

**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
A G E N D A**

**NPCA Main Office
Carolinian Hall
3350 Merrittville Hwy., Thorold ON
Tuesday, May 12, 2026
5:00 PM**

CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL

The Niagara Peninsula watershed is situated within the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Attiwonderonk (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. OPENING WELCOME

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 Minutes of the Public Advisory Committee meeting dated March 10, 2026

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5. CORRESPONDENCE

5.1 Correspondence dated May 8, 2026 from NPCA Staff RE: Beamer Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan Update

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6. PRESENTATIONS

6.1 Lake Ontario Coastal Resilience Pilot Project

Presented by Manager, Natural Hazard Management & Resiliency, Brendan Buggeln.

6.2 Regional Consolidation of Conservation Authorities Update

7. DELEGATIONS

8. CONSENT ITEMS

9. DISCUSSION ITEMS

10.COMMITTEE REPORTS

11.NEW BUSINESS

11.1 Members' Updates (Verbal) – Information/Issues/Items of Interest

12.ADJOURNMENT

**PUBLIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 10, 2026
5:00 PM**

MEMBERS PRESENT: David Cribbs, Chair
Julia Baird
Philip Beale
Lageera Chatheechan
Mary Jane Combe
Andrew Panko
Steven Rivers (arrived at 5:13p.m.)
David Wylie
Lennie Aarts
Stephanie Flagg (arrived at 5:12p.m.)
Robert Foster, ex-officio
George McKibbon
Cindilee Ecker-Flagg

MEMBERS ABSENT: Andrew Panko
Lageera Chatheechan
Naheed Qureshi

STAFF PRESENT: Leilani Lee-Yates, CAO/Secretary-Treasurer
Melanie Davis, Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
Natalie Green, Director, Watershed Strategies & Climate
Change
Jessi Nelson, Niagara River RAP Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m.

1. OPENING WELCOME

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Recommendation No. PAC-01-26

Moved by: Philip Beale

Seconded by: George McKibbon

THAT the agenda for the Public Advisory Committee meeting held on March 10, 2026 **BE AMENDED** to receive an update from the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer regarding the provincial announcement related to next steps for the consolidation of conservation authorities, immediately following approval of the agenda.

CARRIED

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3. UPDATE FROM THE CAO/SECRETARY-TREASURER

CAO/Secretary-Treasurer, Leilani Lee-Yates, informed the Public Advisory Committee of details outlined by Hon. Todd McCarthy, Minister, Environment, Conservation and Parks, and Chief Conservation Executive, Hassaan Basit, on the next steps to transition to a regional conservation authority framework.

This overview included the establishment of Transition Committees and their proposed membership, plans to introduce amendments to the *Conservation Authorities Act* to enable consolidation through statutory amalgamation, changes to governance provisions, and establishment of local watershed councils.

NPCA Chair, Robert Foster, noted that the Board is following along with significant interest and appreciates the valuable contributions from the Public Advisory Committee as further details are released.

Recommendation No. PAC-02-2026

Moved by: Philip Beale

Seconded by: William Rapley

THAT the update from the CAO/Secretary-Treasurer on the provincial announcement regarding next steps for the consolidation of conservation authorities **BE RECEIVED**.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

5.1. Public Advisory Committee meeting dated November 25, 2025.

Recommendation No. PAC-03-26

Moved by: Julia Baird

Seconded by: Cindilee Ecker-Flagg

THAT the Minutes of the Public Advisory Committee meeting dated November 25, 2025 **BE APPROVED**.

CARRIED

6. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

7. PRESENTATIONS

7.1. Niagara River Remedial Action Plan Ecosystem Impairment Removed

Niagara River RAP Coordinator, Jessi Nelson, provided a presentation regarding the initiative noted above. Discussion ensued regarding progress on ecosystem impairment indicators and determining factors.

Recommendation No. PAC-04-26

Moved by: Philip Beale

Seconded by: William Rapley

THAT the presentation regarding the Niagara River Remedial Action Plan Ecosystem Impairment Removed **BE RECEIVED.**

CARRIED

8. DELEGATIONS

None.

