



QUARTERLY REPORT Q2 • 2019

Vol. 15 April-June 2019

CONTENTS

Mandate & Mission.....4

About us.....5

Q2 Highlights6

Managing our Watershed8

Restoring our Watershed.....9

Our Waters.....10

Our Lands.....11

Ecological Activity12

Engaging our Community.....13

Getting Social14

Welcome!

This quarterly report offers a progress update to the residents of the Niagara Peninsula watershed, including our funders, and our stakeholders.

As laid out in our Strategic Plan, we are making a concerted effort to be more transparent and hope that these reports are helpful in your understanding of our work, programs, and services.

NPCA MANDATE

As prescribed by the Conservation Authorities Act:

To establish and undertake programs and services, on a watershed basis, to further the conservation, restoration, development, and management of natural resources; and

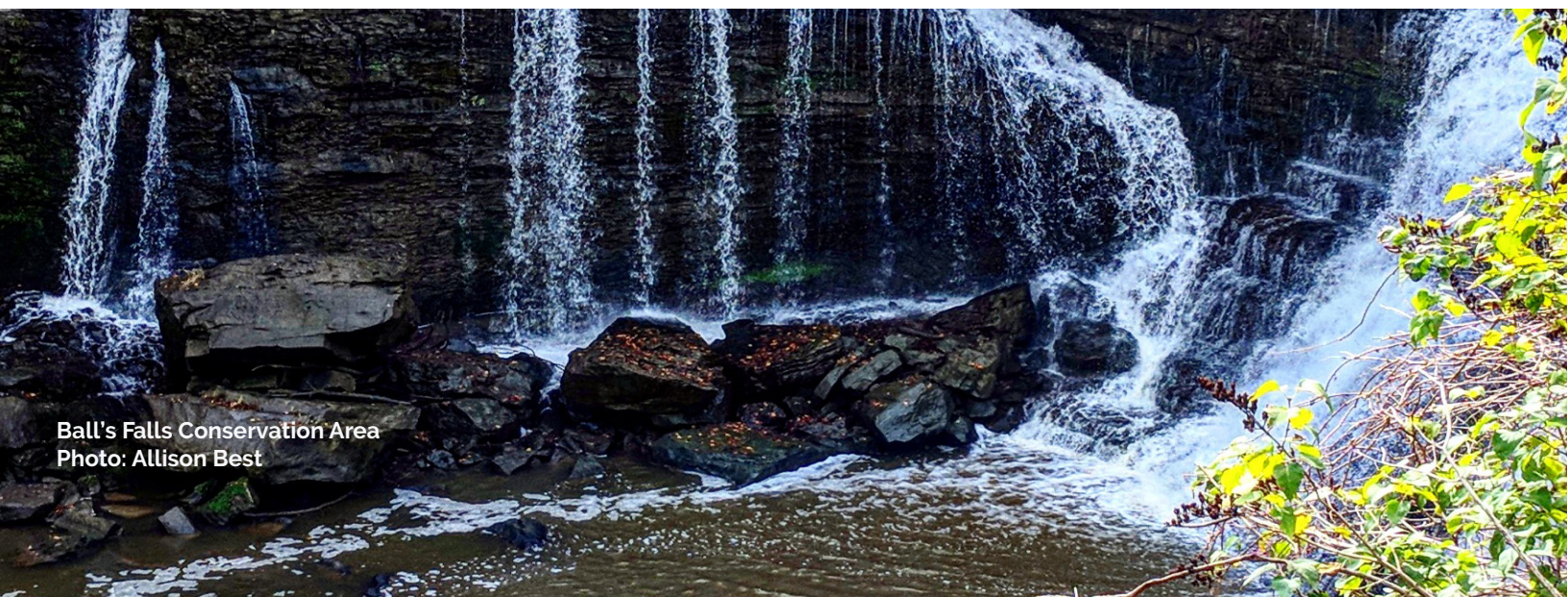
As prescribed by Provincial Regulations:

To protect people and property by regulating, and risk-mitigating development through reviewing and commenting on applications, issuing permits, and ensuring policy compliance within the appropriate legislative and regulatory framework.

MISSION

To implement our Conservation Authorities Act mandate by remaining a responsive, innovative, accountable and financially sustainable organization.

