

## **Appendix E: Additional Feedback**

- E-mails and online submissions (61)
- Letters from Organizations and Groups
  - Grape Growers of Ontario
  - Niagara Federation of Agriculture
  - Ontario Tender Fruit Growers
  - Niagara Home Builders' Association
  - Joint Letter from Environmental Groups

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** 'lizcdn@yahoo.com'  
**Cc:** Acs, Erik; Heyworth, David; Giles, Doug; Making Our Mark  
**Subject:** FW: Update on NHS as part of OP Review

Hi Liz,

I am happy to provide an update on our natural environment work for the new Niagara Official Plan -

I was wondering if you could provide me with a brief update about where the team is at re. the Natural Heritage work for the OP.

We are currently on Phase 4 of the work program which is the identification and evaluation of options for regional-scale natural heritage and water resource systems. We are tentatively scheduled to present a staff report and consultants report to the Region's Planning and Economic Development Committee on July 15. Those reports will be available as part of the meeting's agenda package about 1-week in advance. I invite you to watch my presentation online. (Wednesday July 15, 1:00 pm – link available on the Region's website). Many of your questions below will be addressed in more detail through the Options report and presentation on the 15th.

In our staff report we are requesting direction from Regional Council to start the consultation process with the public and stakeholders. There will be opportunities to provide feedback on the various options we are looking at before a decision on the preferred NHS and WRS option is made.

I understand funding was received to help with mapping and data collection. When do you expect that work will be complete and a tentative map of an NHS available?

That is correct. We have partnered with the Greenbelt Foundation and NPCA and retained a consultant to update the ELC (ecological land classification) mapping region-wide. We hope to have that work done later in 2020. The ELC mapping is just one of the many layers that we need to complete the NHS mapping (which we intend to have completed in draft by about mid-2021). The Options report that we are presenting in July has some high-level and conceptual mapping which we use to illustrate the various options.

In reading the documents, It seems that you will be identifying 30 m buffers from identified natural features but not tentative linkages between them, is that correct?

No that is not correct. The 30m buffer is a requirement of certain key features in the Provincial Growth Plan NHS and Greenbelt Plan NHS. The Growth Plan NHS and Greenbelt Plan NHS also require significant number of 'linkages' across the Region which we will be implementing through the new Official Plan. In addition to this, the Options report that we are presenting in July looks at a range of options for the development of Regional linkages outside of the Provincial NHS's. We are considering different options for buffers as well.

Also, that at this stage, there is no plan to actually zone the mapped areas as NHS in the way that Halton has. Is that correct?

No that is not correct. "Zoning" is the responsibility of local municipalities through local zoning by-laws. Generally, the local Official Plans will need to conform with the Regional Official Plan and Provincial policy. Local zoning by-laws will then implement local Official Plan designations and policy.

Through the Regional Official Plan we are typically using either a "designation" or "overlay". The Options paper that we are presenting in July looks at several options and combinations of the use of designation and

overlay for the various components of the NHS. (You are correct that Halton currently has many parts of it system as a designation – although it is our understanding this is something that they have to look at again as the Province is now requiring that the agricultural system be ‘designated’ as well, and there are issues with overlap)

Furthermore, any features/buffers identified will be subject to "refinement" through developer funded ESRs as part of the development application process. Is that correct?

At this point we are still working to make a decision on the preferred option and direction for the NHS. We have not made any decisions on the refinement of features or buffers through the EIS process. That will come later in the process as we start to look at writing policies and updating our EIS guidelines.

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

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**From:** Liz B. <[lizcdn@yahoo.com](mailto:lizcdn@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2020 11:49 AM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <[makingourmark@niagararegion.ca](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Cc:** Giles, Doug <[Doug.Giles@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Doug.Giles@niagararegion.ca)>; Savage, Lindsey <[Lindsey.Savage@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Lindsey.Savage@niagararegion.ca)>; Costantini, Karen <[Karen.Costantini@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Karen.Costantini@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Subject:** Update on NHS as part of OP Review

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Dave:

I was wondering if you could provide me with a brief update about where the team is at re. the Natural Heritage work for the OP.

I understand funding was received to help with mapping and data collection. When do you expect that work will be complete and a tentative map of an NHS available?

In reading the documents, It seems that you will be identifying 30 m buffers from identified natural features but not tentative linkages between them, is that correct?

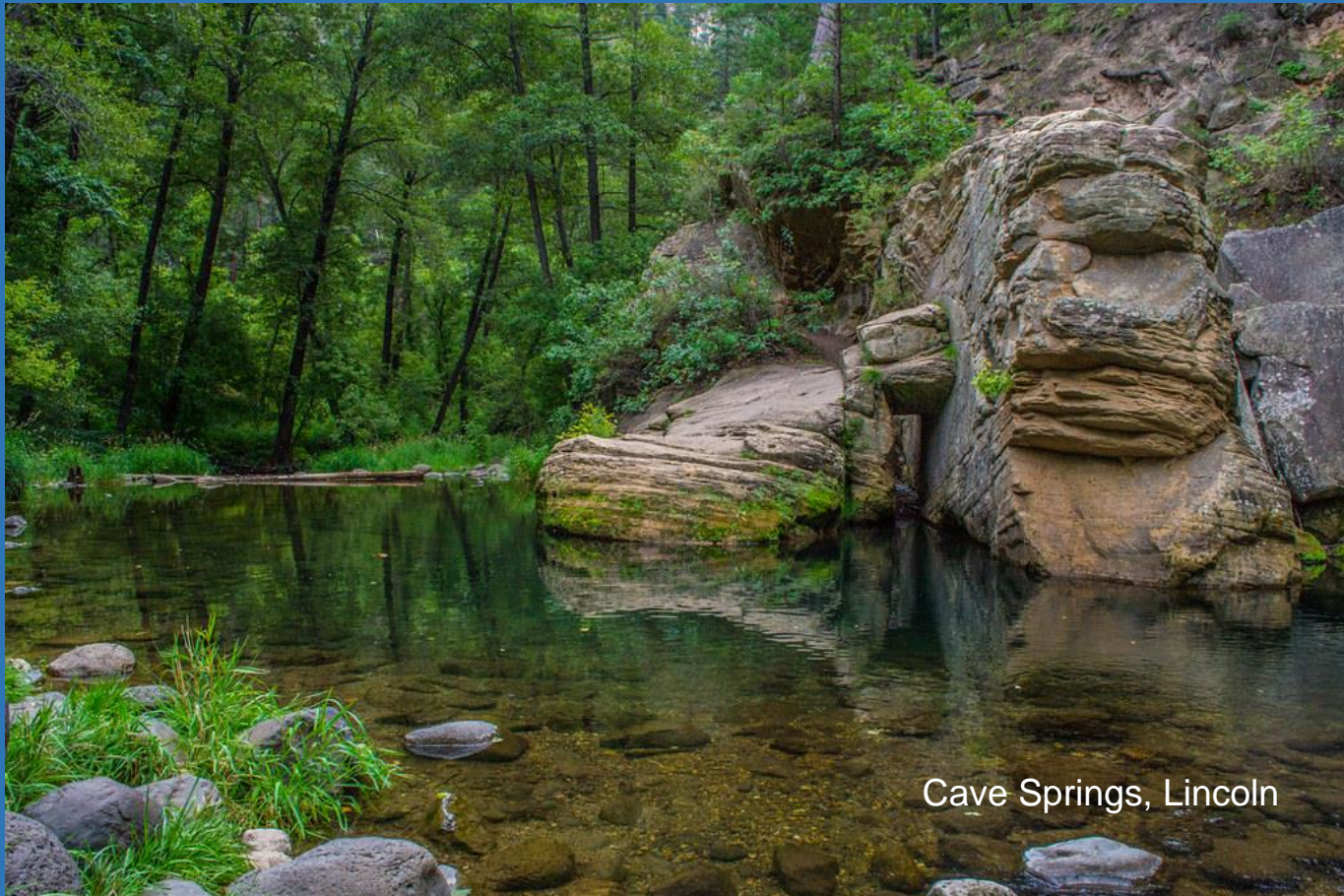
Also, that at this stage, there is no plan to actually zone the mapped areas as NHS in the way that Halton has. Is that correct?

Furthermore, any features/buffers identified will be subject to "refinement" through developer funded ESRs as part of the development application process. Is that correct?

Thanks for any information you can provide.

All the best,  
Liz Benneian

# Creating Niagara's Natural Heritage System

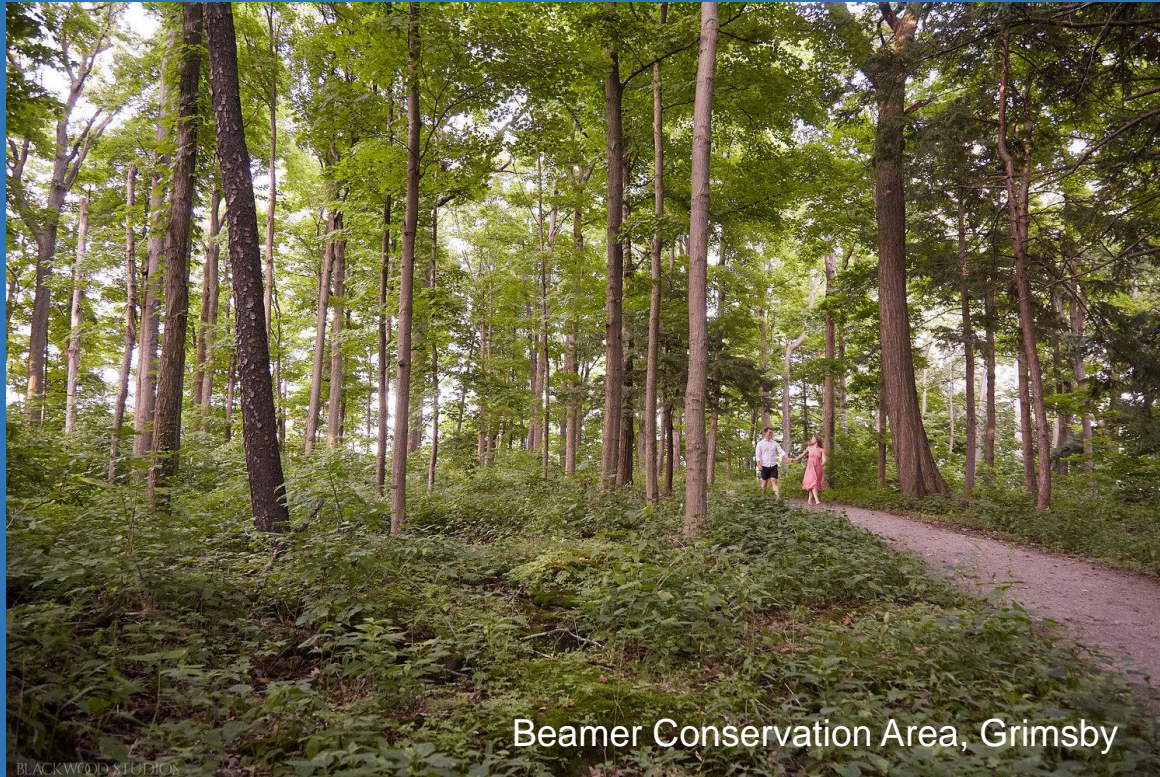


Cave Springs, Lincoln

*Liz Benneian*

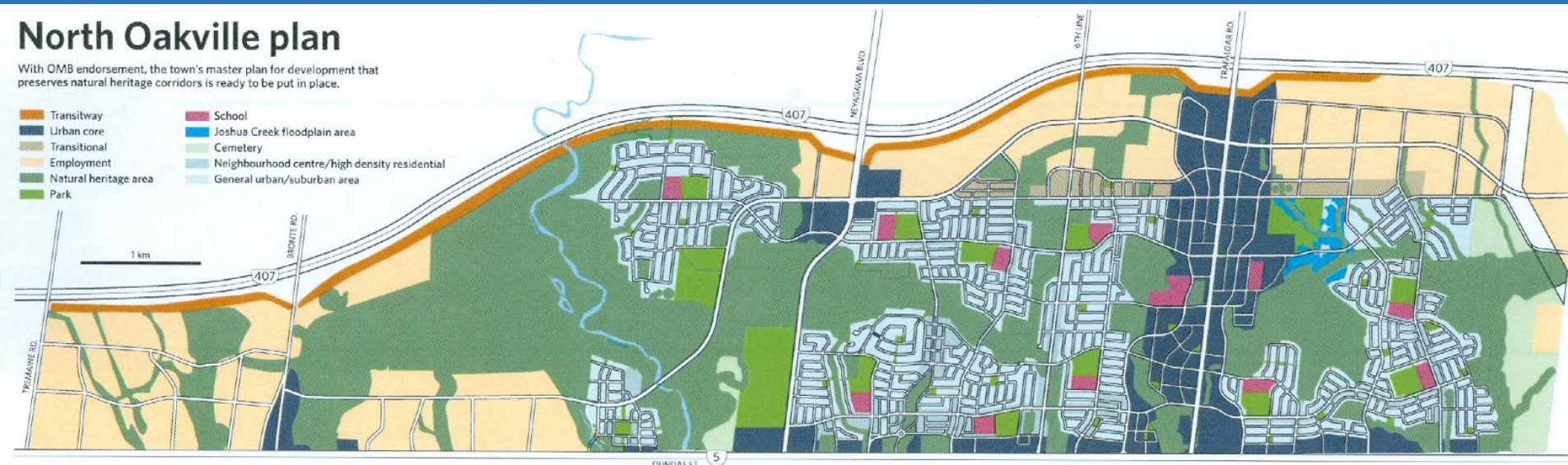


# Thank You For Taking A Natural Heritage System Approach



The decisions Council will make on what Natural Heritage System option to support may be the most important decision this Council makes — one that will either protect Niagara's natural legacy for future generations or lead to its inevitable loss.

# Oakville's Natural Heritage System



The dark green areas are the land designated as Natural Heritage System (25+% of the area).

The system preserves ecological integrity over the long-term and allows only passive human use.

The light green areas are neighbourhood parks and sports fields.

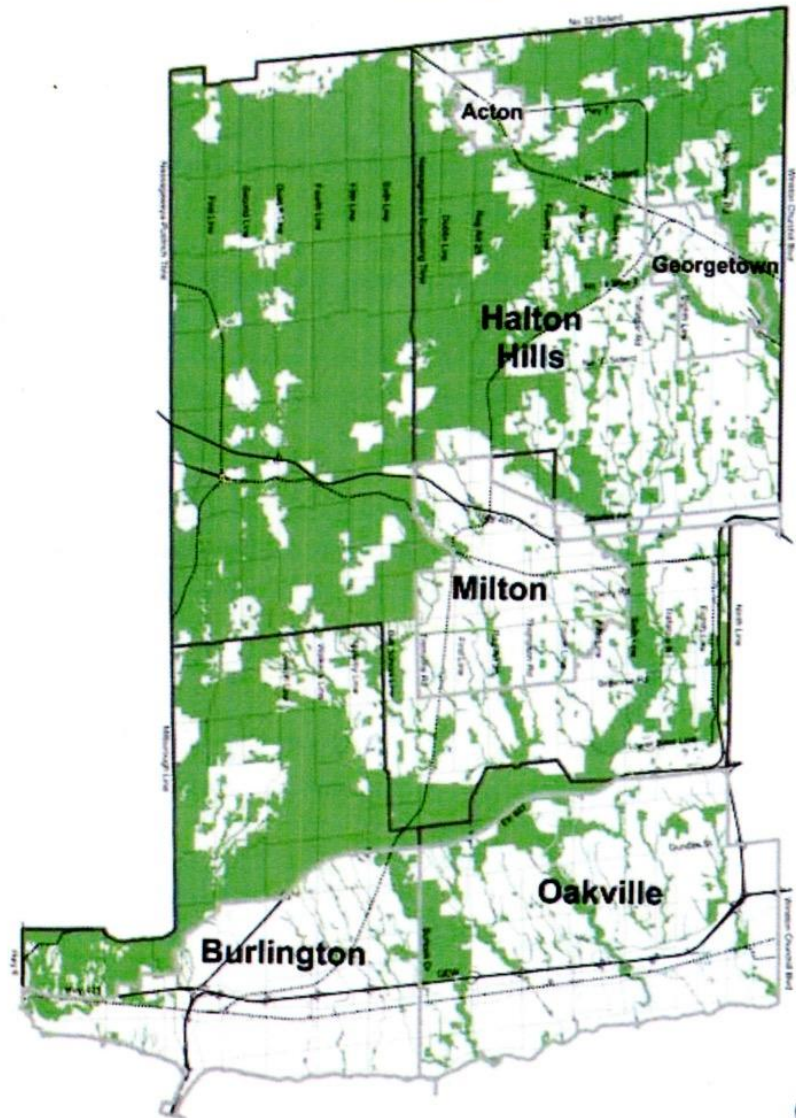


# Halton Region's Natural Heritage System

The plan protects 33% of Halton Region's land.

The system includes Greenbelt and Escarpment lands, woodlands, wetlands and floodplains, core and linkage enhancement areas and other natural areas as identified by municipalities.

Designating NHS does not preclude agricultural uses.



Natural Heritage System

Municipal Boundary

Urban Area

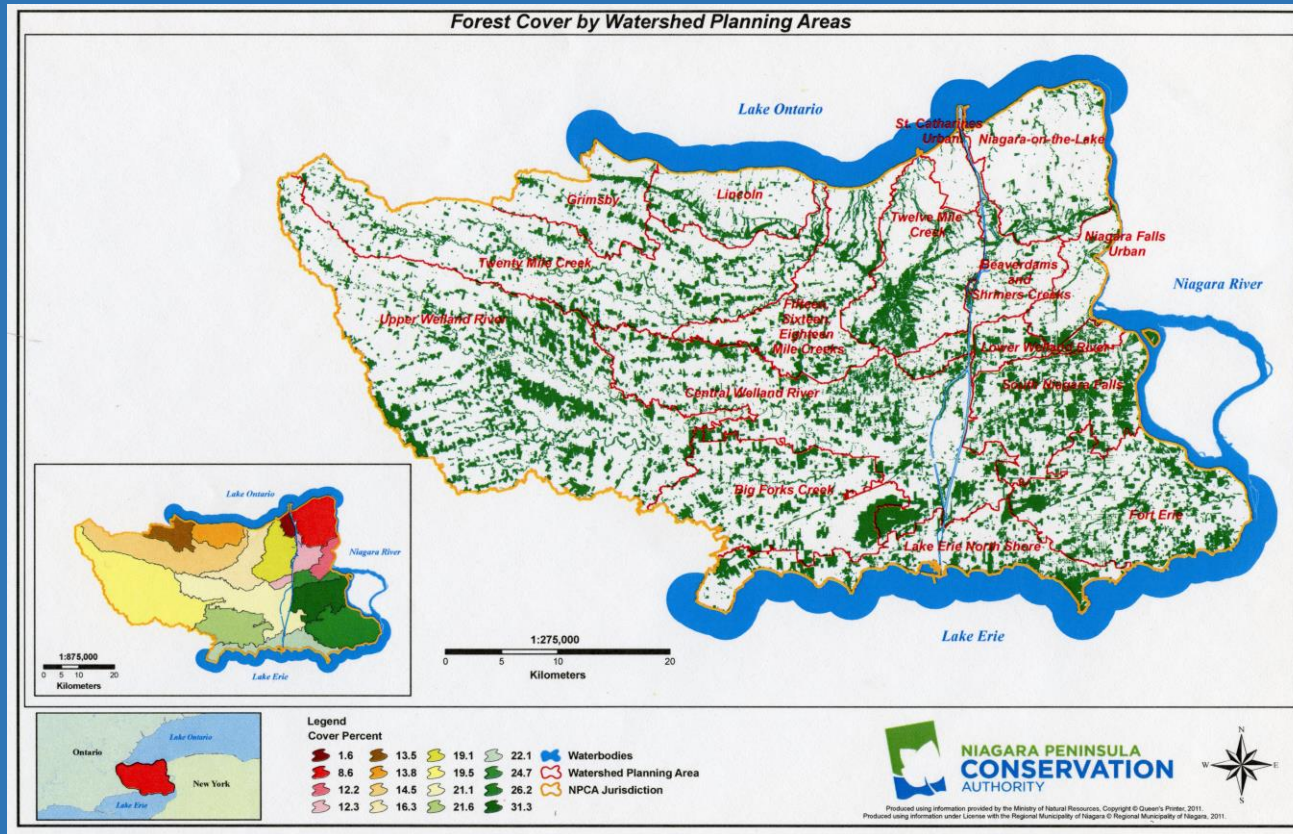
# Development Pressure Will Only Increase In The Years Ahead



As we all know, Niagara is under significant development pressure. If we don't act now to preserve Niagara's natural environment there will be nothing left to save. Niagara has already experienced devastating losses to its natural heritage. 5



# Niagara's Depleted Natural Heritage



Environment Canada says 30% forest cover is the minimum forest cover threshold.

40% will support half of potential species richness and marginally healthy aquatic systems.

50% forest cover is likely to support most of the potential species and healthy aquatic systems.

In Niagara we have 17.5% forest cover. Many large areas of Niagara including Grimsby, Lincoln,

St. Catharines, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Thorold, and Niagara Falls have less than 14%.

Some areas are as low as 1.6%. It's important to note this map is from 2011. More has been lost.

# Niagara's Woodlands Are In Bad Shape

They are small, narrow, fragmented and don't have interior forest habitat.

The Natural Heritage System will protect the woodlands that exist and will enhance them with buffers, linkages and through restoration plantings.

## FOREST CONDITIONS

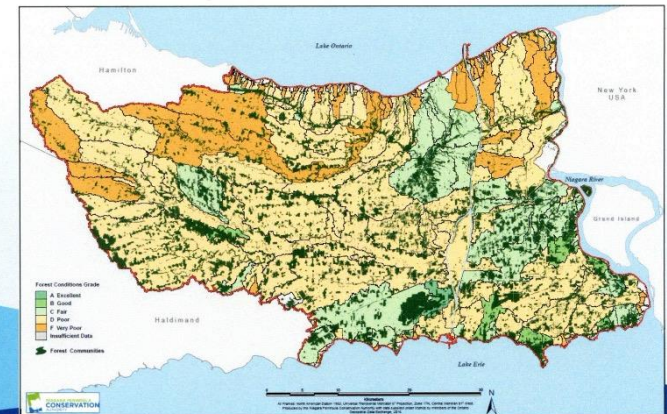
D

Forests are ecosystems that are composed of a diverse group of plants, animals and other organisms. Forests provide many social and ecological benefits such as habitat of flora and fauna, carbon sequestration, building materials, and opportunities for recreation.

The percentages of forest cover, forest interior, and stream side cover were used to evaluate the forest conditions of the watershed.

### What Did we Find?

- The majority of NPCA's watershed scored a D grade as most of the woodlands are small, narrow, fragmented, and do not contain interior forest habitat.
- The highest forest condition grades were found in the southern portions of the watershed.
- The lowest forest condition grades were found in watersheds along the Lake Ontario shoreline, portions of Hamilton, and the urban centres such as St. Catharines and Niagara Falls.





# Niagara's Surface Water Is In Bad Shape

Surface water is contaminated with fertilizer and pesticides from agriculture, faulty septic systems, sewer overflows and urban stormwater.

Its quality has been rated a “D” in Watershed Reports for many years.

Protecting natural areas and enhancing them, as envisioned in the NHS report, is key to improving ground water quality.

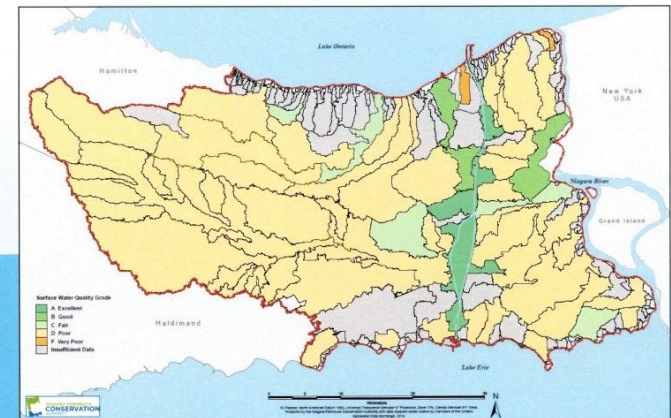
The NPCA monitors water quality at 80 sites throughout its watershed.

