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*"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*

NPCA'S STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

This document will lay out the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) strategic direction for the next 4 years.

NPCA is committed to organizational transformation.

Transformation will be externally focused – involving stakeholders from the development, agriculture and environmental communities, as well as government partners at all levels. Transformation will also be internally focused – generated by the Board, Management, and front-line staff.

NPCA's transformation will deliver a pragmatic customer-friendly “feel” in resolving complex regulatory issues, a re-focused conservation/sustainable growth mandate, and an ambitious change agenda moving forward. Concrete change actions will be executed with excellence, accountability and measurable results. The plan will promote a corporate culture that positively benefits the organization and the public at large including all stakeholders.



"The world as we have created it, is a process of our thinking. It cannot be changed without changing our thinking."
EINSTEIN



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)
- Level II agreement with Fisheries and Oceans Canada to administer the review of projects under section 35(1) of the Fisheries Act (1998)

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 and 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.

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."
OUR COMMON FUTURE (Report of the World Commission on Environment & Development)

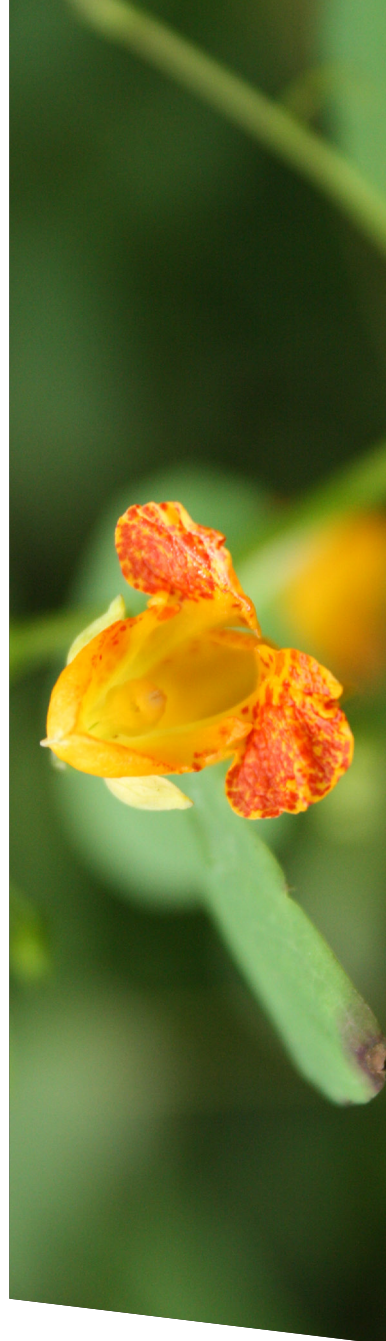
THE NPCA STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

THE CHANGE PROCESS HAS INVOLVED EXTENSIVE CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS, GOVERNMENT PARTNERS & THE PUBLIC.

- Public meetings re: NPCA mandate, performance & need for positive change
- “Sleeves Rolled Up” stakeholder working sessions to identify problems & recommend solutions
- Candid stakeholder & government partner interviews
- Five empowered stakeholder “change management” working groups led by NPCA Board members

THE CHANGE PROCESS HAS ALSO INVOLVED RIGOROUS INTERNAL EXAMINATION OF NPCA'S ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE, WORK PROCESSES AND ACCOUNTABILITY TOOLS.

- Board & staff interviews re; challenges & opportunities
- Third party objective assessment of organization performance issues
- Town Hall style front line staff sessions re: strengths & weaknesses



- NPCA's Historical Mandate
- Creation of the NPCA
- NPCA Jurisdiction



- Identified Challenges Existing at the NPCA



- Strategic Change Consultation
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Public Consultation
- Strategic Plan Sub-Committees



- Transparent Governance & Enhanced Accountability
- Effective Internal / External Communication
- Model to set Policies & Priorities
- Streamlined Delivery of Development Process Approvals
- Asset Management & Land Programs



WHO WE ARE

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN RECOGNIZES THE CONSERVATION IDEALS THAT THE NPCA WAS FOUNDED ON IN 1959.

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 an area known as the Niagara Peninsula Watershed. This area of jurisdiction encompasses the whole of Niagara Region, 21% of the City of Hamilton and 25% of Haldimand County. At its inception, the driving force behind the Conservation Authority movement was its grassroots land stewardship and water protection programs. Today, this vital commitment continues as we strive to manage the impact of human activities, urban growth and rural activities on the watershed.

