

Vol. 7: Apr-June 2017

# QUARTERLY REPORT Q2 2017

# NPCA MISSION, VISION & VALUE STATEMENTS


*“The objects of an authority are to establish and undertake, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources other than gas, oil, coal and minerals.”*  
R.S.O. 1990, c.C.27 s.20

- Responsibilities of NPCA include;
- Floodplain Management (1970's)
  - Hazard Land Management including the management of local areas susceptible to flood and erosion risks (1983)
  - Great Lake Shoreline management (1988)
  - Ontario Regulation 155/06 NPCA: Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses (2006)

**MISSION**  
To manage our watershed's natural resources by balancing environmental, community, and economic needs.

**VISION**  
Balancing conservation and sustainable development for future generations by engaging landowners, stakeholders and communities through collaboration.

- VALUES**  
To the landowners, stakeholders and communities affected by our actions, we value:
1. A sustainable balance between environmental conservation, economic growth and agricultural prosperity.
  2. Clear and respectful communication.
  3. Integrity, fairness and sensitivity to all impacted by our actions decisions.
  4. Creativity and innovation in service delivery to clients.
  5. Transparency, accountability and quality in our services.
  6. Pragmatic solution oriented approaches to decision making.
  7. A respectful work environment and professional development.



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Welcome to our Quarterly Report. Each year we will endeavour to produce quarterly reports for our funders, stakeholders and communities we are proud to serve. 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.



  
Mark Brickell  
Chief Administrative Officer



  
Sandy Annunziata  
Chair, Board of Directors

# ABOUT US

The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) was established on April 30, 1959, under the Conservation Authorities Act, and serves approximately half a million people in the Niagara Peninsula Watershed, encompassing the entire Niagara Region and portions of the City of Hamilton and Haldimand County. The NPCA strives to manage the impact of human activities, urban growth and rural activities on its watershed.

The Niagara Peninsula is one of the most complex watersheds in the Province. It includes lands drained by the Niagara River, Twenty Mile Creek, the Welland River, the Welland Canal, Lake Erie and Lake Ontario. NPCA programs focus on the conservation and preservation of the unique environment, and initiatives that help keep people and their property safe from flooding and erosion while keeping our drinking water clean and safe.

The NPCA's ongoing commitment to land stewardship is reflected in the management of over 2,870 hectares of unique natural areas. These lands are held in public trust, allowing the people of Niagara, Hamilton, and Haldimand County to enjoy its distinctive natural heritage at 39 Conservation Areas, each offering diverse recreational and educational opportunities and a place for both children and adults to experience nature's beauty.

# ADMINISTRATION

The **Living Landscape** ([www.thelivinglandscape.ca](http://www.thelivinglandscape.ca)) is the name given to the project with its primary objective to review and complete a fundamental rewrite of NPCA's primary development guidance document entitled, Procedures and Guidelines for the Administration of Ontario Regulation 155/06 and Land Use Planning Policy Document.

Using various media and communication channels, the draft policy document was circulated to the public and stakeholders including the Watershed municipalities, Core Working Group (CWG), Community Liaison Advisory Committee, Watershed Floodplain Advisory Committee, Region of Niagara Agricultural Policy and Action Committee (APAC), Niagara Home Builders Association (NHBA), Hamilton-Halton Home Builders Association, and the Niagara Area Planners Group. The draft policy document was also posted on the project website with links to it provided on the NPCA website. Also, five public open houses were held across the watershed in May and June of 2017.

To provide ample time for input, the deadline for the public and stakeholders to submit comments on the latest draft of the policy document has been extended (Board approved) from June 30, 2017, to September 30, 2017. A final document is proposed to be presented to the NPCA Board for approval in late 2017.

The **Source Protection Authority** confirmed two appointments to fill the vacancies on the Source Protection Committee. Mr. Carl Bodimeade was confirmed as one of the public-at-large members, and Ms. Annie Michaud was confirmed as the Commerce member.

Staff continued to monitor **daily water levels** at our 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. The public may access this real-time water level and rainfall information through the NPCA's website.





# LEGACY

**The Mickey DiFruscio and Family Legacy Pollinator Garden Project** was inaugurated this year to help in the establishment and maintenance of various pollinators, including butterflies.

The program will establish 2-3 pollinator gardens annually for the next five years. Each of the area municipalities will receive one on either Conservation Authority owned or publicly held land. Also, a garden will be established in both Hamilton and Haldimand to cover NPCA's entire watershed jurisdiction. Each garden plot will be approximately 200 square meters in size. It will contain only native species of plants that serve as either host or nectar sources for native pollinator species. Each plot will contain some of Member DiFruscio's homegrown milkweed. In addition to the planting, each plot will be complimented with an educational sign containing information on native pollinators and their associated habitat and information about Mr. DiFruscio, his family, and the Legacy Project.

