



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

September 3, 2026



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Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, September 3, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Hamilton Conservation Authority conducts meetings in a hybrid format: in-person and via WebEx platform.

All meetings can be viewed live on HCA's You Tube Channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/HamiltonConservation>

1. Call to Order

– Brad Clark

1.1. Land Acknowledgment

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

3. Approval of Agenda

4. Delegations

5. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence

- | | |
|--|---------|
| 5.1. Permit Applications Summary Report | Page 1 |
| 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – July 2, 2026 | Page 7 |
| 5.3. Approved – April 9, 2026 Conservation Advisory Board Minutes – for receipt only | Page 17 |
| 5.4. Approved – June 25, 2026 Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – for receipt only | Page 23 |
| 5.5. Correspondence from the City of Hamilton with respect to 2027 Operating Budget Submission for the Hamilton Conservation Authority, dated July 6, 2026 | Page 29 |
| 5.6. Correspondence from Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to Conservation Authority's GMs/CAOs, with respect to Announcement of Project Executives for regional consolidation, dated July 15, 2026 | Page 31 |

- 5.7. Correspondence from Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to Conservation Authority's Board Chairs with respect to the roles of CAOs/GMs during the regional consolidation process, dated July 15, 2026 Page 33
- 5.8. Correspondence from Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to Conservation Authorities, Mayors and Heads of Council with respect to Transition Committees, dated July 30, 2026 Page 35
- 5.9. Correspondence from Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency to Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority with respect to introduction of the Project Executive, Jacqueline Johnson, dated August 14, 2026 Page 39

6. Foundation Briefing

Foundation Chair – Graham Reid

7. Member Briefing

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

9. Reports from Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board

- 9.1. Budget & Administration Committee – August 27, 2026 – Susan Fielding
(Recommendations)

- 9.1.1. BA 2624 HCA 2027 Draft Budget Page 41

- 9.1.2. BA 2625 2027 Draft HCA Fee Schedule Page 67

- 9.2. Conservation Advisory Board – August 13, 2026 – Wayne Terryberry
(Recommendations)

- 9.2.1. CA 2616 Final Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan for Approval Page 113

- 9.2.2. CA 2617 Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program: Financial Assistance Guidelines Revisions Page 259

10. Other Staff Reports/Memorandums

Reports to be Approved

- 10.1. Appointment of Officers under the Conservation Authorities Act – Liam Fletcher Page 305

- 10.2. ERO #026-0740, with respect to Proposed Regulations under the Conservation Authorities Act – Appointment of members to Regional Conservation Authorities – Lisa Burnside Page 309
- 10.3. ERO #026-0740, with respect to Proposed Regulation – Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency Board Member Ineligibility – Lisa Burnside Page 317
- 10.4. Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System MOU Renewal – Lisa Burnside Page 321

Memorandums to be received

- 10.5. Watershed Conditions Report – Jonathan Bastien Page 331
- 10.6. Conservation Areas Experiences Update – Brandon Good Page 337

11. New Business

- 11.1. Motion regarding HCA Public Waterfront Safety Practices – Brad Clark

12. In-Camera Items

- 12.1. Confidential Report – BA/Aug 01-2026
(Personnel Matter)
- 12.2 Confidential Memorandum – BD/Sept 01-2026
(Property Matter)

13. Next Meeting – Thursday, October 1, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

14. Adjournment

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Report to: Board of Directors

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/Director, Watershed Management Services

Prepared By: Mike Stone, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Permit Applications Summary Report

HCA permit applications approved by staff under the *Conservation Authorities Act* and *Ontario Regulation 41/24* between the dates of June 20, 2026 to August 20, 2026 are summarized in the following Permit Applications Summary Report (PASR-7/26).

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors receive this Permit Application Summary Report PASR-7/26 as information.

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HAMILTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
PERMIT APPLICATION SUMMARY REPORT (PASR 7/26)

HCA permit applications approved under the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 41/24 between the dates of June 20, 2026 - August 20, 2026

Permit Number	Date Permit Issued	Review Days	Applicant Name	Location	Application Description	Recommendation / Conditions
2026-61	27-Jul-2026	12		15 Scanlon Pl / LOT 53 / CON 3	For the construction of a pool	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-59	27-Jul-2026	1		491 Highway 5 W / LOT 13 / CON 3	For the construction a septic system	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-46	22-Jun-2026	13		545 Sulphur Springs Rd / LOT 41, 42 & 41, 42 / CON 1 & 2	For the construction of a pool and armour stone wall	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-47	25-Jun-2026	2		1029 Mineral Springs Rd / LOT 39 / CON 1	To replace the existing two-storey single dwelling and deck with a new one-storey single dwelling and deck	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-48	25-Jun-2026	3		264, 266, 268 McNeilly Rd / LOT 8 / CON 2	For the the construction of three single detached dwellings	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-49	06-Jul-2026	10		1282 Scenic Dr / LOT 54 / CON 2	Expansion of existing deck	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-50	06-Jul-2026	8		1562 Rymal Rd E / LOT 16 / CON 1	For the expansion of an existing parking lot	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-51	09-Jul-2026	1		83 Lowinger Ave / LOT 51 / CON 3	For the construction of an addition to an existing dwelling	Approved subject to standard conditions.