Surface water quality is graded using three indicators:

- Phosphorus (contributions from excessive fertilizer use and wastewater discharge)
- E. coli bacteria (found in the intestines of humans and other animals)
- Benthic macroinvertebrates community (small animals without a backbone that live at the bottom of streams). These animals have a range of tolerances to water pollution. Their quantity and variety can provide an indication of the level of water pollution.

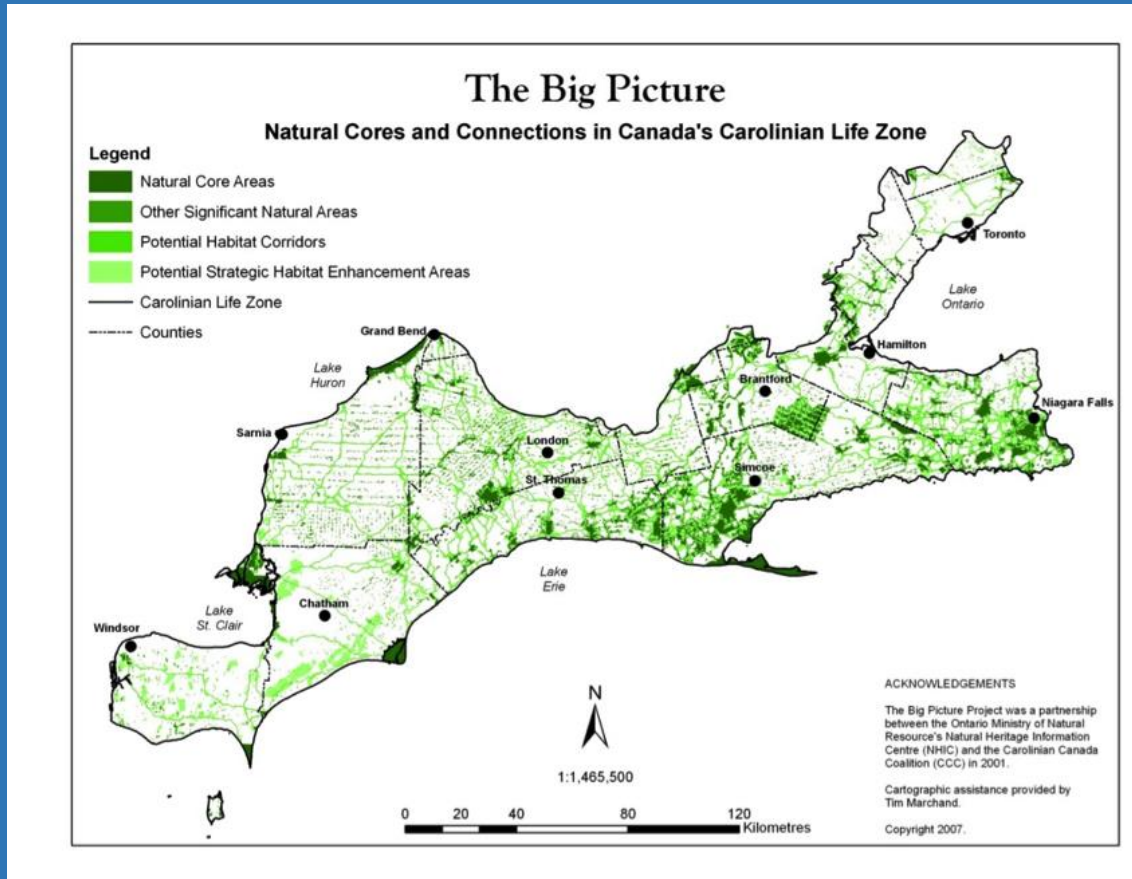
#### What Did we Find?

- Most of the watersheds scored a D grade and have poor water quality.
- The highest surface water quality grades were found in watersheds where cleaner water is redirected from Lake Erie and the Niagara River to support hydroelectric generation and shipping in the Welland Canal.
- Nutrient and bacteria contamination from non-point sources (agricultural/livestock runoff and faulty septic systems) and point sources (combined sewer overflow and urban stormwater) continue to be the major causes of water quality impairment in the NPCA watershed.



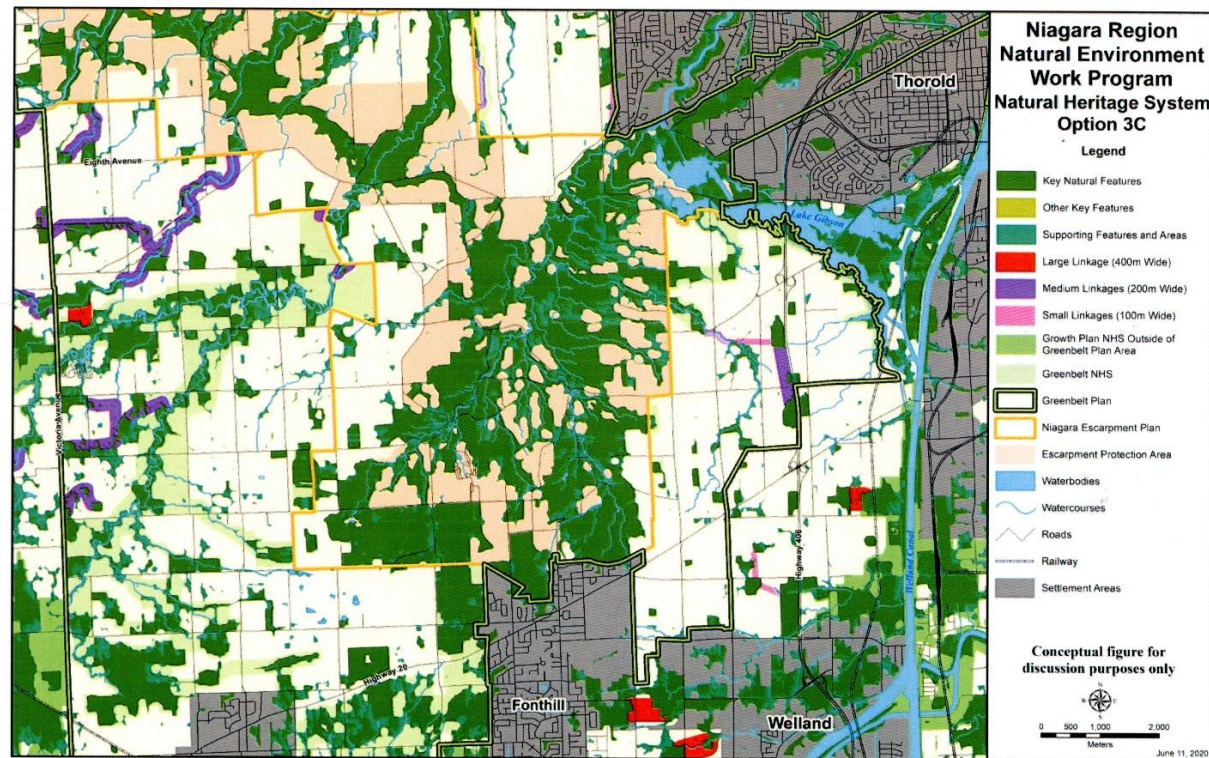


# Niagara's NHS Is Key To Preserving Canada's Most Diverse Ecosystem



The Carolinian Zone is the most diverse bioregion in Canada but due to the loss of natural areas to urban development and agriculture less than 15% of its natural area remains. 125 species are considered vulnerable, species of special concern, threatened or endangered by either the federal or provincial government.

# Please Support the Best NHS Plan: 3C not 3B



13

The major difference between Option 3C and # B is that option 3C includes supporting features and small linkages within settlement areas and suggests minimum buffers from key natural features within settlement areas.



# Please Support the Best NHS Plan: 3C not 3B



Malcolmson Eco Park, St. Catharines

One of the things COVID-19 has taught us is that people value nature where they live.



# Please Support the Best NHS Plan: 3C not 3B



Our people deserve all the green infrastructure benefits that natural spaces provide: shade/cooling; water purification; flood abatement; oxygen production; erosion control.





Fort Erie Friendship Trail

**Thank you**

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 3:39 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: Online Form - Request to Speak at a Standing Committee

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**From:** Niagara Region Website  
**Sent:** Thursday, 09 July 2020 12:39:20 (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Clerks  
**Subject:** Online Form - Request to Speak at a Standing Committee

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

Name  
Liz Benneian

Address  
3150 Culp Road

City  
Jordan Station

Postal  
L0R 1S0

Phone  
9055623819

Email  
[lizcdn@yahoo.com](mailto:lizcdn@yahoo.com)

Organization

standing committee  
Planning and Economic Development Committee



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Presentation Topic

Item 5.1 PDS 26-2020 Natural Environment Work Program

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Presentation includes slides

Yes

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Previously presented topic

No

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Presentation Details

I would like to thank those in who have been working on this report for their excellent work so far. I would also like to draw the Councillors attention to the urgent need to develop the most robust Natural Heritage System possible and to support option 3C that is outlined in the report. The slide deck will be less than 6 slides. I realize I am a few hours late in this request but hope you will consider it. I look forward to hearing from you. All the best, Liz

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Video Consent

Yes



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Carla Rienzo <carlarienzo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 13, 2020 10:48 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Cc:** Bradley, Jim  
**Subject:** Final Agenda for the Niagara Region Planning and Economic Development Committee

Dear Sean Norman, where our natural heritage systems are concerned let it be known that **I fully support only option 3C** as it identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas; supporting features in and outside of settlement areas; includes large, medium, and small linkages outside of settlement areas; includes small linkages inside of settlement areas where the potential area is in a natural state; and, prescribes mandatory buffer minimums outside of settlement areas with suggested policy minimums inside of settlement areas.

Sincerely,  
Carla Rienzo

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2020 3:23 PM  
**To:** 'SORE'  
**Cc:** Huson, Diana; Making Our Mark; Acs, Erik; Norio, Ann-Marie  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara Region re Natural Heritage System Recommendation  
**Attachments:** PDS 26-2020 Natural Environment Work Program - Phase 4.pdf

Hi SORE Association,

Thank you for your submission.

To clarify, as noted in the attached PDS 26-2020 the recommendations are preliminary and still require input through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Point of Engagement - which we are currently undertaking. All of the options that are being evaluated will be presented, and input towards finalizing the evaluation process will be requested.

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

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**From:** SORE <update@sorenottl.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:32 PM  
**To:** Norio, Ann-Marie <Ann-Marie.Norio@niagararegion.ca>  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>; Huson, Diana <Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara Region re Natural Heritage System Recommendation

Dear Mr. Norman and Members of Planning and Economic Development Committee:

We write concerning PDS 26-2020-Natural Environment Work Program-Presentation of Options, which was presented at today's Committee meeting. Our apologies for this late submission but we only just became aware of the report and today's meeting.

SORE is a federally incorporated not-for-profit community organization dedicated to the wise management, use and development of the historic Rand Estate in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We count many hundreds of NOTL and Region residents among our members and supporters. You can visit our website at [sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca) for more information on our organization.

The Rand Estate contains several natural environmental components of interest and importance among its many attributes, including heritage trees, woodlands and One Mile Creek and its tributaries.



We read with interest the report and recommendation of your consultants, supported by staff, for Option 3B with respect to Natural Heritage System inputs to the Region's updated Official Plan. The report indicates that this option most closely reflects the input received during the consultation process to date.

With respect, we do not agree. The Consultation Summary Report which sets out the input supposedly leading to this conclusion does a good job of reflecting the advice provided by the various stakeholders to the consulting team. It lists nine "Key Themes" concerning that input. Among them are the following:

- Take a Systems Approach to Natural Environment Planning
- Recognize the Uniqueness of Niagara's Geography, Natural Environment and Agriculture
- Accurately Map the Natural Environment
- Protect the Natural Environment
- Forward Thinking Natural Environment Policies and Official Plan
- Build Trust Through Continued Engagement, Collaboration and Education.

We do not see anywhere in that consultation report a Key Theme that natural environment considerations and planning should be subservient to other considerations. Option 3C presented in the report in our view most accurately represents the input received from the stakeholders through the Region's consultation process. Yet the recommendation that Option 3B is preferred is explicitly made on the basis that other considerations should temper the Natural Heritage System inputs to the update Official Plan. If the Region's intention was and is that notwithstanding the input received during the consultation process, other considerations would be brought to bear on the recommendation on a preferred option, that should have been expressly stated and the stakeholders given an opportunity to comment. As it stands, the report's recommendation on a preferred option cannot be reconciled, in our view, with the input supposedly leading to that recommendation.

We ask that both Options 3B and 3C be carried forward into the next stage of consultation and that the stakeholders be explicitly asked for focused input on both options in light of the Key Themes identified in the consultation report, before the preferred option is endorsed by this Committee.

We congratulate the Region and staff on this initiative. It is long overdue and welcome. As the input received to date makes clear, Niagara Region has a biosphere unique to Canada. Our Regional Official Plan should embrace and build on that reality.

SORE Association  
[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)  
[sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca)

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2020 11:58 AM  
**To:** 'writeon@sympatico.ca'  
**Cc:** Acs, Erik; Making Our Mark  
**Subject:** FW: Questions concerning Natural Heritage System Report  
**Attachments:** PDS 26-2020 Natural Environment Work Program - Phase 4.pdf; PDS 18-2018 Natural Environment - Project Framework.pdf; NHS Qs to Sean Norman.pdf

Hi Linda,

Thanks for your submission. Please see below a response to your questions:

**Q1. Option 3C “best fulfills” what would seem to be the \*logical highest priority criteria...  
So why is Option 3B being recommended?  
[The chart on page 82 and 83 indicates via green circles that Option 3C “best fulfills”:  
\*Consistent....Achieve the Vision, Goals, and Objectives if the new NOP, with  
consideration of Regional Council’s strategic priorities  
\*Defensible...Policies follow a systems-based approach  
\*Effective...Ensures protection of the natural environment system.].**

A1. The identification of the preliminary preferred options through the technical evaluation process considered all of the evaluation criteria and did not assign a higher or lower priority to any of the criteria. As noted in the attached report - PDS 26-2020 - the recommendations are preliminary and still require input through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Point of Engagement, which we are currently undertaking.

**Q2 a. Who ARE the “stakeholders” referred to in this report?  
b. Do “stakeholders” in this report include environment, climate and public health?  
c. The public IS a “stakeholder” — our natural heritage and its benefits are at stake....  
So why the differentiation?  
page100 - Next Step ... “to consult with stakeholders and the public.”]**

A2. Yes, you are correct the public is an important stakeholder in the project. Stakeholders groups for the project were outlined in the attached PDS 18-2018 (which lists the public as a stakeholder). In PDS 26-2020 we use the terminology “*public, stakeholders, and Indigenous Groups*” in an attempt to be clear to Council and others that are reading the report that we will be having sessions and engagement that are designed for the general public as well as reaching out to specific groups and organizations that have an interest in the project. Differentiating between public and stakeholders is not intended to prioritize or diminish any of the input received.

**Q3. Will ALL “consult” meetings be “public” — in that everyone can attend?  
— i.e. NO “private” meetings with “certain” stakeholders.**

A3. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Point of Engagement for the project will include a range of public sessions, stakeholder workshops, presentations, and 1:1 meetings with other public agencies, committees, and Indigenous Groups. This is typically for any planning or municipal project, a range of consultation and engagement tools are used, including 1:1 meetings.



Where 1:1 meetings are held, we are transparent and identify them as part of the project record. All of the engagement sessions, presentations, and meetings that we have, as well as the input received will be documented as part of the next consultation summary report. For example – please refer to Table 1 (Pg 2) of the Consultation Summary Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> Point of Engagement, <https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/rural-and-natural-systems/pdf/natural-environment-consultation-summary-report.pdf>. This table lists all of the sessions, presentations, and meetings that were undertaken for our previous point of engagement. The input received at each is documented throughout the report and within the appendices.

#### **Q4. When do you expect to have these meetings?**

A4. We are currently finalizing the plans for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Point of Engagement. We expect to have the majority of our sessions in late-August, September, and early-October.

#### **Q5. How will the meetings be advertised?**

A5. We are currently finalizing our plan for advertising the public sessions, but it will include the Region's social media channels as well as the website for the new Niagara Official Plan. <https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/>. If you have not already done so, I would encourage you to sign-up to receive newsletters for the Official Plan which is one of the best ways to stay up-to-date on the entire Official Plan work program. [link at <https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/>]

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

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**From:** Linda Manson <[writeon@sympatico.ca](mailto:writeon@sympatico.ca)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 5, 2020 1:21 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean <[Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Subject:** Questions concerning Natural Heritage System Report

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Norman,  
Please see the attached email containing questions concerning the Niagara Region Natural Heritage System Report.  
I look forward to your responses.  
Thank you for this very worthwhile endeavor!  
Sincerely,  
Linda Manson

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** 'dpierrynowski@gmail.com'  
**Cc:** Acs, Erik; Making Our Mark; Norio, Ann-Marie  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Enquiry from Region website

Hi Dawn,

Thank you, we have received your submission.

We are just starting the consultation and engagement on the preliminary referred options which will be undertaken over the next several months.

All of the input we receive will be considered and documented as part of the next Consultation Summary Report.

We anticipate that the natural heritage and water resource system options will return to Regional Council in late 2020/early 2021 for a final decision.

Regards,

**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**

Senior Planner

Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region

Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

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**From:** Niagara Region Website  
**Sent:** Monday, 10 August 2020 11:33:46 (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Clerks  
**Cc:** webincoming  
**Subject:** Online Form - Enquiry from Region website

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

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name

Dawn J Pierrynowski

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phone

9053842476



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email

[dpierrynowski@gmail.com](mailto:dpierrynowski@gmail.com)

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municipality

Welland

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other mun

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subject

Region's Natural Heritage System and Water Resourc

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comments

I have sent the letter below to Mr. Nicholson and Mr. Diodati. I felt that the other councillors should be included. Hello Councillors, Please address Regional council regarding my concerns about the proposed options that have been put forward about the Region's Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System. I did watch the presentations to council. It is my firm belief that option 3C for the Natural Heritage System and option 2B for the Water Resource System provide the best options for the overall physical and mental health of Niagara's citizens, the health of the environment and ultimately the economy of the Region. A much better effort needs to be made to council about economic value of these resources. Making it easier to develop within a Natural Heritage System should not be the focus. All the other options do not have a long term vision of how our community's environmental resources should be conserved, preserved and enhanced. How can our poor water quality and conservation efforts continue to be acceptable? I would like my letter to be formally submitted to all of the council at the next meeting that these issues will be discussed at. Thank you Dawn Pierrynowski

---

reply

yes

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Page Referrer

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/council/writtenletter.aspx>



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Liz B. <lizcdn@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 16, 2020 11:11 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** questions re NHS and WRS planning

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Sean:

I was wondering if you could tell me what percentage of Niagara's landbase is designated as settlement areas? Also is a "settlement area" the same as the current municipal boundary or are there lands identified as settlement areas that go beyond what would be identified on current maps as municipal boundaries?

I was also wondering if the mapping exercise for the NHS and WRS is mapping in the settlement areas despite the fact staff are currently not recommending including the settlement areas?

I was also wondering why staff decided to make recommendations on options for the NHS and WRS, and make local and regional politicians aware of your recommendations, before public consultation was concluded?

Last question, have you reached a recommendation on how the NHS and WRS will be delineated? Will the lands for the NHS and WRS be designated or will they be depicted as overlays and what are the potential consequences for the protection of the NHS and WRS depending on how they are depicted?

Thanks,  
Liz Benneian  
905-562-3819



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Acs, Erik  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 2, 2020 8:19 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: More about Waverly and Niagara Regional Council

FYI

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**From:** gracia.janes@bellnet.ca <gracia.janes@bellnet.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 02, 2020 7:07 PM  
**To:** Acs, Erik <Erik.Acs@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Re: More about Waverly and Niagara Regional Council

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thanks for your very detailed reply Erik. I look forward to reading the report and appendices, as John, who I consider very knowledgeable has commented favourably. I'm particularly interested in your field work and hope that the results will ensure protection of our natural areas both inside and outside of urban boundaries. I noticed at a Council meeting last Fall, that Niagara-on-the-Lake took out some of the mapping of our creeks etc. They may be back in, by amendment. I'm looking into it for the NOTL Conservancy, as we have successfully opposed flag lots on Victoria Street, where 65% of the lot to be divided was on flood plain (with a proposed cut and fill replacement of land approved earlier by the NPCA). Luckily the new proposed OP negates this ability to sever and build on flag lots. However, we were unsuccessful in stopping a division of land for 2 lots on William Street in the middle of a lovely natural woodland area near the banks of the One Mile Creek, which is now now subject of a subdivision application for more lots. Another important area of course is the Wilderness on King, which had 4 mapped levels of protection in the old OP. Fortunately the Niagara Foundation was bequeathed half the area and are hopeful of winning a court case to acquire the other at an affordable price. As you can see, we are very cognizant of the bit by bit potential for natural area destruction and hope your regional efforts pay off.

Regards,  
Gracia

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**From:** Acs, Erik  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 2, 2020 3:34 PM  
**To:** [pals@becon.org](mailto:pals@becon.org) ; Gracia Janes  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** RE: More about Waverly and Niagara Regional Council

Hi John and Gracia,

We're still working on a response to the previous email.

I've attached a link (the report and attachments are too large to email) to the agenda which contains the identification and options report that went to the July Planning and Economic Development

Committee. The report is agenda item 5.1 and has several appendices. <https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=78797728-409f-4734-ad7c-9e2f4d539969&Agenda=Merged&lang=English&Item=15>

Unfortunately I think the email below, and other articles floating around contain misinformation and paint the team involved in the project negatively. I would encourage you to review the report and attachments, keeping in mind that the Province requires us to meet the criteria laid out in Option 1 for both NHS and WRS. In the past in Niagara (and present in other jurisdictions) consideration of anything beyond the Province's requirements never occurs/occurred. Based on feedback from our consultation to date, we've developed a range of options for the natural heritage system and water resource system that far exceed Provincial requirements for the identification of features and systems. We've even gone so far as to identify these as preliminary preferred options.

In addition, we're currently undertaking the field work component of our ELC project which will support the creation of better natural environment mapping. <https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=7780>

I'm happy to answer any other questions. We also have a workshop coming up this fall, if you haven't received an invite for it yet you will soon.

Erik

**Erik Acs: M.Sc. MCIP, RPP**  
**Manager of Community Planning**  
Planning and Development Services  
Regional Municipality of Niagara  
1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way  
Thorold, ON L2V 4T7  
Phone: 905-984-3610  
Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215  
Fax: 905-687-8056  
[www.niagararegion.ca](http://www.niagararegion.ca)

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**From:** [pals@becon.org](mailto:pals@becon.org) <[pals@becon.org](mailto:pals@becon.org)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 02, 2020 2:54 PM  
**To:** Acs, Erik <[Erik.Acs@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Erik.Acs@niagararegion.ca)>; Gracia Janes <[gracia.janes@bellnet.ca](mailto:gracia.janes@bellnet.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: More about Waverly and Niagara Regional Council

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Erico just got back from out of town and may not have not seen your reply to my email. On this matter could you please email me the report which refers to these Options 3C AND 2b

On 2020-09-01 12:59, Kevin McCabe wrote:

Hello Everybody:

Marcie is our favourite birder, and has put together the petition regarding Waverly Woods. Here is her update on the next stage of the issue. Kevin

## Options 3C and 2B. Saving Waverly Woods

**Marcie Jacklin**

Fort Erie, Canada

Aug 25, 2020 —

Dear citizens of Niagara, would you like our community to look like Mississauga? If not, it is very important that you know there currently is an opportunity to join with people from around the Region to work together to ensure that Niagara Regional Council makes the best decision for us and for future generations.

In the coming months, Niagara's Regional Council will have a once in a lifetime chance to vote to preserve Niagara's natural heritage for the future or to continue to allow it to be destroyed and paved over.

As part of the Official Plan review, the Region must develop a Natural Heritage System (NHS) and a Water Resource System (WRS). The plans need be in place by July 1st, 2021.