With its unique resources, 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. Nestled between two Great Lakes and transversed by the Niagara Escarpment, the Niagara Peninsula has truly unique climatic and biotic zones that are unlike anywhere else in North America. Programs focus on watershed management activities that help keep people and their property safe from events such as flooding and erosion.

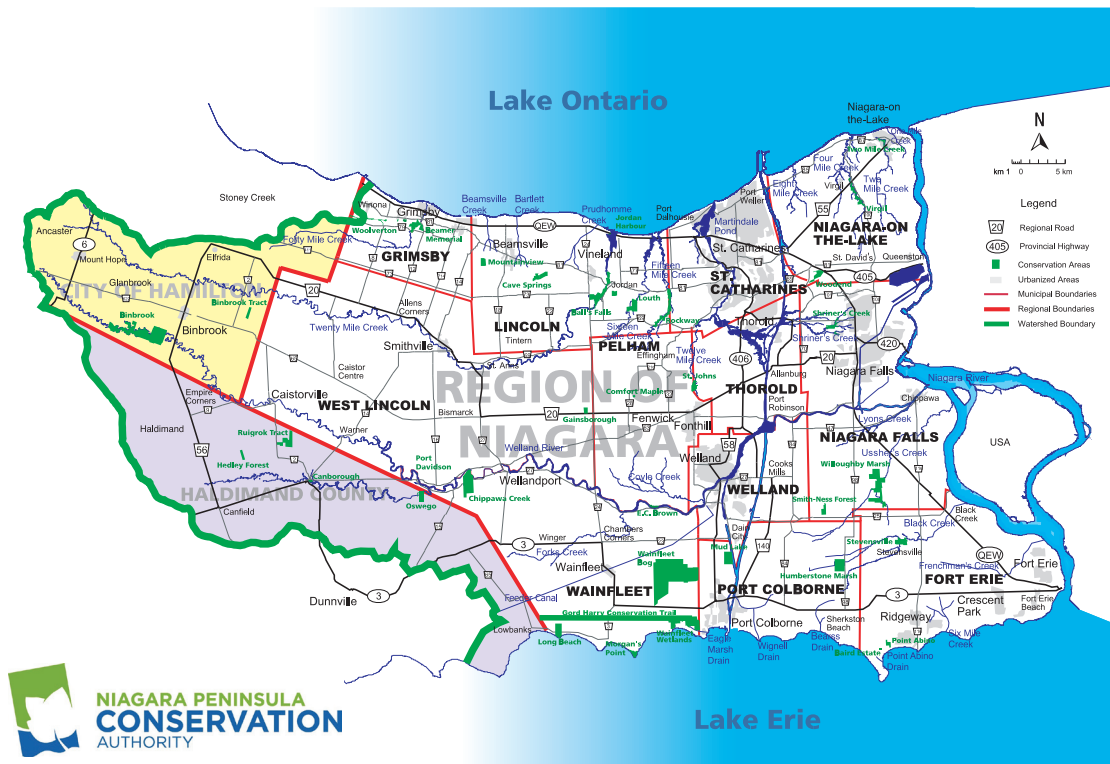
The NPCA delivers programs, advises municipalities and regulates land use according to a complex series of legislative mandates.

The NPCA fulfills this mandate by advocating and implementing programs that:

- **Improve the quality of lands and waters within its jurisdiction**
- **Contribute to public safety from flooding and erosion**
- **Provide for the management of conservation and hazard lands**
- **Enhance the quality of life in its watershed by using its lands for regional recreation, heritage preservation and conservation education**

As stewards of the watershed's natural resources, the NPCA works with landowners, government, conservation clubs, volunteer groups, individuals of all ages and many other partners to accomplish the work that needs to be done. Each year, thousands of voluntary hours are contributed to help protect the ecological health of Niagara's watershed through public engagement in stewardship activities, playing a vital role in helping achieve the underlying goals of these programs.

WATERSHED AREA OF JURISDICTION



The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority serves approximately 500,000 people and covers an area of approximately 2,424 square kilometers, encompassing:

- The entire Niagara Region
- 21% of the City of Hamilton
- 25% of Haldimand County

The activities of the NPCA are governed by a Board of Directors comprised of 15 members appointed by the member municipalities as follows; 12 appointed by Region of Niagara, 2 appointed by City of Hamilton, and 1 by Haldimand County. The Directors are committed to serving the local, rural and urban communities on behalf of the watershed municipalities and contribute their leadership and expertise in decisions that determine the policies and programs of the Authority.