2026-52	09-Jul-2026	8		442 Montreal Cir / LOT 3 / CON BF	For the construction of second dwelling unit in an unfinished basement	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-53	09-Jul-2026	4		86 Boulder Cres / LOT 5 / CON 1	For the construction of a below-grade basement entrance and associated basement renovations	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-54	10-Jul-2026	8		24 Copes Ln / LOT 12 / CON BF	For the construction of an inground pool	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-55	13-Jul-2026	5		22 Rosebough St / LOT 7 / CON 1	For the replacement of a front deck and a rear deck	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-56	13-Jul-2026	1		75 Marshboro Ave / LOT 7 / CON 1	For the construction of a shed	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-57	15-Jul-2026	7		401 Mount Albion Rd / LOT 31-33; 31-33 / CON 5; 6	For the construction of a bridge	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-58	22-Jul-2026	1		Green Mountain Rd, Highland Rd E, and Mud St E / LOT / CON	For the replacement of culverts at Green Mountain Rd, Mud St E, and Highland Rd E	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-60	27-Jul-2026	1		Mountain View Rd / LOT / CON	For the replacement of culvert FLA-2951	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-62	30-Jul-2026	30		1058 Sulphur Springs Rd / LOT / CON	For the replacement of two culverts and ditching works	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-63	04-Aug-2026	14		74 Strawberry Dr / LOT 24 / CON 2	For the construction of a secondary dwelling unit	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-64	04-Aug-2026	6		15 Northlawn Ave / LOT 7 / CON 4	For the construction of an addition to an existing dwelling	Approved subject to standard conditions.

2026-65	06-Aug-2026	10		27 Silverspring Cres / LOT 7 / CON 1	For the construction of a below grade entrance and basement renovation	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-66	12-Aug-2026	1		277 Highland Rd E / LOT 19 / CON 7	For the installation of a septic system	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-67	06-Aug-2026	1		173 Dartnall Rd / LOT 15 / CON 1	For the construction of two commercial/light industrial buildings, parking lot, and associated landscaping	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-68	07-Aug-2026	8		20 Lakeshore Dr / LOT 11 / CON BF	For the construction of an exterior below-grade entrance to an existing dwelling	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-69	13-Aug-2026	1		13 Broad Oak Crt / LOT 46 / CON 1	For the construction of a deck	Approved subject to standard conditions.
2026-70	17-Aug-2026	1		45 Solar Dr / LOT 24 / CON 3	Grading and site alteration in support of a new industrial building	Approved subject to standard conditions.

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Hamilton Region Conservation Authority

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

July 2, 2026

Minutes of the Board of Directors meeting held on Thursday, July 2, 2026 at 6:00 p.m., at the HCA main office, 838 Mineral Springs Road, in Ancaster, and livestreamed on YouTube.

PRESENT:

Brad Clark – in the Chair	Craig Cassar – Virtually
Jeff Beattie – Virtually	Susan Fielding
Lisa DiCesare	Alex Wilson – Virtually
Wayne Terryberry – Virtually	
Maureen Wilson	
Graham Reid – Foundation Chair	

REGRETS: Elise Copps, Matt Francis, Mike Spadafora

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Burnside, Lindsay Davidson, Marlene Ferreira, Brandon Good, Rob Gray, Amanda Martin, Scott Peck, Elizabeth Reimer, Mike Stone, Jaime Tellier, Sandra Winner

OTHERS: None

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present. HCA's Indigenous Land Acknowledgement was read.

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the Board's Governance Policy. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda.

Lisa Burnside advised that an addendum was circulated, an item of correspondence from the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks that will appear under item number 5, Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence, and be as addressed as item 5.4

BD12, 3650

**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the agenda be approved, as amended.

CARRIED

4. Delegations

There were none.