9. CONSENT ITEMS

None.

10. DISCUSSION ITEMS

None.

11. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

12. NEW BUSINESS

12.1. NPCA Corporate Priorities – Committee Areas of Interest

- Manager, Office of the CAO & Board, Melanie Davis, shared corporate priorities for 2026 with the Committee to gauge interest on topics for engagement at future meetings.
- Member McKibbin noted importance of focusing on issues and initiatives unique to the Niagara Peninsula watershed that would remain problem areas after amalgamation.
- Chair Cribbs reiterated that significant time and attention will be required for forthcoming changes and suggested the Committee would be agreeable to additional meetings if they were of value to staff.
- Member Baird expressed interest in hearing about projects from the lens of potential amalgamation.

12.2. Members' Updates

- Member Rapley noted muddy water conditions along the Niagara River, discussion regarding low water levels, high winds, and ice cover resulting in spill over land took place. He further noted that river otters have been sited in the Lyons Creek area.

- Vice Chair Beale attended a community event with Niagara GeoPark and is focused on preparing for opening the Pioneer Village, welcoming the Committee to the Village for a tour if it is of interest.
- Member Aarts shared that the steering committee for Big Forks Drain in the Township of Wainfleet is near establishment.
- Member Combe noted that bud survival for grape growers is at approximately 50% due to multiple days of significantly cold temperatures, reaching lows of -25°.
- Member Baird noted that funding for a project to develop a standard survey to explore behavioural and attitudinal changes from getting out into nature has been received, and that Brock University is hosting a World Water Day event from 11-3pm on March 23, 2026.

13. ADJOURNMENT

Recommendation No. PAC-05-26

Moved by: Mary Jane Combe

Seconded by: Julia Baird

THAT the Public Advisory Committee meeting **ADJOURN** at 6:43 p.m.

CARRIED

May 8, 2026

NPCA's Public Advisory Committee
RE: Beamer Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan Update

To ensure community partners are informed of pertinent updates related to the Beamer Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan, NPCA staff submitted a Memo to the Town of Grimsby Council at their April 27, 2026 meeting.

This Memo included information regarding extreme weather and erosion that had recently damaged the stairs connecting upper and lower portions of the site, along with information regarding an upcoming Public Information Session scheduled on June 16, 2026.

Staff received the following motion from the Town Clerk's Office:

C-26-080

Moved by: Councillor DiFlavio

Seconded by: Councillor Vardy

Resolved that the memorandum from the NPCA regarding the Beamer Management Plan be received.

Result: CARRIED

A copy of Memorandum distributed to Grimsby Town Council has been attached for the Committee's information.

Sincerely,



Melanie Davis
Manager, Office of the CAO & Board
Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

MEMO

TO: Town of Grimsby Staff & Council
FROM: Eric Baldin, Manager Conservation Area Land Planning
DATE: April 27, 2026
RE: Beamer Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan Update

Background

In 2025, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) initiated the management planning process for **Beamer Memorial Conservation Area**. The development of the updated management plan is guided by **NPCA's Conservation Areas Strategy**, with a strong focus on collaboration and community engagement.

Located in the Town of Grimsby, Beamer Memorial was acquired by NPCA in the late 1960s for escarpment protection and nature study. Beamer Memorial is 63 hectares in size and offers breathtaking, panoramic views of the Niagara Escarpment and Lake Ontario. The conservation area is popular for observing the annual spring hawk migration as they pass over the Niagara Peninsula watershed, passive hiking and nature observation, exploring the Bruce Trail, and taking in the fall colours.

Due to the sensitive environment of the escarpment, the updated management plan will consider natural heritage enhancements, biodiversity protection, and guide capital investments to improve visitor experience and safety, as well as the long-term sustainability of the conservation area.

Overview Management Planning Process

Generally, the completion of a management plan can take 12-18 months (or longer), depending on public interest and policy requirements. The management planning process often involves extensive review and studies to understand the site conditions followed by visioning exercises to imagine its future state.