To be effective in preserving what little is left of Niagara's natural ecosystems, the NHS and WRS will need to map and protect environmentally significant areas and water resources, sufficient buffers to protect them and linkages to connect them into resilient and sustainable systems that can foster and enhance local biodiversity into the future.

Unfortunately, Regional staff are recommending options that will not meet this objective, largely because it leaves all settlement areas (municipalities and their designated development lands) out of the equation. Natural systems do not recognize lines drawn on a map. They are either considered in their entirety or you don't have a "system". If this was in place now, Waverly Woods would have been protected from development.

Not only should the Regional Council select the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System that best protects the environment, they should also select the ones that provide the most benefits for the Region's citizens. For the Natural Heritage System that is Option 3C and for the Water Resource System that is Option 2B.

COVID has shown us the importance of having nature close to home. Beyond that our urban areas also need the green infrastructure benefits that natural spaces provide such as flood and erosion protection, pollution mitigation, pollination services, biodiversity protection and water quality improvements.



To learn more about this issue, please watch this clip of the presentation Town of Lincoln resident Liz Benneian recently made to the Planning and Economic Development

Committee: [https://www.youtube.com/embed/R\\_Y1gIdVSN0?start=4974&end=6400&fbclid=IwAR2wliLkG2c\\_ZjPqUIRnREOKI0ZRFYk3wKs1kTDrL-uRgJaeVxAloXJKsQg](https://www.youtube.com/embed/R_Y1gIdVSN0?start=4974&end=6400&fbclid=IwAR2wliLkG2c_ZjPqUIRnREOKI0ZRFYk3wKs1kTDrL-uRgJaeVxAloXJKsQg)

To connect with others who will be encouraging Council to choose the best NHS and WRS options for our future contact Liz at the Biodiversity and Climate Action Committee at [bcacniagara@gmail.com](mailto:bcacniagara@gmail.com).

Have a look at the Biodiversity and Climate Action Committee Facebook page at [https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=294341598685232&id=114688909983836&\\_tn\\_=K-R](https://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=294341598685232&id=114688909983836&_tn_=K-R)

Please connect with your Regional Councillors and Mayors listed here to let them know you want 3C and 2B. <https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/council/profiles/default.aspx>

\* Please donate to help us cover our legal and expert costs. Go to this link <https://www.forterievoices.org/donation> or send a donation to Community Voices of Fort Erie, P.O. Box 273, Fort Erie, Ontario L2A 2S0. All donations go towards our legal and expert costs. We require experts to testify at the Hearing in areas like Planning, Ornithology, Wetlands, Hydrology, Military History and Built Heritage.

\* Share the petition with others [Sign the Petition](#) Can we get to 7500 signatures by September 1st? If you prefer not to sign the petition an alternative is to join our email list by sending your email and name to [cvferie@gmail.com](mailto:cvferie@gmail.com).



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## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Acs, Erik  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 3, 2020 1:34 PM  
**To:** pals@becon.org; Gracia Janes; Marcie Jacklin; Rick; Bruce and Laurie Mackenzie  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** RE: State of Regional Plan Review Natural Areas

Hi John,

Sorry for the delay in this reply. I had Sean provide the following input

John, you are correct – the Growth Plan NHS does not extend into urban boundaries. However, as you have noted the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) does require the protection of natural heritage features with urban boundaries. The Regional NHS will be implementing the Growth Plan NHS, Greenbelt Plan NHS, and PPS, as well as issues which are of regional importance. The Regional NHS that we are developing will be in both the urban and rural areas of the Region.

At this stage in the work program we have not developed draft policies or detailed mapping of the Region – there is therefore nothing to share at this point. We are still considering options for how the NHS (and water resource system) will be designed. Those reports can be found here:

Staff report – <https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/rural-and-natural-systems/pdf/report-identification-evaluation.pdf>

Consultant's report - <https://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/rural-and-natural-systems/pdf/technical-report-identification-evaluation.pdf>

As clearly noted in the staff report – the recommendations at this point are preliminary and still require the input of the public and stakeholders – which we will be undertaking over the next several weeks. You will however note that the NHS and WRS options that are being recommended by staff and our consultants go well beyond provincial requirements.

In regards to your question about the LPAT, we're not really at the point yet where we have investigated that in much detail. There have been changes to the Planning Act, and there are certainly components of an Official Plan that are no longer subject to appeal – we (legal team) still need to sort out the details on that. Suggesting the entire plan is not subject to appeal is premature at this point. Regardless, we still have lots of consultation ahead, and many opportunities for Council to hear public feedback. Regional Council is not the final approval authority for the plan, that authority lies with the Province.

Erik

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**From:** pals@becon.org <pals@becon.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 26, 2020 1:47 PM  
**To:** Acs, Erik <Erik.Acs@niagararegion.ca>; Gracia Janes <gracia.janes@bellnet.ca>; Marcie Jacklin <mjacklin@brocku.ca>; Rick <guitarjones@gmail.com>; Bruce and Laurie Mackenzie <kintail52@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** State of Regional Plan Review Natural Areas

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Thanks Eric I remember on the Public Meeting on the regional plan last fall you discussed with me the board which showed proposed mapping for natural areas, which I believed followed provincial amendments to the Growth Plan. It appears that the map did not show any proposed protected natural areas that are within urban boundaries. This is of concern to me since such an approach would remove from the current ECA protection, both the Waverly Beach and Thundering Waters areas. While the approach may reflect the current state of the Growth Plan, I believe it is contrary to the PPS Natural Areas policies, (which are refined in the Natural Heritage Reference Manual), which make no reference to urban boundaries. In fact the guidelines go into considerable length into how to link and buffer natural areas are part of subdivision approval. Also the Growth Plan provisions, like all provincial policies are minimal standards, which the region can and in this case, should exceed.

I have tried to navigate the Regional website to see the proposed Natural Area policies. Could you please send me the policy both by pdf and normal mail. Normal mail would be helpful since the colours of any map would show up. My address is 134 Church Street, St. Catharines, L2R-3E4.

As I indicated in the Woodland Review, the most practical change to the Natural Areas policy would be to require that any proposal to justify site alteration in an ECA area should be subject to a mandatory peer review. Such reviews should also be required in the more regulated EPA areas, in which infrastructure projects (ie. roads) are permitted.

Another concern I have is I heard at a Planning Committee meeting that the new regional plan would not be subject to review by LPAT. Is this correct?

Thanks, John Bacher



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Brigitte Bonner <brigittebonner@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 12, 2020 3:05 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Niagara Official Plan Review

Saturday, September 12, 2020

Dear Mr. Norman,

I am writing in regards to the Natural Heritage System (NHS) and the Water Resource System (WRS) which are part of the review of the Official Plan.

I believe that it is extremely important that the options that provide the most protection for our environment and our water be selected.

This is a crucial time in history as we are battling more and more negative effects of climate change. The plan selected will affect generations to come. If strict protections are not put into place now, it may be too late.

It is vital that Niagara's remaining natural areas and water resources are protected now, as the pressure of development is ever increasing. We need a functioning ecosystem to survive.

That is why I believe that Option 3C for the NHS and Option 2B for the WRS are the best choices. These options provide the most protection for our natural systems both inside and outside settlement areas.

I am very concerned about this issue and hope that the options that are most beneficial for the environment and the residents of Niagara are put into place.

Thank you in advance for giving me the opportunity to provide my input.

Sincerely,

Brigitte Bonner

Ridgeway, Ontario

Sent from my iPad

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, September 21, 2020 11:20 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean; Heyworth, David  
**Cc:** Acs, Erik  
**Subject:** FW: Letter/questions regarding Niagara's Official Development plan

FYI.

**From:** Edie Thomson <musicaledie@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 20, 2020 10:30 AM  
**To:** makingyourmark@niagararegion.ca  
**Subject:** Letter/questions regarding Niagara's Official Development plan

---

Dear Mr. Heyworth,

I understand that development is inevitable and cannot be stopped since our population in this area is increasing, but I believe MORE can be done to align the population growth with healthier environmental standards in the new "Official Plan."

My question is such: when a developer culls the trees in a forested area in order to prepare it for housing, who is ultimately responsible for replacing all those trees that come down?

Is there a particular person or department that counts the number of trees that come down so that the equal amount are replaced? (Or does this even happen?)

The developers and real estate agents selling the properties are making MILLIONS of dollars in these developments, but what are they giving back once the land is stripped and habitat is lost? The development should be done responsibly so that trees in that area are left undisturbed as much as possible, then REPLACED with an equal ratio to what was cut.

My concern is that our forests and treed canopy of this region are coming down at an alarming rate, thus reducing the necessary "cooling effect." We are living in unprecedented times where global warming and climate change is a HUGE issue, therefore, more consideration and mandatory regulations should be in place BEFORE trees are taken down.

The natural solution to the urban sprawl and population growth is to focus attention on filling in the existing empty strip malls which are noticeable throughout the entire region. It only takes a car ride from one end of the city of Niagara Falls to the other to see at least 4 vacant strip malls collecting dust. That land should be developed FIRST and "in-filled" with new homes before another project is started.

Another suggestion I have is that once an area is slated to be a housing development, a full section behind those homes should be left unaltered ( no tree cutting) so that natural habitat for native birds are permitted to thrive in that area.

I thank you for your attention to the above and look forward to attending the online information seminars. I also urge you and your team to set the standards high so our region is recognized for creating environmentally healthy developments.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,  
Edie Thomson

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 13, 2020 11:56 AM  
**To:** 'Tristan Knight'  
**Cc:** Costantini, Karen; Making Our Mark  
**Subject:** RE: Follow-up to Presentation

Hi Tristan,

Thanks for the follow-up. You are right, at this phase we are really looking at concepts for the NHS and WRS. Policy development will be part of the next phases of our work program.

With the current provincial framework there is a difference of how features are to be protected (i.e. within Provincail NHS's protection is per the Growth Plan/Greenbelt Plan and outside of the NHS's they are per the PPS). This is something we are thinking actively about, and once there is a preferred option, we will be designing the system and making a recommendation on this.

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

---

**From:** Tristan Knight <tristan@terrastoryenviro.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 20, 2020 7:36 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>; Costantini, Karen <Karen.Costantini@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Follow-up to Presentation

Hi Sean, Karen,

First, just wanted to express my appreciation for the workshop held last week. Overall the presentations were informative and thought-provoking. North-South (Sal in particular) are eminently qualified to be delivering advice/options on environmental policy development, and I'm glad they are on your team. I do intend on submitting responses to your questionnaire.

In considering the presentation further, I wanted to clarify something that I'm not sure was covered. Does the Region intend to implement a different set of policies for significant natural features occurring beyond the boundary of the future RNHS as part of the updated ROP? I recognize that the presentation was focused primarily on options for mapping the NHS, and so this question may be a bit beyond scope (perhaps it falls in line with Project Phase 7?). If a "two-tiered" approach to Regional policies for significant/key natural feature protection within vs. beyond the future NHS is under consideration (or likely), the configuration of the NHS (i.e., the focus of Project Phase 4) becomes a more important question. As a consultant I see this regularly – applications dealing with (say) a Significant Woodland within the Growth Plan NHS are afforded a 30 m setback, while a (roughly)



equivalent Significant Woodland is afforded a smaller setback (sometimes considerably) if it's beyond the Growth Plan NHS (where only the PPS "no negative impact" test would apply, without "mandatory minimum" setbacks).

If you wanted to respond to the above through the matrix you are providing on the Q&A that's okay of course.

Thanks again.

T.

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**Tristan Knight** M.E.S., M.Sc.  
Senior Ecologist | President  
Terrastory Environmental Consulting Inc.  
(c) 905-745-5398  
[www.terrastoryenv.com](http://www.terrastoryenv.com)

**Norman, Sean**

---

**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2020 9:15 AM  
**To:** lorrainenadeau8@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Hi Lorraine,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the new Niagara Official Plan. We have forwarded your email to the staff involved in the growth management, housing, and environmental policy aspects of our new official plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 22, 2020 9:35 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

## Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

---

Name

Lorraine Nadeau

---

Email

[lorrainenadeau8@gmail.com](mailto:lorrainenadeau8@gmail.com)

---

Phone

9056884625

---

Organization or Affiliation

---

Address

76 Village rd.

---

City

St. Catharines

---

Specify City

St. Catharines

---

Postal Code

L2T 3B7

---

Province

Ontario

---

Topics of Interest

Housing Strategy,Natural Environment,Agriculture,Climate Change

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Other Topics of Interest

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Comments

The explosive suburban development that is overtaking the region is troubling at best. The large expensive homes and surrounding barren neighborhoods are not geared to young families, mature or single people or low/moderate incomes. Green and natural spaces are endangered and can not be offset nor replicated in sterile homogeneous landscapes. Diversity is critical for all existence. We humans are no exception. Development based on greed and filling tax coffers is short-sighted and will leave a devastating legacy.





## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2020 9:21 AM  
**To:** Mary-Anne Ratte  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara region

Good Morning Mary-Anne,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the new Niagara Official Plan. The policies of the new plan will support the development of existing urban areas, while also protecting agricultural lands and natural heritage.

We have forwarded your email to the staff involved in the growth management, agriculture, and environmental policy aspects of our new official plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

**From:** Mary-Anne Ratte <mylexie1958@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 2:25 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara region

To whom it may concern

My concerns regarding the region are as follows- rapid over development of all green space, poor transportation, increase in traffic and accidents, constant increase of property taxes even though there is more houses being built. Wild life are in our streets during early morning hours as we have invaded their space with over development. I hear coyotes howling most nights as I live near farm land. Four way stops need to end on busy roads, like Quaker. There is too much traffic and stop lights need to be installed. The Niagara region wants and are getting people to move to this area, but congratulations, so comes the crime. Regardless of what the police might claim, there is an increase of all crime rates. Much of this goes unreported. There is also an increase in homelessness as the price of housing and rent increase. Yes this is all negative, but I am very concerned that this once beautiful area with lots of farm land, trails and forest has lost and will continue to lose land so in a few years we will be as overcrowded and have more crime than the Toronto area. Good luck with your plan. I will watch closely who I vote for.

Mary-Anne

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Mostacci, Rino  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 24, 2020 8:56 AM  
**To:** Tamara Maiuri; Huson, Diana  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean; Heyworth, David  
**Subject:** RE: Please keep Niagara's ecosystems safe

Hi Tamara, thank you for your interest.  
I have copied your correspondence to Sean Norman, who is managing this project.

**Rino Mostacci, MCIP, RPP**  
**Commissioner, Planning & Development - Niagara Region - CA**  
**E. [rino.mostacci@niagararegion.ca](mailto:rino.mostacci@niagararegion.ca) T. 905. 685.1571 M. 289.241.0821**

---

**From:** Tamara Maiuri <[tam.maiuri@gmail.com](mailto:tam.maiuri@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 24, 2020 6:22 AM  
**To:** Huson, Diana <[Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Cc:** Mostacci, Rino <[Rino.Mostacci@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Rino.Mostacci@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Subject:** Re: Please keep Niagara's ecosystems safe

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Hi Diana, thanks for getting back to me and for clarifying the information. I unfortunately had other commitments last night and missed the session but I'll be sure to follow along on this.

Thanks again

Tam

On Wed, Sep 23, 2020 at 3:58 PM Huson, Diana <[Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca)> wrote:

Hi Tamara,

Thank you for reaching out. I'm afraid you may have received some inaccurate information.

While we were presented with a report on this, it was the consultation, not staff who made this recommendation. The message we received, and were in favour of as a Committee, was adopting measures beyond the minimum standards regulated by the province.

This work forms part of the official plan work and we are a long way from making a decision on this. Staff are in the middle of gathering public input on this at this time.

As someone who has an interest in this process as it unfolds and develops into a policy, I would encourage you to provide your feedback. One of our information centre are happening tonight and I would encourage you to contribute.

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/public-information-centres.aspx?fbclid=IwAR1WMt8myEfCLH0lvTKQc-Nc2w8zW06n2cdUYowBeXIFiY2gVCFnEgePCI0>

Thank you taking an interest in this important work! Have a wonderful day ;)

Diana Huson

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Sent from [Workspace ONE Boxer](#)

On September 23, 2020 at 9:24:55 AM EDT, Tamara Maiuri <[tam.maiuri@gmail.com](mailto:tam.maiuri@gmail.com)> wrote:

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mayors and Regional Councillors:

My name is Tamara Maiuri and I live in St. Davids.

I am writing to ask that you vote for the best possible Natural Heritage and Water Resource System (NHS and WRS) options to be part of the Official Plan. Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS ensure the necessary protection of Niagara's environment, protections that were outlined as essential in the Region's own report on climate change (which can be found here on page 30: [www.niagararegion.ca/projects/rural-and-natural-systems/pdf/climate-change-discussion-paper.pdf](http://www.niagararegion.ca/projects/rural-and-natural-systems/pdf/climate-change-discussion-paper.pdf)).

This issue is important to me because the vote will determine Niagara's future. The NHS 3C & WRS 2B will:

- help mitigate climate change by preserving and enhancing natural systems
- protect all the green infrastructure benefits that natural areas provide including pollution reduction, oxygen generation, flood control, erosion prevention, urban cooling, pollination services
- provide greenspaces where people live, for recreation and better health
- help to address biodiversity loss in Niagara

We must protect Niagara's remaining natural areas and water resources right now because development pressure is increasing. If you don't adopt the best measures this term, there will be little left to save. Whether the people of Niagara can depend on a functioning ecosystem depends on your vote.

Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS provide the best protection and enhancement opportunities for these natural systems both outside and inside of settlement areas.

Concerns have been raised suggesting that by identifying aspects of the NHS and WRS in settlement areas, developers will feel so constrained that they will lobby to open even more greenfield lands for development. However, they are already lobbying for this and will regardless of how comprehensive the Region's NHS and WRS plans are. As such, the argument that certain aspects of the NHS and WRS in settlement areas might push them to lobby more is null and void.

Please, base your decision on the needs of Niagara's current and future residents, rather than the desires of a special interest group.

I will be following this issue closely. Your vote matters and will be remembered. I urge you to choose 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS.

Sincerely,  
Tamara Maiuri  
45 Melrose Dr, NOTL  
289-687-5840

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**Norman, Sean**

---

**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2020 9:19 AM  
**To:** cpaskey@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Good Morning Cindy,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the new Niagara Official Plan. The policies of the new plan will support the development of existing urban areas, while also protecting agricultural lands and natural heritage.

We have forwarded your email to the staff involved in the growth management, agriculture, and environmental policy aspects of our new official plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

---

**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 1:37 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

---

Name  
Cindy Paskey

---

Email  
[cpaskey@gmail.com](mailto:cpaskey@gmail.com)

---

Phone  
9056873175

---

Organization or Affiliation

---

Address

19 St. Lawrence Drive

---

City

St. Catharines

---

Specify City

---

Postal Code

L2M 2T7

---

Province

Ontario

---

Topics of Interest

Urban Structure,Housing Strategy,Natural Environment,Agriculture,Climate Change

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Other Topics of Interest

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Comments

I am concerned about the continuing loss of green space, tree canopy, residential neighbourhoods and the infilling of land with town housing (such as along Beaverdams Road, and has become common throughout Fonthill, St. Catharines, NOTL) and commercial buildings. Single residences, along with their trees and gardens are being destroyed and the land is being used for multi-unit buildings featuring concrete. What used to be a scenic "country-ish" drive is now becoming littered with commercial buildings - driving out to St. Davids along York Road for example. At the same time, commercial buildings go vacant and fall into disrepair – happening in St. Catharines at Fairview Mall, GM on Ontario Street, the Henley Plaza on Ontario Street for example. Niagara is losing its character and charm. Traffic congestion is increasing everywhere and public transit provides little relief. We have an aging population. With COVID even our minimum wage tourist-related jobs are at risk. We are attracting retirees who seek more affordable living and spend less, drive up housing prices and probably increasing pressure on our health care system. Our homeless population has increased. Many of our children are moving elsewhere for employment. Who will maintain all of the existing and new development / infrastructure over the long term? Niagara is becoming dominated by concrete and fast- food outlets. How is this affecting agriculture and healthy food choices? Is it possible to create more mixed-use developments that feature green space and amenities for residents? On Niagara's current land use trajectory, I believe our quality of life is diminishing.



**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2020 9:23 AM  
**To:** Edie Thomson  
**Subject:** RE: Written Opinion regarding Natural Heritage Plan

Good Morning Edie,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the new Niagara Official Plan. The policies of the new plan will support the development of existing urban areas, while also protecting agricultural lands and natural heritage.

We have forwarded your email to the staff involved in the growth management & housing, and environmental policy aspects of our new official plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

---

**From:** Edie Thomson <musicaledie@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, September 24, 2020 10:33 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Written Opinion regarding Natural Heritage Plan

After reading the material presented regarding Niagara's Official Plan: Natural Environment, it is imperative that we take every action to ensure that planning **Option #3 be the ONLY consideration moving forward.** We are at a critical point with global warming and climate change, and therefore, consideration to the environment must be a priority.

Option 3 offers a responsible compromise so that housing development can be done so in a balanced manner, while also accommodating wildlife and natural habitat in a proposed development.

My additional suggestion after viewing the information, is that more attention be considered when identifying a development's "buffer zone." The buffer zone should include a **larger square footage area** so that animal and wildlife habitat can remain relatively intact while also preserving tree canopy.

(I also noticed that missing in the development plans/ housing development was green space for children such as a city park/family area. This should be a compulsory part of every new housing development since many families require some kind of green space (grass and trees) for their children. )

I would also like to add that since builders and developers are the ones who acquire the most financial gain from a new growth plan/development project, then **THEY** should also be responsible for replacing the same number of trees they clear cut in the surrounding area. Tree replacement should NOT be at the expense of the city or municipality.

Thank you.  
Sincerely,

Edie Thomson

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 30, 2020 8:52 AM  
**To:** ibrucato@outlook.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Good morning,

Thank you for the comments regarding Niagara's tree canopy coverage, and tree planting.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, September 29, 2020 11:30 AM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

---

Name

JOHN BRUCATO

---

Email

[ibrucato@outlook.com](mailto:ibrucato@outlook.com)

---

Phone

9052958555

---

Organization or Affiliation

---

Address

3086 Chipman Crescent, Niagara Falls, On L2G 6M5



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City  
Niagara Falls

---

Specify City  
Niagara Falls, Ontario

---

Postal Code  
L2G 6M5

---

Province  
Ontario

---

Topics of Interest  
Natural Environment, Climate Change

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Other Topics of Interest

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Comments

In terms of our over-all environment as well as thwarting the effects of climate change, it is very important to maintain, if not INCREASE the tree canopy throughout the Niagara Region. Too many mature trees are being lost due to development, private discretionary removals, disease and insufficient public tree plantings. An aggressive and ongoing program of tree planting throughout the region should be implemented without delay. Programs engaging and encouraging community members and promoting the benefits of trees should be part of this initiative. Developers should be required to fund replacement of any portion of tree canopy that is reduced by projects, whether on the immediate site or by way of plantings in other locations. Tree stock for plantings should be of a suitable size that ensures successful growth of specimens to maturity.