Our success in meeting our mission is dependent upon working in collaboration with our partners in conservation. Ensuring the future viability of the Niagara Peninsula watershed is a shared responsibility.



Ball's Falls Conservation Area
Photo: Allison Best

ABOUT US

Our Waters

The NPCA manages the Niagara Peninsula watershed with the purpose of keeping people and property safe from flooding and erosion.

Our watershed includes several bodies of interconnected waters that flow throughout the Region of Niagara, and parts of the City of Hamilton and Haldimand County. NPCA also implements programming aimed at improving water quality.

Our Lands

NPCA manages 42 Conservation Areas, including Ball's Falls, Binbrook, Long Beach and Chippawa Creek. These lands are held in public trust for recreation, heritage preservation, conservation, and education.

The NPCA also reviews and regulates proposed developments, in and near natural hazards such as floodplains, streams, shorelines, valleys, and wetlands.

Our Legacy

We manage the Niagara Peninsula watershed and our conservation areas for this generation and for all future generations.

Our Life

Water and air are essential to life, as such it is everyone's responsibility to protect it.

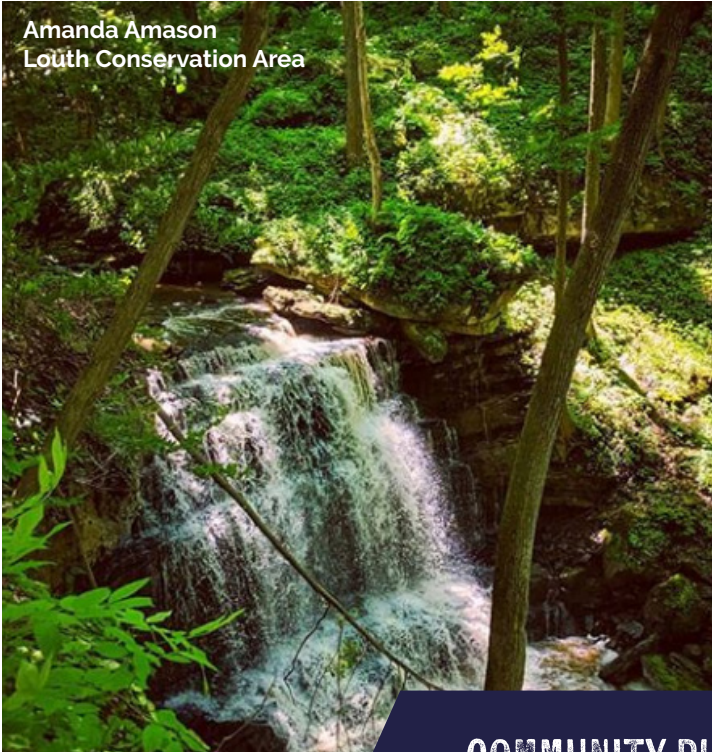


St. Johns Trout Pond Opening

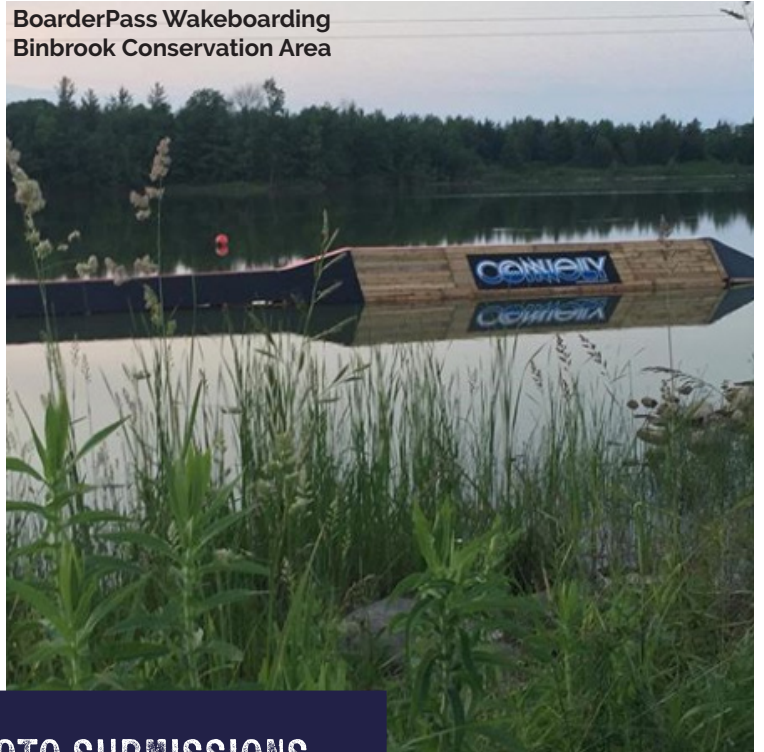
Q2 HIGHLIGHTS

1	New Treetop Trekking Adventure Park at Binbrook CA	1	Revitalized Restoration Grant Program
1,250	Volunteers with the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority	5	New "Drinking Water Protection Zone" signs installed
4	Flagship Properties in 2019 Season	165	# of Planning and Regulation Permit Applications Reviewed