Completed to date (2017):

First Garden: June 5, 2017 – Lower Virgil Dam site, planted in partnership with General Motors Green Team, DSBN Academy, and Niagara College. 1500 plants

Second Garden: June 20, 2017 – Mel Swart Park, City of Thorold, planted in partnership with the Mel Swart Park Committee and the City of Thorold. 1500 plants



# COMMUNITY

Between April and June, staff recruited volunteers to assist in the delivery of **Niagara Envirothon**, Yellow Fish Road™ painting, Park Clean-up Day, invasive species removal, Roots on the Twenty event, school programs, planting projects, gardening at Ball's Falls, bluebird box monitoring, ecological monitoring, Niagara Children's Water Festival, and heritage demonstrations at Ball's Falls. NPCA staff also met with new volunteers to discuss opportunities and events coming up later in the year. Total volunteers (January to June): 75 individuals + 268 from 25 community groups/partners

The Niagara Envirothon program celebrated its 10th year in 2017. A total of 15 teams from 11 Niagara schools attended a workshop at Ball's Falls in April where they learned about aquatics, forestry, soils, and wildlife from industry professionals. Professionals volunteered from various backgrounds and organizations including Heartland Forest, Land Care Niagara, Niagara College, Niagara Farm Project, Agriculture Canada, and the NPCA. Staff also engaged local farmers to help deliver the current issue topic for 2017, Sustainable Farming. The teams returned to Ball's Falls on May 3rd to compete against each other based on what they learned at the workshop. The team from Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School in St. Catharines placed 1st at this year's event. They went on to represent Niagara at the Ontario Envirothon at Trent University at the end of May and placed 3rd overall – the

first time a Niagara team has placed in the top 3 at the provincial level.

A seasonal camper appreciation barbecue was held at **Chippawa Creek and Long Beach Conservation Areas** in June to welcome back our loyal seasonal campers. Several seasonal campers approached park staff afterward with positive feedback. Vice-Chair James Kaspersetz, members Stewart Beattie, and Bruce Timms were in attendance, as well as members of the Senior Management Team.

The **Yellow Fish Road™** program is coordinated by the NPCA in Niagara. In 2017, the NPCA delivered presentations and kits to several groups in Niagara including Girl Guides, schools and "green teams". The NPCA also attended community events for Earth Day with information about this outstanding program. The Source Protection Plan outlines two specific policies related to Outreach and Education in the Intake Protection Zones of Port Colborne and Niagara Falls. The Yellow Fish Road™ program is used as a tool to provide outreach and education in these zones. In April, the NPCA developed a communications plan, a social media plan related to the Yellow Fish Road™ program. A total of 63 fish were painted next to storm drains, and over 360 fish-shaped door hangers were distributed to residents to explain the significance of the painted fish.





## OUR LAND

The 2017 **Hawkwatch** Season has concluded for the season. The Niagara Peninsula Hawkwatch is a group of volunteers that offer their time to obtain and record valuable information on raptors, their populations, and the link to environmental health. The Hawkwatch Season started March 1 and ended on May 15. NPHA held a Public Open House at **Beamer Memorial Conservation Area** on April 14, 2017, with over 500 people in attendance. The Open House included 'Hawk Talks', a children's program, and was a venue for various local nature groups to display information on their organizations, natural resources, and habitat work that is important to them. The NPCA also had an information booth to engage visitors and display information about the work it does.

Salamander monitoring, year three, was completed in the spring as part of the five-year study at **Cave Springs Conservation Area**.

This work is to assess the presence/ absence of the less detectable species of salamanders and will be further considered in site habitat activities and operations. The monitoring will continue for two more years as the length of salamander study requirements has increased to 5 years, from 3 years.

The **Rockway Conservation Area Archaeological Study** has been completed by Archaeological Research Associates Ltd (ARA). The area salt spring/well was identified as a common place for the congregation of fauna and used by First Nations when hunting. The historical importance and industrial use of the salt spring/well were also reconfirmed. Several options for the restoration of the salt mine/well have been provided, in addition to the restoration of the site stone furnace. Staff will be completing the restoration on the stone furnace in the fall/winter of 2017.

## OUR INITIATIVES

The **Strategic Initiatives** team continues to be successful in increasing corporate event rentals. Corporate bookings have been increased by 146% with a total revenue increase of \$11,975.08. New events such as the Niagara Regions Employee Picnic and the Ontario Society for Environmental Education's two-day workshop highlight a few of the new events that the SI team was able to bring to Ball's Falls.

**Educational Programming** realized a steady increase in bookings over May and June. 41 programs were booked in 2017 compared to 27 in 2016. The historical Spring Awakening and the hands-on Amazing Amphibians programs were very well received by participating schools and were the most popular program offerings this season. Guided nature hikes, secondary school programs on invasive species and water quality, as well as the new archery course, were offered to schools this spring. More than 1,200 students participated in educational programs at Ball's Falls between April and June.

The **Niagara Children's Water Festival** ran May 9th to 12th. 216 classes representing nearly 5,000 children participated in 2017. The event was

supported by nearly **500 volunteers** who helped administer the interactive activity stations. Great weather and support from our many partners resulted in another successful event.

NPCA staff worked in partnership with the Twenty Valley Tourism Association to execute a new spring event at Ball's Falls. **Roots on the Twenty** featured live entertainment, a lumberjack show, local craft beverages, VQA wines, educational exhibits and local culture. Approximately 2,000 guests attended.