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 3:16 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: Online Form - Enquiry from Region website-Comments on Natural Heritage

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**From:** Niagara Region Website  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 29 September 2020 11:18:15 (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)  
**To:** Clerks  
**Cc:** webincoming  
**Subject:** Online Form - Enquiry from Region website

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

---

name

Maria Featherston

---

phone

905-871-4681

---

email

[maria\\_featherston@hotmail.com](mailto:maria_featherston@hotmail.com)

---

address

---

municipality

Fort Erie

---

other mun

---

subject

Regional Council/Clerk

---

comments

September 29, 2020 Dear Mayors and Regional Councillors: My name is Maria Featherston

and I am a resident of Fort Erie. Soon you will be asked to make the most important decision of this term—you will be asked to approve a Natural Heritage System (NHS) and Water Resource System (WRS) as part of the Official Plan. I am asking you to please vote for the Options that, according to your own technical experts, are most protective of our environment and water resources. They are options 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS. In these COVID times it has become more and more apparent how important our natural spaces are to our mental well-being. Upon moving to Fort Erie in 1977, we lived in an apartment and spent every weekend walking, hiking or even just driving along the river. It was a chance to de-stress, get away from confined spaces and enjoy nature. As an avid birdwatcher, camper and hiker I love to find wildlife in its natural settings. We are losing more and more habitat to development. This loss of Niagara's natural beauty will impact tourist dollars and make us less attractive to employers and new residents. It is critical that Niagara's remaining natural areas and water resources are protected now because development pressure is increasing and if you do not adopt the best measures this term, there will be little left to save. Whether future generations in Niagara can depend on a functioning ecosystem depends on your vote in this matter. Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS provide the best protection and opportunities for enhancement for these natural systems both outside of, and inside of, settlement areas. The health of our communities; physical, mental and natural depend on you. Climate change needs to be addressed and you have an opportunity here to do our part on behalf of Niagara residents. If you do not act now according to what the science of natural systems dictates, your actions cannot be undone. I took part in the ZOOM information meeting and I am convinced more than ever that there is only one possible option for each of these systems. I urge you to choose 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS. Maria Featherston 996 Parkdale Avenue Fort Erie, L2A 5B6 905-871-4681

reply  
yes

Page Referrer  
<https://www.niagararegion.ca/>



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Mary Lou Tanner <[mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca](mailto:mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca)>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 3, 2020 4:01 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Cc:** Heyworth, David; Acs, Erik  
**Subject:** Re: Tonight's Webinar

Hi Sean

Appreciate you reaching out. When doing the watercourse mapping project for the Region, we spent a great deal of time with the farmers in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We also heard a lot about this issue as we undertook the 2013 review of the Greenbelt Plan in Niagara. The Region's report on the Greenbelt Plan identifies the competing objectives related to natural heritage and farming. You can find a general description of the issue on page 35 of the Region's 2013 report prepared by Urban Strategies.

In essence the issue boils down to the need to ensure that there is no damage to crops by introducing habitat for bugs, pests, and disease through either the vegetative protection zone planting or the stewardship initiatives for habitat restoration. During the above projects, we heard very clearly from farmers that this was a major concern. The ladybug issue is this: for those farmers that sell their grapes to wine producers, the tolerance for ladybugs per tonne of grapes is 1 ladybug. Any more than 1 ladybug and the tonne of grapes is rejected. Farmers can't realistically check every cluster of grapes, what they do need is to ensure that plantings adjacent to NHS features do not create the circumstance where bugs have a foothold into the grape crop.

Thanks again. Wishing you all well.

Mary Lou

**Mary Lou Tanner, FCIP, RPP**

Principal Planner

**M** 289 776 8904 **E** [mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca](mailto:mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca)



***To our valued clients and industry partners:***

***Thank you for your work with NPG. We are grateful.***

***NPG staff continue to work remotely in full capacity through Stage 3 of Niagara's and Ontario's re-opening. We are available by email and phone. Our meetings will be conducted virtually using a variety of technology options that we***



*have as part of our day to day business. We have instituted enhanced health and safety and cleaning protocols for our office and our staff so we can all continue to be healthy and safe.*

*We continue to be ready and available to assist you. In the event you are having difficulty reaching us, please email Dianne Rintjema, [drintjema@niagaraplanninggroup.ca](mailto:drintjema@niagaraplanninggroup.ca). We hope you and those you care for are safe and well.*

---

**From:** "Norman, Sean" <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>  
**Date:** Thursday, October 1, 2020 at 1:38 PM  
**To:** Mary Lou Tanner <mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca>  
**Cc:** "Heyworth, David" <david.heyworth@niagararegion.ca>, "Acs, Erik" <Erik.Acs@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** RE: Tonight's Webinar

Hi Mary Lou,

Thanks for the submission and bringing this to our attention. We will look into these issues in a bit more detail.

Yes, please send along the information regarding ladybugs if you could.

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

---

**From:** Mary Lou Tanner <mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 23, 2020 7:58 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>; dave.heyworth@niagararegion.ca  
**Subject:** Tonight's Webinar

Hi Sean and Dave

Thanks very much for the webinar tonight. It was a very good presentation and discussion. I do want to follow up with you on the question I raised about agriculture and buffers. For example, a natural sustaining vegetation protection zone, the following is from the Greenbelt Plan:

“In addition, these uses are exempt from the requirement of establishing a condition of *natural self-sustaining vegetation* if the land is and will continue to be used for agricultural purposes. “ (3.2.5.7). Land has been interpreted that everything up to a feature, a building, a parking area has to be planted with agricultural crops (even if the farmer cannot reasonably harvest them). It seems to be a very narrow interpretation of this policy. The consequence is that natural self-sustaining vegetation introduces new pests and bugs that could undermine the saleability of the crops. I can share the ladybug quantum if needed. The point is that farmers need to plant and need flexibility to ensure the maximum sale price; natural self-sustaining vegetation can bring pests that undermine that.

Second issue: The PPS policy of existing agricultural uses. There have been agencies who have interpreted “existing” as “existing” on the date the PPS came into effect. So if a farmer chooses to change an orchard to a vineyard, the agency has interpreted this as no longer an “existing” agricultural use. We’ve also had experience where land in fallow that is then planted has been interpreted as not “existing”. The consequence is that new policies impact what can and can’t be done with the farm and the farm buildings.

I really think that duplicating the provincial policies needs to be balanced with the needs of farmers in Niagara – there are competing interests around agriculture, value added/on farm diversification etc.

Mary Lou Tanner, FCIP, RPP

Principal Planner

M 289 776 8904 E [mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca](mailto:mtanner@niagaraplanninggroup.ca)



***To our valued clients and industry partners:***

***Thank you for your work with NPG. We are grateful.***

***NPG staff continue to work remotely in full capacity through Stage 3 of Niagara’s and Ontario’s re-opening. We are available by email and phone. Our meetings will be conducted virtually using a variety of technology options that we have as part of our day to day business. We have instituted enhanced health and safety and cleaning protocols for our office and our staff so we can all continue to be healthy and safe.***

***We continue to be ready and available to assist you. In the event you are having difficulty reaching us, please email Dianne Rintjema, [drintjema@niagaraplanninggroup.ca](mailto:drintjema@niagaraplanninggroup.ca). We hope you and those you care for are safe and well.***

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## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Monday, October 5, 2020 9:56 AM  
**To:** mbuckin1@becon.org  
**Subject:** RE: Natural Heritage System

Good Morning Marya,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding natural heritage system options for the new Niagara Official Plan. The policies of the new plan will support the development of existing urban areas, while also protecting agricultural lands and natural heritage.

We have forwarded your email to the staff involved in the environmental work program for the new official plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** mbuckin1@becon.org <mbuckin1@becon.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, October 4, 2020 2:33 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Natural Heritage System

Greetings

Having read the options and as a 40 yr. Resident of Niagara there is only option that can truly be called Natural Heritage which is Option 3 C.

When I moved here that many years ago I was greatly impressed with the 'Greenness' of the Region and felt that Niagara should take pride in the extent of woodlots, forests, marshes, wetland, meadows, and farmlands extant in an area as Urban as it was then and with an ever expanding urbanization such as S. Ontario. It was Iconic! along with beautiful. The drive from the Border to Toronto was an impressive 'Gateway' with the lovely views of Orchards and a site line across Lake Ontario often as far as Toronto.

From an Environmental point of view to the perspective of Tourism and Healthy, Livable Communities , Green is what Niagara needs to Preserve, Promote and Celebrate.

So much of what was here those years ago is now Devastated. The stretching of urban sprawl is constantly increasing along with ever higher building elevations. To me this contrary to what can make Niagara outstandingly unique and attractive and that is being Iconically Green . By Building up without excessive heights and using in-filling over outward expansion addresses the need for improved tax bases, increasing population, employment possibilities, tourism, and attractive, healthy communities.

The best course toward this is by ending the fragmentation of woodlots, bush, and forests; recognizing and respecting the vital role of nature in all its forms including wetlands, savannahs, meadows, lakes, ponds and streams and highlighting their role in making Niagara unique in its shoreline local in spite of being adjacent the

intense density of the GTA. The Pandemic has highlighted the significance of nature's role in holistic and inclusive health and greatly enhanced people's appreciation and desire to be in around natural environments. That means that communities need to pay even greater attention to all of the Components of Nature that contribute to the highest quality of air, water, and lifestyles while at the same time, greatly contributing to the reduction of environmental and weather related threats. These are the kind of factors that stand in contrast to other Options and make Option 3C the most desirable choice. I am aware of the concerns about impeding the flexibility of Developers but it seems to be, overall, Developers are far more adaptable than the Components of Nature. The recent acceleration of floods, fires, drought, storms, temperature fluctuations, and more underscores this. We ignore these elements at our peril. Our Natural Heritage and overall well being depends

Of greatest Urgency is the recognition that without healthy people, a healthy environment and ecosystem it is impossible to Have let alone Sustain a Healthy Economy.

Sincerely,

Marya F. Buckingham, BA, M.Div

#309 81 Scott St. St. Catharines, L2n 7L5



## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 9:43 AM  
**To:** David Reimer  
**Subject:** RE: Virtual Public Information Centre: Natural Environment - Natural Heritage System

Good Morning David,

Thank you for submitting comments regarding the webinar we held on natural heritage for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We appreciate your feedback and have forwarded your email to the staff involved in the environmental work program for the new official plan, for their consideration and inclusion in the consultation summary.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

-----Original Message-----

From: David Reimer <niagaramd@gmail.com>  
Sent: Tuesday, October 6, 2020 7:27 PM  
To: Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
Subject: Virtual Public Information Centre: Natural Environment - Natural Heritage System

Thank you for your presentations - they were very informative and well-presented. My comments would be;

It is clear that we have mandated residential growth goals from the Province, a desire for industrial/commercial growth to provide local jobs, and a desire to protect our valuable agricultural land. But, I am grateful to see that you are considering an emphasis on our Natural Environment as well. I would encourage you to recommend the most progressive of your possible recommendations (Option 3C) for a number of reasons;

- our natural areas are the most easily lost, but the hardest to reclaim, of land uses
- we are seeing significant losses in insect and bird populations warning us of increasing

environmental stresses and greater changes to come. Loss of habitat is a major factor in this, and Niagara is relatively low in natural habitat

- Climate change is a reality, and the benefits of 'green' areas in temperature modification, carbon capture, and moisture retention are well-known
- this present pandemic has emphasized the value of green spaces to the mental health and well-being of our population. And given the crowds at many of our green areas, it suggests we need more.

- ecological diversity is hard to put a dollar, social/cultural, or ethical value to. However, I believe it is very important, and natural habitat protection is key to it's protection.

Sincerely yours,  
David Reimer

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 3:11 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: Feedback re. the Niagara Official Plan (NOP) Virtual Info/Consultation Sessions

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**From:** Desmond Sequeira <[sequeira\\_cdjd@sympatico.ca](mailto:sequeira_cdjd@sympatico.ca)>  
**Sent:** Monday, October 5, 2020 1:22 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <[makingourmark@niagararegion.ca](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Cc:** Barnhart, Daryl <[Daryl.Barnhart@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Daryl.Barnhart@niagararegion.ca)>; Bellows, Sandie <[Sandie.Bellows@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Sandie.Bellows@niagararegion.ca)>; Bradley, Jim <[Jim.Bradley@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Jim.Bradley@niagararegion.ca)>; Butters, Barbara <[Barbara.Butters@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Barbara.Butters@niagararegion.ca)>; Bylsma, Dave <[Dave.Bylsma@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Dave.Bylsma@niagararegion.ca)>; Campion, Frank <[Frank.Campion@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Frank.Campion@niagararegion.ca)>; Chiocchio, Pat <[Pat.Chiocchio@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Pat.Chiocchio@niagararegion.ca)>; Darte, George <[George.Darte@niagararegion.ca](mailto:George.Darte@niagararegion.ca)>; Diodati, Jim <[Jim.Diodati@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Jim.Diodati@niagararegion.ca)>; Disero, Betty <[Betty.Disero@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Betty.Disero@niagararegion.ca)>; Easton, Sandra <[Sandra.Easton@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Sandra.Easton@niagararegion.ca)>; Edgar, Kelly <[Kelly.Edgar@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Kelly.Edgar@niagararegion.ca)>; Fertich, Wayne <[Wayne.Fertich@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Wayne.Fertich@niagararegion.ca)>; Foster, Robert <[Robert.Foster@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Robert.Foster@niagararegion.ca)>; Gale, Bob <[Bob.Gale@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Bob.Gale@niagararegion.ca)>; Gibson, Kevin <[Kevin.Gibson@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Kevin.Gibson@niagararegion.ca)>; Greenwood, Barbara <[Barbara.Greenwood@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Barbara.Greenwood@niagararegion.ca)>; Heit, Brian <[brian.heit@niagararegion.ca](mailto:brian.heit@niagararegion.ca)>; Huson, Diana <[Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca)>; Insinna, Tom <[Tom.Insinna@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Tom.Insinna@niagararegion.ca)>; Ip, Laura <[Laura.Ip@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Laura.Ip@niagararegion.ca)>; Jordan, Jeff <[Jeff.Jordan@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Jeff.Jordan@niagararegion.ca)>; Junkin, Marvin <[Marvin.Junkin@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Marvin.Junkin@niagararegion.ca)>; Nicholson, Peter <[Peter.Nicholson@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Peter.Nicholson@niagararegion.ca)>; Norio, Ann-Marie <[Ann-Marie.Norio@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Ann-Marie.Norio@niagararegion.ca)>; Redekop, Wayne <[Wayne.Redekop@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Wayne.Redekop@niagararegion.ca)>; Rigby, Tim <[tim.rigby@niagararegion.ca](mailto:tim.rigby@niagararegion.ca)>; Sendzik, Walter <[Walter.Sendzik@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Walter.Sendzik@niagararegion.ca)>; Steele, Bill <[Bill.Steele@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Bill.Steele@niagararegion.ca)>; Tripp, Ron <[Ron.Tripp@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Ron.Tripp@niagararegion.ca)>; Ugulini, Terry <[Terry.Ugulini@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Terry.Ugulini@niagararegion.ca)>; Villella, Leanna <[Leanna.Villella@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Leanna.Villella@niagararegion.ca)>; Whalen, Tim <[Tim.Whalen@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Tim.Whalen@niagararegion.ca)>; Witteveen, Albert <[Albert.Witteveen@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Albert.Witteveen@niagararegion.ca)>; Zalepa, Gary <[Gary.Zalepa@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Gary.Zalepa@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Subject:** Feedback re. the Niagara Official Plan (NOP) Virtual Info/Consultation Sessions

I attended the sessions on 22, 23, & 24 September 2020. You have said, " We hope you enjoyed our event".

Permit me to be as "Canadian" as I can manage to be at this time by responding as follows: After spending six valuable hours away from other important matters to give you my attention, the answer is "definitely NOT"..

As a very lay person seeking enlightenment from experts, a number of questions arose for me. For example,

- Why were sessions aimed at simple persons like me (as distinguished from the exceptionally knowledgeable people you are) so replete with jargon unintelligible to me?
- My even less "Canadian" streak prompts me to ask: Was this some form of predictable political narcissistic ploy, consisting mostly of self-talk and self-congratulations, which could then give you license to say that you fully involved the public in the process, thereby also giving yourselves a pass on whatever you proceed to do?
- Why did you even present to an ordinary person like me at this stage when, as it appeared to me, you had so little to say by way of concrete, specific proposals vs vague generalities full of uncertainties and "motherhood" statements? Your numerous and complicated maps contributed to teaching me nothing.

In case you choose to dismiss the above as a rant by some lone crackpot with an axe to grind, here are quotes from a couple of others who also attended, regarding what you had to offer:

From Ryan Forster, an advanced doctoral candidate in Political Ecology:

" It is chalk full of the bromidic language of technocrats..... It's painstaking bureaucratic crap that appears as a systematic process aimed at thorough and responsible decision making but is, I suspect, a functional barrier to proper democratic participation. I mean, these are experts and they are well-informed, but how can the public truly weigh in without some simplified, shortened version of all this? (And Ryan says more)

From Kostyn Petrunick, an English Graduate student:

".... I was at the one last night. They are brutal..... I think they are being purposefully obscure or accidentally so. Either way, It's an anti-democratic barrier"

I cannot believe that the Niagara Regional Council (NRC), especially with Jim Bradley at the helm and including the mayor of my city and others whom I also voted for, will allow this travesty to pass for public info/consultation. As far as I am concerned, I sat through six hours without being informed. My effort to say so at the third meeting was predictably "paraphrased" out of my comments by your Q&A moderator

I do hope that you will manage to recognize the above as a sincere effort to provide you with some constructive criticism to assist with any future attempt to inform and consult. How many others felt the same as me but are way too "Canadian" to say so? What you need most of all is communication specialists who might, first of all, help you know your audience.

Please Note: I do have some thoughts re. what I, as a resident of Niagara (given the Climate and Biodiversity Collapse that is already upon us) expect from an NRC that I helped to elect and several of whose members I personally voted for. I will share this shortly in a separate email though I am joining thousands of others in Niagara by becoming cynical about the politicians of the region, even more so after Thundering Waters. Yes, I have good reason to believe that it is many of these politicians with their vested interests who are the impediments to taking the Climate and Biodiversity Collapse crisis seriously and NOT the educated, knowledgeable council staff.

Thank you,

Desmond Sequeira

St. Catharines ON

905 937 1554

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** egailb <egailb@sympatico.ca>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 6, 2020 9:16 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Niagara's wonderful natural heritage

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am a continuing member of the St. C Heritage Advisory Committee, (formerly simply Heritage Committee), and a member of a number of community organizations that are concerned about climate change, esthetics (billboards blighting the city) and historical societies. All I can add to the mess that has been made of Thundering Waters [the corporation with a memorandum of agreement by our former Ontario gov't] by the former NPCA and more is to *please please* have the region firmly uphold out local Niagara biodiversity, our natural wonders here.

Gail Benjafield, St. Catharines

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Allan Teichman <allan.teichman@me.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 1:07 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Input to Niagara Regional Council on preserving our natural heritage

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr. Norman,

Please convey the following to Regional Council as my input on the Region's planning for natural heritage preservation planning.

As a long-time resident of the Niagara area, one of the things I value most about it are the pockets of natural heritage that exist throughout this region. There is literally no week, year-round, when I am not out hiking or exploring one of them.

As the region continues to welcome new residents, that natural heritage is getting gobbled up and fragmented at a steady rate. Thriving ecosystems like the Thundering Waters Forest are at risk of diminution to "memories of" status.

Recommendations and suggestions for preservation aren't binding, which means they are not a priority for any developer. Let's make both of those change!

I support the greatest degree of protection we can bring to our natural heritage areas, and specifically reject any decision to continue on our path of non-binding suggestions. I strongly encourage the Region to have the foresight and strength to choose **Natural Heritage System 3C** and **Water Resource System 2B** as best able to protect both settled and unsettled areas for a healthy and green future.

Through the Niagara Parks system, we have successfully protected the natural heritage that drives our tourism industry. It's now time to bring that same rigour to the natural areas that make this part of the province a great place to actually live.