2,866	Students Engaged in Outdoor Education & Recreation	5	Applications received for NPCA Well Water Decommissioning Program
10	Schools Participating in Niagara Envirothon	1	Welland River Floodplain Mapping Project
329	Thanksgiving Festival Vendor Applications	107	Hunting Permits Issued

Amanda Amason
Louth Conservation Area

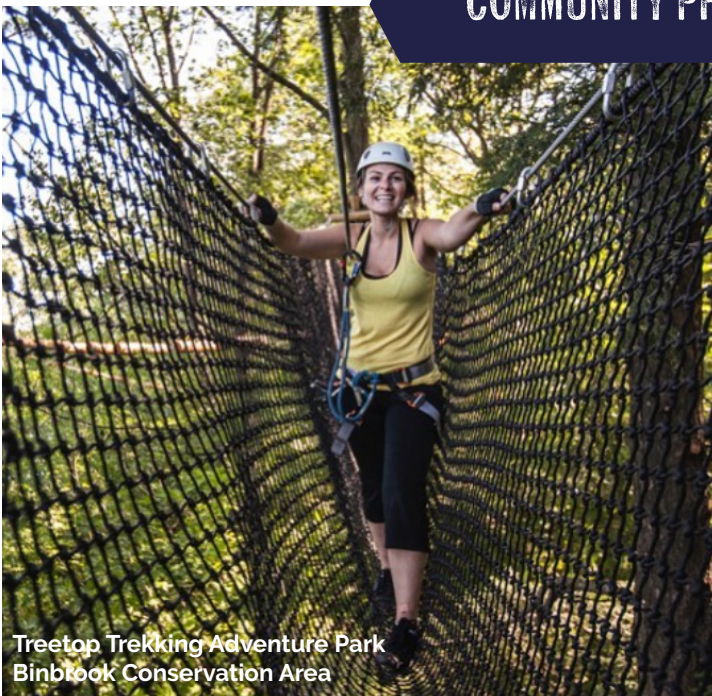


BoarderPass Wakeboarding
Binbrook Conservation Area



COMMUNITY PHOTO SUBMISSIONS

Treetop Trekking Adventure Park
Binbrook Conservation Area



Amanda Amason
Ball's Falls Conservation Area





Wainfleet Wetlands Conservation Area

MANAGING OUR WATERSHED

Planning & Development

During the second quarter of 2019, the NPCA reviewed:

- » 33 Planning Act/NEC Applications
- » 58 Building Permit Applications
- » 25 Property Information Requests
- » 21 Pre-consultation Proposals
- » 74 Work Permits under Section 28

Staff also responded to various inquiries from the public and local municipalities, as well as attended weekly consultation meetings with the local municipalities and conducted various site inspections.

Compliance & Enforcement

- » 21 Complaints received
- » 8 Complaints resolved
- » 10 Notices of Violation issued

Tree and Forest Conservation By-law

NPCA's Forester reviewed 22 files: 19 were directly related to the by-law (one of which was a Good Forestry Practice permit application), two involved NPCA owned lands and one was a property information request.

Water Resources Engineering

Staff continue to provide daily support to the Planning and Regulations program with respect to the analysis of natural hazards and the review of storm water management engineering designs.

