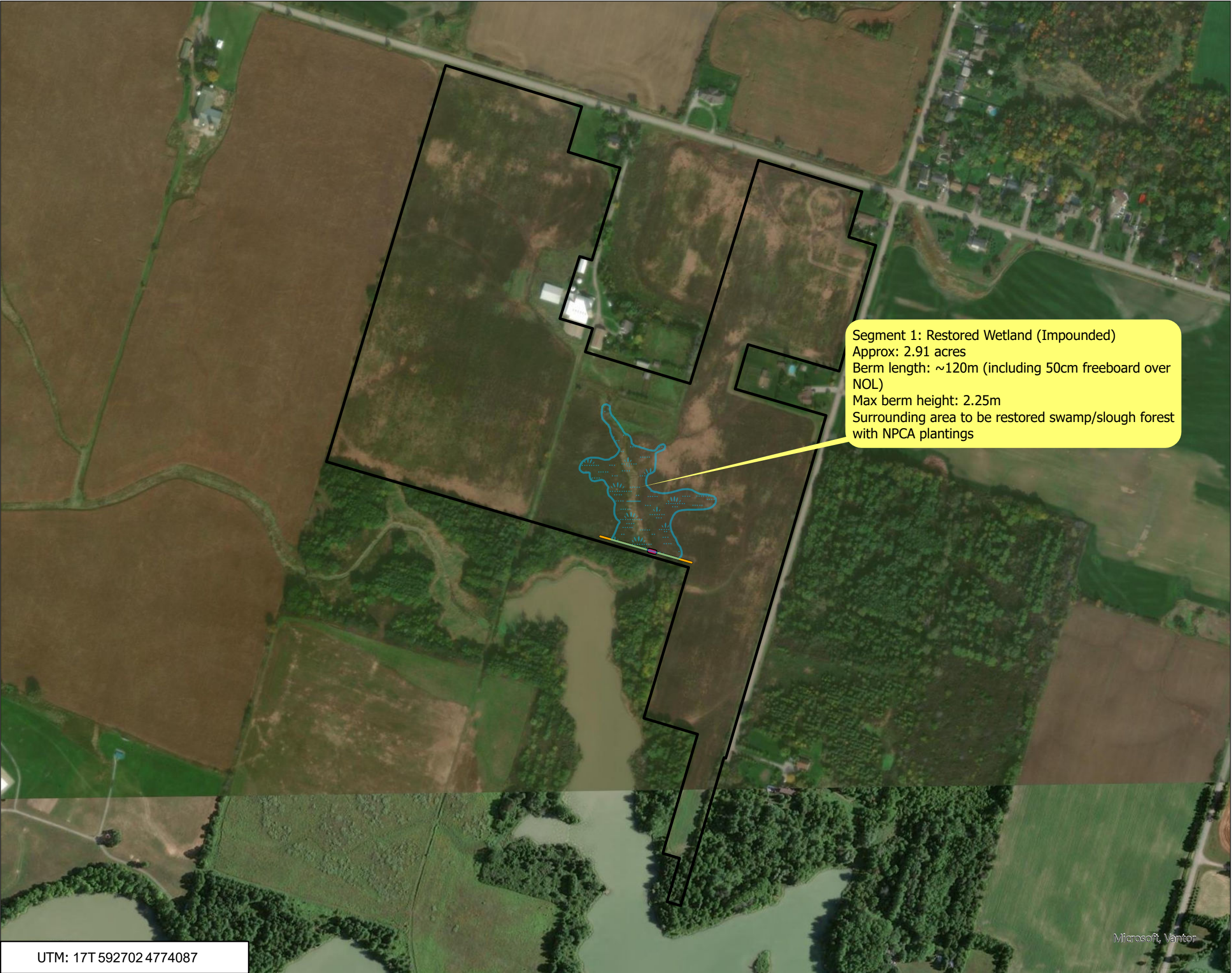
MANAGEMENT PLAN
Schedule “C”

The control structure on this project will be an overflow spillway, holding water at a maximum Normal Operating Level (NOL) of 201m. Seasonal fluctuations in water levels are to be expected. Borrowed material from the wetland basin will be used to construct the approx. 120m long berm; this excavation will be targeted to created additional wetland habitat. This excavation is to be implemented so that it does not affect the engineered design and does not affect the ability of the wetland project to contain water. Due to the passive nature of the overflow spillway control structure, DUC is not responsible for any future management costs associated with the Project.

