

# Niagara River Ramsar Designation – Canada

**Jocelyn Baker:** Canadian Co-Chair, Niagara River Binational Ramsar Designation Steering Committee

**Jajeon Rose-Burney:** U.S. Co-Chair, Niagara River Binational Ramsar Designation Steering Committee

**Kerry Mitchell:** U.S. Member, Niagara River Binational Ramsar Designation Steering Committee

# Overview

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- Who we are
- Why we are here today
- What is Ramsar
- Why Ramsar for the Niagara River
- Path moving forward



# Why Are We Here Today?



On October 3, 2019 the U.S. portion of the Niagara River was officially designated as a Wetland of International Importance: a Ramsar site.

When Canada achieves Ramsar designation, the 2 sides will join, forming the first transboundary Ramsar site in all the America's

# Why Are We Here Today?

We are seeking Niagara Regions endorsement for Niagara River Ramsar Designation



**Ramsar** is a Global Convention for action on the wise use conservation of water-based ecosystems: Wetlands of International Importance

Think lands that are wet for global cultural interpretation





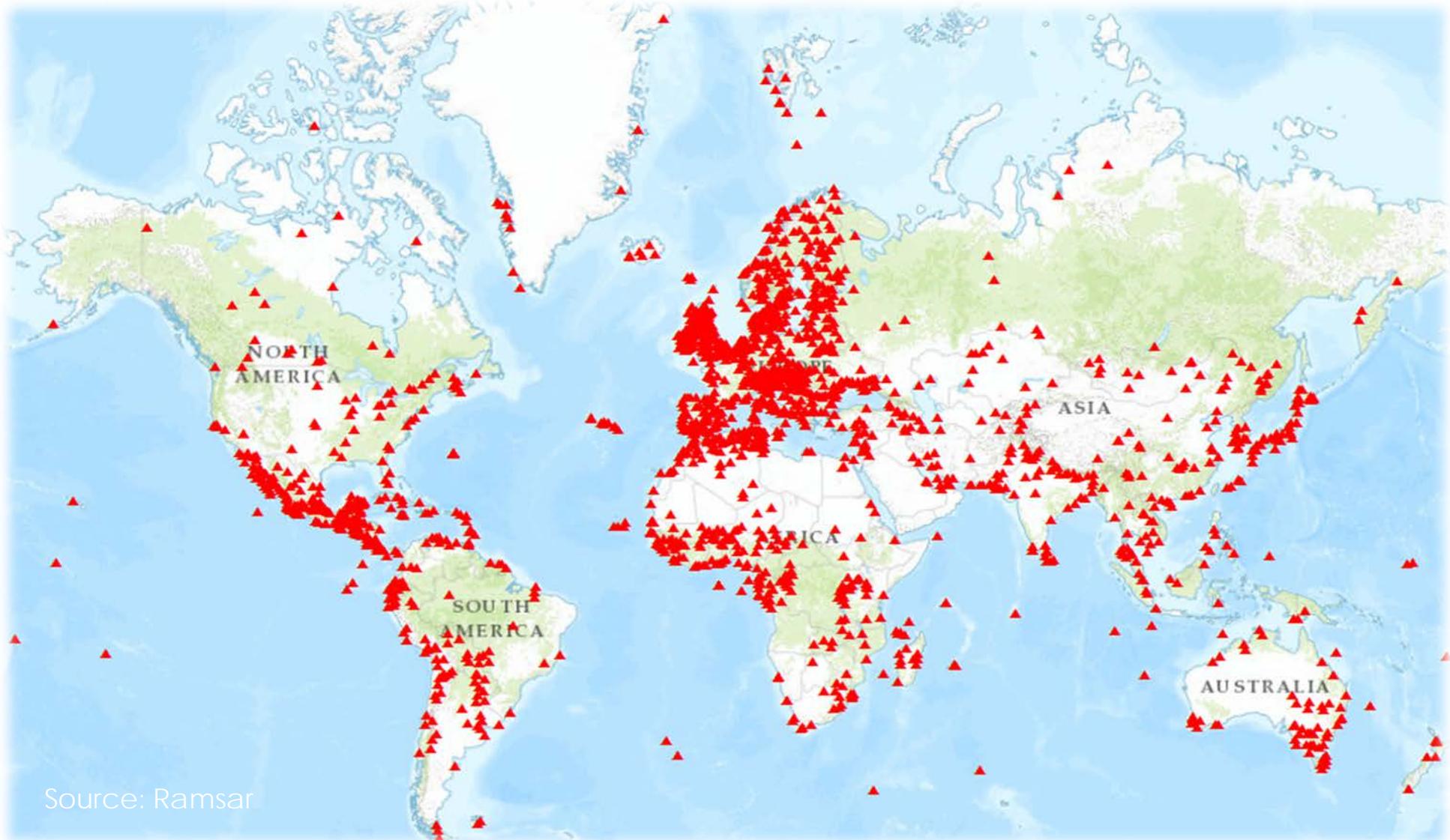
# Ramsar is:

- Voluntary Convention signed by 171 countries
- Global biodiversity recognition of water-based systems
- Goal to strengthen global conservation and collaboration