Thanks,

-- Allan --

~~~~~  
Allan Teichman  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario



**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** erika loffelmann <loffelmannrika@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 1:32 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Natural Heritage sites

To those whom this may concern,

I am a lifetime resident of St.Catharines. I've had the privilege to grow up, in my opinion, one of the most beautiful areas of Canada. We have such an amazing opportunity to give this legacy to our future generations. But only if we act now to protect, preserve and form a truly unique program of conservation. Please, I ask you to seriously consider making sure we can continue to offer our children and the world at large the biodiversity and conservation of our ecosystem here. Thank-you for your time and serious consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Erika Loffelmann

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Lorna Anstruther <lanstruther@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 8:09 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Preserve Our Natural Heritage

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr. Norman:

After participating in the debacle in Niagara Falls regarding the Riverfront Development, I am compelled to add my two cents about preserving our natural heritage.

We have one and only one chance to get this right and sadly too much of our natural heritage has been lost and continues to be lost because the Region and communities have failed miserably to set and follow the regulations.

NHS Option 3C

WRS Option 2B

The tighter the regulations the better.. Also needed is strict monitoring of sites, with swift action when violations are reported / occur. I would like to see that violations are punished with huge fines and mandated remedial measures.

Thank you,  
Lorna Anstruther  
Niagara Falls, ON L2E 6H7

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 1:59 PM  
**To:** Melissa McGlashan  
**Subject:** RE: Natural Heritage System - Plan Better, Live Better

Good afternoon Melissa,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

**From:** Melissa McGlashan <melissamcglashan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 11:01 AM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Natural Heritage System - Plan Better, Live Better

Please respond indicating that this letter has been received.

**Natural Heritage System  
Plan Better, Live Better**

To The Region,

There has recently been a presentation to the Region's Planning and Economic Development Committee regarding a Natural Heritage System. It seems obvious that, of the options presented, Option 3c is the most protective of our environment and human health, and provides for the most green infrastructure benefits. It also provides the most information to council and staff when making future planning decisions.

It was very disappointing that staff specified a preference for option 3b during the presentation to the Planning and Economic Development Committee without yet having done any public consultation or stakeholder meetings. In addition, it was disappointing that this option is preferred given that staff has not specified any goals they are trying to achieve with the Natural Heritage System nor how option 3b would achieve those goals. Option 3b does not map within urban areas. This leaves a great deal of information out of future decision making as the majority of our Niagara population is in urban areas. Option 3b severely limits the ability of council and staff to make informed decisions on behalf of Niagara Region residents. Option 3c provides staff and council with the most information by mapping throughout the region, including rural, suburban, and urban areas.

With Niagara Region revising its official plan as well as designating a natural heritage system, now is our last, best chance to protect our farmlands, wetlands, and green spaces. By mapping within urban areas, Option 3c gives cities all

of their mapping information. This allows for decisions to be made regarding buffer areas around natural heritage sites and linkages to other natural heritage sites. Linkages are significant because without linkages we merely have islands of green space, and species diversity dies in islands.

Having all mapping information helps give cities the flexibility to deal with development applications. Without this information, all planning intentions are undercut. I live in Welland and our urban boundary is about to be expanded to include all land to the Pelham and Thorold borders making mapping in my city extremely important and valuable. Several of Niagara's current regional councillors have previously served as city councillors which means that they have experience dealing with issues arising from development applications. Mapping throughout the region, rather than only doing half the job, can help avoid these issues by clearly establishing where development can be accommodated and under what conditions (for example maintaining buffer zones and/or linkages). This clarifies situations for potential developers and further enables city councillors to act in the best interests of their constituents.

It is incredibly important to note that once our natural areas are bulldozed it is not possible to restore them. Niagara Region has one opportunity to preserve what we have left of our natural habitats. The region needs smart development and option 3c far exceeds option 3b at achieving this. Rather than settle for doing part of the job, we should be employing the best option and obtaining the most information. Why would the region set out to do half a job and deny future councillors and planning staff the best information to make informed decisions? Why should Niagara residents have to settle for less than the best?

It is my hope that you will agree that more information leads to better planning which leads to healthier, more beautiful and functional cities for all. I am writing today to add my voice to others in the community who may reach out to you on this topic, and to ask that staff recommend option 3c for the designation of our Natural Heritage System. In closing I would like to impart two final thoughts: 1) Better planning does not mean no development, and 2) People do not come to Niagara for the concrete.

Please maintain the natural heritage of the Niagara Region for generations to come.

Kindest regards,

Melissa McGlashan, Hon BSc.  
490 Clare Ave  
Welland ON L3C 3B5

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 12:16 PM  
**To:** berzerker9001@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara Official Plan

Hi Nancy

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** berzerker9001@hotmail.com <berzerker9001@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 10:23 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara Official Plan

Hello,

It is important for the future of the Niagara Region that the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource system be extended into the settlement areas, that is options 3C NHS and 2B WRS. The patchwork approach to development will give disastrous results for environmental sustainability and ultimately make the region undesirable for growth of any kind. The region has many abandoned areas that are excellent candidates for redevelopment. We can't continue to simply abandon development failures from the past and destroy the few natural areas remaining. These natural areas are necessary for sustainable growth.

I urge you to opt for sustainable growth by implementing options 3C NHS and 2B WRS.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nancy Lease  
289 First Ave  
Welland



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 12:13 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: Water Resource Systems - Sept 24/20

Hi Sean,

This also came to the inbox. Could you please file and respond as appropriate.

Thanks.

---

**From:** Marcie Jacklin <mjacklin@brocku.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 4:25 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Water Resource Systems - Sept 24/20

Hello

Thanks for the all work which has been done on the new Official Plan so far.

Here are a few questions that I have from the meeting on Sept 24/20

1. It was mentioned that there wasn't much guidance from the province about WRS. Who will establish the criteria? Who will be the experts?
2. My notes are a bit unclear - will Vegetation Protection Zones be required within Settlement areas?
3. I think Sal mentioned NHIC however getting records into their database right now is difficult given the reduced staff. I would still suggest that the team consult with local nature clubs about Endangered Species.
4. What are the concerns about developing on top of a Highly Volatile Aquifer? How would development be managed?
5. Given what happened between 2009 and 2018 there are multiple trust issues with site specific studies - they are often inaccurate or incomplete etc. Are there plans to address these issues given that many of the experts were laid off during that period?

Regards

Marcie Jacklin [mjacklin@brocku.ca](mailto:mjacklin@brocku.ca)

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 12:12 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: Natural Environment - NHS Sept 23/20

Hi Sean,

This came to the inbox. Could you please file and respond as appropriate.

Thanks.

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**From:** Marcie Jacklin <mjacklin@brocku.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 7, 2020 4:14 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Natural Environment - NHS Sept 23/20

Hi

I still have a few questions from the evening of Sept 23/20

1. You mentioned at the beginning that climate was an overlay but there doesn't seem to be much info about climate change mitigation for this key section.
2. You mentioned that Option 3C was restrictive. Could you explain what you meant by that?
3. How many developers would be willing to add enhancement areas to their plans?
4. How realistic are population growth estimates for 30 years in the future?
5. Why does planning always focus on compensation rather than protection? Surely developers know when they are buying wetlands/woodlands etc.

Regards

Marcie Jacklin [mjacklin@brocku.ca](mailto:mjacklin@brocku.ca)

SORE Association  
[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)  
[sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca)

On 8-Oct-2020, at 5:51 PM, SORE <[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)> wrote:

We are submitting these comments for the consideration of Regional staff and Councillors on behalf of SORE.

SORE is a federally incorporated not for profit organization dedicated to the protection and wise management of the historic Rand Estate in Niagara-on-the-Lake. SORE represents several hundred residents in NOTL concerned about inappropriate development and the protection of natural and built heritage.

The Rand Estate is a nationally significant heritage asset currently under threat from an entirely inappropriate development proposal involving a hotel, convention centre and high density subdivision. Randwood contains (or contained before a large portion of it was outrageously clear cut two years ago) one of the few surviving examples of an extensive designed landscape by Dunington-Grubb, in addition to a variety of heritage trees, woodlots and One Mile Creek and one of its tributaries. The Rand Estate is a clear and compelling example of natural environment and water resource features in a settlement area that the Region's Official Plan should be focused on protecting and enhancing rather than abandoning.

As indicated in our correspondence of July 15 (copy enclosed), it was and remains our view that Option 3C best accords with the input that the Region has received during all of the consultation on this issue. The initial recommendation of staff that Option 3B is preferred is, with respect, neither traceable or replicable given the input the Region has received. That recommendation can only be justified if the Region acknowledges that other considerations have been brought to bear outside the input received during the consultation process. Those considerations should be made explicit if the Committee elects not to adopt Option 3C.

Substantively, it is our submission that the Region should and indeed must clearly map natural heritage system and water resource system features holistically using an ecosystem approach as required by both the Provincial Policy Statement under the Planning Act and the MMAF Statement of Environmental Values under the Environmental Bill of Rights. This should include buffers and linkages in accordance with a proper ecosystem approach, both outside and very importantly inside settlement areas. Such features should not and we submit cannot be ignored simply because they are inside

settlement areas. They are a critical component of not only ecosystem health; they enhance the quality of life for all within settlement areas.

Such an approach is not only required under relevant legislation, we submit it makes for good business. Developers will clearly know where the constraints are and municipalities within the Region can then deal with development proposals transparently and from a position of strength.

In closing, we urge staff and the Committee to consider carefully:

1. the input received during the consultation process;
2. the Region's obligations under the Planning Act and The Environmental Bill of Rights; and
3. the benefit of clear guidance to developers and lower tier municipalities with respect to ecosystem protection of natural heritage features and water resource systems, both inside and outside of settlement areas.

We thank you for your consideration and extend our appreciation for the efforts of staff and Council in this important endeavour.

SORE Association

[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)  
[sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca)

**Norman, Sean**

---

**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:32 PM  
**To:** Ian Darling  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara's New Official Plan

Hi Ian,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

**From:** Ian Darling <ian.darling@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 4:43 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara's New Official Plan

Hello ,

I would like to voice my pro-conservation opinion that the Natural Heritage systems and Water resource system 3C NHS and 2B WRS be extended into the settlement areas to promote the preservation of these systems throughout all of the region.

Thank you,

Ian Darling

--

Ian Darling

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** judy doerr <judydoerr505@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 1:00 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Cc:** Bradley, Jim  
**Subject:** NOP/CLIMATE CHANGE/"CRITICAL CHOICES FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF HEALTHY ECOSYSTEM IN OUR CHANGING WORLD".

NOP /PLANNING DEPT FOR THE BEST 2020 CHOICES

The Official Plan must reflect "the best environmental science"

To protect what is left of Niagara Natural Heritage and Natural Water Systems. Must take into consideration the up to date environmental science critical to sustaining our ecosystems in a climate change era. We will be missing an opportunity to assure Niagara residents AND future generations the most optimal protection is in place rather than basic choices that allow for loopholes and arbitrary discretion that create future unnecessary waste of time political process & tax dollars over and over. (like what went on for years with RIVERFRONT Dev. Protesting)..we need CLEAR regulation....that We can be proud and CONFIDENT in that our NHS/WRS will not be lost for children to enjoy healthy communities.....that is everyone's RESPONSIBILITY. It is what we expect from elected officials in 2020 and beyond.

Please use this vital opportunity to choose opt 3c for NHS and

2B for WRS.....it only makes sense given these critical times where biodiversity is critical to our survival and sustaining healthy communities for future generations....the science based evidence is there as proof we must use it and incorporate it into future planning.



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Huson, Diana  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 11:42 AM  
**To:** Kerry Kennedy  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean; Mostacci, Rino  
**Subject:** Re: Official plan feedback

Hi Kerry,

Thank you for reaching out with your feedback. We appreciate your input as this important policy takes form.

The 3C and 2B models were part of consultants report helping to conceptualize how we can proceed in thinking about what these plans (as part of the overall new official plan) and subsequent mapping could look like. It also helped to inform a robust model of public consultation that occurred incorporating 28 sessions over 15 days with a diverse group of stakeholders.

While there's still much work to do, I don't believe that what comes back to Council will be a 3X or 2Y model. It will most likely incorporate aspects of some or all of these models in proceeding to a mapping stage, which still requires more time. And probably more important will be the secondary plans developed by all of our municipalities, such as Pelham, that outline and implement these policies at the local level. They all form part of a very important puzzle!

Thank you for providing input on this. It's a very important project and we need as many people participating in the process as possible to ensure our policy accurately reflects the best interests of our communities.

I can tell you that our Committee has shown interest in upholding and championing environmental policy where possible so I believe we have a good mindset in examining and voting on this issue.

I hope that provides some clarification. Please let me know if I can be of further assistance. Have a wonderful day!

Diana Huson  
Regional Councillor  
Town of Pelham

On Oct 8, 2020, at 3:11 PM, Kerry Kennedy <forkennedys@hotmail.com> wrote:

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am submitting my response to the options presented for the Niagara Region Official Plan's natural heritage system and water resource system plans.

In order to be a resilient and sustainable community, the only informed options are 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS.

There was a time when decision makers and land owners didn't know better and made choices negatively impacting the ecological function of our land. In 2020 we have the science to know better. We understand that the ecosystem services provided by the biodiversity and health of connected wetlands, water courses and natural spaces are essential to human health and survival. Our choices now will impact us at a local level and contribute to the resilience of our globe.

Support for industry and population growth need to occur without further fragmenting the very fragile and already extensively damaged natural heritage systems in Niagara. This is critical. The removal of forest cover in Niagara has already damaged the ecological integrity and function of our systems. Without protecting the remaining connectors, including in settlement areas, we will be at higher risk, unable to support our diversity of species potential and suffer with poor water quality.

NHS 3C and WRS 2B are, without question, the prudent choices for our community.

Kerry Kennedy  
1088 Deborah Street  
Fonthill ON  
L0S 1E4

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:29 PM  
**To:** Kostyn  
**Subject:** RE: Feedback on NHS Stakeholder Groups / Public Meeting

Hi Kostyn,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

**From:** Kostyn <kostyn.petrunic@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 2:29 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Feedback on NHS Stakeholder Groups / Public Meeting

Hello,

My name is Kostyn Petrunick, and I am a resident of the Town of Lincoln (Jordan Station). I attended the "Virtual Public Information Centre: Natural Environment - Natural Heritage System" on September 23, 2020, and am providing feedback here because I don't believe I received the feedback form. Please confirm you received it.

I affirm the concerns which have already been raised by community members about the vague and jargon-filled language and format of the presentations, and I am expressing some additional concerns.

The first of these is that the NHS plan lacks an explicit goal. How can you plan something without having goals? Despite climate change supposedly being integrated across the Official Plan, the NHS options fail to mention it. The connection between climate change, biodiversity loss, and conservation are clear and well documented in The New Niagara Official Plan's Climate Change Discussion Paper from November 2019. We need to be specific in addressing this.

While some suggest that the choice is effective, comprehensive conservation or development, this is a false dichotomy. I am very much for thoughtful, urban planning and sustainable development. Currently, municipalities have nothing they can use to stand up to bad development applications, but a comprehensive NHS (and WRS) could serve this function. These plans can help councils get the kinds of development they actually want. We want good development, in the right places, to foster long-term, livable communities.

Additionally, we must protect natural heritage in settlement areas with strong linkages because so

much of Niagara is already designated as settlement area and to keep natural heritage protection outside of that would defeat the whole point of maintaining and enhancing ecosystems in the region.

Finally, I want to again voice my disappointment with the proposed options. Why would we accept two non-options (1 & 2), two bare minimum options (3A & 3B) and only one comprehensive option (3C)? Are we a bare minimum region? Do we want the bare minimum for our friends and neighbours?

NHS 3C and WRS 2B are the only truly sustainable options. Anything less is unacceptable.

Thank you for your time.

All the best,

Kostyn Petrunick (he/him)

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:33 PM  
**To:** LinaRich Lianga  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara official plan

Good evening Lina,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** LinaRich Lianga <linarichlianga@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 7:15 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara official plan

To whom it may concern,

I would like to voice my pro-conservation opinion that the Natural Heritage systems and Water resource system 3C NHS and 2B WRS be extended into the settlement areas to promote the preservation of these systems throughout all of the region.

Thank you

Lina Lianga

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Rob and Arlene Carson <rcarson1@cogeco.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 11:26 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Official Plan Review- Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems - Carson

I participated in the two Zoom meetings on Wednesday September 23 (Virtual Public Information Centre: Natural Environment – Natural Heritage Systems) and Thursday September 24 (Virtual Public Information Centre: Natural Environment – Water Resources Systems and Niagara Watershed Plan). Prior to those presentations, I was prepared to make a case for Options 3C and 2B.

I subsequently reviewed “Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, March 18, 2010, Natural Heritage Reference Manual for Natural Heritage Policies of the Provincial Policy Statement, 2005, Second Edition, Toronto”. This document outlines technical guidance for implementing natural heritage policies of the Provincial Policy Statement 2005 (PPS), the recommended technical criteria and approaches consistent with the PPS to protect natural heritage features and areas, and natural heritage systems in Ontario. No where are the various options in the Zoom presentations found. Proponents of specific developments must demonstrate that alternate approaches are consistent with the PPS.

In Section 2.1, Natural Heritage is defined. It states that natural features and areas shall be protected for the long term, ecological functions and biodiversity of natural heritage systems shall be maintained, restored or improved. It recognizes linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and groundwater features. Development and site alteration shall not be permitted in endangered/threatened species significant habitat, significant wetlands (in Ecoregions 5E, 6E and 7E i.e. below Canadian Shield – and significant Canadian Shield wetlands north), significant coastal wetlands, significant woodlots/valleylands south and east of Canadian Shield, significant wildlife habitat, significant areas of natural and scientific interest, unless demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on natural features or ecological functions, and on lands adjacent to natural heritage features and areas unless ecological function has been evaluated and no negative impacts on natural features and ecological functions has been demonstrated.

Planning authorities shall protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by identifying surface water features, groundwater features, hydrologic functions, natural heritage features and areas necessary for ecological and hydrologic integrity of watershed, and will maintain linkages and related functions among surface water features, groundwater features, hydrologic functions, natural heritage features and areas on a watershed basis. Protection for prime agriculture areas and mineral aggregate resources are recognized.

No development or alteration is permitted in a significant feature. No development or site alteration is permitted in adjacent lands unless ecological function is evaluated, concluding no negative impacts (EIS). The width of adjacent lands to significant wetlands is 120m.



Considerable emphasis in the Reference Manual is placed on linkages or corridors. The limitations and value/quality are discussed, and functions and scale of linkages are defined. Waterbodies/wetlands are disproportionately valuable, so water features, wetlands, hydrologically important areas must be protected. Water resources (surface/ground water, hydrologic functions) may require separate analysis to be factored into natural heritage system design.

The options considered by Niagara Region do not conform to the Reference Manual, especially the “rules” for buffers and linkages, and the relationship to settlement areas, in different options. I suggest that the Region abandon the options and develop a NHS and WRS that are fully compliant with the Reference Manual guidelines.

Robert Carson, M.Sc., P.Eng.  
1 McFarland Gate  
Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON  
LOS 1J0

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Sarah Lynch <splynch@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 12:34 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Niagara Region official plan

An inventory of Niagara's remaining natural areas, conducted between 2006 and 2009 by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA), concluded that Niagara only had 56.4% of the natural areas remaining that would be needed to ensure a science-based, functioning ecosystem into the future. The Region's own environmental consultants have stated that Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS have the best chance of preserving a functioning ecological system into the future. I support option 3C and option 2B.

Sarah Lynch  
L2R1Z1

Sent from my iPad

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:33 PM  
**To:** Tara Darling  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara Official Plan

Hi Tara,

Thank you for your comments.

We have forwarded your email regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan, to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

**From:** Tara Darling <tara.darling@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 4:45 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara Official Plan

Hello ,

I would like to voice my pro-conservation opinion that the Natural Heritage systems and Water resource system 3C NHS and 2B WRS be extended into the settlement areas to promote the preservation of these systems throughout all of the region.

Thank you,

Tara Darling

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:33 PM  
**To:** winkal winkal  
**Subject:** RE: Natural Heritage Systems

Good Evening Win,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** winkal winkal <winkal@sympatico.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 7:46 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>; Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Natural Heritage Systems

Greetings,

I wish to record my preference for option 3c in Niagara's Official Plan review under Natural Heritage Systems, and option 2B under Water Resource systems. These options will help to protect natural areas and natural features with linkages and buffers within settlement areas. This will make it clear where development can take place with the least amount of damage to our natural heritage.

The presence of natural areas close to residential neighbourhoods has proven invaluable in these current unprecedented times of anxiety and restricted activity. Being out in nature, having forests and fields and wildlife close to us has been essential to our mental and physical health.

I cannot be more emphatic that these two options are the only options worth considering.

Sincerely,

Win Laar

8 Sheppard Cres., RR1, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0 905-262-5057 [winkal@sympatico.ca](mailto:winkal@sympatico.ca)

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:36 PM  
**To:** janetashleypollock@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Hi Ashley,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted via this email and for your continued participation at our virtual webinars.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in all of your identified topic areas of interest for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 3:54 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

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Name  
Ashley Pollock

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Email  
[janetashleypollock@gmail.com](mailto:janetashleypollock@gmail.com)

---

Phone  
905-687-6503

---

Organization or Affiliation

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Address  
24 Gale Crescent, Apt 2

---

City

St. Catharines

---

Specify City

St Catharines

---

Postal Code

L2R 3K9

---

Province

Ontario

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Topics of Interest

Urban Structure,Housing Strategy,Employment Lands Strategy,Land Budget,Natural Environment,Agriculture,Climate Change,Aggregates,Other

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Other Topics of Interest

pollution

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Comments

October 9th deadline: First thing I would like to say is that a recent notice on social media has said that comments regarding the “New Official Plan” for Niagara needs to be submitted by the public by Friday, October 9th. This feels uncomfortable ... 1) because the recent webinars (Sept 23, 24, Oct 7, 8, 20, 21) have not been completed; therefore, it can be construed that no matter any comments made by the public for the last 2 webinars could very well be ignored since they take place after Oct 9th. 2) because this, seemingly, cuts off the public before the planning process is completed (target date, I believe, is 2022). During that “over a year” time, things may change such as, new population moving into the region. 3) As well, the pandemic has changed things - we’re not as mobile as we were, we’re expected to stay at home much more, we’re expected to reduce close interactivity (family/friend bubbles), and so on. The more diverse, as in “live-work-play” a community is, the easier it is to fulfill pandemic restrictions. Focus of the plan: Climate change should be looked at as the most important. The greater the green canopy - as in more trees, less water-hungry, low-diversity lawns, more community gardens, more green roofs, more vertical gardens, more balcony gardens, many, many more trees/shade in heat-sink-large parking lots (or similar), etc, etc, etc - the lower air pollution will be. It’s also likely that soil/ground pollution would be lowered, or, at least, mitigated. And if a water feature (lake, pond, river, creek, etc) is available in an area, greenery along shorelines helps towards shoreline stabilization and flood mitigation (possible wildlife regeneration as well like more birds, more fish, etc). Our planet is becoming hotter, drier, along with more extreme weather events (and now it seems, more pandemics). This threatens our lives - it's even possible that people will die droves - hence, planning needs to take not just the causes of but also the results of climate change into account. Diversification in a community, too, is important - communities should be “live-work-play”. Housing that fulfills all needs (whether high or low density housing, though high density gives any resident more chances to interact with

others). Diverse housing also provides “affordability” and “affordable”. Work has always made up some part of any urban community - but retail, food services, offices, industry, even farming should be part of a community setting as well - such as, easier & faster to get to work, more employment opportunities (particularly) for younger people, etc. The trend to separate “live-work-play” components has led to “dead” areas. One example is an industrial park that’s only vibrant during the day (but scary, isolated, lonely at night). Play should be at our fingertips or within easy reach, wherever, whatever, whenever any of us are doing things such as, eating lunch under shade tree, walking/running/bicycling in a park, looking out an office/home window at other people playing, etc, etc, etc. Because the Niagara region also is a food basket (not just a fruit basket), agriculture is also terribly important. We need to partner up better between our urban and farming peoples and communities. We all should know how, what, why, where our food comes from - or, at the very least, be more familiar. All too often it seems, urban and farming communities are adversarial. They shouldn’t be. Ditto for all work environments - industries, offices, retail, etc. Pollution - we just simply need to clean it up - whether old stuff or new stuff. The public needs to be involved - all the way throughout this process. Nevermind, planning department & various partners expertise, the public lives here. The living “it” is also a type of expertise. The public needs to be involved in some kind of ongoing committee-type-partnership with Niagara Regional Planning - not just reading the latest news or email or announcement, watching a webinar, or some such . We need to be engaged.





**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 8:30 PM  
**To:** jmpotter068@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Hi Mary,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 3:27 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

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Name

Mary Potter

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Email

[jmpotter068@gmail.com](mailto:jmpotter068@gmail.com)

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Phone

905-892-2566

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Organization or Affiliation

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Specify City  
**Ridgeville**

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Postal Code  
**L0S 1M0**

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Province  
**Ontario**

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Topics of Interest  