The **Party in the Park** celebration in honour of Canada's sesquicentennial was hosted July 1st at Binbrook Conservation Area. The event featured a "beach day" themed party which incorporated Canadiana themes with live music performed by the "Practically Hip." The night was capped off with an outdoor movie presentation of "Sing." Overnight camping was also offered and was completely sold out. Both Burlington Beach Rentals and Boarderpass Wake Boarding offered services during the event. The Splashpad at Binbrook Conservation Area was completed and opened to the public on June 29. The Part in the Park event served as an official grand opening with ribbon-cutting photo ops with Councillor Brenda Johnson, and MP David Sweet.



# THE NUMBERS

YEAR TO DATE

**\$11,917,007** 2017 Gross Approved  
Budget

Total Expenditure as of  
June 2017 **\$4,747,914**

**230**

Planning Act/NEC  
Applications (YTD)

**164**

Building Permit  
Reviews (YTD)

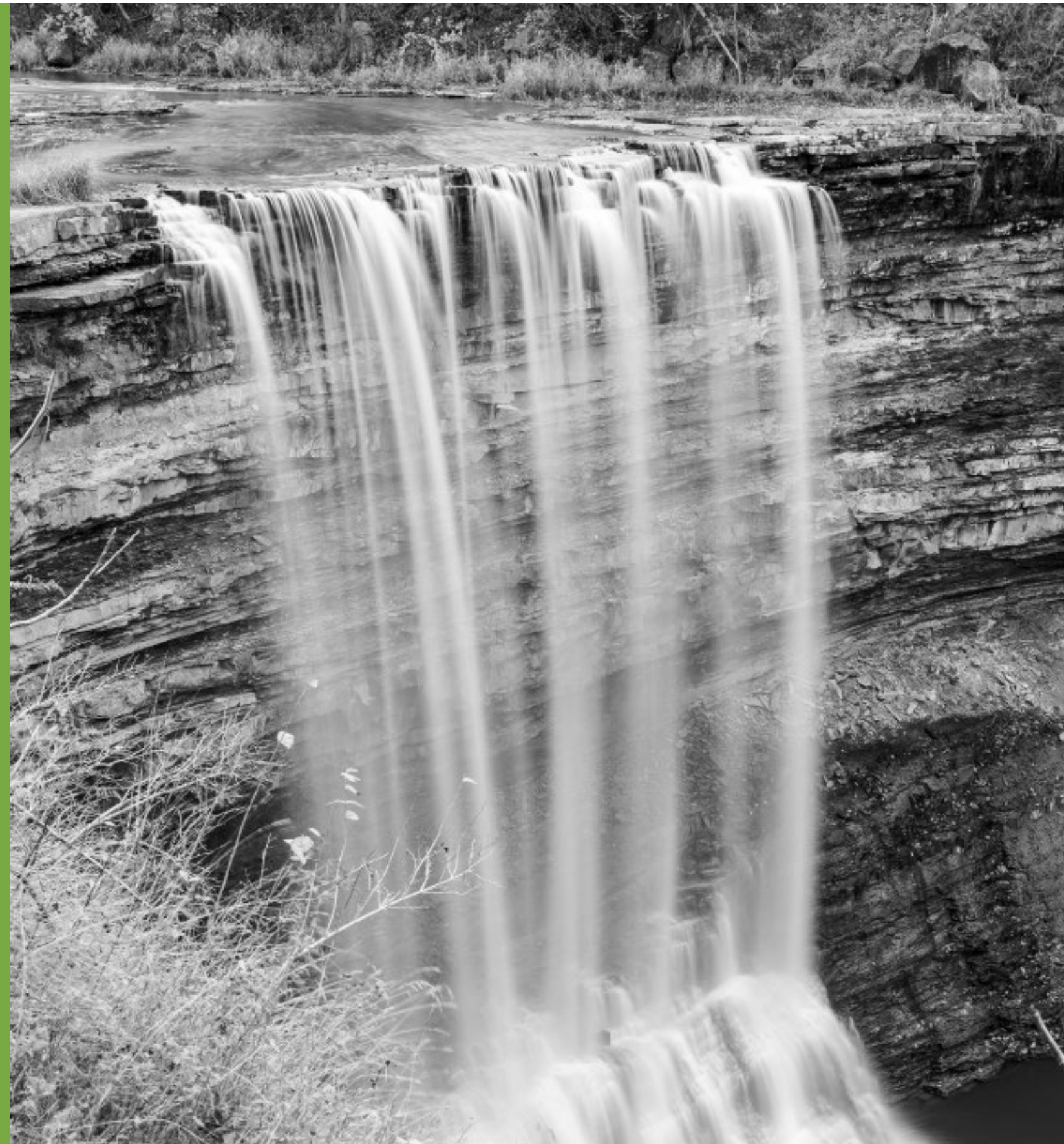
**89**

NPCA Permits  
(YTD)

**185** Hunting Permits Issued

Site Visits by Watershed  
Ecological Technicians **230**

**34,000** Trees Planted





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