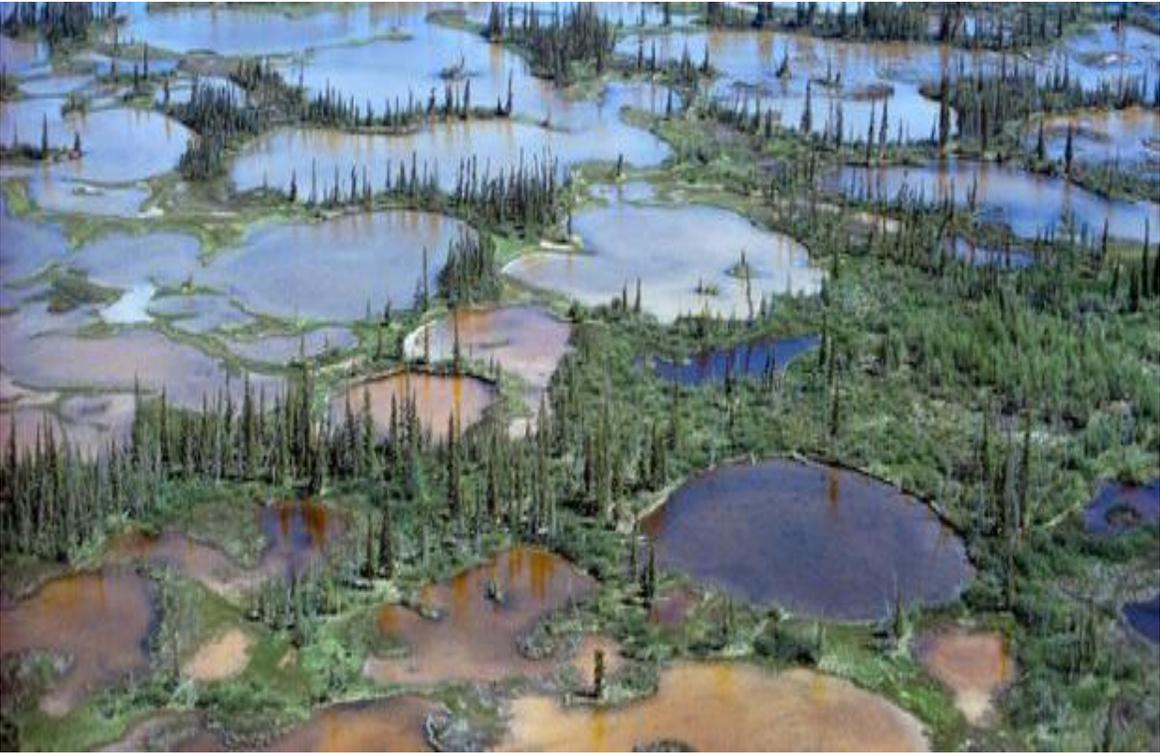


171 member nations, over 25 million ha on 2,391 sites

Ramsar sites form the world's largest network of globally important areas



# Canadian Ramsar Sites



Source: Globe and Mail / Richard Seeley



Source: Modified from NATO

**Brock**  
University

# Environmental Sustainability Research Centre

[brocku.ca/esrc](http://brocku.ca/esrc)



**Julia Baird**

Post-doctoral associate  
with Brock's Environmental  
Sustainability Research Centre.

Goal: Analyze social  
networks that have a stake  
in sustainability issues.  
Protect our greatest  
resource — water.



# Canadian Boundary



# Lake Ontario

# U.S. Boundary



## Legend

-  Ramsar Site Boundary
-  Water (within boundary)
-  Greenspace (within boundary)