Property PIN: 173920154
Property Address: 5299 Chippewa Rd. Hamilton, ON

Initials

DRAFT



Binbrook_North | Wetland Restoration Project

Drawn By: Nick Krete
Schedule B - Sketch Plan

Legend

- Restore Wetland
- Berm
- Spillway
- Lot Boundaries

L/O Initials _____

PIN: 175390216
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
Contact: Steve Gillis (sgillis@npca.ca)

Project Number: P-000019206-001-001

Conservation Authority: NPCA

Landscape: GLSL

Date: 2026-06-01

**NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS A LEGAL
PLAN OF SURVEY**

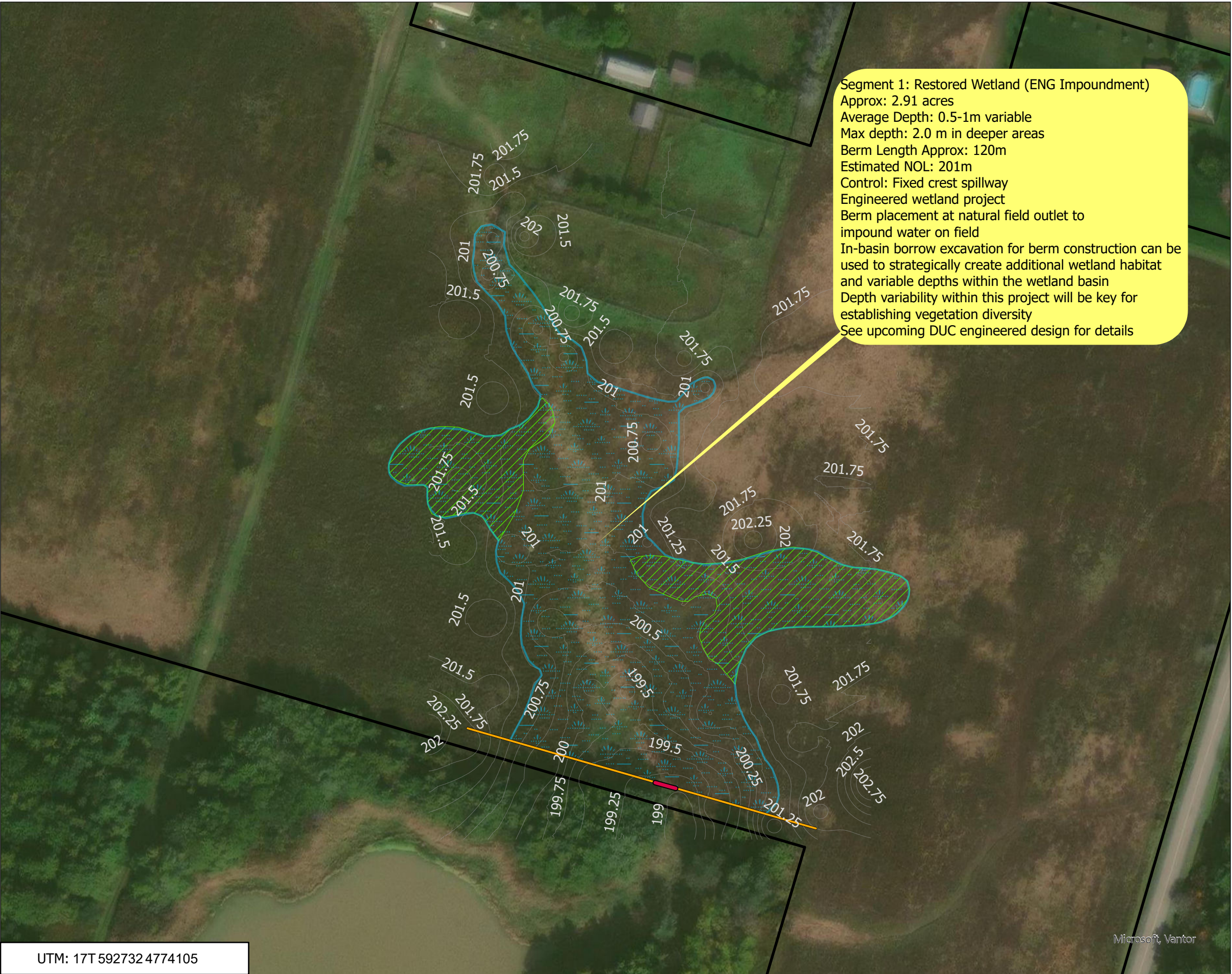
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Canada's
Wetlands*