"You must know where you came from yesterday, know where you are today, to know where you're going tomorrow."
CREE SAYING



ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING

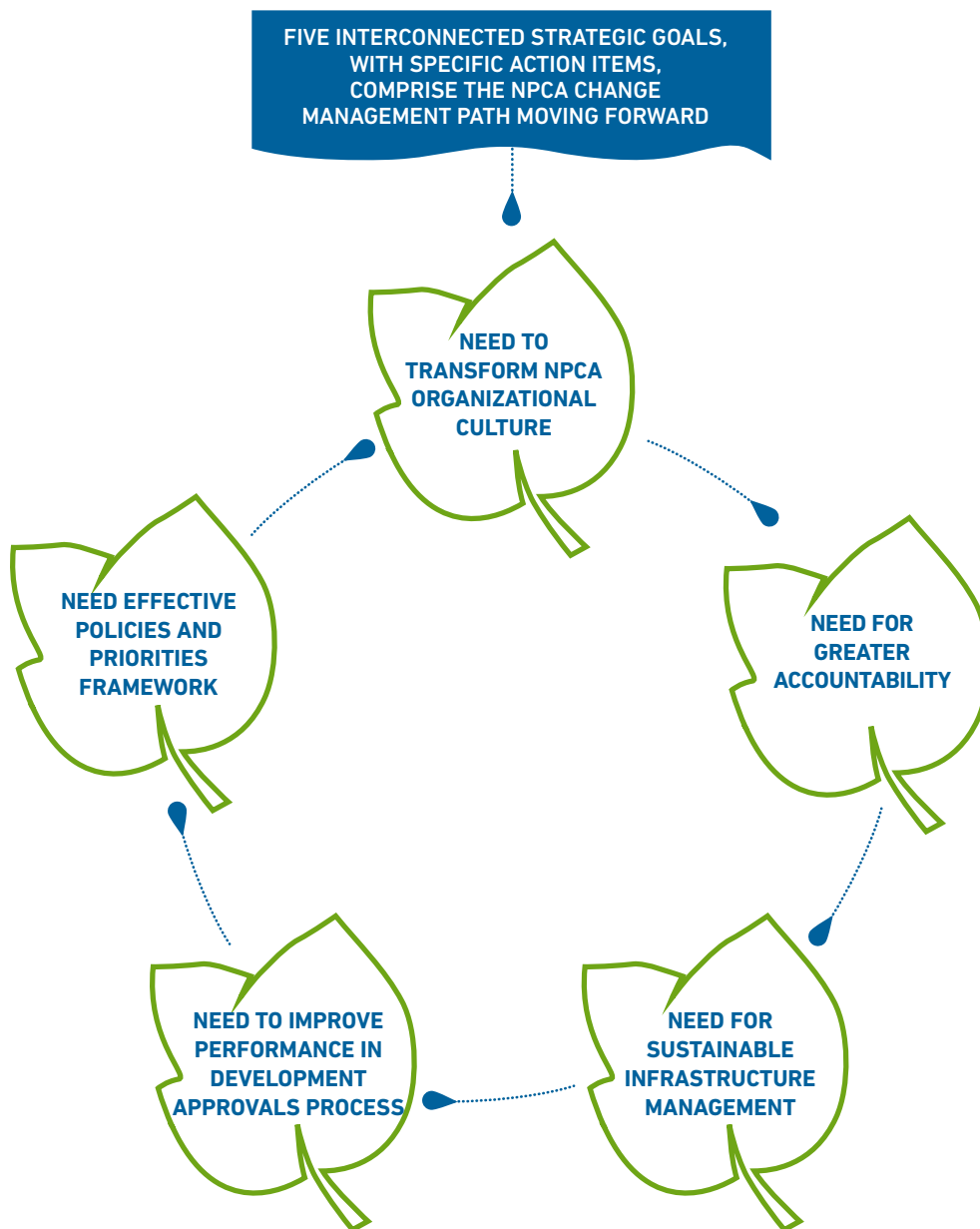
The Board of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority committed to engaging in a change process that would identify challenges and create solutions to better service the watershed community.