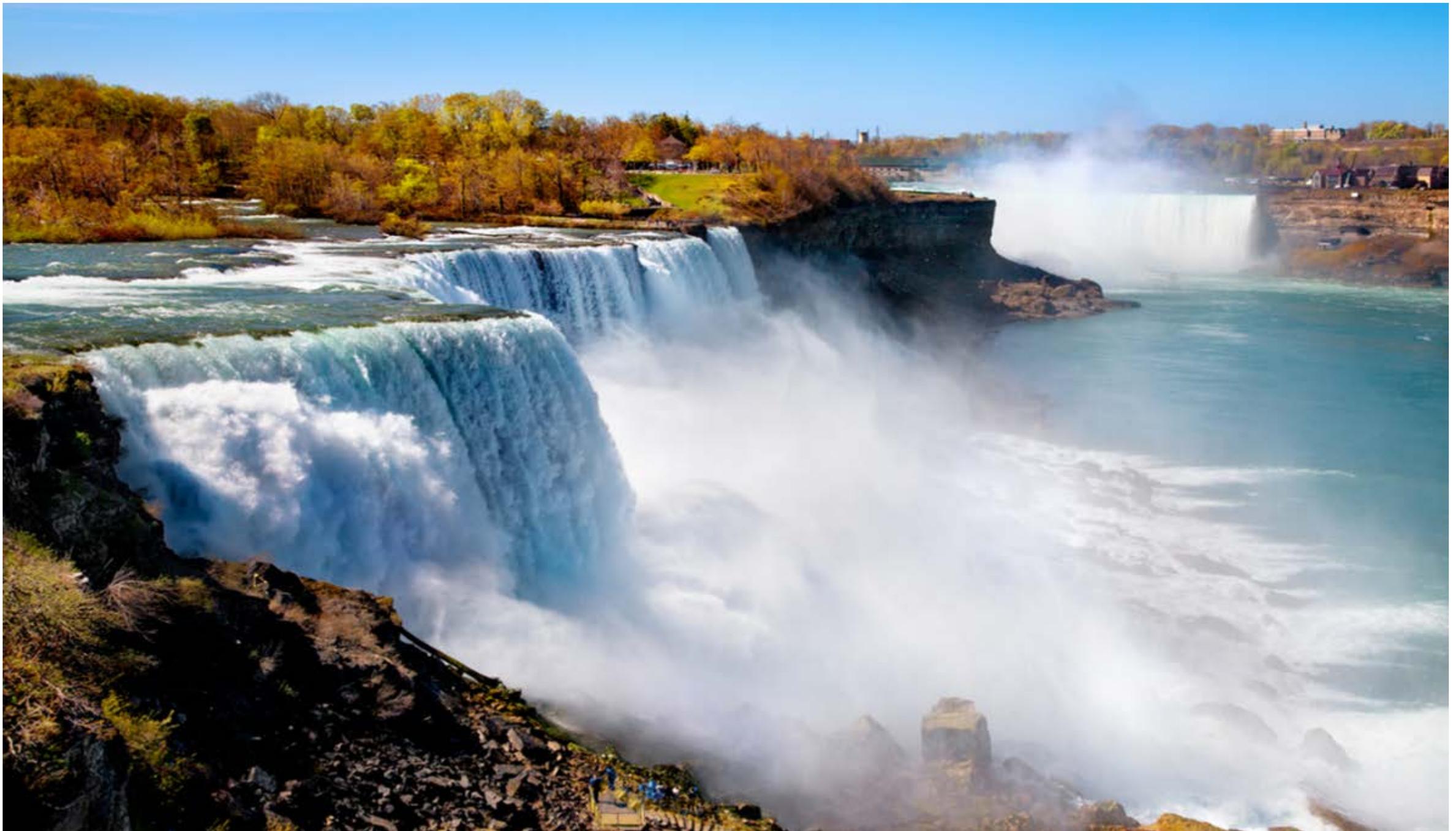
0 3.5 7 Miles

Lake Erie

# Ramsar Designation Criteria – one criteria needed to qualify

- 1. Is representative, rare, or unique.**
2. Supports vulnerable, endangered or threatened species.
3. Supports keystone or endemic species.
4. Supports species at a critical stage in their life cycles.
5. Supports 20,000 or more waterbirds.
6. Supports 1% of the individuals global population of waterbird.
7. Supports a significant proportion of indigenous fish species.
8. An important food source, spawning area, or migration area for fish.
9. Supports 1% of the individuals population of a non-avian species.