**Natural Environment**

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Other Topics of Interest

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Comments  
I hope you will select the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System that provides the most benefits for the Region's citizens.



**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 12:18 PM  
**To:** splynch@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Hi Sarah,

Thank you for the comments you have submitted regarding the development of the natural heritage system and water resource system for the new Niagara Official Plan.

We have forwarded your email to staff involved in the natural environmental work program for the new Niagara Official Plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 8, 2020 12:16 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

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Name  
Sarah Lynch

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[splynch@gmail.com](mailto:splynch@gmail.com)

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Organization or Affiliation

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Specify City  
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Postal Code  
L2R 1Z1

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Province  
Ontario

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Topics of Interest  
Housing Strategy,Natural Environment,Agriculture,Climate Change

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Other Topics of Interest

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Comments  
The Region's own environmental consultants on the project have stated that Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS have the best chance of preserving a functioning ecological system into the future. I support Option 3C and 2B.



Annette Gibbons  
9 Lawrence Avenue  
Grimsby, ON, L3M 2M1  
agibbons4@cogeco.ca

October 9, 2020

Re: Niagara Region Official Plan  
Natural Heritage System (NHS) and Water Resource System (WRS)

Comments

1. Natural systems don't stop at municipal boundaries. We need to include buffers, linkages and potential enhancement areas in settlement areas.
2. Goals have not been set in terms of what the region is trying to achieve regarding environmental sustainability, biodiversity protection, ecosystem function and our climate crisis.
3. A well-defined NHS and WRS can help eliminate the contentious battles Niagara's municipalities keep having over development applications because if we know where we can't build, then we also know where we can.
4. Mapped NHS and WRS features and buffers/linkages and enhancement areas, including in settlement areas, can be tools municipalities use to negotiate with developers to get the kind of development they want. It's another tool in their tool chest.
5. Properly mapping the NHS and WRS can help achieve the higher-density, compact, transit friendly, live/work/play communities, with greenspace that we say we want but rarely get.
6. Settlement areas currently cover 20% of Niagara's landscape and will soon be more with boundary expansions from Welland and Niagara Falls.
7. Features in settlement areas cannot be protected over the long term unless they have buffers and linkages. Features that are not properly protected become future development sites.
8. A robust NHS WRS option is needed because that is just the first step and we know that protections will get watered down in every step going forth, from decisions made on what is mapped and what isn't to what happens when development applications come forward and the developers consultants argue that buffers can be reduced and significant woodlands are no longer significant etc.

9. None of the options actually lives up to the goals of the policy framework for the Natural Environment as outlined in the Region's current Official plan that states: The Healthy Landscape policies apply an ecosystem approach based upon the following principles a) Ecosystem Health and Sustainability – to ensure healthy, resilient and self-sustaining ecosystems over the long term while also meeting human needs. We know from the work done by the NPCA during the Nature For Niagara natural heritage inventory work (2006-2009) that Niagara only had 56.4% of the natural systems left that are needed for a science-based, functioning ecosystem that could sustain itself into the future. Their modelling showed that even if they did their best to protect what was left, they could only save 90% of the 56.4%. We have lost much since and none of the options protects all of what's left. We don't have what we need now to protect a functioning ecosystem, so it is absolutely essential that the NHS and WRS protect as much as possible.
10. Staff said Climate change was not a separate item in the Official Plan because climate change would be "woven into" all parts of the plan. How is it woven into the NHS/WRS options? Climate change is barely mentioned in the report.
11. The Region should be a leader in biodiversity protection. In the Region's current Official Plan under Objectives for a Healthy Landscape it says:
  - 7.1 To maintain a healthy natural environment for present and future generations.
  - 7.2 To conserve Niagara's distinctive natural character.
  - 7.3 To apply an ecosystem-based approach to planning and decision-making.
  - 7.4 To foster and promote cooperation among public agencies, private landowners and community groups.
  - 7.5 To support and encourage environmental stewardship and restoration.

How does this plan fulfill these objectives?

Please choose Option 3C for the Natural Heritage System(NHS) and Option 2B for the Water Resource System (WRS).

Sincerely,

Annette Gibbons

# Niagara Region Natural Heritage System and Water Resources System Concept Plans

## Introduction

I would like to thank Niagara Region's staff for their public consultation presentations and for providing the opportunity to comment on their concept plan for the development of the regional Natural Heritage System and Water Resources System. Developing these plans, given the number of competing interests for land use in the Region, is not a simple task but it is extraordinarily important.

**It is vital that we ensure that this is a science driven process which then can be separately considered on its own merits prior to being considered under the many lens of political, economic, and planning influences. Fortunately, much of the science is available.**

Though the planning is in the concept stage, the details of the science must be the guiding factors. What is not clear from the presentations is the extent to which the detailed work which was completed by the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) in studies such as the *Natural Heritage Areas Inventory* (NHAi) and *Nature for Niagara's Future* is being utilized. **This work indicates that almost a decade ago Niagara was in the position of having a significant 'natural deficit' meeting only 56% of targets identified as being required for having a healthy ecosystem.**

These plans must include target setting to ensure that there is adequate representation of the natural communities and their components. The plans must clearly state what the Region's goals are for our Natural and Water Systems and demonstrate that measures will be included which will both retain and protect existing assets and identify and support opportunities for remediation where needed. This would ensure that there is a clear understanding of whether the proposed actions will accomplish what we as a community expect.

As stated in the NPCA Natural Heritage Areas Inventory (2010);

*The Niagara Peninsula is located within the northern most range of the deciduous forest region in North America (also referred to as the Carolinian Canada zone). It has the warmest average annual temperatures, the longest frost-free growing season and the mildest winters in Canada. **This zone represents 1% of Canada's land area and it has more species of plants and animals than any other ecosystem in Canada.** (Carolinian Canada website).*

We must always remember that the Niagara Region is a unique natural area of Canada and we have an opportunity and an obligation to acknowledge it as such through this exercise. It is likely our last chance.



# Niagara Region Natural Heritage System

## Proposed Concept Plan

### Comments

#### Social/Economic Factors

**Option 3C is the best choice from the available options and would best serve the needs of our residents, as well as somewhat support the further development of potential ecotourism opportunities.**

When considering the options presented, it is important to understand the multiple functions of natural systems. As well as being important for biodiversity and natural functions, easy community access and usage is important for the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors. Providing adequate access to natural areas within settlement areas, which are within walking distance of a high percentage of the local community, contributes to the quality of life of its residents.

The demand for access to natural features has been clearly demonstrated since the beginning of COVID-19, where many natural areas were overwhelmed with usage by both residents and visitors. As we seek to increase settlement densities the demand for access to natural areas is likely to increase even more as property sizes decrease and populations increase and we must ensure that there are adequate greenspaces, especially robust natural systems, to address resident needs. There is no indication that consideration of community needs has been included in of the options offered and if not then this does not serve the needs of our residents.

Many natural areas within urban boundaries show signs of degradation which can be attributed to high use and incursion of adjacent land uses. This clearly demonstrates the need for adequate buffers to protect the values of the core areas. Urban linkages are also important within neighbourhoods to promote movement of both human and natural elements between urban natural features.

There are potential economic benefits to ensuring we have robust natural systems, both urban and rural, from a tourism perspective. The proposed Niagara Peninsula Geopark discusses the potential to expand ecotourism and the associated economic benefits. The efforts of local groups recognizes the economic value of promoting activities such as bird watching which generates millions of dollars annually in the Point Pelee area and similarly has the potential of contributing to our local economy . There is no indication that this planning exercise takes into account a need to consider the potential economic benefits which can be realized through ecotourism by maximizing the diversity and potential of our natural communities.

#### Natural Systems Functions

**Option 3C is the best choice from the available options as it would provide the crucial buffers and linkages needed in both urban and rural areas to help retain the health and natural values of these communities.**

As noted in the introductory remarks, the public presentations did not indicate the extent to which the available science has been used to develop the options presented. No targets are identified and we have

no indication as to the effectiveness, from a conservation and protection perspective, of what would be retained under these options. There is no indication that climate change will have impacts on these natural communities, or any real indication of potential impacts from other sources as the Region's Climate Change Discussion Paper does not discuss natural systems impacts in detail. This paper does however state;

*Land use planning has been identified as one of the most effective processes for local adaptation to climate change, as existing tools available, such as official plans, zoning by-laws, and development permits can help to minimize climate change risk to the community.*

And further;

*Climate change adaptation can occur through design and orientation that promotes green infrastructure, such as street trees, urban forests, permeable surfaces, bioswales, and green roofs.*

What we do know is;

- The Niagara watershed meets only has, at most, 56% of the targets identified for a healthy ecosystem as a natural heritage system. These targets were set during stakeholder engagement sessions over a year and a half during the process of developing the Nature for Niagara's Future study and are mostly focused on ecological, hydrological and habitat functions. **This indicates that almost a decade ago Niagara was in the position of having a significant 'natural deficit'.** Given the increasing development activity in the watershed one can state with a large degree of certainty that this deficit has increased since the study.
- Remediation needs must be recognized with opportunities identified and planned for now if we are going to decrease our 'natural deficit'
- Urban natural areas require linkages and adequate buffers if they are not going to be at risk of losing their ecological value, further increasing our 'natural deficit'
- Climate change will likely add a host of stressors which then have the potential to increase this deficit or which can be better mitigated through adequate planning, ensuring the natural communities and systems are as robust as possible.

And there is no indication that the available science has been adequately utilized on its own to determine how best to develop this strategy, separate from planning and political considerations.

**The science must come first, followed by other considerations, if we are to have a Natural Heritage System which will adequately address protection and mitigates natural deficits. And the process must be transparent.**

**Therefore, though these comments identify 3C as the best of the proposed options, it must be noted that the approach, the process itself, does not appear to be suitable to determine how to best move forward to develop a science based Natural Heritage System which will stand the test of time.** Yes this is a planning exercise but it must have solid foundations in science.

It is recommended that further options be developed which build on the existing Option 3C and include science based information as to where identified natural deficits in the Region may be addressed, as well as clearly indicating the associated relative conservation and protection benefits. Further options can then be developed which layer on and clearly identify political and planning considerations which may influence final outcomes.

## **Niagara Region Water Resources Systems Comments**

**Based on the options provided, option 2B is the best choice.**

NPCA has provided a watershed report card for many years which 'grades' a number of components of our natural systems, including our ground water and surface water, in the Watershed.

Surface water quality is an ongoing concern and according to the NPCA's 2018 Report, 'Most of the watersheds scored a D grade and have poor water quality'.

While groundwater quality was graded a 'B', it was noted that some groundwater quality is impacted by adjacent land use.

It is unfathomable that water resource protection in the Niagara Region should not be as stringent as possible given the poor water quality which exists in the Region and the importance of the resource. Given that the NPCA report identifies urban Combined Sewer Outlets (CSOs) as a contributing factor, it is imperative that urban protection is included in this plan.

### Final Comments

NPCA Board meeting minutes, dated July 15, 2020, state under Preliminary Preferred Options (pg. 15);

Following the evaluation of the options, preliminary preferred options were identified for the NHS and WRS. The preliminary preferred options are the recommendations of the Consultant team and are supported by the professional opinion of Regional Planning Staff.

Option 3B was identified as the preliminary preferred NHS option.

Option 2A was identified as the preliminary preferred WRS option.

Reasons for these choices were provided and can be found in these minutes.

These statements raise a number of questions.

1. Why did the Region's presenter at the September 22<sup>nd</sup> public consultation presentation state that there was not a staff preferred option?
2. Are these preferences science based?

3. Are these preferences in the best interests of our residents, our communities, and our natural systems, and future generations?
4. How do we know if these stated preferences are best, or will adequately protect our natural systems if they are not based on the best available science?

We deserve clear answers prior to further resources being committed to this exercise.

#### Recommendations

1. Develop further science based options which build on 3C (NHS) and 2B (WRS) and include targets which will act as measurables to determine effectiveness of the strategies over time.
2. Provide separate information on political and planning issues which might influence these options.
3. Incorporate climate change impacts into these options to determine how this stressor might impact the value of the ecological features and what can be done to reduce those impacts.
4. Withdraw the Preliminary Preferred Options until such time as sufficient information is available and analyzed.

**Submitted by**

**Liz Benneian**

**Although the pdf form that was sent to us does not state it has word count limits, it seems to so I have submitted my comments in this format.**

**1. In thinking about all of the options reviewed for the natural heritage system and water resource system, which option(s) best satisfy the following statements:**

**a. Represents a forward-thinking approach to natural environment planning. Why do you feel that way?**

None of the options represents a really forward-thinking approach to NHS or WRS planning because that would have to start with a goal of trying to protect and enhance enough features, buffers, linkages and enhancement areas to create a minimum science-based system threshold that was likely to result in a functioning and resilient ecosystem that would be robust enough to last into the future.

I believe the planning for the NHS and WRS puts the cart before the horse in terms of you are already roughing out what features to include and exclude, inside and outside of settlement areas, without a clear understanding of what you are trying to achieve and what you need to achieve it.

Under the Region's current Official Plan, in the policy section on the natural environment it notes:

"The Healthy Landscape policies apply an ecosystem approach based upon the following principles:

- a) Ecosystem Health and Sustainability – to ensure healthy, resilient and self –sustaining ecosystems over the long term while also meeting human needs.
- b) An Ounce of Prevention – to emphasize better up-front planning to avoid problems.
- c) Environmental Protection Plus Enhancement – to protect the existing environment while supporting environmental restoration.
- d) Stewardship Plus Regulation – to combine support for the stewardship activities of landowners, community groups and public agencies with regulations to maintain ecosystem health.
- e) Thinking Globally, But Acting Locally – to address the cumulative effects of individual actions."

None of the Options will achieve a). Without a goal you cannot achieve b). We know from the Natural Heritage Inventory work that the NPCA did between 2006 and 2009, that Niagara only

had, at that time, (and so much has been lost since!) 56.4% of natural areas to meet that minimum science-based threshold for sustainability. Even in their best case “no constraints” modelling only 90% of that amount would have been preserved. What you are proposing will save so much less. I think citizens deserve to know how much less. So, none of the options fulfills c). Stewardship and regulation have not been mentioned in discussions on the NHS/WRS so d) is not addressed and there is virtually no discussion in the documents or at stakeholder meetings of addressing cumulative impacts so that eliminates e).

You have started from the wrong base.

You are looking at restrictions instead of possibilities, to give as was stated more “flexibility” to developers. For instance, Under the 3C option which is the “best” Option you’ve presented, you include small linkages inside of settlement areas “where the potential area is in a natural state”. Why not include all potential linkages in settlement areas and leave it to the municipalities to negotiate as site plan applications come forward? Linkages are linkages. If they are not in a natural state, they could be enhanced. Even linkages that are no more than a sidewalk with minimal greenery on each side can serve as a valuable linkage, not only for small creatures, but for larger animals especially at night after most human activity has ceased.

The same with including mandatory minimum buffers for significant features within settlement areas. We have all seen the applications from developers that claim backyards are sufficient buffers. If the options were really forward-thinking, then they would be stating whatever was needed to protect the features, in and outside of settlement areas over the long term. **Unless there are appropriate buffers from features in settlement areas, you know they will not survive, and when they degrade, they become open to development so that ultimately, no natural areas will exist in our cities.**

Municipalities continually complain that they feel their hands are tied in negotiations with developers. Mapping natural heritage features, their buffers, linkages and potential enhancement areas and protecting/designating them, wherever possible, outside of settlement areas, and identifying them inside of settlement areas, would provide some leverage to municipalities to negotiate with developers when development applications come forward so that our Region’s cities have a hope of creating livable communities that are attractive, that harness the green infrastructure benefits that natural areas provide and that give citizens the access to nature that they need.

For me, the fight to get an ecosystem approach to planning began in 2000 when citizens fought for, and eventually got, a science-based natural heritage system in North Oakville, the first of its kind in Ontario, upheld by the OMB in a precedent-setting decision. I can’t believe that 20 years later, I am still fighting for the same thing. Protecting the natural systems on which we depend is not forward-thinking, it is necessary.

Of course, of the options presented, 3C and 2B are preferable but they are not sufficient.

**b. Helps ensure that growth takes place in the most appropriate places in the Region. Why do you feel that way?**

All of the Options make Growth in settlement areas less restrictive to developers and therefore guide growth to urban areas.

3C and 2B shouldn't be looked at as an impediment to growth in settlement areas. Rather identifying buffers, linkages and potential enhancement areas inside of settlement areas should be viewed as tools municipalities can use to guide the growth that will occur to be as beneficial to the community and least costly to existing taxpayers as possible in terms of providing a more compact, denser urban form that supports public transportation and leaves room for parks and natural areas, and all the benefits they provide, that make a city a desirable place to live.

**c. Achieves an appropriate balance between protecting the natural environment and supporting agriculture in the Region. Why do you feel that way?**

As you know, and as is outlined in the Technical Report, all of your options protect agriculture.

Neither the NHS nor the WRS as proposed, places any restrictions on agriculture. Though they likely should in terms of requiring sufficient mandatory buffers to protect watercourses.

I understand that agriculture is extremely important to Niagara. And I support local agriculture. However, like any business, I think agriculture should do its best to limit the harm it causes to commonly held resources including our water.

We know that Niagara only has one cold water stream left and it is in trouble. We know our ground water is highly contaminated with agricultural runoff. We know the Great Lakes, our drinking water supply, is being overloaded with phosphorous that runs off farm fields.

Much of this could be mitigated with vegetative buffers along watercourses, or in farmers terms, "ditches".

**d. Achieves an appropriate balance between protecting the natural environment and supporting growth and economic development in the Region. Why do you feel that way?**

What is "an appropriate balance"? If we are leaving less trees/wetlands/meadows/natural areas than needed to mitigate pollution, prevent flooding, protect our drinking water, produce oxygen, feed wildlife, prevent erosion, promote pollination, for people to recreate, to create livable, attractive cities, to protect the area's natural beauty and our health and our vital tourism and viticulture industry, is that an appropriate balance?

The issue shouldn't be sacrificing one to protect the other. Growth and economic development can be achieved at the same time natural systems are protected and even enhanced.

Every city has acres of land along major transportation routes that are filled with single-story commercial buildings with large parking lots out front. Many of these commercial spaces are



now empty as COVID has accelerated the decline in storefront retail. In the era of online shopping, many of these retail spaces will never be needed again. As well, we are now experiencing a large number of empty commercial/office spaces with COVID accelerating a work-from-home trend. These already serviced lands, adjacent to public transportation, should be redeveloped into human scale (4- to 6-storey) buildings at street front (more storeys behind), with commercial on the bottom, and more affordable housing above, that would meet the needs of both younger and older members of our community and with parking directed below ground and with lots of space for plazas and parks and other communal assets that make a city livable.

This kind of compact urban growth is what we keep saying we want but that is rarely what we get as even in our urban areas sprawling development of single-family homes and townhouses continues to be favoured over a more compact urban form, and as development of greenfields is favoured over redevelopment.

You have not provided an option that provides sufficient protection to the natural environment while supporting growth and economic development. But of the options that you have provided 3C and 2B comes closest.

## **2. In thinking about all of the options reviewed for the natural heritage system and water resource system...**

### **a. What do you like about the options — what are the ‘positives’ and ‘advantages’?**

The positives in all the 3s and 2B is that this Region is finally moving away from the features-only based system that it has clung to long after most municipalities have created more science-led, eco-system-based planning.

3C and 2B allow for the most supporting features, specially the critical linkages between features.

### **b. What don't you like about the options?**

NHS and WRS plans are being created without goals in mind. How can you know if the plan you are creating is capable of achieving the results you want in terms of protection of Regional natural areas and water resources if you haven't defined them? Where is the science? Where is the data?

How can could you have presented a preferred option to the P&EDC before you had the basic information these decisions should be made on? NHS and WRS options should be driven by goals and defined by science.

Also, as already made clear in my comments above, the options identified are not robust enough to actually protect the features that have been/will be identified, especially in settlement areas.

I should point out that Natural Heritage System planning in Oakville started with the Mapping of Natural heritage features, buffers and linkages in a joint effort by the MNRF, Conservation

Halton and the Town of Oakville. Once the mapping was done, then policies and planning were created.

2A is totally inadequate to protect our water resource system. Only 2B should be considered.

The Region needs the strongest possible NHS and WRS options because as you well know there will be unlimited opportunities to water down protection for NHS features and at every step of the process going forward, from the mapping stage, to the submission of site plans.

One big issue with mapping is that you have acknowledged that you will not be able to map everything so will have to rely on environmental assessments submitted by developers' consultants and as we all know, while they identify features, they then usually make the case why they can still be destroyed. Not good enough.

The Region should be responsible for knowing what ecological and water resource systems it has. whether you build on the good work of the NPCA of a dozen years ago, whether you have to hire the NPCA or other consultants again, whatever, get the mapping done.

**3. In consideration of all of the options and variations for identifying a natural heritage system and water resource system, what would you recommend be put forward as a preferred option for the natural heritage system and water resource system?**

If I had the ability to support an alternative Option it would be one that:

1. Set a goal that was the most protective of existing features and would designate them with mandated buffers and linkages and identified enhancement areas that were sufficient to at least protect what we have (which is about half of what is actually needed as per the NPCA Nature for Niagara study).
2. In my NHS Option 3D would:
  - Identify additional features in and out of settlement areas
  - Identify supporting features inside and outside of settlement areas including potential enhancement areas
  - Include large medium and small linkages outside of settlement areas
  - Include suggested large medium linkages inside settlement areas.
  - Include mandatory small linkages wherever possible inside settlement areas.
  - Prescribe mandatory buffers outside of settlement areas
  - Prescribe mandatory minimum buffers for features inside of settlement areas
  - Prescribe minimum buffers for supporting features inside of settlement areas.

Furthermore, with the understanding that the Region's residual Natural areas are not sufficient to provide the residents of this Region with a functioning ecosystem now or over the long-term, and as the lead for environmental planning in the Region, the Region should work with municipalities to promote the renaturalizing of our urban areas so they, too become a part of the natural ecosystems through measures that include but are not limited to:

1. Plans to naturalize 25% of municipal parks
2. Require the planting of only native trees, shrubs and wildflowers on all new developments and on Municipal and regional lands
3. Begin a public education campaign to highlight the benefits of planting native.

4. Support, through partnerships with the NPCA, municipalities and community groups, naturalization on public and private lands in urban areas.

Of the options identified, I can only support 3C and 2B.

5. **What, if any, additional information beyond that considered to date, would you share to inform the identification of a preferred option for the natural heritage system and water resource system?**

If you want to make your NHS/WRS more defensible, I suggest wording in the Official Plan that the protection of Niagara's natural heritage and water resources is a first priority for the Region. The fact such a line was included in Oakville's Official plan was of significant importance in the precedent-setting decision upholding the NHS when more than two dozen developers took the Town to the OMB.

## **6. Additional comments/feedback.**

I do not appreciate being told that what I have heard and what I have read is untrue.

Staff presented their preferred options to the P&EDC, which were 3B and 2A. In their report it was also suggested that the committee could relieve the staff from carrying out anymore public consultation. The fact that the committee did not do that doesn't negate the fact that staff suggested it. Therefore, it is right to conclude that staff meant what they said when they told the P&EDC they had a preferred option and, in fact, were so supportive of it, they thought further public consultation unnecessary.

As a citizen, I do not appreciate elected officials, acting as surrogates for planning staff, telling me to stop saying what I know to be true.

Intimidation does not engender public trust. Pretending there was no preferred option, as was stated during the public consultation meeting, when there was, also does not engender public trust.

Second, I registered for the stakeholder consultation, but I listened in to all of the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of public consultations. I came away thinking that if I hadn't already been through a multi-year fight for the Province's first NHS, if I had not read the Technical report and other available information about the NHS/WRS planning process and if I wasn't already familiar with Provincial and municipal planning policy, I would have found much of what was presented as unintelligible.

Too much time was spent on explaining Provincial planning policy. It could have been greatly simplified. Too much time was spent on options you were barely considering, and not enough time was spent on really drilling down on the key options.

The presenters went well over-time, limiting time for people to ask questions.

Some answers didn't address the questions asked or did but then became so long-winded, adding in so much extraneous information, that the answer was lost.

There wasn't any clarity on what the NHS and WRS was meant to achieve, likely because no clear goals have been set. There was no clear idea of "here's where we are now" and "here's where we want to be."

I found the maps that were used misleading as they suggested that everything in the Greenbelt and the Niagara Escarpment Plan was already "protected" natural area when that is hardly the case.

I would hope in the future, the region can find a better way to conduct public engagement on such an important project that has the possibility of protecting, or not protecting, Niagara's natural heritage and water resources for future generations. The Region and its citizens should be partners in this exercise and a more consultative public engagement process would help.

**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** Bernadette Secco <bernadette.secco@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 10:54 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Cc:** Making Our Mark  
**Subject:** Natural Heritage & Water Resource Options  
**Attachments:** image.jpg; ATT00001.txt

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Whom It May Concern:

My comments are, my preferences. That is, for the Natural Heritage System, I support option 3C. For Water Resource System, I support Option 2B.

The chart below explains my reasons.

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Cheryl Schonewille <csbaybeach@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 10:34 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Saving our Environment

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hello Sean,

Please incorporate all future decisions involving the Niagara Region with the first priority to protect our remaining natural resources. Please don't pave over paradise!

We must protect what we can't manufacture.

Sincere regards,  
Cheryl Schonewille  
Fort Erie.

**Norman, Sean**

---

**From:** D Labute <ddlabute@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 9:07 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Official Plan Review

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Mr No

The so called protected Core Natural Heritage areas in Niagara are being eaten up by development to the point that they will no longer survive.

The OP states that an EIS must be conducted on the land within 120 metres adjacent to a PSW greater than 2 ha in size. (Table 6-1 Core Natural Heritage Components and adjacent lands)