NPCA CHALLENGES CLEARLY IDENTIFIED

1. **NEED TO TRANSFORM NPCA ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE:**
Through the strategic plan process the NPCA recognized the need to transform NPCA culture to embrace public and stakeholder collaboration and communication.
2. **NEED FOR GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY:**
Through the strategic plan process the NPCA recognized the need for greater accountability regarding NPCA Governance and Management.
3. **NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE MANAGEMENT:**
Through the strategic plan process the NPCA recognized the need for sustainable management of NPCA land and fixed assets.
4. **NEED TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE IN DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS PROCESS:**
Through the strategic plan process the NPCA recognized the need to improve NPCA performance in the development approvals process.
5. **NEED EFFECTIVE POLICIES AND PRIORITIES FRAMEWORK:**
Through the strategic plan process the NPCA recognized the need to have an effective framework to refine NPCA Policies and Priorities.

"A powerful idea communicates some of its strength to him who challenges it."
MARCEL PROUST

NPCA STRATEGIC GOALS



"When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better too."
PAULO COELAO



DRIVING STRATEGIC CHANGE: THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUPS' MANDATE

EFFECTIVE NPCA MODEL TO SET POLICY AND PRIORITIES

This group was tasked with the mandate to develop a detailed Board policy review exercise to ensure policy frameworks reflect current perspectives and needs on conservation / economic development.

NPCA ASSETS AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

This group's mandate was to review NPCA land acquisition policies and strategies in order to balance life-cycle responsibilities with the capital budget process. They recommended a best practices review of land program delivery model and processes for implementation

IMPROVING DEVELOPMENT PROCESS PERFORMANCE

This group's mandate was to conduct 3rd party evidence based business process re-engineering review of the NPCA development and permit approvals process. They also conducted an organizational structure review in order assess resource adequacy and service delivery.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND PUBLIC

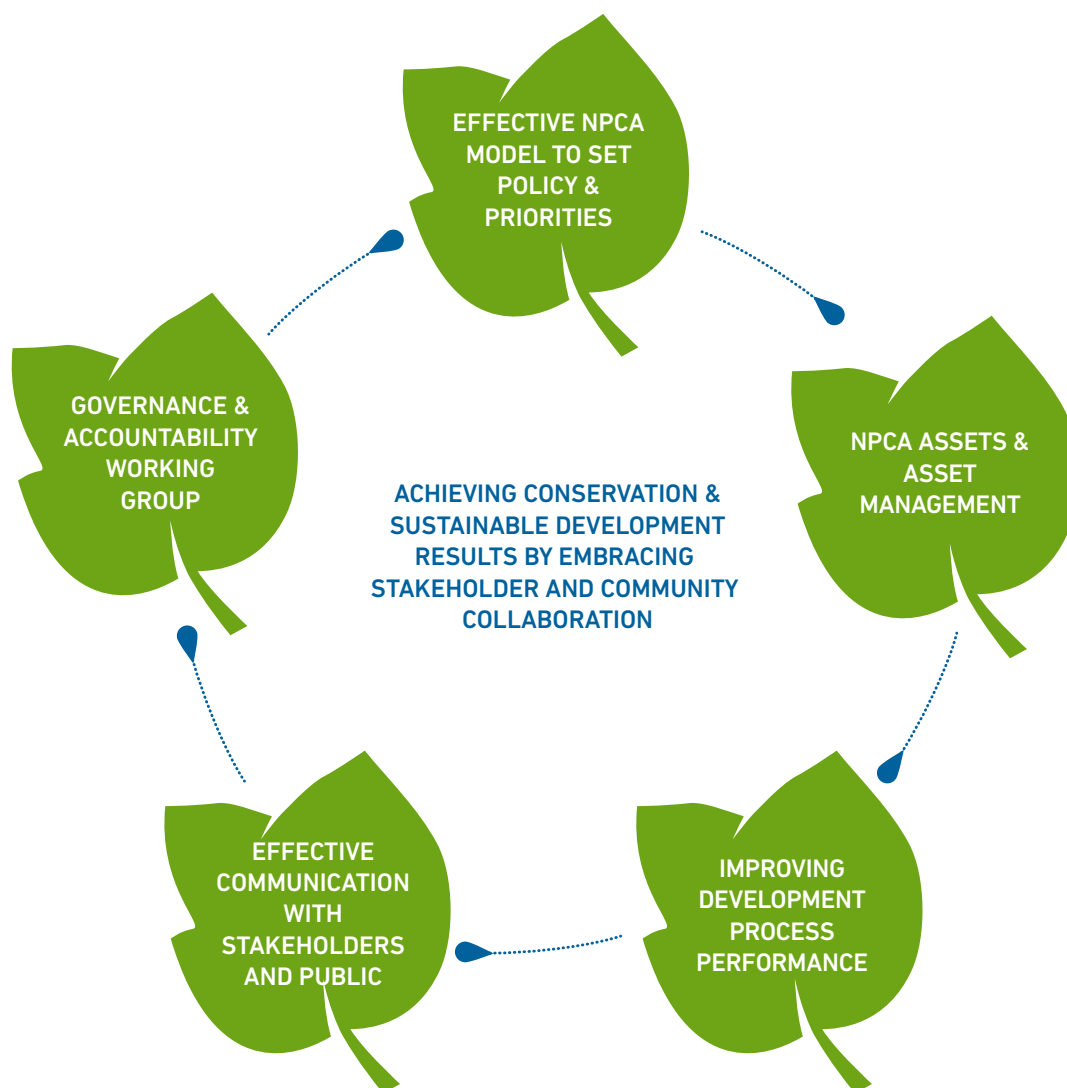
This group's mandate was to engage major stakeholders from throughout the community in order to address customer and community concerns. They investigated the applicability of incorporating on line social media to improve NPCA profile.

GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY WORKING GROUP

This group's mandate was to set criteria for measuring the success of business operations, including an accountability dashboard and report card. They recommended the budget process be redesigned to achieve successful results-based performance; and implement programs to help encourage and preserve public use of lands in order to increase revenues used to maintain park facility assets.

"You must be the change you wish to see in the world."
MAHATMA GANDHI

NPCA STRATEGIC PLAN WORKING GROUPS



"Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have."
MARGARET MEAD



STRATEGIC CHANGE CONSULTATION

CONSULTATION PROCESS

1. PUBLIC & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION TOOL KIT

At the onset of the process a number of public consultation sessions were held. These consultation opportunities with the development industry, the agricultural sector, dedicated environmentalists, and especially the general public generated blunt and powerful feedback. Valuable insights were gained about NPCA strengths, weaknesses and the necessary “change” pathway going forward. It is understood that carefully considered change is necessary.

2. RIGOROUS INTERNAL DIALOGUE AND PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

The NPCA has turned inwards and taken a hard look at its operations, policy framework and future priorities in an effort to meet customer needs and deliver balanced regulatory services that recognize conservation and economic progress can co-exist.

3. STAKEHOLDER ‘CHANGE’ WORKING GROUPS LED BY BOARD MEMBERS WERE ESTABLISHED TO GENERATE PRAGMATIC, MULTI-YEAR CHANGE ACTION PLANS.

With this in mind, working groups consisting of a balanced cross-section of watershed stakeholders, technical experts and the general public were formed to address five performance improvement themes identified in Chart 2. Board Members from the NPCA Strategic Committee chaired these five Working Groups. These Working Groups generated meaningful discussions and recommended the necessary changes needed to create significant performance improvement opportunities for the NPCA. The result is a refocused, re-energized “new” NPCA that is aligned with the conservation and economic priorities of the public, key stakeholders, and the Board.



"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children."
NATIVE AMERICAN PROVERB

EFFECTIVE NPCA MODEL TO SET POLICIES & PRIORITIES

PHASE 1:

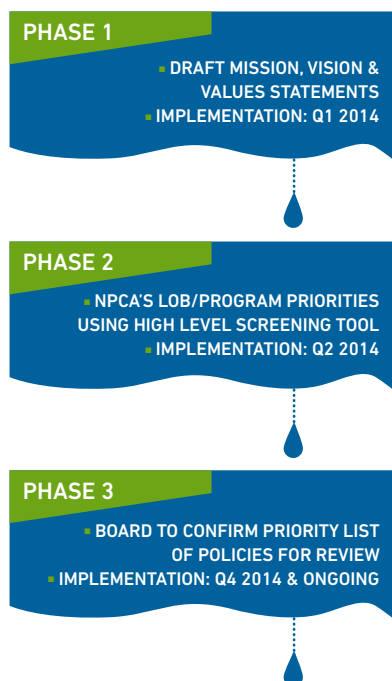
- Board to establish/endorse draft Mission, Vision & Values Statements. (Implementation: Q1 2014)