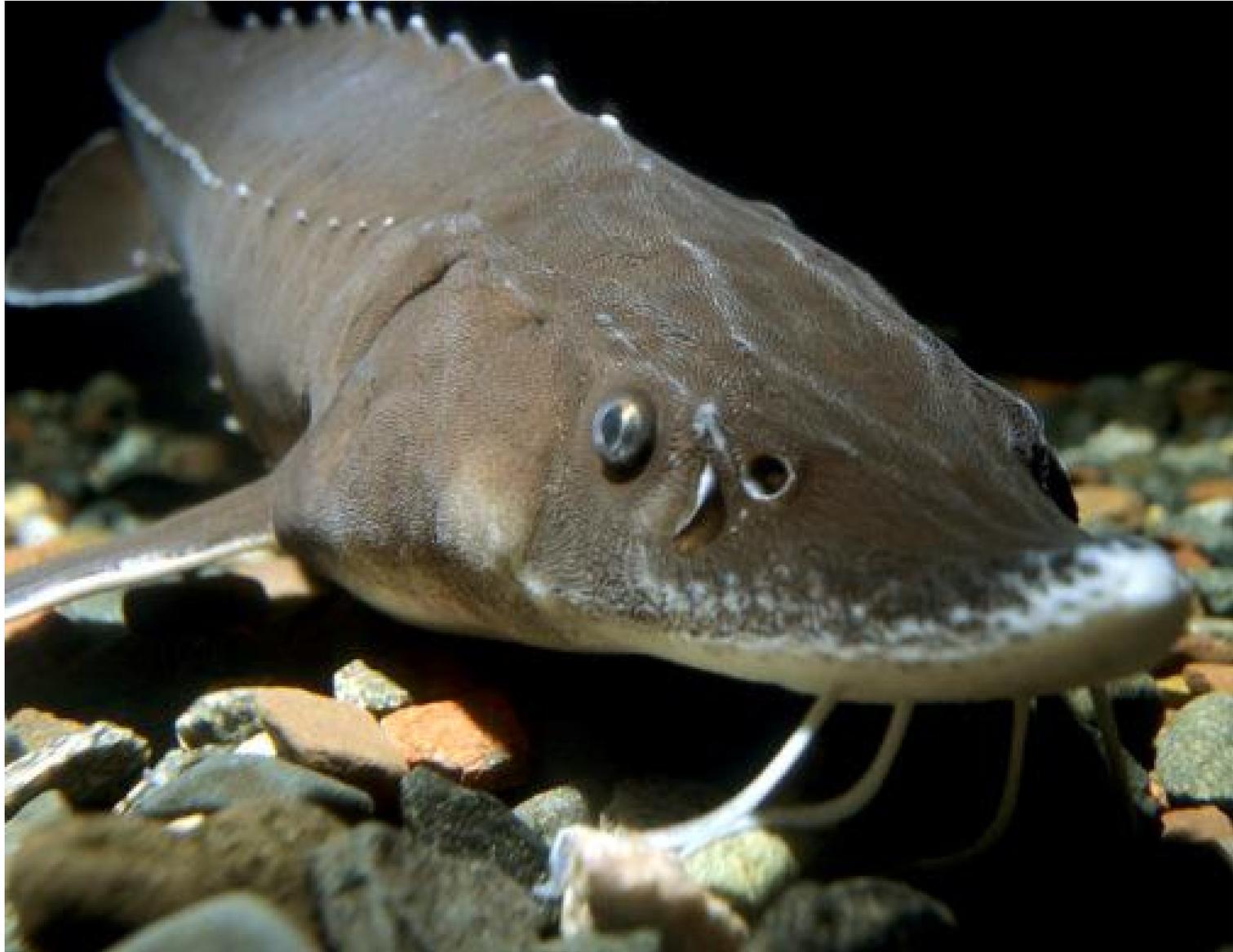




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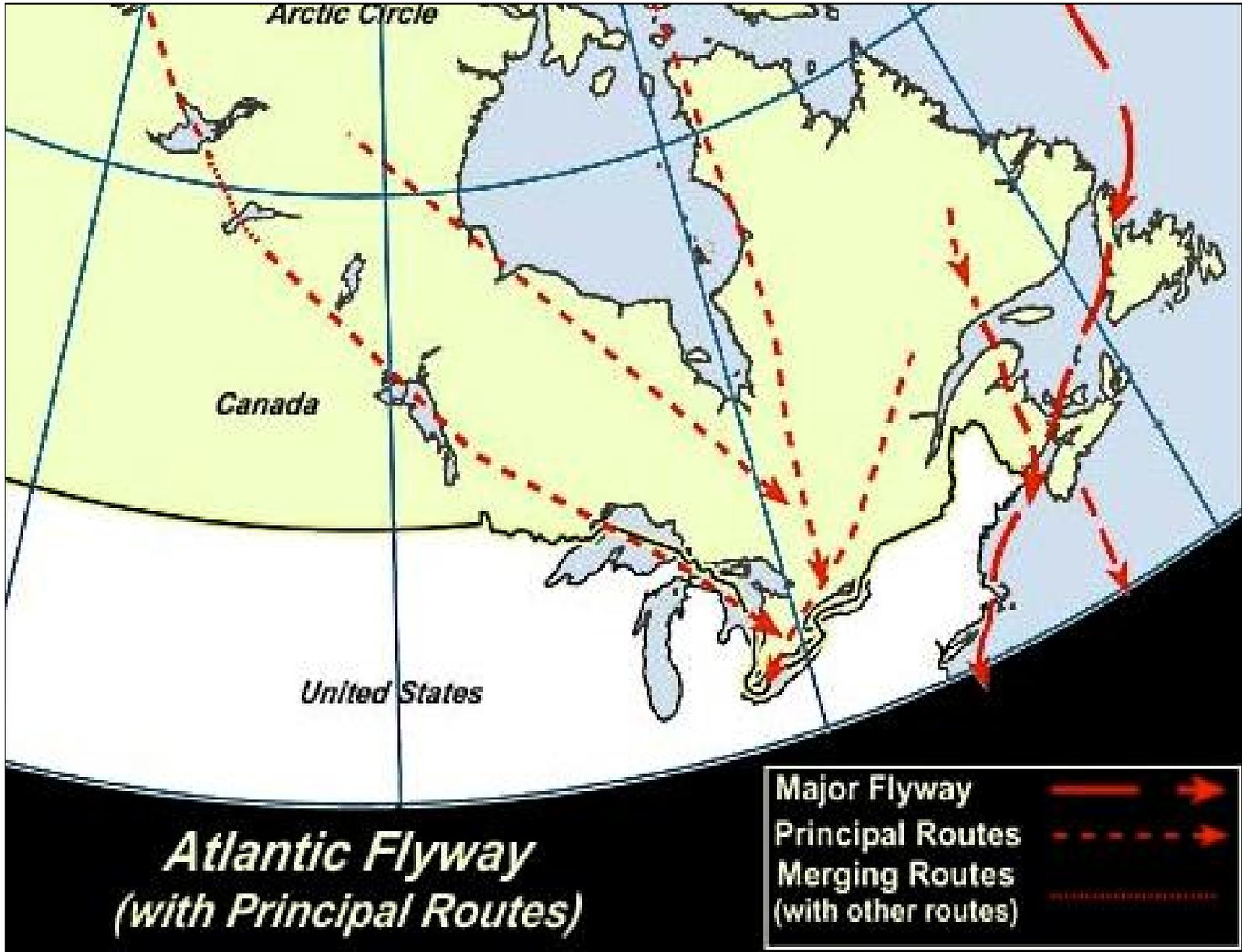