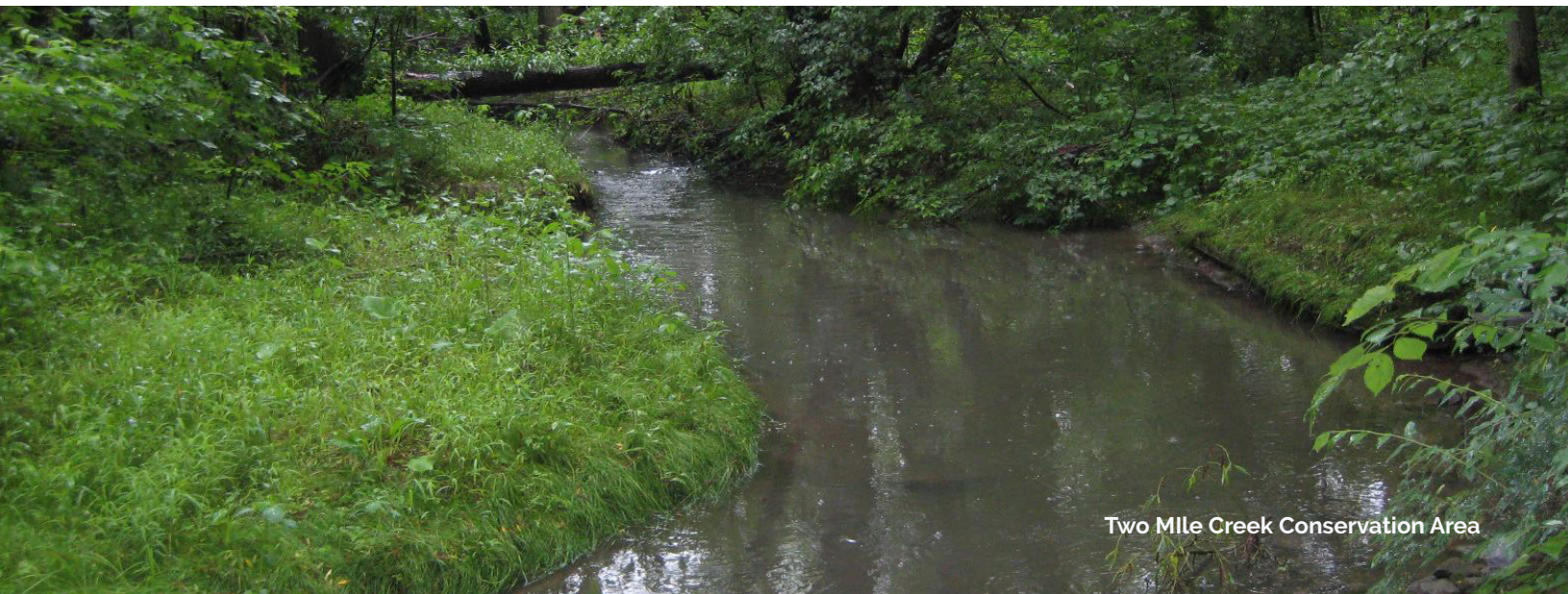
We are presently undertaking the coordination and review of the Welland River Floodplain Mapping Update.

Source Water Protection

Throughout this quarter, staff provided the Niagara Region with technical assistance regarding the proposed relocations of the Welland and Niagara Falls Water Treatment Plant intakes.

Other highlights of the Source Protection program activities included:

- » The 2018 Source Water Protection Annual Progress Report was submitted to Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks.
- » The NPCA received a draft Transfer Payment Agreement from Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks for the Source Water Protection 2019-2020 program funding.
- » Five new 'Drinking Water Protection Zone' signs were installed around the vicinity of the DeCew Water Treatment Plant (St. Catharines).



Two Mile Creek Conservation Area

RESTORING OUR WATERSHED

Niagara River Remedial Action Plan (RAP)

The team is working toward reviewing delisting criteria and identifying and completing actions for the following five remaining indicators: fish consumption, fish and wildlife populations, benthos, beach closings, and fish and wildlife habitat.