PHASE 2:

- Board must confirm NPCA's Lines of Business/Program Priorities.
- High-level screening tool developed/tested by Policy Working Group to be used for this purpose. (Implementation: Q2 2014)

PHASE 3:

- Board to confirm priority list of policies for review.
- NPCA Development Approvals Policies will kick-off review process. Priority policies will be vetted using decision making tool developed by Policy group. (Implementation: Q2 2014 & ongoing)



"The human brain now holds the key to our future. We have to recall the image of the planet from outer space: a single entity in which air, water, and continents are interconnected. That is our home."

DAVID SUZUKI



STREAMLINED, EFFICIENT DELIVERY OF DEVELOPMENT APPROVALS PROCESS

PHASE 1:

- Board to consider & adopt the development review and permit approval process business rules/flow charts and dispute resolution process, (including the recommended processing timelines). (Implementation: Q2 2014)
- Board to consider & adopt the dispute resolution process tool. (Implementation: Q3 2014)
- The Community Liaison Advisory Committee (CLAC), endorsed by the Board, will participate in providing specific detailed recommendations beyond the conclusion of this process. (Implementation: Q4 2014)

PHASE 2:

- Complete majority of review and permit approvals with in-house staff to improve management control and continuity - confirm in 2014 budget. (Implementation: Q2 2014)
- Staff capacity comprised of appropriately experienced personnel needs to be provided via additional resources or realignment of existing resources - confirm in 2014 budget. (Implementation: Q2 2014)
- NPCA should adopt use of a software system for monitoring development applications. (Implementation: Q3 2014)

PHASE 3:

- NPCA policy document should clearly distinguish between broader planning guidance and regulatory/permit requirements. (Implementation: Q4 2014)

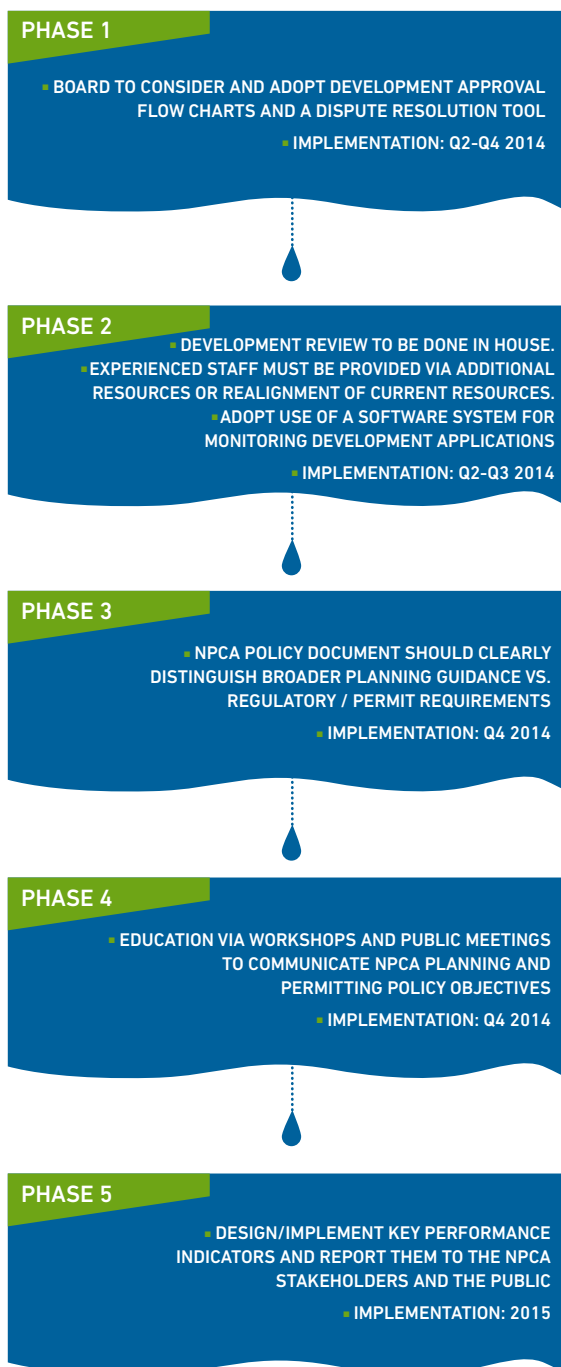
PHASE 4:

- Education via workshops and public meetings to communicate NPCA planning and permitting policy and objectives. (Implementation: Q4 2014)
- Advise stakeholders about the roles of NPCA permitting procedures. (Implementation: Q4 2014)

PHASE 5:

- Design/implement key performance indicators and report them to the NPCA, key stakeholders and the public. (Implementation: 2015)

"To improve is to change; to be perfect is to change often".
WINSTON CHURCHILL



"If there is no struggle, there is no progress".
FREDERICK DOUGLASS

IMPROVED CAPACITY FOR MANAGING ASSETS & LAND PROGRAM

PHASE 1:

- Initiate Board approval process for recommended new land management criteria in consultation with Community Liaison Advisory Committee (CLAC).

NEW ACQUISITION CRITERIA

The criteria for land acquisition should be reviewed and updated based on the following objectives:

1. Is the property outside the urban area?
2. Is the property already protected through legislation (e.g. Provincially Significant Wetland)?
3. Are there other organizations that may be more appropriate recipients of the property?
4. Is acquisition the only means by which the land can be preserved and protected?
5. Is the acquisition clearly within the statutory mandate of the NPCA?
6. What are the long-term capital and operating costs associated with the property?
(Implementation: Q3 2014)

PHASE 2:

- Conduct review of current NPCA land holdings to determine properties that meet/fail to meet new land acquisition and management criteria.
- Properties outside acquisition criteria should be flagged for long-term management solutions – including management, acquisition, transfer, and partnership.
(Implementation: Q4 2014)

PHASE 3:

- Develop GIS mapping of candidate properties for land management. Appendix for land acquisition strategy & guide for establishing priority sites. (Implementation: Q4 2014)

PHASE 4:

- Execute comprehensive condition rating on complete inventory of NPCA assets.
- Establish required reserve contributions based on overall asset replacement plan. (Implementation: 2015)

PHASE 5:

- Asset management plan based on "first to worst" rankings. Focus on top 5 priorities. Integrate with capital budget.
(Implementation: 2015)

PHASE 1

- INITIATE BOARD APPROVAL FOR RECOMMENDED NEW LAND MANAGEMENT CRITERIA IN CONSULTATION WITH THE COMMUNITY LIAISON ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q3 2014

PHASE 2

- CONDUCT REVIEW OF CURRENT NPCA LAND HOLDINGS TO DETERMINE PROPERTIES THAT MEET/FAIL NEW MANAGEMENT CRITERIA
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q4 2014

PHASE 3

- DEVELOP GIS MAPPING OF CANDIDATE PROPERTIES FOR LAND MANAGEMENT
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q4 2014

PHASE 4

- EXECUTE COMPREHENSIVE CONDITION RATING ON COMPLETE INVENTORY OF NPCA ASSETS.
- ESTABLISH REQUIRED RESERVE CONTRIBUTIONS BASED ON OVERALL ASSET REPLACEMENT PLAN
- IMPLEMENTATION: 2015

PHASE 5

- ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN BASED ON "FIRST TO WORST" RANKINGS
- IMPLEMENTATION: 2015

*"Leave the beaten track behind occasionally and dive into the woods.
Every time you do you will be certain to find something you have never seen before."*
ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL

TRANSPARENT GOVERNANCE & ENHANCED ACCOUNTABILITY

PHASE 1:

- Review established governance processes and develop improved public transparency – provide easily accessible information about board appointment process.
- Provide board profile page on website to include but not limited to photograph, conservation training/employment or relevant education, personal interests in conservation.
- Implement board member event participation tracking tool for annual reporting. (Implementation: Q3 2014)

PHASE 2:

- Expand public participation to support NPCA Governance via establishment of a Community Liaison Advisory Committee (environment, agriculture, landowners, development, industry, volunteer/user sectors).
- Improve NPCA profile and accountability to municipal governments by providing ongoing quarterly briefings to watershed member municipalities and local councils on activities and key issues being addressed by NPCA. (Implementation: Q3 2014)

PHASE 3:

- Design and implement business planning based on core lines of business and key performance indicators and vet through board and newly created community liaison groups.
- Create long range business plan and redesign NPCA operating and capital budget process and accounting structures to reflect real programming and staffing deployment. Link budgets to key performance indicators.
- PSAB compliant capital project reporting. (Implementation: Q4 2014)