UTM: 17T 592702 4774087

Microsoft, Vantor



Binbrook_North | Wetland Restoration Project

Drawn By: Nick Krete
Schedule B - Sketch Plan

Legend

- Restore Wetland
- Borrow
- Binbrook Survey Contour
- Berm
- Spillway
- Lot Boundaries

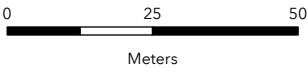
L/O Initials _____

PIN: 175390216
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority
Contact: Steve Gillis (sgillis@npca.ca)

Project Number: P-000019206-001-001

Conservation Authority: NPCA

Landscape: GLSL



Date:
2026-06-01

**NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS A LEGAL
PLAN OF SURVEY**

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Canada's
Wetlands*

UTM: 17T 592732 4774105

Microsoft, Vantor

Report To: Board of Directors

Subject: Long-term Meadow Habitat Stewardship Agreement with Metrolinx

Report No: FA-19-26

Date: July 24, 2026

Recommendation:

WHEREAS NPCA acquired agricultural lands adjacent to Binbrook Conservation in 2025 with the intention of completing habitat restoration and enhancement work;

WHEREAS long-term monitoring and stewardship are critical components of ensuring the success of restoration work;

WHEREAS conservation authorities are temporarily prohibited from providing a service where the duration of the provision of service exceeds two years in length, unless authorization is obtained from the Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA);

WHEREAS a resolution of the authority supporting the proposed decision must be submitted to OPCA for consideration of such requests;

THAT Report No. FA-19-26 RE: Long-Term Meadow Habitat Stewardship Agreement with Metrolinx Canada **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT staff be **DIRECTED** to seek authorization from OPCA as per the Minister's Direction regarding temporary restrictions provided on May 1, 2026;

AND THAT staff **BE AUTHORIZED** to enter into an agreement with Metrolinx to formalize collaboration and long-term stewardship of the meadow habitat restoration project at Binbrook Conservation Area;

AND FURTHER THAT staff **EXECUTE** necessary documents upon authorization, if received.

Purpose:

To seek Board direction on submitting an authorization request to the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) regarding a 10-year stewardship agreement with Metrolinx for the implementation and long-term and maintenance of restored meadow habitat at Binbrook Conservation Area.

Background:

Amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* in April 2026 include the addition of Section 1.14, providing the Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) the authority to issue a Direction to a conservation authority in relation to various matters facilitating the transition to a regional conservation authority framework. Section 1.14 further provides that an authority that receives such a direction shall comply with the direction within the time specified.

The types of directions that can be issued by the Minister are set out in clauses 1.14 (1) (a) to (d), as follows:

- (a) prohibiting the authority from making a decision in relation to its exercise of any of its powers under this Act or any other Act in the circumstances specified in the direction and subject to any specified conditions;
- (b) requiring the authority to give notice, in accordance with the direction, of a decision that it has made;
- (c) requiring the authority to send notices under subsection 25 (2), 27 (3) or 27.2 (3) by the date specified in the direction;
- (d) governing budgetary and apportionment matters relating to the authority that are otherwise addressed in a regulation made under clause 40 (1) (c), (e) or (f) or clause 40 (3) (k).

Effective May 1, 2026, the MECP issued a Minister's Direction regarding temporary restrictions on significant financial, asset, or employment decisions to mitigate risk and ensure a stable transition to the new regional conservation authority structure, pursuant to the revised *Conservation Authorities Act*. For the decisions specified in this Direction, conservation authorities are required to seek authorization from the Chief Executive Officer of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) before the authority can make the decision.

In accordance with the Minister's Direction, authorization from OPCA is required when a conservation authority is:

- vi. Providing a service to a person or body where:
 - a. the duration of the provision of the service exceeds 2 years in length,
or
 - b. the total amount to be charged for the service exceeds the lesser of \$500,000 and 5% of the authority's revenues, as reported in the authority's most recent audited financial statement.

This does not include a decision to renew or extend an agreement for a service that the authority was providing to the person or body prior to the Effective Date.

In order to proceed with a decision, the authority must request written authorization from the OPCA CEO and include the following information:

- i. A description of the decision that the authority is seeking authorization to make, including details of the proposed decision and why the proposed decision is a decision that is subject to paragraph 1 of the Direction.
- ii. A resolution of the authority supporting the proposed decision.
- iii. An explanation for why authorization should be granted, including any risks associated with deferring the proposed decision until after the transition date.
- iv. Any information about relevant dates for the proposed decision, including any considerations around urgency or the time-sensitive nature of the proposed decision.