5. Consent Items for Applications, Minutes and Correspondence

The following consent items were adopted:

- 5.1. Permit Applications Summary Report
- 5.2. Approval of Board of Directors Minutes – June 4, 2026
- 5.3. Approved – May 29, 2026 Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – for receipt only
- 5.4. Letter from the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, regarding the Minister's Director with respect to budget and apportionment matters.

6. Foundation Briefing

Graham Reid indicated that The Foundation held its election of officers at the June Board Meeting, and, at that meeting he was elected as the Chair of Hamilton Conservation Foundation Board of Directors. Other officers include Margret Reid (no relation) who will serve as Vice-Chair, as well as Paul Keast who will continue as Secretary-Treasurer. The Board will be on hiatus from meetings until September, but the committees will remain active throughout the summer.

The Foundation received a total of **\$7,110** in donations and lottery revenue from June 1st to June 30th, 2026, bringing the fiscal year-to-date fundraising total to **\$2,331,764** which is 98% of the annual goal. Additionally, the Donor Impact Report was recently published and shared with the Foundation's community of supporters.

BD12, 3651**MOVED BY: Jeff Beattie
SECONDED BY: Alex Wilson****THAT the Foundation Briefing be received.****CARRIED****7. Member Briefing**

There was none.

8. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

9. Reports from Budget & Administration Committee and Conservation Advisory Board**9.1. Budget & Administration Committee – June 25, 2026
(Recommendations)****9.1.1 2025 Reserve Balances & 2025 Accumulated Surplus Allocation**

Susan Fielding brought forward the staff report indicating that at the end of 2025, the Hamilton Conservation Authority had an accumulated surplus of \$913,803 to be allocated to reserves. It was recommended that \$800,000 would be allocated to the General Land Acquisition reserve and \$113,803 would be added to the Watershed Management Services reserve to support on-going projects.

BD12, 3652**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Craig Cassar****THAT the Budget & Administration Committee
recommend approval by the Board of Directors the
allocation of the accumulated surplus balance at
December 31, 2025 of \$913,803 as follows:**

- \$800,000 to the General Land Acquisition reserve,
- and \$113,803 to the Watershed Management Services reserve.

CARRIED

9.1.2 2027 Budget Process and Year 3 Strategic Plan Initiatives

Susan Fielding provided an overview of the staff report indicating that the 2027 budget process will be accelerated to ensure that the budget is completed prior to the municipal elections and in accordance with the Minister's direction. The proposed 2027 budget will be a maintenance budget, that continues existing programs and services and assumes a proposed 3.7% municipal levy increase, continued \$2 million capital block funding from the City of Hamilton and is supported by the use of reserves, support from our Foundation and conservation area revenues.

The report highlighted the Year 3 initiatives from the Strategic Plan which will continue to implement the priorities from the comprehensive program and service reviews completed in 2025 and advance priorities across all four pillars of the Strategic Plan.

BD12, 3653

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare**

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT this report be received for information; and further,

THAT the Year 3 initiatives identified in the report that support all four priority areas in the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan be approved and incorporated into 2027 year budgeting.

CARRIED

9.1.3 Legislative Minimum Wage Increase to HCA Casual Wage Rates

Susan Fielding provided an overview of the staff report indicating that the HCA will increase the minimum wage as legislated by the Province on October 1, 2026; the HCA's Casual/Seasonal Wage Grid will be adjusted to reflect this. Additionally, Level 1, Step 2 of the Casual/Seasonal Wage Grid will be increased, to recognize the experience and operational value of returning employees and to ensure appropriate difference between the two wage ranges.

BD12, 3654

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson**

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the revised Casual/Seasonal wage grids for Hamilton Conservation Authority and Confederation Beach Park, Lakeland Pool and Wild Waterworks be approved, which provides for the following:

- a) The provincially mandated minimum wage rate of \$17.95, effective October 1, 2026, be applied to Level 1, Step 1 positions; and**
- b) An additional increase of seventeen cents to be applied to Level 1, Step 2 positions for the 2027 hiring year.**

CARRIED

10. Other Staff Reports/Memoranda

Reports to be Approved

10.1. Wild Waterworks Administration Building Roof Replacement – Tender Results

Rob Gray provided an overview of the staff report indicating that roof of the administrative building at Wild Waterworks requires replacing due to water infiltration. Following a public tender process, staff recommend GRRC Roofing to be awarded the contract; they were the lowest bidder and provided strong, solid references.

BD12, 3655

**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry
SECONDED BY: Jeff Beattie**

THAT the Board of Directors award the construction tender for the Wild Waterworks Administration Roof Replacement project to GRRC Roofing for a total cost of \$112,000.00 (before taxes) which includes a contingency sum.

