
MEMORANDUM

PDS-C 11-2020

Subject: Ramsar Request for Endorsement

Date: Wednesday, September 9, 2020

To: Planning and Economic Development Committee

From: Erik Acs, Manager of Community Planning

The purpose of this memo is to provide brief context related to the presentation at the September 9, 2020, Planning & Economic Development Committee regarding a request for the Region to consider the Ramsar designation.

The Ramsar Convention is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands. A designation for the Niagara River to become a Ramsar site of international importance is being sought by U.S. and Canadian agencies in order to recognize the importance of the Niagara River's contribution to the natural environment.

- The request for a Ramsar endorsement on the Niagara River was first received by Regional Council in October of 2014 (PDS 39-2014).
- Staff provided a follow up report in 2015 (PDS 36-2015), which gave additional information on the designation and included a presentation from the Niagara River Ramsar Designation Bi-National Steering Committee.
- Ultimately, Regional Council held off on an endorsement decision as several local municipalities had yet to discuss the endorsement or provide local support.
- In June of 2020, the Region received correspondence from the Canadian Co-Chair of the Niagara River Ramsar Designation Bi-National Steering Committee, indicating the group has been working on satisfying the remaining designation requirements for Canada, which includes support from the Niagara Region.

A delegation request has been made by the Niagara River Ramsar Designation Bi-National Steering Committee, which will provide an update on their request for endorsement.

Following the presentation, it is suggested that Council refer the matter to Regional staff in order to solicit current stakeholder input prior to making a decision on its endorsement of the Ramsar designation.

Respectfully submitted and signed by

Erik Acs, MCIP, RPP
Manager of Community Planning