Discussion:

In 2025, NPCA successfully acquired a 28-hectare parcel of agricultural land located at 5299 Chippewa Road in the City of Hamilton. Located adjacent to the Binbrook Conservation Area, the parcel is ideal for restoration and habitat enhancement to improve natural heritage features on the north shore of Lake Niapenco while providing opportunity to manage and improve surface water quality draining into the lake through natural assets like forests and wetlands. The overall restoration plan for this site advances watershed-based resource management objectives by improving biodiversity, hydrologic function, and ecological resilience in alignment with NPCA's [Watershed-based Resource Management Strategy](#).

In 2026, with external funding confirmed from various sources, NPCA will begin implementing the phased restoration for this site, including tree plantings, 4 ha meadow habitat feature, 0.8 ha shrub thicket, and 1.18 ha wetland enhancement. Planning and partner coordination are currently underway, with site preparation and wetland construction beginning in late summer 2026 followed by tree planting in fall 2026 and additional habitat enhancements (i.e., meadow and shrub habitat, etc.) in the spring of 2027.

Recently, NPCA was approached by Metrolinx with an opportunity to establish compensatory habitat associated with a local transit infrastructure project. The proposed project requires the replacement of vegetation communities, including meadow and thicket habitat on a 1:1 basis and tree replacement at an approximate ratio of 10:1. NPCA staff met with Metrolinx in Spring 2026 to propose a restoration project at Binbrook Conservation Area, as part of a larger restoration plan for the site. The proposed Metrolinx-funded habitat restoration project includes the creation of 4 ha of meadow habitat, 0.8 ha of shrub thicket, 330 native trees, and 4 species-specific habitat features, including snake hibernacula, bat roosting structures, standing snags and nesting boxes. All costs for this meadow restoration project (e.g., site preparation, soil management, purchase of plant materials, installation of habitat features and planting, etc.) will be covered by Metrolinx.

As part of this potential partnership with Metrolinx, a signed agreement will be required. Once restoration plans have been confirmed, an agreement will be prepared by Metrolinx to outline roles and responsibilities related to this project, including 10 years of monitoring with adaptive management (e.g., invasive species control, watering, and infill (replacement) plantings) to meet ecological performance targets, as required. This type of long-term natural asset management (i.e., adaptive management) is common for NPCA and would be included in operational work plans and future management plans, as appropriate.

Given the temporary restrictions under the Minister's Direction, the decision to proceed with providing a service to a person or body where the duration of the provision of the service exceeds two years in length is prohibited unless the NPCA receives authorization from OPCA. NPCA staff recommend requesting authorization from OPCA to ensure the ecosystem restoration project can begin, as planned.

Without authorization to proceed with an agreement with Metrolinx, NPCA is at risk of the following impacts:

- losing funding support for the planned restoration work;
- potential delays or cancellation of project implementation;
- not achieving other external funding commitments and deliverables; and
- harm to partner / public reputation.

Financial Implications:

This project is in its initial stages of scoping with a restoration plan, budget, and agreement currently being developed in collaboration with Metrolinx. While a cost estimate is not available yet, Metrolinx has confirmed that they would cover all costs for the meadow and shrub thicket restoration project.

An agreement outlining the required project deliverables and long-term stewardship responsibilities are expected to extend beyond the initial funding period and will be considered in operational work planning. Staff are working with Metrolinx to confirm the details of NPCA's responsibilities for long-term stewardship requirements and any associated funding that could support these future activities.

Links to Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 1.3: Restore and enhance natural habitat, water resources, and forest cover.

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

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:

Natalie Green, M.Sc., PMP
Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate Change

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: Finance Committee

Subject: 2027 Budget Assumptions and Process

Report No: FC-07-26

Date: July 15, 2026

Recommendation:

THAT Report No. FC-07-26 RE: 2027 Budget Assumptions and Process **BE RECEIVED**;

AND THAT the budget assumptions for the 2027 Operating and Capital Budgets as identified in the report **BE APPROVED** for use in the development of the 2027 budgets;

AND THAT staff **BE DIRECTED** to continue discussions relative to known funding gaps and service level agreements with municipal partners;

AND THAT a list of current known unfunded priorities **BE PREPARED** for the Board's consideration in conjunction with 2027 budgets;

AND THAT the Preliminary 2027 Budget **BE REVIEWED** by the Finance Committee and brought to the Board of Directors at the October 23, 2026 meeting for review and approval;

AND THAT staff **BE DIRECTED** to coordinate with municipal partners to ensure the 2027 budget process aligns with the Minister's direction under section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* with respect to budget and apportionment matters;

AND FURTHER THAT the funding municipalities **BE ADVISED** thirty days in advance of the Levy vote in accordance with the *Conservation Authorities Act* and Ontario Regulation 402/22.