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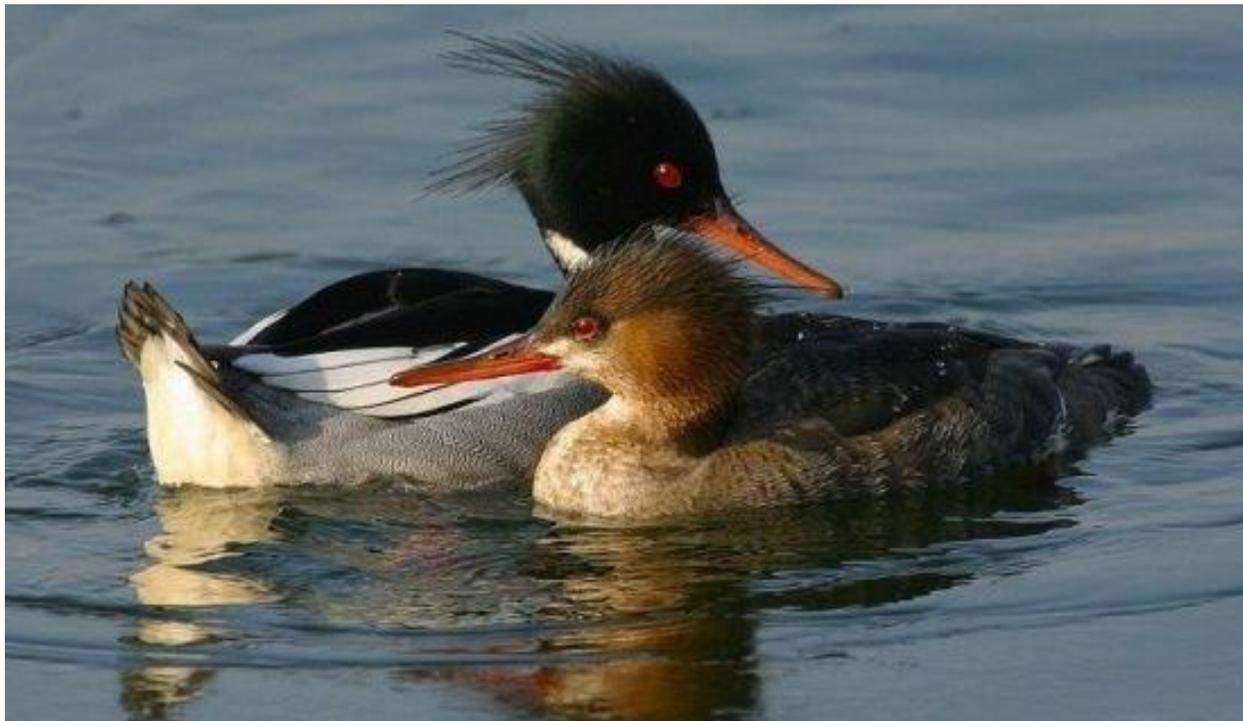




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Source: Buffalo News

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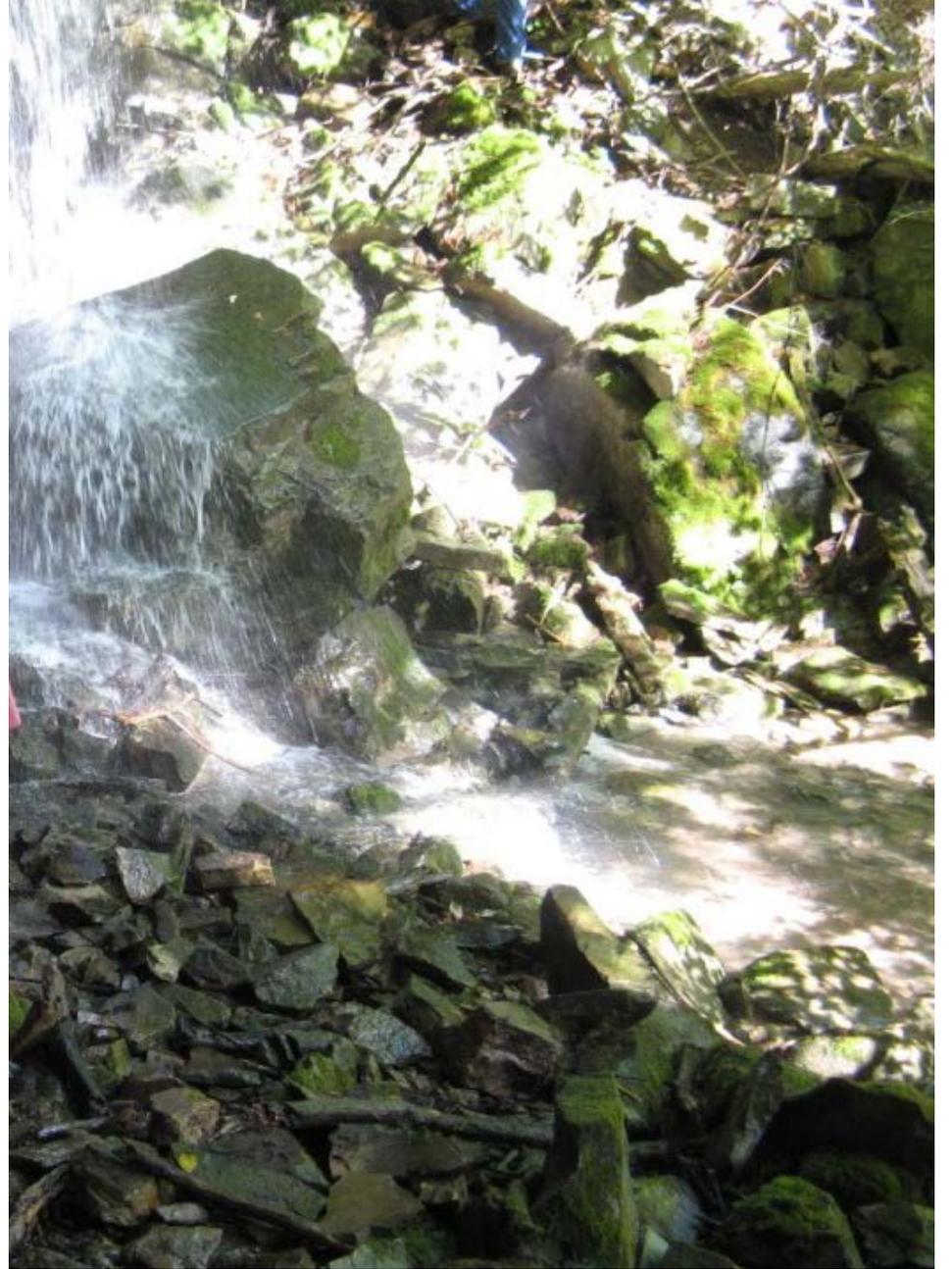