A property owner can have the NPCA forester mark off the 30 metre buffer around the PSW. The owner can then start to clear cut and grade the area outside the subject land (which I will call Area 1). If there is another polygon of the PSW complex located 200 metres from Area 1 the 30 metre buffer will be marked and cut. The sad part is that the NPCA and Region allow this to happen, disregarding the 120 metre rule (Ref Polygon 3 & 4 Drapers Creek along Sumbler Rd in Welland)

- Heritage corridor is lost between Polygon 3&4 and Polygon 13 on Clare Ave and Webber Rd, Welland
- Wildlife habitat is smaller area, less nesting areas and feeding grounds.
- Not a violation because no work was done within the PSW buffer.

As long as the property owner or developer has not applied for a permit to develop the area, the 120 metre buffer requirement for the EIS in the OP does not apply. When the EIS is performed, the property between the two polygons is just barren land. All vegetation is gone (wetland plants and soil), no furry animals or amphibians. The EIS can now recommend a reduced buffer around the PSW from 30 to 15 metres and the NPCA and Region will approve it.

For over 5 years I have tried to have the NPCA and the City of Welland remove an illegal drain pipe that is connected into the city sewer. It is still in place today. (Polygon 15 Drapers Creek in Welland.)

The Draper Creek PSW complex is being destroyed and examples are all along South Pelham Rd.

ROPA 11 the removal of Polygon 15 Drapers Creek from the Official Plan was denied by the Region. In June 2016. November 2016 the OMB ruled against the removal of Polygon 15 from the Drapers Creek complex based on the incorrect information in the EIS.

Niagara has lost too much of our Core Natural Heritage areas by so called 'removal of dead and dying ash' trees and again reducing the NPCA regulated 30 metre wetland buffer to 15 metres.

It is time to save Thundering Waters and the Waverly forest from reckless development.

Respectfully  
Don LaBute  
Welland

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Ed Smith <edsmith121@yahoo.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 3:29 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Comments on the NHS

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good afternoon Sean,

I have been following the process for the development of a NHS at the region and would like to take this opportunity to express my dissatisfaction with the options presented.

I struggle to identify any real efforts at environmental stewardship and visionary growth plans for the environmental deficits that Niagara currently faces. From an outside perspective it is difficult to see this as anything except an effort to do a minimal amount for Niagara environment. I believe our environment needs more than a minimal response plan. I believe the Niagara Region should be setting examples for the green future of this Region.

I would be remiss to fail to mention the lack of measurable goals for Niagara. Water quality, tree canopy, climate change, eco-system health indicators, so many opportunities for the Region to demonstrate a true commitment. I just don't see it happening in these options.

I believe more can be accomplished, the Region can do better than these options suggest. I ask the Region to assume a role of visionary leadership on these issues in order to guarantee that so much of what we value about the Niagara Region is maintained for generations.

Thank you,

Ed Smith  
St Catharines



**Norman, Sean**

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**From:** June Chipp <juneechipp@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 10:52 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning,

Niagara Region is responsible for protecting our natural environment and water resources, so that they may be enjoyed by all and not irretrievably lost. Please make this a priority in all future planning and decisions.

Thank you.

June Chipp  
Fort Erie

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Josh Michener <jmichener@live.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 8:23 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Cc:** Dahlia Steinberg  
**Subject:** Choosing options 3c and 2b for the NHS and WRS is a must. Please think of the future of future people.

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Sean, please watch David Attenborough's new documentary, "A Life On Our Planet", with your family sometime. We need to, not only stop reducing the amount and types of natural areas we have, we need to increase them, we need to expand and protect areas of biodiversity or our great-grandchildren will suffer. Please encourage the most robust options in this decision and know you've done the right thing. You have the power to stand up and keep this region beautiful!

Sincerely,

Josh Michener

( A concerned father and longtime Niagara resident who's in love with the natural biodiversity we still have and who doesn't want to see it negatively impacted.)

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** leo thrash <huizdashthrash@yahoo.ca>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 7:24 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** preservation of green space

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Mr Norman,  
I would like to encourage you to please do what you can to preserve green space and to stop the sprawl of development. What happened to preserving the escarpment? Where did the greenbelt go?  
The results of the greed of developers and governments brings tears to my eyes. What was once such a pretty place to live is fast being bulldozed and we are becoming Toronto-like. Towns have lost there definition and distinction. Wildlife has no place to go. Bring back regulation! Feedback on this issue should not be necessary. Ridiculousness!  
Thanks for your time,  
Leona Thrasher  
87 Mildred Avenue,  
St Catharines, ON

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Marcia Carlyn <marcia.carlyn@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 11:00 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Please Help Save the Environment!

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Sean,

As a senior planner, I hope you put the highest priority on saving our environment and natural resources. We're counting on you!

Thanks for your help,

Marcia Carlyn  
Crystal  
Beach

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** not disclosed <abraxof@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, October 9, 2020 1:12 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** Biodiversity

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the Niagara Region email system. Use caution when clicking links or opening attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Sean,

I think we should protect all the natural sites that are possible. There are already enough developments. Do we need to look any further than our ever disappearing winter and global warming?

Of course our kids but so do the adults who take care of the kids \*all humans\*. It's a huge boost for mental health not to mention physical health which are both directly linked.

Probably someone smart could also make an economic link between preservation that is more enduring and meaningful than profit of developers, construction companies and city taxes.

Pitter patter. get at er'.

thanks

mark.

## **Feedback on the Natural Heritage System (NHS):**

At the outset of the NHS Public Information Consultation (PIC) via zoom, we were told the goal was to set a DIRECTION. The technical report states: “*Option 3C best represents a FORWARD thinking SYSTEMS APPROACH ...*” So why would regional staff or councillors choose anything BUT the BEST, forward-directed option for the environment and people of Niagara in the Regional Official Plan?

If COVID -19 has taught us anything, it’s the importance of having as much nature as possible where we live — for the simple pleasures, restorative and immune system benefits it provides.

The disastrous, outdated features-based approach still in use here (aided and abetted for half a decade by the thankfully-ousted NPCA rogue regime) ... has resulted in tremendous loss of natural heritage — what remains needs the strongest ‘catch-up’ protection possible. Given the compounding negative impact of climate change on top of development pressures? Even Option 3C doesn’t go far enough ... but it’s the best option shown — to date.

With Option 3C as a solid foundation in settlement areas, Niagara’s towns and cities could follow up with their own forward-thinking enhancement/restoration efforts and eco policies (such as naturalizing and boosting shade-giving tree canopy) — to add protection of our natural environment and enjoyment of it (so important to mental and physical well-being).

ONLY Option 3C prescribes mandatory buffers for Provincially Significant Wetlands (PSWs), but not in settlement areas (where development happens). Mandatory buffers are the ONLY way to protect these precious natural flood controllers and air purifiers from falling prey to Environmental Impact Studies (bought and paid for by developers and usually not peer reviewed) ‘justifying’ reduced buffers. [I tried explaining this to an aunt in California and she thought I was joking.]

Planning staff state concern that Option 3C “*may pose unintentional consequence of developers pushing for expansion of urban boundaries due to resulting reduction of available land within settlement areas*” — but include no evidence-based risk assessment to measure benefits against unintended negative consequence. [News flash: It’s already happening — as brownfields abound — so that concern is invalid.]

Will Option 3C tighten limits on what can be developed? Yes — to protect our natural heritage. But just as Option 3C will map what CAN’T be developed, it will make it clear what CAN be. And maybe will get developers doing some forward thinking of their own — building up not out!

The technical report clearly shows Option 3C as providing the best protection of our natural heritage system — features, buffers and linkages — which should be the first priority objective vs. providing flexibility for developers! That priority should be evident in the name alone.

— Linda Manson, Niagara Falls

**Feedback on the Water Resource System (WRS) on NEXT page ...**

### **Feedback on the Water Resource System (WRS):**

The BEST choice of WRS options is as CLEAR as the QUALITY of our WATER should be: 2B.

How do I know? By reading what's in the technical report ... and by hearing the answer given to my question at the WRS Public Information Consultation (PIC).

I asked: *"What do you see as the key long-term differences between 2A and 2B — impact wise?"*

North-South Environmental's expert replied:

*"Impact wise? Benefits first? **More features, more area covered ... better quality water.**"*

BETTER QUALITY WATER with 2B: What more do regional councillors need to know?  
Why would anyone ever settle for anything less — for the people of Niagara?

— Linda Manson, Niagara Falls

[Feedback on the Natural Heritage System \(NHS\) on PREVIOUS page.](#)

## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 2:14 PM  
**To:** Norman, Sean  
**Subject:** FW: Long Term Plan

**From:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 22, 2020 10:58 AM  
**To:** Banach, Isaiah <Isaiah.Banach@niagararegion.ca>; Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** FW: Long Term Plan

---

**From:** Ken Lilley <[badhare@cogeco.ca](mailto:badhare@cogeco.ca)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, October 21, 2020 9:20 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <[makingourmark@niagararegion.ca](mailto:makingourmark@niagararegion.ca)>  
**Subject:** Long Term Plan

I believe a responsible long term plan must mandate a reduction in our regional population.

We must reduce our pollution and our impact on global warming. We must also stop our biodiversity destruction.

It is obvious continuous growth has not and will not work.

Thank you for your consideration.



## Norman, Sean

---

**From:** Making Our Mark  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 4:46 PM  
**To:** jkotsch@gmail.com  
**Subject:** RE: Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

Hi John,

Thank you for submitting your comments on various topic areas of the new Niagara Official Plan.

While some of your comments may be more relevant to local municipal planning responsibilities, we will certainly be forwarding your email to staff involved in the natural environment, housing, and transportation work programs for the development of our new plan, for their consideration.

Best Regards,  
Official Plan Team

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**From:** Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>  
**Sent:** Thursday, October 29, 2020 4:11 PM  
**To:** Making Our Mark <makingourmark@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Online Form - Official Plan 2019 Updates Request

To reply, copy the email address from below and put into 'To'. (if resident entered their email address)

---

Name

John Kotsch

---

Email

jkotsch@gmail

---

Phone

905-354-3109

---

Organization or Affiliation

---

Address

6597 Erwin Cr.

---

City  
Niagara Falls

---

Specify City

---

Postal Code  
L2G 4Z9

---

Province  
Ontario

---

Topics of Interest  
Urban Structure,Housing Strategy,Natural Environment,Agriculture,Climate Change

---

Other Topics of Interest  
recreational use of regional lands

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Comments

• The regional level of government needs to develop a plan/strategy which protects and promotes the urban forest/canopy - too many residents, businesses, developers and government agencies remove mature trees without a thought to the long term effects of these actions. Too few trees are planted either on private or public lands to make up for the ongoing lost to our urban forest. • Enhancing and expanding our urban forest is an efficient and cost effective way to help our region to endure the negative effects of global warming, and increase the capture and storage of carbon from the atmosphere. • Hire regional arborists to aid and educate municipals, businesses, and citizens on the proper maintenance of our trees. • Pass a law that specifically requires municipalities to mandate developers of new homes, to immediately plant trees on boulevards once a unit is ready for occupancy. Too often developers do not plant trees until an entire subdivision is completed, which may take years. • The Region needs to partner with Hydro One in order to develop a plan which focuses on using hydro corridors as places of recreation and urban food gardens. Walking/cycling trails with inter and intra city connections need to be developed on these corridors. These trails would add to the quality of life for Niagara's citizens and add another tourist draw to our area. • Increase and improve the number of bike lanes on our streets/roads. A white line is not good enough on some of our busier streets. • Mandate that more affordable housing units should be built, especially in new housing / condo developments. Many municipalities around the world specify the percent of affordable units needed to be included in new housing developments.



## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Monday, November 2, 2020 1:07 PM  
**To:** 'writeon@sympatico.ca'  
**Cc:** Making Our Mark; Acs, Erik  
**Subject:** FW: NHS Options July 15 vs Sept 23 NHS buffers - major differences!  
**Attachments:** July 15 vs Sept 23 NHS buffers!.pdf

Hi Linda,

Following the presentation of the options as outlined in Technical Report #2 to the Planning and Economic Development Committee on July 15th, the consultant team prepared presentations for Stakeholder Workshops and the two Public Information Sessions. While these presentations were being prepared it became evident that the Technical Report #2 had some minor inconsistencies in the options and the text related to buffers (in particular how the table presented the options) that required clarification and revision to the table for the presentations to stakeholders and the public. The options presented to the stakeholders and public attempted to provide greater clarity and consistency on what was included in each option as described in Technical Report #2.

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

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**From:** Linda Manson <writeon@sympatico.ca>  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 31, 2020 11:36 AM  
**To:** Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** NHS Options July 15 vs Sept 23 NHS buffers - major differences!

Sean,  
MAJOR differences between these 2 presentations  
wrt 'Buffers/Vegetation Protection Zones (to Key Natural Features and Areas) ...  
Intentional?  
By mistake?  
Please advise --- thanks!  
-Linda

Natural Environment Work  
Program –Phase 4: Identification and Evaluation of Options  
Planning and Economic Development Committee  
PDS 26-2020

July 15, 2020

Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP –Senior Planner

<https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/FileStream.ashx?DocumentId=9805>

See page 17 (attached)

Virtual Public Information Centre Wednesday, September 23, 2020

Natural Environment - Natural Heritage System

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/official-plan/pdf/sept-23-presentation.pdf>

See page 17 (attached)

Your message is ready to be sent with the following file or link attachments:

July 15 vs Sept 23 NHS buffers!.pdf

**From:** Niagara Chapter Trout Unlimited Canada; SORE; Peninsula Field Naturalists, Niagara Falls Nature Club; Niagara Beekeepers' Association of Niagara; Ontariogreen Conservation Association; Bert Miller Nature Club; Niagara Birding Conservation and Tourism Collaborative; Hamilton Naturalists; Friends of One Mile Creek; Extinction Rebellion Niagara; Miriam Richards, Professor Biological Sciences, Brock University; and members of the Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

**To:** Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee

Nov. 3 2020

Re: Woodland Tree Bylaw and Its Impact on Natural Heritage and Water Resource System Planning

Dear Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee:

The information that came forward to the Planning and Economic Development Committee about the Woodland Bylaw makes the issue of adopting the most robust Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems more important than ever.

As was made clear in answer to Councillor Butters' specific question about what the bylaw would do to preserve or enhance the existing 17% forest cover in Niagara, staff replied that there was nothing in this bylaw that would add to the existing tree cover in the Region. In fact, there is little in this bylaw that will actually protect our *existing* tree cover. Staff explained they were limited in making improvements to the Region's Forestry Bylaw by the Municipal Act and Forestry Act.

For instance, forests that have suffered tree loss due to emerald ash borer, and no longer meet the density requirements under the Forestry Act, including woodlands currently mapped as Significant Woodland or Environmental Conservation Area under the Official Plan, can be reclassified as not significant and can lose their protection. Nothing in the new bylaw changes this.

The new bylaw will not prevent the practice of some woodland owners from clearing the understory, which ensures that the woodland will lose its significance over time as no new trees will grow to replace the old.

The new bylaw only applies to specific lands and therefore does not cover much of the remaining wooded areas in Niagara. For the same reason, the bylaw cannot set tree replacement rules/ratios. Replacement orders are only put into effect, at the discretion of the Region's enforcement officer, if he determines a violation has occurred on woodlands covered by the bylaw. Tree removals that occur through applications under the Planning Act cannot be covered by the Region's bylaw. To protect any other wooded area, group of trees or specific trees, or removal of trees due to applications covered by the Planning Act, each municipality would have to enact their own Private Tree Bylaws.

There is no ongoing monitoring of woodlands covered by the bylaw. Offences are pursued on a complaint basis and the time limit is tight. The Region hoped to increase the time limit for pursuing charges from 6 months to two years but found out they couldn't because of the Provincial Offences Act.

Any fines levied due to an offense against the new Woodland Bylaw will not go to restoration efforts, tree planting grants or to land acquisition. Fines under this bylaw “are divided up on a pro rata share with the lower tier municipalities based on legislated requirements” — as contained in an answer by staff to public comments on the bylaw.

The old bylaw contained numerous exemptions to the bylaw, including many added in 2008 for agricultural use, and the new bylaw includes one more plus it no longer protects hedgerows less than 20 m wide. These will inevitably lead to further woodland losses.

Finally, there is nothing in the new bylaw that addresses two of the greatest threats we face — climate change and biodiversity loss.

While questions were asked about possible tree planting/restoration programs, it's important to note that these are significantly limited by three factors:

1. a severe lack of funding for those efforts,
2. lack of readily available land for naturalization, and
3. the reliance on volunteers and community groups to carry out work that should be paid employment by professionals.

Furthermore, unless restoration plantings outstrip the continuous losses due to development and other land uses — and there is zero evidence that they do — then Niagara's irreplaceable natural ecosystem will continue to diminish over time.

In summary, the Region's new Woodland Bylaw does not address the concerns articulated so well by Chair Bradley and Councillors Butters, Fertich, Easton and Greenwood about improving the Region's limited tree cover. Staff suggested that Council look to the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System planning to address concerns about protection of our unique, but diminished and fragmented, local ecology.

**That makes it more important than ever that you approve only the most robust Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems.**

Natural Heritage System (NHS) and Water Resource System (WRS) plans map significant environment and water resource features, delineate sufficient buffers to protect them and link them together to form an ecological system that is sufficient to provide:

1. the green infrastructure benefits we require,
2. enough nature to support local flora and fauna and
3. a resilient ecosystem that will continue to exist over time.

**Given the development pressure Niagara Region is under, this is the last chance we have to save Niagara's unique natural environment for future generations.**

Taking all types of ecosystems into account including forests, wetlands, meadowlands etc. a 2011 study by the NPCA estimated that the watershed's remaining natural areas contribute only 56 per cent towards what the system needs to remain viable, and therefore persists as a highly environmentally degraded and fragmented landscape. <https://npca.ca/our-voice/post/restoring-and-improving-niagara-peninsula-watershed>

What Planning staff identified to you as their preliminary preferred options at the July 15 PEDC meeting, 3B for the NHS and 2A for the WRS, come nowhere close to protecting our remaining natural areas. Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS is the best of the options presented, however, we think they could be improved upon and we will present some ideas to you in future correspondence/presentations. Please see the chart that shows the differences between the current options.

| <b>Natural Heritage System</b>                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Staff's preliminary recommendation</b>                                                                        | <b>Best option to protect environment and meet Region's stated goals</b>                                                                   |
| <b>NHS Option 3B</b>                                                                                             | <b>NHS Option 3C</b>                                                                                                                       |
| - Identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas                                                 | - Identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas                                                                           |
| - Identifies supporting features outside of settlement areas such as potential enhancement areas                 | - Identifies supporting features <b>inside and outside of settlement areas</b> including potential enhancement areas                       |
| - Includes large and medium linkages outside of settlement areas                                                 | - Includes large, medium, and <b>small linkages</b> outside of settlement areas                                                            |
|                                                                                                                  | - <b>Includes small linkages inside of settlement areas where the potential area is in a natural state</b>                                 |
| - Suggests policy minimum for buffers outside of provincial NHSs and both inside and outside of settlement areas | - Prescribes <b>mandatory</b> buffer minimums outside of settlement areas with <b>suggested policy minimums inside of settlement areas</b> |
| <b>Water Resource System</b>                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Staff's preliminary recommendation</b>                                                                        | <b>Best option to protect water resources and meet Region's stated goals</b>                                                               |
| <b>WRS Option 2A</b>                                                                                             | <b>WRS Option 2B</b>                                                                                                                       |
| - Would identify additional features only outside of settlement areas                                            | - Would identify additional features and areas <b>Region-wide, including within settlement areas</b>                                       |

Please be aware that developing these options is just the first step to the creation of a Regional NHS and WRS. This phase only develops a concept of what features, buffers and linkages should be considered inside and outside of settlement areas. The next layer will be the mapping, then the consultation with municipal planning staff

and likely with other stakeholders including developers. There will be many opportunities to include or exclude areas from the final plan.

As well, there are municipal boundary expansions coming forward from Niagara Falls and Welland, and significant development applications in Fort Erie and elsewhere, that will affect what is left to protect.

**The decision on the NHS/WRS may be the most important decision you make during this term of Council, that will have the greatest impact on future generations.**

During the recent public consultations on both the Woodland Bylaw Review and the NHS/WRS, the public made it clear that they want the strongest possible protection for our remaining natural areas. We trust that you will give the public's concerns serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Dennis Edell, Niagara Chapter Trout Unlimited Canada

Lyle Hall, SORE, Niagara-on-the Lake

Bob Highcock, President, Peninsula Field Naturalists

Joyce Sankey, Conservation Director, Niagara Falls Nature Club

Lucy Sardella, Niagara Beekeepers' Association of Niagara

Liz Benneian, Executive Director, Ontariogreen Conservation Association

Lynda Goodridge, Bert Miller Nature Club

Marcie Jacklin, Niagara Birding Conservation and Tourism Collaborative

Miriam Richards, Professor Biological Sciences, Brock University

Chris Motherwell, Hamilton Naturalists

Klara Young-Chin, Friends of One Mile Creek, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Ryan Forster and Team, Extinction Rebellion Niagara

Annette Gibbons, Grimsby, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Dr. Carol Tuck-Riggs, Grimsby, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Jackie Oblak, Town of Pelham, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Christine Knighton, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Melissa McGlashan, Welland, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara





October 13, 2020

Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Delivered via email: [Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca)

Dear Mr. Norman:

**Re: Niagara Official Plan – Natural Heritage and Water Resource Mapping**

The Grape Growers of Ontario (GGO) is the official organization operating under the Farm Products Marketing Act, that represents all of Ontario's 500 processing grape growers on 17,000 acres of vineyards, including 180 wineries. The GGO welcomes the opportunity to provide input into the Natural Environment Work Program of the Niagara Official Plan. Consultation with individuals, organizations and those who are dependent on agriculture is important to achieve the appropriate balance between protecting the natural environment and supporting agricultural activities in Niagara.

We commend Niagara Region, its staff and planners for understanding the importance of agriculture to the community. The recognition that agriculture is a contributor to the sustainability of the Greenbelt and requires support to maintain the land base is essential when considering mapping any changes. The Agriculture System approach addresses both the protection of farmland and the viability of the agri-food sector.

The Region's Plan needs to recognize the importance of infrastructure and services required for the viability of the agri-food sector including all agricultural water resource infrastructure such as agricultural swales, constructed drains, ditches, privately owned irrigation ponds and all current and future municipally or privately owned irrigation systems or channels. Due to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events, water for irrigation is becoming more critically important to the viability of the Niagara Specialty Crop Area designated in the Greenbelt Plan. The Region must ensure that this man-made infrastructure is recognized as part of the Agricultural System and Agri-Food Network rather than as key natural heritage, hydrological features, or fish habitat.



The Grape Growers of Ontario supports the proposed Option #1 “Minimum Standards Overlay” outlined in the Natural Environment Work Program – Phase 4 Agricultural Community Workshop presentation dated September 21, 2020.

The Natural Heritage mapping needs to be developed with input from growers and others to achieve the balance of protected countryside and productive countryside as identified in the *Planning for Health, Prosperity and Growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe: 2015-2041* document. We recommend that the Agricultural Policy and Action Committee with its representation from grower organizations, municipal leaders and Niagara regional representatives be utilized in establishing the Natural Heritage and Agricultural systems including identification of agricultural infrastructure and all aspects of the Region of Niagara’s long-term planning. It is important to understand that agriculture must not only be protected, but valued as a partner in protecting the Natural Heritage System and Agricultural System.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond, and we would be pleased to provide additional input throughout the Natural Heritage and Water Resource Mapping process.

Regards,



Debbie Zimmerman, CEO  
Grape Growers of Ontario  
[d.zimmerman@grapegrowersofontario.com](mailto:d.zimmerman@grapegrowersofontario.com)

c: Matthias Oppenlaender, Chair, Grape Growers of Ontario  
Bill Schenck, Chair, Agricultural Policy and Action Committee





Delivered via email: Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca

Re: Niagara Official Plan – Natural Heritage and Water Resource Mapping

The Niagara Federation of Agriculture (NFA) is your agricultural organization representing over 1,400 farm family members. Niagara offers the most diversified area of food production in all of Canada and agriculture has proven to be the economic mainstay within the Region. Agricultural producers have \$838.1 million in gross farm receipts with an employment impact of 19,892 jobs within the Region. The Niagara Federation of Agriculture (NFA) is the local extension of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) which represents over 38,000 farm family members across our province.

The directors of the Niagara Federation of Agriculture would like to take this opportunity to thank the Region of Niagara for including the agriculture community in the discussion concerning the new Official Plan. This is an overwhelming process and it comes during a difficult time for all. The directors have reviewed the information provided and would like to make the following comments with respect to the Natural Heritage System.

1. Based on the information provided at this time, the federation would prefer Option 1, implementing Natural Heritage System as an overlay.
2. There is concern over the mapping: who does the mapping, at what time of year will the mapping be completed, will the landowner be notified when mapping is being completed, will the landowner be able to meet with those developing the map to explain what the features are on their farm, will the mapping be ground-truthed and what is the process to change/appeal if the landowner disagrees with the mapping? NFA would like to work with Niagara Region to address these concerns.
3. The federation strongly suggests that land owners be notified of any designation changes to the land prior to the change being finalized.
4. The federation would like to be involved in the next steps, including mapping and development of the policies associated with agriculture in the Official Plan including natural heritage system, corridors and linkages, water resources, transportation and infrastructure.

Thank you once again for this opportunity to work with the Region of Niagara in the development of their Official Plan. The federation has a committee focused on this issue and would appreciate working with the Region in developing a progressive, agriculture friendly Official Plan. The struggles of COVID-19 over the past few months highlights the importance and the need for a supply of safe and healthy food. Niagara can fill this need if given the right tools to work with. Please contact me at 289-303-8883 if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Chris Hamilton  
President  
Niagara Federation of Agriculture



## Ontario Tender Fruit Growers

October 6, 2020

**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**

Senior Planner

Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region

Delivered via email: [Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca](mailto:Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca)

Re: Niagara Official Plan – Natural Heritage and Water Resource Mapping

The Ontario Tender Fruit Growers represents over 200 family farms on approx. 9,000 acres of tender fruit, primarily located in the Niagara Region.

The 2020 season has brought again to the forefront, the importance of water to our economic sustainability. Our initial crop estimates have been drastically affected by the lack of rain this season and as at September 28<sup>th</sup> we are facing a moisture deficit of 554mm, which is 17% greater than the historical average.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to the Resource Mapping project for the Niagara Official Plan and are pleased that the Niagara Region recognizes the importance of agriculture in its policy direction.