Purpose:

The purpose of Report No. FC-07-26 is to recommend endorsement of the 2027 Budget Assumptions and Process to the Board of Directors for approval.

Background:

Ontario Regulation 402/22 requires an authority to prepare the budget for a calendar year in accordance with the budgetary process set forward in the Regulation.

On June 26, 2026 the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) issued a direction under s.1.14 of the CAA which aims to preserve operational and budget process continuity through the transition to a regional governance model for conservation authorities.

While Ontario Regulation 402/22 (Budget and Apportionment) does not set out specific dates or deadlines for the completion of the various phases of the budget and apportionment process, this Direction sets the following timing requirements and additional notification requirements:

Item/Task	Deadline
i. Holding of meeting to approve apportionment amounts for participating and specified municipalities (s. 16 of O. Reg. 402/22)	No later than 30 calendar days before the transition date
ii. Holding of meeting to approve final budget (s. 22 of O. Reg. 402/22)	
i. Providing copies of the approved final budget (s. 24 of O. Reg. 402/22)	Prior to the transition date
ii. Sending of notices to participating and specified municipalities (s. 25(2), 27(3), and 27.2(3) of the CAA)	
i. Providing a notice to the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks (MECP) and Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA) when each of the following steps is completed: a. Approval of a draft budget for consultation purposes b. Approval of apportionment amounts c. Approval of the final budget d. Sending of notices to participating and specified municipalities	Upon completion of each step

O. Reg 402/22 – Budget and Apportionment retains the three current methods of apportioning expenses/costs, as described further in Table 1.

Table 1: Methods of Apportionment and Authorized Use

Apportionment Method	When Used
Modified current value assessment (MCVA) method using MPAC data	<i>Operating expenses and capital costs where <u>all</u> participating municipalities benefit (and benefit is not disproportionate)</i>
Benefit-based apportionment method: Determined based on the benefit obtained by each participating municipality(ies)	<i>Operating expenses and capital costs where <u>one or some</u> participating municipalities benefit</i> <i>Operating and capital costs where <u>all</u> participating municipalities benefit <u>and</u> where benefit is disproportionate</i>
By agreement between CA and participating municipality(ies) (where CA has entered into an agreement with municipality(ies) with respect to apportionment)	<i>Operating expenses where <u>one or some</u> participating municipality(ies) municipalities benefit</i> <i>Capital costs where all or some benefit</i>

Municipal Apportionment

The approach to municipal apportionment will not change for 2027 calendar year budgets and will follow the existing methods set out in O. Reg. 402/22 and O. Reg. 401/22 (Determination of Amounts Under Subsection 27.2 (2) of the Act) and apply to the current participating and specified municipalities of each authority per the apportionment percentages distributed by the Ministry of the Environment Conservation and Parks.

Once apportioned amounts are determined and approved by authorities, notices of apportionment are sent to each participating municipality and notices setting out amounts owing are sent to each specified municipality. Each municipality shall be required to pay the amount apportioned to it even after the transition date under the CAA, at which point the payment will be due to the regional conservation authority.

Levy Apportionment by Type of Costs

As per the Legislation, CA's can apportion costs for all category 1 (mandatory) programs and services and can only apportion costs for category 2 and 3 programs and services with agreements in place with the municipalities. General operating expenses or capital costs (formerly referred to as 'corporate administrative costs') can be levied without agreement. As part of the budget process, and in keeping with current practice, CA's are required to consider the use of self-generated revenue as per Board approved Fee Policy.

The fees that conservation authorities charge, in accordance with the Minister's Fee Classes Policy, are considered 'user fees.' 'User fees' are fees paid to an authority by a person or organization for a service that they specifically benefit from. This includes use of a public resource (e.g., park access or facility rental) or the privilege to do something (e.g., receive an approval through a permit or other permission to undertake a regulated activity).