CARRIED

10.2. Proposed pool accessory to a new dwelling in a regulated area of Lake Ontario at 24 Copes Lane, City of Hamilton (Stoney Creek) – Permit application SC/F,C,A/26/43

Elizabeth Reimer provided a summary of the staff report indicating an application was received for the construction of a pool and cabana at 24 Copes Lane, Stoney Creek, that required Board approval because the proposal does not fully comply with HCA's current shoreline policies. Staff recommended approval because a Permit for the home was approved and substantially constructed under the previous policy

framework and no feasible alternative pool location exists outside the hazard area, and appropriate shoreline protection measures will be maintained.

BD12, 3656

**MOVED BY: Jeff Beattie
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the HCA Board of Directors approve the issuance of a permit under Section 28.1 of the Conservation Authorities Act, subject to submission of final drawings and subject to standard conditions, for construction of a pool within the regulated area associated with Lake Ontario at 24 Copes Lane, Stoney Creek, City of Hamilton.

CARRIED

10.3. Watershed Conditions Memorandum

Scott Peck provided an overview of the memorandum, noting that during the period of May 25th to June 22nd 2026, there were no significant flooding or water safety concerns, related to area watercourses or the Lake Ontario shoreline.

Currently, there are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant watercourse flooding, localized watercourse flooding of low-lying areas that typically flood during higher water levels, or significant water safety concerns. Current flows are estimated to range from slightly elevated above baseflow conditions in some watercourses (Ancaster Creek and Redhill Creek) to elevated but slightly below thresholds for significant water safety concerns in other watercourses (Spencer Creek). There aren't any observations, reports or expectations of significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake is 34 cm above average for this time of year.

BD12, 3657

**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry**

THAT the memorandum entitled Watershed Conditions be received.

CARRIED

10.4. Conservation Areas Services Update

Brandon Good reported that conservation area operations are at full summer season levels. A new Wind Phone at Dundas Valley Conservation Area has been installed

and well received, providing visitors with a reflective space for grief, remembrance, and healing while supporting HCA's commitment to mental wellness and meaningful connections to nature. Wild Waterworks and Lakeland Pool are now open, with Wild Waterworks celebrating its 40th operating season. HCA is also partnering with the Province of Ontario to deliver the Learn to Fish program at Christie Lake, Valens Lake, and Fifty Point Conservation Areas. Strong registration levels demonstrate continued community interest in accessible outdoor recreation and nature-based learning opportunities

BD12, 3658

**MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the memorandum entitled Conservation Areas Services Update be received.

CARRIED

11. New Business

There was none.

12. In-Camera Items

BD12, 3659

**MOVED BY: Wayne Terryberry
SECONDED BY: Susan Fielding**

THAT the Board of Directors moves *in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.

CARRIED

During the *in-camera* session, one Security/Legal matter, one Negotiation matter and one Property matter were discussed.

12.1. Confidential Report – BA/June 01-2026 (Security/Legal Matter)

Susan Fielding provided a summary of the confidential staff report coming forward from the Budget and Administration Committee, regarding a security/legal matter.

BD12, 3660

**MOVED BY: Susan Fielding
SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson**

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT Confidential Report BA/June 01-2026 be approved

CARRIED

12.2 Confidential Report – BD/July 01-2026
(Negotiation Matter)

Lisa Burnside provided an overview of the confidential report and answered members' questions.

BD12, 3661

MOVED BY: Alex Wilson
SECONDED BY: Jeff Beattie

THAT the Board of Directors approve Confidential Report BD/July 01-2026;

And THAT this report remain in camera.

CARRIED

12.3 Confidential Report – BD/July 02-2026
(Property Matter)

Lisa Burnside provided a summary of the confidential report and answered members' questions.

BD12, 3662

MOVED BY: Craig Cassar
SECONDED BY: Wayne Terryberry

THAT the Board of Directors approve Confidential Report BD/July 02-2026;

AND THAT this confidential report and recommendation remain in camera.

CARRIED

BD12, 3663

MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson
SECONDED BY: Lisa DiCesare

THAT the Board of Directors moves out of closed session.

CARRIED**13. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be held on Thursday, Thursday, September 3, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

14. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting was adjourned.

Scott Fleming
Secretary-Treasurer

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HAMILTON CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Conservation Advisory Board

MINUTES

April 9, 2026

Minutes of the Conservation Advisory Board meeting held on Thursday, April 9 2026 at 4:00 p.m., virtually via Webex platform and livestreamed on YouTube.