The Greenbelt Plan (2017) also recognizes the importance of agriculture and has designated the Niagara Peninsula Tender Fruit and Grape lands as a specialty crop area with supportive plan policies which are essential to our sustainability as a sector. The following excerpts are key components in that policy;

*“The agricultural land base is comprised of prime agricultural areas, including specialty crop areas, and rural lands. The agri-food network includes infrastructure, services and assets important to the viability of the agri-food sector.”*

*Integrated planning for growth management, including goods movement and transportation planning, shall consider opportunities to support and enhance the Agricultural System.*

*Municipalities are encouraged to implement regional agri-food strategies and other approaches to sustain and enhance the Agricultural System and the long-term economic prosperity and viability of the agri-food sector, including the maintenance and improvement of the agri-food network.*

*The agri-food network does not require land use designations in official plans. Municipalities are expected to provide policies to maintain and enhance the agri-food network and to identify the physical location of components of the agri-food network in collaboration with the Province. This work will assist with the long-term viability of the agri-food sector by planning for agriculture and the rural economy.*

An Agri-Food network for the Niagara Specialty Crop Area should be established by the region and all infrastructure for that Agri-Food network should be identified. This would include all agricultural water resource infrastructure components.

These include;

- agricultural swales,
- constructed drains,
- ditches,
- privately owned irrigation ponds,
- and all current and future municipally or privately owned irrigation systems or channels

The above systems should not be mapped as key natural heritage, hydrological features or fish habitat. These systems are crucial infrastructure that supports agricultural viability. They are not natural and do not consistently contain enough water to maintain aquatic life or natural self-sustaining vegetation.

All other key natural heritage /hydrological features should be mapped under Option 1 as presented to stakeholders in September to implement the minimum standards of the Provincial Policy Statement and Plans.

Additionally, as there has only been conceptual maps presented, ongoing public and stakeholder consultations on the mapping process and plan should occur prior to finalizing.

We would be pleased to participate in a separate committee to establish the Agri-Food network for the Specialty Crop Area and suggest that the Agricultural Policy Action committee which already has representation from grower organizations, municipal leaders and Niagara regional reps would be the ideal platform for that work. This work would include the identification of infrastructure and all aspects of long-term planning for the success of the agricultural sector in Niagara.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'PT' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Phil Tregunno  
Chair, Ontario Tender Fruit Growers  
[ptregun@gmail.com](mailto:ptregun@gmail.com)

C. Agricultural Policy Action Committee

Mr. Doug Giles – Acting Commissioner of Planning  
Niagara Region

**December 1, 2020**

Dear Mr. Giles,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Region of Niagara New Official Plan Project ("NOP"). This letter is submitted on behalf of the Niagara Home Builders Association ("NHBA"), providing our comments, thoughts and concerns. We want to state clearly that the intent of this submission is to assist Regional staff with their ongoing work on the NOP. It is our belief that this detailed submission will be helpful to staff, providing a basis for future discussions and coloration between the Region and the NHBA, the result of which will be a strong and exceptional Official Plan.

As you are aware, the NHBA consists of over 140 members, including builders, developers, and suppliers, and for over 60 years has been the voice of the home building industry in Niagara. Together, our members provide all aspects of the home building industry and are responsible for 90% of all new residential dwellings constructed in the Niagara Region. Through our Government Relations Committee ("GRC"), we have assembled a team of planning experts and professionals with decades of experience in policy and development planning in Ontario and the Niagara Region. From our extensive experience and practical insights, we provide these detailed comments to you.

Attached to this letter is a chart outlining concerns and impacts of the draft Environmental Policies that have been provided for public comment. This chart provides the collective feedback from our GRC, and has been compiled under two (2) categories:

1. Natural Heritage and Environmental Policies
2. Agricultural and Rural

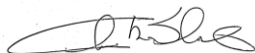
Overall, the NHBA has significant concerns with the processing steps, messaging, technical accuracy and implementation impacts of the ROP material. As the chart shows, our concerns are expressed from the perspective of landowners, the agricultural community, and the development community. In our view, the focus of the ROP should be first and foremost about growth management, and how the Region will proactively plan to accommodate significant growth in the coming years. There is no doubt that the Region is forecast to grow, and issues such as housing supply and affordability will be negatively impacted by an overly restrictive planning framework which unnecessarily frustrates needed development. Accommodating growth should be the main position from which all other ROP work emanates.

We close by re-iterating our willingness to continue constructive and collaborate dialogue with staff. Through the continued efforts of our GRC and as a stakeholder representing the homebuilding industry, our aim is to continually provide the Region with professional, structured and thorough communication providing our collective perspective. Over time, we see these efforts as critical in establishing a professional and positive working relationship with staff. Please accept our comments in the spirit of this objective.

Please review the detailed comments in our attachment at your earliest. We will be in touch to set up future consultation meetings between staff and the GRC, and we look forward to working with staff on the NOP.

Thank you,

Chuck McShane



NHBA Executive Officer

| Issues and Concerns                         |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                       |                   |                    |                        |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Category and Theme                          | Comment / Concern                                                                                  | Impact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Affected Bodies       |                   |                    |                        |
|                                             |                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Development Community | Private Landowner | Municipal Planning | Agricultural Community |
| Natural Heritage and Environmental Policies | Unsubstantiated Increase in Buffer Widths for Natural Heritage Features (i.e. Wetlands, Woodlands) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arbitrarily applied buffer widths without science-based ground truthing and feature verification across the Region is concerning</li> <li>Eliminates ability for individual private analysis by a QP, which is not consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement, Section 2.1.8, which allows development and site alteration on adjacent lands to Natural Heritage features, if the ecological function of the adjacent lands has been evaluated and it has been demonstrated that there will be no negative impacts on the natural features or on their ecological functions.</li> <li>Assumes all features across the Region are the same (quantity, quality, functions)</li> </ul> | x                     | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                                             | Prescriptive Natural Heritage Corridors Outside of Urban Areas                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inflated significance of otherwise non-significant features (i.e. NH corridors)</li> <li>Fragmentation of Agricultural lands and limitations on arable lands</li> <li>NHS outside urban areas already limits Urban Boundary Expansion opportunities. The proposed approach will cause further fragmentation and limit growth opportunities in otherwise appropriate locations within urban areas</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                       | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                                             | Provision of Regulatory Policies for Features Regulated by Other Agencies                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duplication of services and responsibilities already delegated to the NPCA by the Province (i.e. wetland buffer requirements and requested requirements for supporting documentation)</li> <li>Could create contradictory comments or review processes making the process inconsistent, confusing, risky and unreliable</li> <li>Confusion, frustration, and delayed review timelines of development applications and permit processes for development community and public at large</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                          | x                     | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                                             | Mapping Basis Unclear                                                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No inventory mapping of features provided to inform proposed policy direction</li> <li>Preliminary mapping schedule not based on scientific analysis</li> <li>Existing mapping is outdated and erroneous</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | x                     | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                                             | No Demonstrated Need for Enhanced Policy Beyond Provincial Requirements                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of analysis on the impacts that enhanced environmental Policies will have in relation to meeting the other objectives of the Official Plan</li> <li>Enhanced environmental Policies will lead to further limiting the current amount of urban lands available for development, driving up land and housing costs.</li> <li>Existing NH Information has not been released that demonstrates the status of NH</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | x                     | x                 | x                  | x                      |



| Issues and Concerns    |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                       |                   |                    |                        |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Category and Theme     | Comment / Concern                                                                                                             | Impact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Affected Bodies       |                   |                    |                        |
|                        |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Development Community | Private Landowner | Municipal Planning | Agricultural Community |
|                        |                                                                                                                               | Areas quantified through data and mapping                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                       |                   |                    |                        |
|                        | No Evidence of Inventory or Ground Truthing Provided to Inform Policy Directions                                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Policies should inform the process and encourage ground truthing on a site by site basis and allow the science to inform buffers etc., similar to how things are right now.</li> <li>Data and information has been quoted without providing the necessary background information to substantiate data (i.e. tree canopy coverage is quoted at 16% of the Niagara Region, no mapping or data has been released with information)</li> </ul> | x                     | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                        | Lack of Criteria or Information for Growth Options for The Region                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Absence of growth information makes it difficult to comment or properly analyze other policy areas of the Plan</li> <li>Watershed Planning Paper identifies future preparation of High, Medium and Low Constraints</li> <li>No other documents reference criteria</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                   | x                     | x                 | x                  | x                      |
| Agricultural and Rural | The Proposed Natural Heritage Policies Affecting Agricultural/Rural Lands Are Proposed to Be More Restrictive                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher restrictions on lands outside the urban boundaries will limit the viability of Agricultural operations in the Region</li> <li>Fuller understanding and analysis of impact of policy options on Agricultural land, on crops, and of viability of crops</li> <li>How are NH Features that straddle the Urban Boundary being addressed if there are a different set of Policies for Urban or Rural Areas?</li> </ul>                       |                       | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                        | No Clear Indication of How Features Crossing Urban Area Boundaries Will Be Managed or Evaluated                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No difference between the features on the ground so how does a QP provide discernable evidence to support different development constraints based on policy parameters?</li> <li>Buffers and setbacks should be determined based on impacts</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                         |                       | x                 | x                  | x                      |
|                        | There Is No Clear Understanding About Normal Farm Practices and The Impacts of Rigorous or Restrictive Environmental Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strict environmental Policies in the Agricultural areas places undue financial burden on a struggling industry, degrading the viability of Agricultural operations</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                       | x                 |                    | x                      |



| Issues and Concerns |                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                       |                   |                    |                        |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Category and Theme  | Comment / Concern                                                                                                        | Impact                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Affected Bodies       |                   |                    |                        |
|                     |                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Development Community | Private Landowner | Municipal Planning | Agricultural Community |
|                     | Water Resources Considered as Regulated Natural Heritage Features Rather than a Resource Required to Support Agriculture | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This could lead to having to provide setbacks and buffers to areas, restricting the amount of land that can be used for Agricultural uses, which is not consistent with the Provincial Policy Plan to protect and support the viability of Agricultural areas</li> </ul> |                       | x                 | x                  | x                      |

## Norman, Sean

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**From:** Norman, Sean  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2020 3:23 PM  
**To:** 'SORE'  
**Cc:** Huson, Diana; Making Our Mark; Acs, Erik; Norio, Ann-Marie  
**Subject:** RE: Niagara Region re Natural Heritage System Recommendation  
**Attachments:** PDS 26-2020 Natural Environment Work Program - Phase 4.pdf

Hi SORE Association,

Thank you for your submission.

To clarify, as noted in the attached PDS 26-2020 the recommendations are preliminary and still require input through the 2<sup>nd</sup> Point of Engagement - which we are currently undertaking. All of the options that are being evaluated will be presented, and input towards finalizing the evaluation process will be requested.

Regards,  
**Sean Norman, PMP, MCIP, RPP**  
Senior Planner  
Planning and Development Services, Niagara Region  
Phone: 905-980-6000 ext. 3179 Toll-free: 1-800-263-7215

---

**From:** SORE <update@sorenottl.ca>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:32 PM  
**To:** Norio, Ann-Marie <Ann-Marie.Norio@niagararegion.ca>  
**Cc:** Norman, Sean <Sean.Norman@niagararegion.ca>; Huson, Diana <Diana.Huson@niagararegion.ca>  
**Subject:** Niagara Region re Natural Heritage System Recommendation

Dear Mr. Norman and Members of Planning and Economic Development Committee:

We write concerning PDS 26-2020-Natural Environment Work Program-Presentation of Options, which was presented at today's Committee meeting. Our apologies for this late submission but we only just became aware of the report and today's meeting.

SORE is a federally incorporated not-for-profit community organization dedicated to the wise management, use and development of the historic Rand Estate in Niagara-on-the-Lake. We count many hundreds of NOTL and Region residents among our members and supporters. You can visit our website at [sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca) for more information on our organization.

The Rand Estate contains several natural environmental components of interest and importance among its many attributes, including heritage trees, woodlands and One Mile Creek and its tributaries.

We read with interest the report and recommendation of your consultants, supported by staff, for Option 3B with respect to Natural Heritage System inputs to the Region's updated Official Plan. The report indicates that this option most closely reflects the input received during the consultation process to date.

With respect, we do not agree. The Consultation Summary Report which sets out the input supposedly leading to this conclusion does a good job of reflecting the advice provided by the various stakeholders to the consulting team. It lists nine "Key Themes" concerning that input. Among them are the following:

- Take a Systems Approach to Natural Environment Planning
- Recognize the Uniqueness of Niagara's Geography, Natural Environment and Agriculture
- Accurately Map the Natural Environment
- Protect the Natural Environment
- Forward Thinking Natural Environment Policies and Official Plan
- Build Trust Through Continued Engagement, Collaboration and Education.

We do not see anywhere in that consultation report a Key Theme that natural environment considerations and planning should be subservient to other considerations. Option 3C presented in the report in our view most accurately represents the input received from the stakeholders through the Region's consultation process. Yet the recommendation that Option 3B is preferred is explicitly made on the basis that other considerations should temper the Natural Heritage System inputs to the update Official Plan. If the Region's intention was and is that notwithstanding the input received during the consultation process, other considerations would be brought to bear on the recommendation on a preferred option, that should have been expressly stated and the stakeholders given an opportunity to comment. As it stands, the report's recommendation on a preferred option cannot be reconciled, in our view, with the input supposedly leading to that recommendation.

We ask that both Options 3B and 3C be carried forward into the next stage of consultation and that the stakeholders be explicitly asked for focused input on both options in light of the Key Themes identified in the consultation report, before the preferred option is endorsed by this Committee.

We congratulate the Region and staff on this initiative. It is long overdue and welcome. As the input received to date makes clear, Niagara Region has a biosphere unique to Canada. Our Regional Official Plan should embrace and build on that reality.

SORE Association  
[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)  
[sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca)

SORE Association  
[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)  
[sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca)

On 8-Oct-2020, at 5:51 PM, SORE <[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)> wrote:

We are submitting these comments for the consideration of Regional staff and Councillors on behalf of SORE.

SORE is a federally incorporated not for profit organization dedicated to the protection and wise management of the historic Rand Estate in Niagara-on-the-Lake. SORE represents several hundred residents in NOTL concerned about inappropriate development and the protection of natural and built heritage.

The Rand Estate is a nationally significant heritage asset currently under threat from an entirely inappropriate development proposal involving a hotel, convention centre and high density subdivision. Randwood contains (or contained before a large portion of it was outrageously clear cut two years ago) one of the few surviving examples of an extensive designed landscape by Dunington-Grubb, in addition to a variety of heritage trees, woodlots and One Mile Creek and one of its tributaries. The Rand Estate is a clear and compelling example of natural environment and water resource features in a settlement area that the Region's Official Plan should be focused on protecting and enhancing rather than abandoning.

As indicated in our correspondence of July 15 (copy enclosed), it was and remains our view that Option 3C best accords with the input that the Region has received during all of the consultation on this issue. The initial recommendation of staff that Option 3B is preferred is, with respect, neither traceable or replicable given the input the Region has received. That recommendation can only be justified if the Region acknowledges that other considerations have been brought to bear outside the input received during the consultation process. Those considerations should be made explicit if the Committee elects not to adopt Option 3C.

Substantively, it is our submission that the Region should and indeed must clearly map natural heritage system and water resource system features holistically using an ecosystem approach as required by both the Provincial Policy Statement under the Planning Act and the MMAF Statement of Environmental Values under the Environmental Bill of Rights. This should include buffers and linkages in accordance with a proper ecosystem approach, both outside and very importantly inside settlement areas. Such features should not and we submit cannot be ignored simply because they are inside

settlement areas. They are a critical component of not only ecosystem health; they enhance the quality of life for all within settlement areas.

Such an approach is not only required under relevant legislation, we submit it makes for good business. Developers will clearly know where the constraints are and municipalities within the Region can then deal with development proposals transparently and from a position of strength.

In closing, we urge staff and the Committee to consider carefully:

1. the input received during the consultation process;
2. the Region's obligations under the Planning Act and The Environmental Bill of Rights; and
3. the benefit of clear guidance to developers and lower tier municipalities with respect to ecosystem protection of natural heritage features and water resource systems, both inside and outside of settlement areas.

We thank you for your consideration and extend our appreciation for the efforts of staff and Council in this important endeavour.

SORE Association

[update@sorenottl.ca](mailto:update@sorenottl.ca)  
[sorenottl.ca](http://sorenottl.ca)

**From:** Niagara Chapter Trout Unlimited Canada; SORE; Peninsula Field Naturalists, Niagara Falls Nature Club; Niagara Beekeepers' Association of Niagara; Ontariogreen Conservation Association; Bert Miller Nature Club; Niagara Birding Conservation and Tourism Collaborative; Hamilton Naturalists; Friends of One Mile Creek; Extinction Rebellion Niagara; Miriam Richards, Professor Biological Sciences, Brock University; and members of the Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

**To:** Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee

Nov. 3 2020

Re: Woodland Tree Bylaw and Its Impact on Natural Heritage and Water Resource System Planning

Dear Members of the Planning and Economic Development Committee:

The information that came forward to the Planning and Economic Development Committee about the Woodland Bylaw makes the issue of adopting the most robust Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems more important than ever.

As was made clear in answer to Councillor Butters' specific question about what the bylaw would do to preserve or enhance the existing 17% forest cover in Niagara, staff replied that there was nothing in this bylaw that would add to the existing tree cover in the Region. In fact, there is little in this bylaw that will actually protect our *existing* tree cover. Staff explained they were limited in making improvements to the Region's Forestry Bylaw by the Municipal Act and Forestry Act.

For instance, forests that have suffered tree loss due to emerald ash borer, and no longer meet the density requirements under the Forestry Act, including woodlands currently mapped as Significant Woodland or Environmental Conservation Area under the Official Plan, can be reclassified as not significant and can lose their protection. Nothing in the new bylaw changes this.

The new bylaw will not prevent the practice of some woodland owners from clearing the understory, which ensures that the woodland will lose its significance over time as no new trees will grow to replace the old.

The new bylaw only applies to specific lands and therefore does not cover much of the remaining wooded areas in Niagara. For the same reason, the bylaw cannot set tree replacement rules/ratios. Replacement orders are only put into effect, at the discretion of the Region's enforcement officer, if he determines a violation has occurred on woodlands covered by the bylaw. Tree removals that occur through applications under the Planning Act cannot be covered by the Region's bylaw. To protect any other wooded area, group of trees or specific trees, or removal of trees due to applications covered by the Planning Act, each municipality would have to enact their own Private Tree Bylaws.

There is no ongoing monitoring of woodlands covered by the bylaw. Offences are pursued on a complaint basis and the time limit is tight. The Region hoped to increase the time limit for pursuing charges from 6 months to two years but found out they couldn't because of the Provincial Offences Act.

Any fines levied due to an offense against the new Woodland Bylaw will not go to restoration efforts, tree planting grants or to land acquisition. Fines under this bylaw “are divided up on a pro rata share with the lower tier municipalities based on legislated requirements” — as contained in an answer by staff to public comments on the bylaw.

The old bylaw contained numerous exemptions to the bylaw, including many added in 2008 for agricultural use, and the new bylaw includes one more plus it no longer protects hedgerows less than 20 m wide. These will inevitably lead to further woodland losses.

Finally, there is nothing in the new bylaw that addresses two of the greatest threats we face — climate change and biodiversity loss.

While questions were asked about possible tree planting/restoration programs, it's important to note that these are significantly limited by three factors:

1. a severe lack of funding for those efforts,
2. lack of readily available land for naturalization, and
3. the reliance on volunteers and community groups to carry out work that should be paid employment by professionals.

Furthermore, unless restoration plantings outstrip the continuous losses due to development and other land uses — and there is zero evidence that they do — then Niagara's irreplaceable natural ecosystem will continue to diminish over time.

In summary, the Region's new Woodland Bylaw does not address the concerns articulated so well by Chair Bradley and Councillors Butters, Fertich, Easton and Greenwood about improving the Region's limited tree cover. Staff suggested that Council look to the Natural Heritage System and Water Resource System planning to address concerns about protection of our unique, but diminished and fragmented, local ecology.

**That makes it more important than ever that you approve only the most robust Natural Heritage and Water Resource Systems.**

Natural Heritage System (NHS) and Water Resource System (WRS) plans map significant environment and water resource features, delineate sufficient buffers to protect them and link them together to form an ecological system that is sufficient to provide:

1. the green infrastructure benefits we require,
2. enough nature to support local flora and fauna and
3. a resilient ecosystem that will continue to exist over time.



**Given the development pressure Niagara Region is under, this is the last chance we have to save Niagara's unique natural environment for future generations.**

Taking all types of ecosystems into account including forests, wetlands, meadowlands etc. a 2011 study by the NPCA estimated that the watershed's remaining natural areas contribute only 56 per cent towards what the system needs to remain viable, and therefore persists as a highly environmentally degraded and fragmented landscape. <https://npca.ca/our-voice/post/restoring-and-improving-niagara-peninsula-watershed>

What Planning staff identified to you as their preliminary preferred options at the July 15 PEDC meeting, 3B for the NHS and 2A for the WRS, come nowhere close to protecting our remaining natural areas. Option 3C for the NHS and 2B for the WRS is the best of the options presented, however, we think they could be improved upon and we will present some ideas to you in future correspondence/presentations. Please see the chart that shows the differences between the current options.

| <b>Natural Heritage System</b>                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Staff's preliminary recommendation</b>                                                                        | <b>Best option to protect environment and meet Region's stated goals</b>                                                                   |
| <b>NHS Option 3B</b>                                                                                             | <b>NHS Option 3C</b>                                                                                                                       |
| - Identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas                                                 | - Identifies additional features in and outside settlement areas                                                                           |
| - Identifies supporting features outside of settlement areas such as potential enhancement areas                 | - Identifies supporting features <b>inside and outside of settlement areas</b> including potential enhancement areas                       |
| - Includes large and medium linkages outside of settlement areas                                                 | - Includes large, medium, and <b>small linkages</b> outside of settlement areas                                                            |
|                                                                                                                  | - <b>Includes small linkages inside of settlement areas where the potential area is in a natural state</b>                                 |
| - Suggests policy minimum for buffers outside of provincial NHSs and both inside and outside of settlement areas | - Prescribes <b>mandatory</b> buffer minimums outside of settlement areas with <b>suggested policy minimums inside of settlement areas</b> |
| <b>Water Resource System</b>                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Staff's preliminary recommendation</b>                                                                        | <b>Best option to protect water resources and meet Region's stated goals</b>                                                               |
| <b>WRS Option 2A</b>                                                                                             | <b>WRS Option 2B</b>                                                                                                                       |
| - Would identify additional features only outside of settlement areas                                            | - Would identify additional features and areas <b>Region-wide, including within settlement areas</b>                                       |

Please be aware that developing these options is just the first step to the creation of a Regional NHS and WRS. This phase only develops a concept of what features, buffers and linkages should be considered inside and outside of settlement areas. The next layer will be the mapping, then the consultation with municipal planning staff



and likely with other stakeholders including developers. There will be many opportunities to include or exclude areas from the final plan.

As well, there are municipal boundary expansions coming forward from Niagara Falls and Welland, and significant development applications in Fort Erie and elsewhere, that will affect what is left to protect.

**The decision on the NHS/WRS may be the most important decision you make during this term of Council, that will have the greatest impact on future generations.**

During the recent public consultations on both the Woodland Bylaw Review and the NHS/WRS, the public made it clear that they want the strongest possible protection for our remaining natural areas. We trust that you will give the public's concerns serious consideration.

Sincerely,

Dennis Edell, Niagara Chapter Trout Unlimited Canada

Lyle Hall, SORE, Niagara-on-the Lake

Bob Highcock, President, Peninsula Field Naturalists

Joyce Sankey, Conservation Director, Niagara Falls Nature Club

Lucy Sardella, Niagara Beekeepers' Association of Niagara

Liz Benneian, Executive Director, Ontariogreen Conservation Association

Lynda Goodridge, Bert Miller Nature Club

Marcie Jacklin, Niagara Birding Conservation and Tourism Collaborative

Miriam Richards, Professor Biological Sciences, Brock University

Chris Motherwell, Hamilton Naturalists

Klara Young-Chin, Friends of One Mile Creek, Niagara-on-the-Lake

Ryan Forster and Team, Extinction Rebellion Niagara

Annette Gibbons, Grimsby, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Dr. Carol Tuck-Riggs, Grimsby, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Jackie Oblak, Town of Pelham, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Christine Knighton, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara

Melissa McGlashan, Welland, Biodiversity and Climate Action Niagara