PHASE 4:

- Implement code of conduct to satisfy legislative requirements.
- Develop and implement a workplace satisfaction survey and publish annual results.
- Develop an employee recognition program and review annually.
- Develop and implement a performance review process for CAO and directors to include personal growth development. (Implementation: Q2 2014 – Q4 2015)

PHASE 1

- IMPLEMENT IMPROVED ON-LINE GOVERNANCE TRANSPARENCY TOOLS SUGGESTED BY WORKING GROUP
- ESTABLISH STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUPS
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q3 2014

PHASE 2

- IMPROVE NPCA PROFILE AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO WATERSHED MUNICIPAL COUNCILS
- PROMOTE BOARD MEMBER PARTICIPATION AT NPCA EVENTS
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q3 2014

PHASE 3

- ESTABLISH LONG RANGE BUSINESS PLAN AND REDESIGN
- BUDGET PROCESS STRUCTURES TO REFLECT CURRENT OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGETS
- PSAB COMPLIANT CAPITAL PROJECT REPORTING
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q4 2014

PHASE 4

- IMPLEMENT CODE OF CONDUCT TO MEET LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS
- EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM
- PERFORMANCE AND PERSONAL GROWTH DEVELOPMENT FOR SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM
- IMPLEMENTATION: Q2 2014 - Q4 2015



EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS & PUBLIC

PHASE 1:

- Initiate a corporate culture of effective two-way communication; encourage employee participation in contributing towards the Board's aims and objectives. (Implementation: Q2, 2014)
- Develop corporate conceptual marketing and communications materials and budget for all NPCA's programs and initiatives to ensure consistency of messaging priorities. (Implementation: Q3 2014)
- Create NPCA identity standards manual and provide training to ensure corporate protocol is followed including; style and readability of communications materials. (Implementation: Q3 2014)

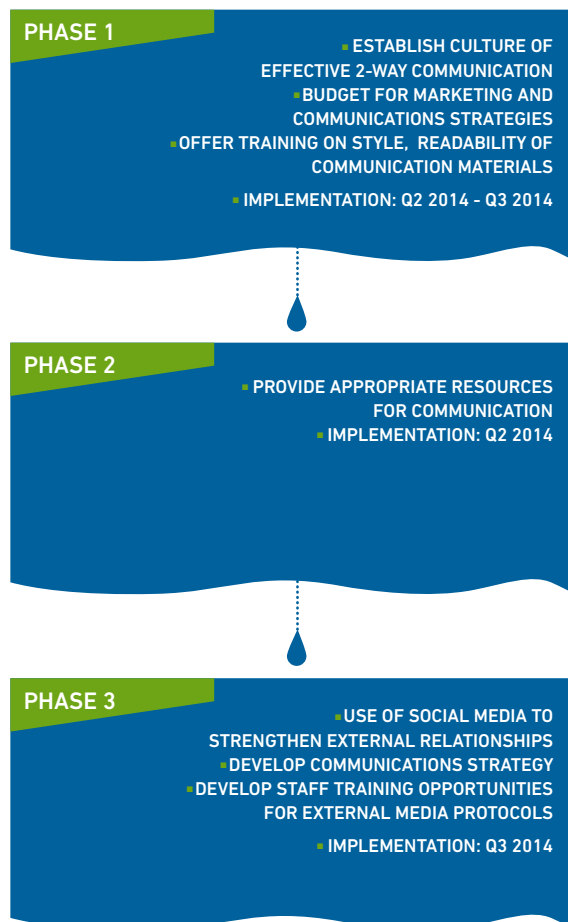
PHASE 2:

- Provide appropriate level of resources for communication. (Implementation: Q2 2014)

PHASE 3:

- Use social media opportunities to strengthen connections and encourage information sharing – use opportunities and look for ways to get more for less. Set clear, realistic and measurable goals.
- Identify potential new partners, funders and allies. Encourage commitment and involvement.
- Develop clear and concise communications strategy and time lines outlining the Board's objectives as to the roles and services performed by NPCA.
- Develop staff training opportunities for external communication and media protocols. (Implementation: Q3 2014)

"There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth. We are all crew."
MARSHALL MCLUHAN



*"Every creature is better alive than dead, men and moose and pine trees,
and he who understands it aright will rather preserve its life than destroy it.*
HENRY DAVID THOREAU



NIAGARA PENINSULA
CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY

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