Enabling authorities to charge a fee for programs and services where the User-Pay Principle is considered appropriate increases opportunities for an authority to generate revenue. This may reduce an authority's reliance on the municipal levy to finance the programs and services it provides.

Methods of apportionment based on the category of programs and services are further detailed below in Table 2.

Table 2: Category of Services and Methods of Apportionment

Types of Costs	Description
Category 1 – all mandatory programs and services	• <i>Operating expenses</i> for programs and services that <u>benefit all</u> participating municipalities (i.e. general levy) would be apportioned using the MCVA or benefit-based methods. • <i>Capital costs</i> that <u>benefit all</u> would use the MCVA, benefit-based or agreement methods. • <i>Capital costs and operating expenses</i> for programs and services that <u>benefit only one or some</u> municipalities (e.g. ice management, certain infrastructure operation/ maintenance costs) may be apportioned by benefit-based or agreement methods.
Category 2 - all municipal programs and services	• <i>Capital costs and operating expenses</i> would be apportioned directly and entirely to the participating municipality that has entered into the MOU or other agreement under s. 21.1.1 of CAA with the CA for the CA to provide the program and service on the municipality's behalf.
Category 3 - other programs and services	• <i>Capital costs and operating expenses</i> would be apportioned in accordance with cost apportioning agreement. If agreement is silent, then MCVA or benefit-based methods.

Currently, all Category 3 programs and services governed by the executed MOU are apportioned to each municipality using the MCVA method.

Discussion:

In the development of the recommended budget assumptions for the 2027 budget process, Staff will consider the following:

- Funding municipalities guidelines for the municipal levy when available. Further to discussions with municipal partners' finance staff, Staff are not anticipating receiving any municipal budget guidelines for 2027 until NPCA budgets are complete, due to municipal elections. In the absence of municipal guidelines, Staff are recommending adoption of the guidelines provided by municipal partners for the 2026 fiscal year (Niagara – 3.5% / Hamilton – 4.25%).
- Cost of living adjustments (COLA) and grid step increases
- Inflation (Consumer price index – CPI)
- Minister's Direction regarding budget and apportionment matters
- Impacts from tariffs
- Multi-year contractual obligations
- Operating, capital, and program pressures
- Board approved Fee Policy and full cost accounting
- Focus on internal efficiencies
- General economic outlook

- Impacts on service delivery
- Asset management and state-of-good repair
- User-Pay Principle

Please see attached Appendix 1 – 2027 Budget Schedule which provides details and milestones on the process and related timelines for the 2027 budget cycle.

Strategic Plan:

As per current practice, the proposed 2027 budget will be aligned with NPCA's *2021-2031 Strategic Plan*. Through six overarching priorities and twenty-one specific, measurable goals, the plan builds on the principles of conservation leadership, customer service, collaboration, and accountability to nature. Each of the strategic priorities has specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely goals to ensure the NPCA is delivering on its mandate and desired outcomes as well as comprehensive metrics to measure the success of our organization's activities and to support the achievement of our key performance indicators (KPIs).

As a requirement of the *Conservation Authorities Act* regulations and as identified in the *2021-2031 Strategic Plan*, the Board of Directors approved the Watershed-Based Resource Management Strategy in December 2024, which assists the NPCA with evolving or enhancing the delivery of its programs and services. The Strategy identifies potential risks that could impact the effective delivery of mandatory Category 1 programs and services, and outlines actions to mitigate these risks. The Strategy will assist staff with the ongoing prioritization of operating and capital costs to support the effective delivery of mandatory Category 1 programs and services.

Unfunded Pressures:

In keeping with previous budget cycles, an extensive review of unfunded operating and capital pressures is currently underway for the 2027 budget process and included below the line in budget presentations. This critical exercise is intended to identify the required investments in the NPCA for long-term sustainability of the organization, and support asset management state of good repair protocols.

The Corporate Services division is currently in the process of developing a formal strategic asset management plan which includes the following components:

- Asset Inventory (complete)
- Asset Condition Assessment (complete)
- Levels of Service
- Lifecycle Management Strategy
- Risk Management Strategy
- Financial Strategy

This process also includes an evaluation of the data gaps in the current asset inventory and condition assessment. It is anticipated that the full Asset Management Plan will be complete in Q3 and brought to the Board for consideration and approval.