Highlights from Q2 include the following:

- » An online survey for Niagara River anglers is underway. By knowing which fish people prefer to eat and how much, we can better focus our efforts on monitoring, research, and education related to fish consumption.
- » A 3-year Niagara River fish community study was recently completed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada building on past work by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. An assessment of the condition of fish within the Niagara River is planned for fall 2019.
- » The Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake received funding from ECCC to conduct a 2-year storm sewer investigation.
- » A report was recently completed outlining findings and recommendations for infrastructure improvements to reduce

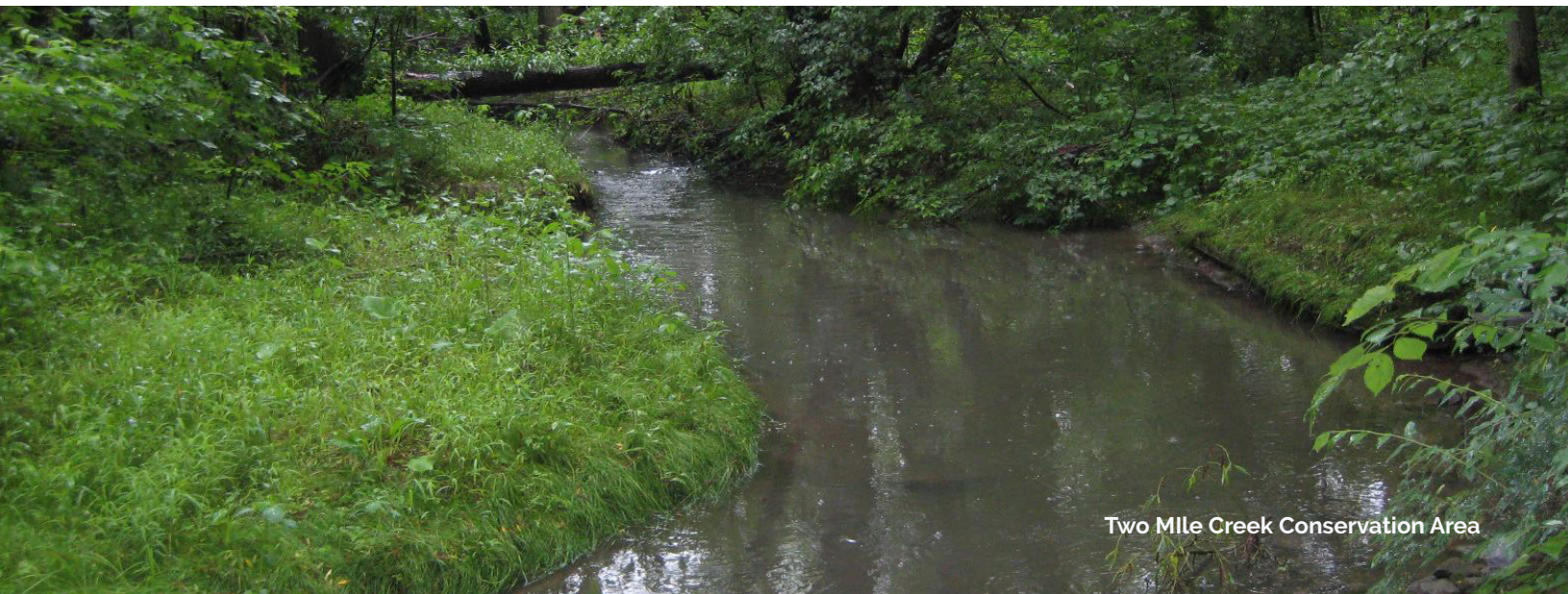
bacterial loadings to the Niagara River at Queen's Royal Beach. Remedial actions will be prioritized in 2019.

Restoration Grant Program

At the April 2019 Full Authority meeting, the board approved the implementation of a revitalized Restoration Grant program.

This program would better address the mandate of the Conservation Authorities Act, the NPCA Strategic Plan, and the Auditor General's recommendation to develop and implement a strategy to better target areas of the watershed based on water quality monitoring and other information on the health of the watershed.

In May, seven projects were approved for immediate funding. These projects partnered with Ducks Unlimited Canada to construct 0.6 ha of wetlands, and with Land Care Niagara to plant 23,600 trees. These projects were expedited to help these organizations deliver on project commitments they would not be able to fulfill without NPCA assistance and to re-establish working relationships with significant partners.