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Niagara Plant Group 14,000 Niagara Parkway, RR#1, Niagara on the Lake, Ontario, L0G 1J0 Tel: (905) 357-0322 Fax: (905) 357-6954

December 16, 2014

Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority  
250 Thorold Road West 3rd Floor  
Welland, ON L3C 3W2

Attention: Ms. Jocelyn Baker  
Supervisor, Watershed Restoration Watershed Management

Dear Ms. Baker;  
Re: Designation of the Niagara River Corridor as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance

Ontario Power Generation that provides over 50% of nuclear generating stations generating stations. In Ni Generating Stations using Upper Niagara River and Lower Niagara River.

The use of the water on the between Canada and The Joint Commission (JC). The land that OPG occupies adjacent to the Niagara River is leased from the Niagara Parks Commission.

As a user of the water, OPG has no objection to the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority seeking designation of the Niagara River Corridor as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance.

Sincerely,



Dean Norton  
Public Affairs and Property Management Advisor

# Feasibility

As a user of the water, OPG has no objection to the steering committee seeking designation of the Niagara River Corridor as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance



ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

JOHN R. KOELMEL  
Chairman

GIL C. QUINONES  
President and Chief Executive Officer

# Feasibility

Mr. Daniel M. Ashe  
Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
1849 C Street NW, Room 3358  
Washington, DC 20006

Re: Designation

United States

The Power  
producing  
Project located

The Niagara  
million kilowatts

the Robert Moses Niagara Power Plant, and the Lewiston Pump-Generating Plant. The project diverts water from the Niagara River and conveys it through conduits under the City of Niagara Falls to the Lewiston project. Water is either pumped into a reservoir for future use or flows through electric generating stations on its way into the lower Niagara River.

The use of the  
States and is  
the land immediately

As a user of  
designation

Sincerely,

Lou Paonessa  
NYPA Community Affairs Director WNY

cc: Krishna K. Roy, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Branch Chief of the Global Program  
Jajeen Rose-Burney, U.S. Chair, Niagara Corridor Ramsar Site Steering Committee

The use of the water on the Niagara River is governed by a Boundary Waters Treaty between Canada and the United States and is administered by the International Joint Commission (IJC). NYPA and the State of New York own most of the land immediately along the gorge and the river shore.

As a user of the water, NYPA has no objection to the steering committee seeking designation of the Niagara River Corridor as a Ramsar Wetland of International Importance

# What a Ramsar Designation Won't Do:

- Ensure environmental protection, Ramsar designation will not bring regulation
- Restrict users rights, including the ability to draw water for irrigation (NOTL)
- The Ramsar Convention is a voluntary framework, it will not stop or prevent economic development projects (Thundering Waters)
- It does not “lock in” an administrative body (nominator) or any other endorsing partner. Endorsements can be reconsidered at anytime with no penalty.



# Does not impact development project example: Oak Hammock Marsh (Manitoba) – Ramsar Site (1987) & Ducks Unlimited Canada National Office

bill so, and strive to strengthen the protection of not only Oak Hammock Marsh, but all of our wildlife management areas.

\* (1330)

In addition, in light of what was said before. That was my presentation as I prepared it for last week Thursday, but in light of comments made during Thursday's and Tuesday's public hearings and recent news articles, I would like to address this committee on several other points.

First of all on Tuesday, Mr. Enns asked Alison Elliott, President of the Manitoba Naturalists Society, whether or not improved interpretive facilities would be of benefit to Oak Hammock Marsh. For the record, I would like it to be known that I have worked for the Department of Natural Resources as a naturalist at Oak Hammock Marsh for two seasons. During that time, it was abundantly clear that the interpretive value of Oak Hammock lay in its unstructured nature. Put simply, kids and adults do not want to spend time in buildings when they come to Oak Hammock. They just like roaming about absorbing what they can from the natural

announced upon the occasion of the third meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention at Regina, Saskatchewan in May 1987.

"Listing a wetlands site under the Convention entails certain conservation obligations. Development is not precluded at Ramsar sites, but contracting parties are obliged to promote the conservation of these areas and to provide information to the Ramsar Bureau if the ecological character of such a site has changed, is changing, or is likely to change as a result of technological developments, pollution or other human interference. (Art. 3 of the Convention). Procedures exist for such developments to be reviewed internationally by the member States to the treaty with a view to assisting the country concerned in maintaining the ecological character of the site.