Relevance to Authority Policy:

The NPCA is required to prepare annual budgets as part of the fiscal control and financial responsibilities of the organization. The budget is also used in the audit process for evaluation by the external auditing firm. Annual audits are required as per Section 38 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix 1: 2027 Budget Schedule

Fee Policy – Available Upon Request

Links To Policy/Strategic Plan:

Goal 6.1 – Ensure responsible, sustainable, and sound fiscal practices

Goal 3.1 – Create equitable access to greenspace for the health and well-being of people.

Prepared by:

Original Signed by:

Lise Gagnon, CPA, CGA
Director, Corporate Services

Submitted by:

Original Signed by:

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

2027 Operating & Capital Budget Schedule

Pending	2027 Budget Planning Guidelines - Niagara, Hamilton and Haldimand
May 15, 2026	Meet with Niagara Region Finance Staff re 2027 Budgets and Amalgamation
May 21, 2026	Niagara Region - Memo received regarding intention to Transition to a Multi-Year Budgeting Framework starting in 2028
June-August 2026	Consultation with funding municipalities on 2027 budgets and MOU's, amalgamation guidelines and Minister's Direction(s)
June 9, 2026	FMW 2027 Operating and Capital Budget modules available
June 16 to July 25, 2025	Budget data input by budget owners, consultation / meetings with internal stakeholders
July 15, 2026	2027 budget assumptions approved by the Finance Committee
July 15, 2026	Meet with City of Hamilton Finance Staff re 2027 Budgets and Amalgamation
July 24, 2026	2027 Operating and Capital Budgets due to Finance
July 27 to Aug. 28, 2026	2027 Operating and Capital Budget analytics by Finance Division
Sept. 9, 2026	2027 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets due to Finance Committee report(s) agenda deadline
September 16, 2026	2027 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets presented to Finance Committee
Sept. 23, 2026	30 day notice to Municipal Funding partners - NPCA Board approval of 2027 budgets on October 23, 2026 (send notice to MECP and OPCA)
October 12, 2026	2027 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets due to Authority Board report(s) agenda deadline, including 2027 Budget Book
October 23, 2026	Draft 2027 Operating and Capital Budgets to the Authority Board for approval to begin negotiations with municipal partners; weighted levy vote (send notice to MECP and OPCA)
Pending	2027 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets presentation to Niagara Region Budget Review Committee of the Whole
Pending	2027 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets - presentation to City of Hamilton General Issues Committee & Haldimand County (if required)
April 2027 (tentative)	2027 Final Operating and Capital Budgets approved by Authority Board
April 2027 (tentative)	Release levy letters to partner municipalities

Governance Committee
June 26, 2026
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON
MEETING MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: D. Cridland
R. Foster
J. Metcalfe, Chair
M. Seaborn
A. Witteveen

STAFF PRESENT: L. Lee-Yates, CAO/Secretary–Treasurer
M. Davis, Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
Z. Dadson, Manager, Project Coordination & Grant Funding
S. Zavarella, Manager, Communications & PR

The meeting was called to order at 11:00 a.m.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Resolution No. GC-07-2026
Moved by: Donna Cridland
Seconded by: Robert Foster

THAT the Agenda for the Governance Committee Meeting held on June 26, 2026
BE AMENDED with the removal of Item 3 as Chair and Vice Chair appointments
were completed at the previous meeting.

CARRIED

2. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

4. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Recommendation No. GC-08-2026
Moved by: Albert Witteveen
Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT the Minutes of the Governance Committee Meeting, dated March 27, 2026
BE RECEIVED.

CARRIED

5. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1. Proposed Government Relations Framework

Manager, Office of the CAO & Board, Melanie Davis, provided a brief presentation on the proposed framework.

Discussion ensued regarding prioritization of workload and scalable solutions, such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems.

Recommendation No. GC-09-2026

Moved by: Donna Cridland

Seconded by: Robert Foster

THAT the presentation regarding the Proposed Government Relations Framework **BE RECEIVED**.

CARRIED

7. DELEGATIONS

None.

8. CONSENT ITEMS

None.

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

9.1. Report No. GC-03-26 RE: Amendments to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

Recommendation No. GC-10-2026

Moved by: Albert Witteveen

Seconded by: Michelle Seaborn

THAT Report No. GC-03-26 RE: Amendments to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* **BE RECEIVED**.

CARRIED

10. NEW BUSINESS

- Committee Members discussed cancellation of July's meeting if no items need to come forward.

11. CLOSED SESSION

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:32 a.m.