Two Mile Creek Conservation Area

OUR WATERS

Water Quality

Staff continue to undertake the routine monitoring program (both chemical and biological) at the NPCA's water quality monitoring stations.

Biological monitoring of benthic macroinvertebrates for the spring session concluded at the end of June.

Other highlights include:

- » Completion of the 2018 Water Quality Biological assessment reports for the Hamilton International Airport and the Glanbrook Landfill (Hamilton)
- » Completion of the spring 2019 biological monitoring programs for the Hamilton International Airport and the Mud Lake Conservation Area (Port Colborne) projects.
- » Staff have updated databases, completed benthic identification of biological samples from 2018 and have completed the 'NPCA Water Quality Monitoring Program: Summary Report of the Year 2018.

- » To date, The NPCA has received five applications and completed three projects for the NPCA Well Water Decommissioning Program. Approximately 20 per cent of the funding for this program has been allocated.

Flood Control

The NPCA issued numerous Flood Watch bulletins, warning residents of a potential for flooding from high water levels on Lake Erie and Lake Ontario.

While localized flooding and erosion was experienced, no major flooding or erosion damage due to wave action was reported during these events.

Staff continued to monitor daily water levels at 15 stream gauge stations, climatic data at our 15 climate stations, and undertake routine maintenance, calibration, and inspections at all 30 installations, as part of the NPCA's routine Flood Forecasting and Warning duties.



OUR LANDS

Beamer Memorial Conservation Area

The Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch took place on Good Friday. Participating clubs included Niagara Nature Tours, Canadian Raptor Conservancy, St. Catharines Photographic Club, Land Care Niagara, the Bruce Trail Conservancy, and Heartland Forest, among many other leaders in conservation. The day included hot food and concessions provided by RJ's Rolling Smokehouse, children's entertainment by Carla Carlson, and free face-painting for kids.

St. John's Trout Pond Opening

The NPCA held the opening event for the trout fishing season at St. John's Pond on April 27, with Honourary Board Member, Mickey DiFrusco, throwing the ceremonial first cast.

The event was supported by Trout Unlimited, with an information tent promoting healthy fishing practices, casting lanes and demonstrations. Concessions were provided by RJ's Rolling Smokehouse, and free children's face-painting was also offered.

Ball's Falls Conservation Area

Ball's Falls continues to be one of the leading wedding venue in the Niagara Region. The Big Barn is booked for each Friday and Saturday this year and most Sundays in 2019 are also booked.

During this quarter, more than 2,800 students experienced immersive, environmental and historical programming at the property through day-camps, school field-trips, overnight camps, and more.

Chippawa Creek & Long Beach Conservation Areas

Both campgrounds began their 2019 seasons on May 17.

Chippawa Creek was pleased to welcome 97 seasonal campers. Long Beach is currently at capacity with 125 campers, which represents the highest attendance the park has ever seen.

Binbrook Conservation Area

The grand-opening of Treetop Trekking was attended by media from Hamilton and surrounding areas on May 17. The NPCA looks forward to another successful season alongside Treetop Trekking, BoarderPass Wakeboarding, Staycation Boat Rentals, and FunSplash Sports Park.

The Glanbrook Conservation Committee (GCC) hosted yet another successful spring derby. Prizes were awarded for biggest panfish for both Adults and Children under 12. Through a partnership with Eva Rothwell Centre of Hamilton, the event welcomed inner-city kids and provided them with opportunities to explore nature and learn about fishing.

The Mud Girl charity race in support of the Breast Cancer Foundation took place again this year on June 1-2. Both race days were highly successful, with more than 5,000 women participating each day, for a weekend of 10,000+ conservation area visitors.



Birds of Prey Demonstration at Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch
Beamer Memorial Conservation Area

ECOLOGICAL ACTIVITY

Binbrook Conservation Area

The environmental monitoring plan for Treetop Trekking is underway by NPCA staff. This plan is specific to the development area to assess potential invasive species, tree and understory health/disturbance and litter over the first five years of the activity's operation.