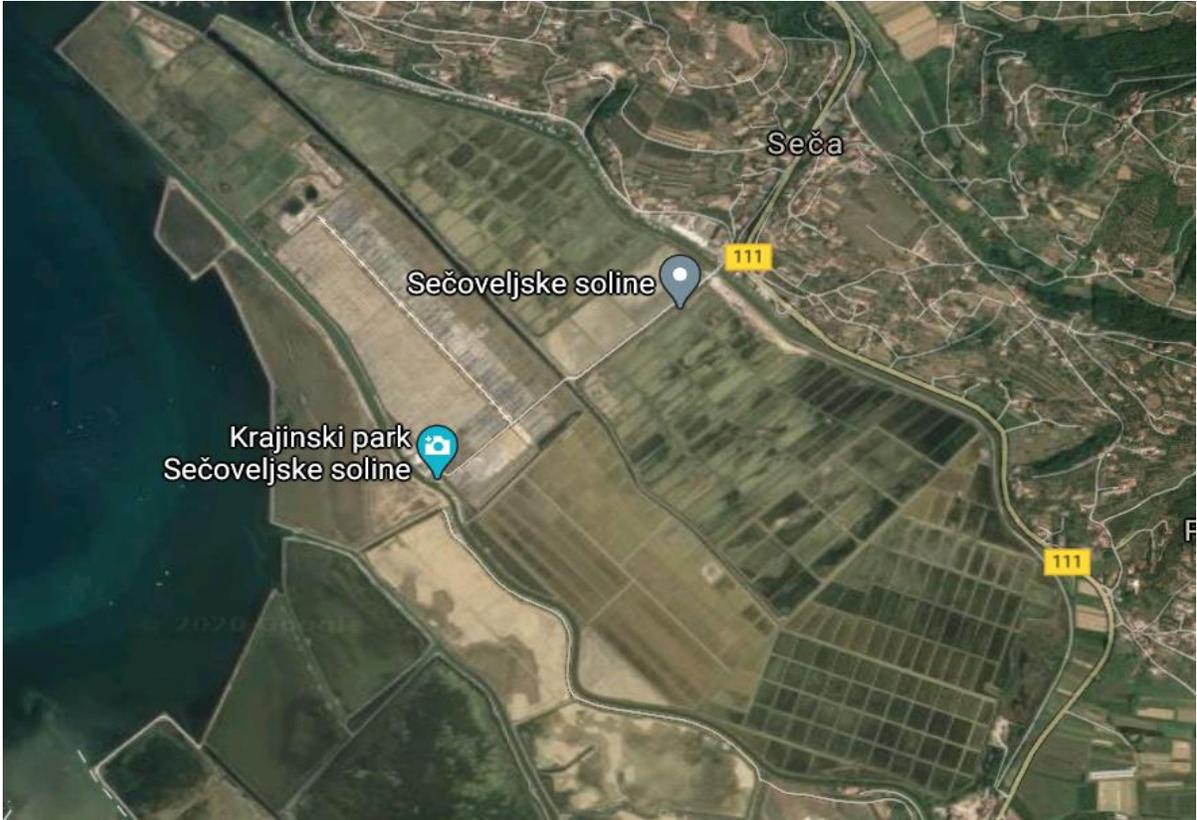
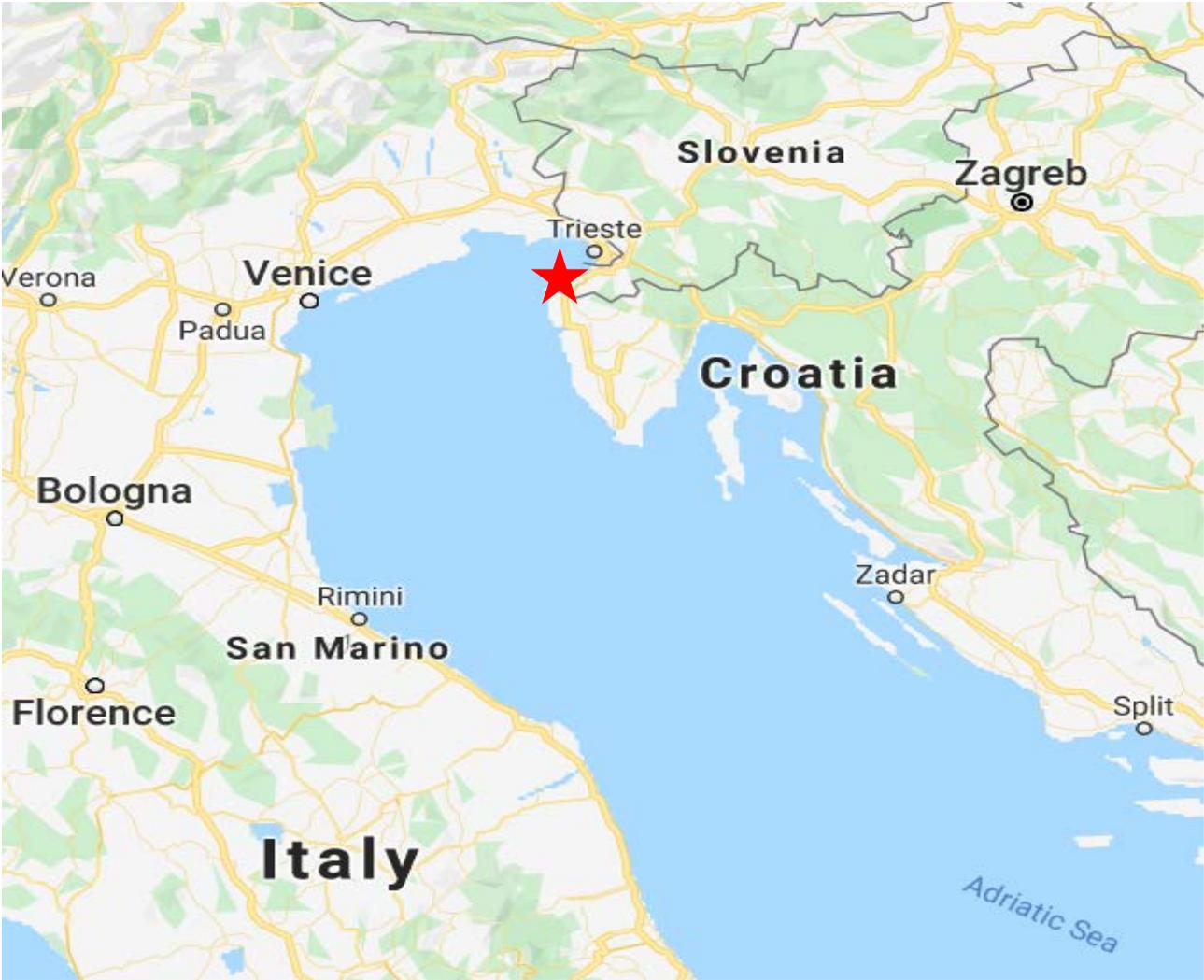
"It should also be noted that the Convention provides the possibility for a country, in its urgent national interest, to delete or restrict the boundaries of a wetland it has included on the List. There have been some cases of boundary restrictions at