This process includes three key phases (as follows) which vary in duration based on site characteristics, opportunities and constraints, resource requirements, and engagement needs.

Phase 1: Characterization or Background Report

- Field work and data gathering or analysis
- Technical studies (e.g. property survey, geotechnical assessment, cultural heritage assessments, etc.)
- Opportunities and Constraints

Phase 2: Management Plan Development

- Concept development
- Preliminary design
- Vision, Goals, Objectives, Classification, Zoning

- Draft and Final Plans

Phase 3: Implementation

- Capital development in one or more stages
- Educational and recreational programming

Further details on Park Classification and Zoning, as well as specific requirements for management planning are included in the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP) as Part III – Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System (NEPOSS). NEPOSS is a network of over 160 protected public parks, open spaces, conservation areas, and trails in Ontario’s part of the Niagara Escarpment, often connected by the Bruce Trail. Agencies managing lands within NEPOSS must comply with NEP Policies, with guidance provided in the [NEPOSS Planning Manual](#).

Community Engagement

Community engagement is at the core of management planning phase and occurs at key milestones throughout the process. Given the popularity and visitation at NPCA conservation areas, robust community involvement is critical to the success of a management plan.

The first phase of the Beamer Memorial CA community engagement process included information gathering involving on-site surveys, an online project information webpage, and a public information session held September 23, 2025 at the Elizabeth Street Pumphouse in Grimsby.

The information session was well attended with over 50 people sharing their ideas, vision, and identifying opportunities for improvements at Beamer Memorial Conservation Area. Additionally, NPCA have organized one-on-one meetings with Town of Grimsby staff, Indigenous partners, local conservation groups, Niagara Geopark, Scouts & Legion, Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee, and Bruce Trail Club to gather additional input and feedback on the management plan. These meetings and discussions continue throughout the process.

From the initial engagements, five clear priorities have emerged:

- Better trails and amenities
- Visitor management and parking
- Education and community engagement
- Protecting natural heritage
- Supporting passive recreation

Recent Issues & Concerns

Due to recent extreme weather and erosion at Beamer Memorial, the stairs connecting the upper and lower portions of the site along the Niagara Escarpment have experienced significant damage. To keep visitors safe, the stairs have been temporarily closed and will not be reinstated in their current form. NPCA is committed to exploring a permanent connection of the upper and lower sections of the conservation area. The safety of our visitors remains a top priority.

As part of its ongoing management planning process, NPCA will be initiating a study to assess the feasibility of a future connection between the upper and lower trail sections. A geotechnical assessment is required to better understand the slope conditions before any long-term solutions can be considered. This work takes time and is necessary to ensure any future option is safe and appropriate for the site.

In the meantime, the conservation area remains open. Visitors can continue to access the upper loop from the main entrance off Quarry Road and the lower section and Bruce Trail via Gibson Street. Additionally, the Bruce Trail Conservancy has implemented a reroute to main trail continuity through the area, which can be found on their [website](#).

Next Steps

NPCA is working closely with community partners, Town of Grimsby staff, and many other interested parties to ensure that current priorities, environmental pressures, protection of unique natural heritage, and needs of the community are reflected in the management plan.

NPCA is currently securing a consultant firm to develop concept plans, conceptual designs, and artistic renderings in support of the conservation area management planning process. Draft concepts and preliminary designs to be shared in Fall 2026.

The next Public Information Session (in-person only) to share more details about key enhancements will be held at the following date and location:

Date: June 16, 2026

Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Location: Peach King Community Centre, 162 Livingston Avenue, Grimsby

NPCA staff will continue to provide updates to Grimsby staff and council to ensure the management plan is in alignment with other relevant municipal plans and would be pleased to share more information to municipal council when a draft plan is completed.

For More Information

As the management planning process proceeds, interested parties are invited to take part in shaping the future of this beloved natural space. We encourage you to visit the [project page](#) to learn more, review materials from the Fall 2025 public information session, share ideas through an interactive map, ask questions, and share your input.

For more information about the Beamer Memorial Conservation Area Management Plan, please contact NPCA staff at landplanning@npca.ca.