Cave Springs Conservation Area

Bat acoustic monitors will remain until mid-late October for monitoring of bat movements and comparison with other areas in the peninsula. This data will be used to assist the NPCA in refining seasonal site use and critical habitat areas for protection and consideration in site-management activities.

Long Beach Conservation Area

As part of the Canadian Food Inspection Agency's (CFIA) plant protection mandate, inventories are completed on Hemlock tree populations throughout Ontario to determine the presence of an insect known as the 'Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA)'. Inventories found a positive population at the park and the adjoining property to the north.

This insect is an aphid which feeds on the sap of the tree causing decline and death to the tree species. To help reduce the potential spread of this insect, no plant parts are to be removed from the site, and

signs will be posted at the woodlot trail entrances on biosecurity measures to lint roll and wash clothes, and not visit other hemlock locations for over a week.

Morgan's Point Conservation Area

In late May, Common Milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) were planted at the site to help augment the lost plants from the previous years of phytoplasma.

This additional planting will assist in continuing to provide habitat for the Monarch butterfly, known to inhabit the site and congregate in the fall at site, using the site as a migratory stopover before their flight south.

Woodend Conservation Area

Forest understorey has been impacted with the loss of saplings, shrub, and herbaceous layers at the site. Staff have developed a restoration plan to restore the area including planting with fencing enclosures in the fall 2019.

Other Conservation Area Ecological Activity:

- » 107 NPCA Hunting Permits issued
- » 2019 Waterfowl Hunting Lottery applications are now available on line



Children's Water Festival at Ball's Falls Conservation Area

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS & ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITY

The NPCA had a busy second quarter engaging partners including the **Niagara Catholic District School Board, Niagara Region, Ohnia:kara Aspiring Global Geopark, Pathstone Mental Health, Ontario Power Generation** and many local libraries to discuss exciting projects and partnership opportunities in the months and years ahead.

The NPCA has been working with the 2021 Canada Summer Games on potential partnerships related to turtle conservation projects and habitat enhancement for turtles in the Niagara region, helping with volunteer call-outs and the possibility of hosting community events.

Niagara Envirothon

The Niagara Envirothon program celebrated its 12th year in 2019. Students from ten schools participated in an indoor learning day at Ball's Falls in March, and an outdoor workshop in April at Brock University, where they learned about aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and agroecology from industry professionals.

Volunteers

From April to June, new volunteers were recruited to support the educational programs at Ball's Falls, the Niagara Children's Water Festival, Niagara Envirothon and the bluebird and marsh monitoring programs.

Staff are now recruiting volunteers for both the summer camps, and the Ball's Falls Heritage Day event, and will soon start recruiting for the Ball's Falls Thanksgiving Festival. The NPCA is proud of its current roster of more than 1,250 volunteers.

In this quarter, we also engaged with:

- » Beacon Christian School
- » General Motors
- » Niagara Children's Water Festival
- » Niagara College
- » Niagara Region: International Civic Space pollinator garden planning
- » Soaring Eagles at St. Kateri
- » Trout Unlimited
- » Welland River Keepers






GETTING SOCIAL

The NPCA's social media continues to be a great resource for community outreach and engagement, education, and the delivery of high-quality customer service. Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages have been increasingly used to share more positive and proactive messages with NPCA's partners in conservation.

This quarter saw the start of the annual 'Step Into Nature' campaign, in partnership with Conservation Ontario and all Conservation Authorities across the province. Through social, digital, and traditional media, we encourage residents and tourists alike to get outside and experience nature by educating them on the many benefits of exploring the outdoors.

Using October 2017 as a benchmark for comparison, when a stronger social media push became apparent, all social media channels, followers, likes, and shares, have increased steadily.

	Corporate Facebook Likes: 6,456 (increase of 1,444)	Ball's Falls Facebook Likes: 2,365 (increase of 564)	Binbrook Facebook Likes: 3,630 (increase of 2,600)
	Facebook Followers: 6,795 (increase of 1,969)	Ball's Falls Facebook Followers: 2,508 (increase of 741)	Binbrook Facebook Followers: 3,807 (increase of 2,768)
	Twitter Followers: 3,432 (increase of 332)		
			Instagram Followers: 674 (increase of 426)

FIND US ON SOCIAL: @NPCA_ONTARIO

#DISCOVER**NPCA**



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