# What will a Ramsar Designation do?

- Promote conservation through international cooperation
- Increase community pride through globally recognized level of significance
- Increase ecotourism (ornithologists Ramsar site network)
- Increase funding for tourism, economic development & resource management
- Increase marketing opportunities linked to site activities, services, & products
- The use of the globally recognized Ramsar logo in branding and advertising





Secoveljske Soline Ramsar Site Slovenia (Salt Pans)



Sol je morje, ki ni moglo  
nazaj na nebo.

## SOLNI CVET

Nerafinirana, nemleta, nejodirana morska sol

Neto: **125 g**

Proizvaja:

**SOLINE Pridelava soli d.o.o.**,  
Seča 115, 6320 Portorož,  
Slovenija, EU

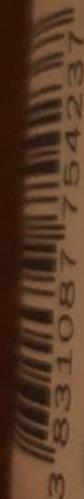
Uporabno najmanj do datuma  
odtisnjene na dnu embalaže.  
Št. lot je odtisnjena na dnu  
embalaže.

Hraniti na suhem.

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[www.kpss.si](http://www.kpss.si)

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Parco Naturale delle Saline di Sicciole



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# QUILL LAKES WATER CRISIS RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION

Quills Lakes, Saskatchewan: Ramsar Site 1987



© Branimir Gjetvaj ~ [www.branimirphoto.com](http://www.branimirphoto.com)





1984

Google time-lapse



1994

Google time-lapse



2007

Google time-lapse



2011

Google time-lapse



2014

Google time-lapse



2018

Google time-lapse

# QUILL LAKES WATER CRISIS RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION





# Where is Canada in the Niagara River designation process?

## Selection of a site nominator:

- In 2015, the Niagara Parks Commission Board of Directors approved the site nominator role in principal pending an acceptable legal review which is completed.

## Completion of a Canadian nomination package:

- Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) species lists are all completed.
- Engagement with Indigenous partners, stakeholders and the community is on-going
- Endorsement have been received from Ontario Power Generation, the City of Niagara Falls (Ontario), Town of Fort Erie, & GLSLCI, NPCA, NC, NRC, Land Care Niagara, various conservation groups.
- Endorsements are required from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake, the Regional Municipality of Niagara.

The Ramsar Convention has been operating as the most successful international conservation collaboration for 50 years (2021)







The Niagara River above Niagara Falls -photo jburney

## GreenWatch: Important Niagara River Ramsar meeting this Tuesday



by Jay Burney / Mar. 19, 2016 4pm EST

### Endorsement from local/ state natural resource agency

- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

### Endorsement from Congress representing area

- Congressman Brian Higgins

### Endorsement from the landowners:

- New York Power Authority
- City of Niagara Falls
- City of Buffalo
- Erie County
- Town of Grand Island
- Village of Lewiston
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, & Historic
- City of Tonawanda
- City of North Tonawanda
- Town of Tonawanda
- Western New York Land Conservancy

## Endorsements from local/ state stakeholders

- Audubon New York / Buffalo Audubon Society
- Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy
- Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper
- Buffalo Society of Natural Resources
- Friends of Times Beach Nature Preserve
- Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative
- Lake Erie Watershed Protection Alliance
- New York State Senator Chris Jacobs
- New York State Assemblyman Sean Ryan
- Niagara Global Tourism Initiative
- Sierra Club Niagara Group
- Visit Buffalo Niagara

## Endorsements from County & Municipality:

- City of Niagara Falls
- City of Buffalo
- Erie County
- Town of Grand Island
- Town of Lewiston
- Village of Lewiston
- City of Tonawanda
- City of North Tonawanda
- Town of Tonawanda
- Niagara County
- Town of Niagara
- Town of Porter
- Town of Wheatfield
- Village of Youngstown





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## NIAGARA RIVER CORRIDOR RECOGNIZED AS 40TH WETLAND OF INTERNATIONAL IMPORTANCE BY THE UNITED STATES



# Global Opportunity for the entire Niagara River Community



Local Opportunity to **Change** the Legacy and **Be** the legacy

# Thank you

## Next Steps

Complete engagement requirements  
and submit final paperwork to ECCC  
Then celebrate!!!