PRESENT:

Sherry O'Connor – in the Chair	
Elise Copps	
Tyler Cunningham	Natalie Faught
Jamie Freeman	Haley McRae
Cortney Oliver	Noah Stegman

REGRETS: Craig Cassar, Wayne Terryberry, Brad Clark and Susan Fielding

STAFF PRESENT: Lisa Burnside, Gord Costie, Rob Gray, Matt Hall, Christina Jager, Peter Lloyd, Scott Peck, Mike Stone, and Sandra Winninger

OTHERS: None

1. Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the HCA Administrative By-law. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda.

CA 2608**MOVED BY: Noah Stegman
SECONDED BY: Natalie Faught****THAT the agenda be approved.****CARRIED****4. Delegations**

There were none.

5. Member Briefing**5.1. Annual Report**

Lisa Burnside provided an overview of the Annual Report, highlighting the achievements made towards accomplishing the initiatives within the four priority areas as outlined in the Strategic Plan. This included securing over \$500,000 in external grants to support priority projects and environmental education; continued progress on the Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration project and acquiring 18 hectares of the Fletcher Creek Swamp forest, to protect this significant wetland and strengthen the natural corridor between Valens Lake and Fletcher Creek ecological preserve.

CA 2609**MOVED BY: Haley McRae
SECONDED BY: Courtney Oliver****THAT the Member Briefing be received.****CARRIED****5.2 Verbal Update – Provincial Announcement – Conservation Authorities Act/Amalgamation**

Lisa Burnside provided a presentation to update the members of the Conservation Advisory Board on the Provincial Conservation Authority consolidation, highlighting key points from the Province's March 10, 2026 announcement and the March 26, 2026 Budget Bill, including:

- Legislation has been introduced to consolidate Ontario's 36 conservation authorities into nine regional authorities and has passed Second Reading

- The Hamilton Conservation Authority would become part of the Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority, along with the Niagara, Halton, and Credit Valley Conservation Authorities
- The Province has indicated there will be no staffing reductions and that existing programs, services, and projects will continue; transitional funding will support implementation
- Following Royal Assent of the Bill, Transition Committees will be established comprising the CAOs of affected conservation authorities and a municipally appointed Board member; a Project Executive will chair the committee and oversee the transition process; the proposed effective transition date is February 1, 2027
- Core operations will continue, including natural hazard protection, natural area conservation, and public access to nature

**CA 2610 MOVED BY: Jamie Freeman
 SECONDED BY: Noah Stegman**

THAT the Verbal Update be received.

CARRIED

6. Chairman's Report on Board of Directors Actions

Sherry O'Connor reported that the following items were approved at the Board of Directors' Meeting held on April March 5, 2026

- 6.1. CA 2604 Volunteer Program Business Plan
- 6.2. CA 2605 2025 Westfield Artifact Accessions and Deaccessions
- 6.3. CA 2606 Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Management Plan

7. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

7.1. Minutes – Conservation Advisory Board (February 12, 2026)

**CA 2611 MOVED BY: Natalie Faught
 SECONDED BY: Courtney Oliver**

THAT the minutes of the February 12, 2026 Conservation Advisory Board meeting be approved.

CARRIED**8. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was none.

9. Staff Reports/MemorandumsReports for Recommendation**9.1. 2026 Westfield Artifact Special Accession**

Peter Lloyd brought forward the staff report highlighting that a donation of a 1929 Ford Model A sedan has been offered to Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area. The vehicle is in good condition and has been reviewed by the Hamilton Conservation Authority's Fleet Coordinator who is confident that the car will be easily restored to running condition. The acquisition will provide a time marker for context within the Village during public events as well as the potential for off-site/outreach.

CA 2612**MOVED BY: Noah Stegman****SECONDED BY: Jamie Freeman****THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors:****THAT the 1929 Model A Ford be accepted as an artifact into the Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area and the Hamilton Conservation Authority artifact collection.****CARRIED**Memorandums to be Received**9.2. Verbal Update, HCA Attendance 2025**

Gord Costie provided an update on 2025 attendance within the conservation areas highlighting overall estimated attendance collectively as well as specific attendance numbers at various owned and managed areas. Attendance numbers are reviewed over time to help determine trends visitation to the areas.

In response to a question posed by Noah Stegman, Gord Costie indicated that trail counters are used to assist in determining attendance numbers, specifically during a

master plan process; Dundas Valley will be undergoing this process and trail counters will be installed to collect visitation data.

CA 2613

MOVED BY: Haley McRae

SECONDED BY: Noah Stegman

THAT the verbal update, HCA Attendance 2025, be received.

CARRIED

10. New Business

There was none.

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Conservation Advisory Board is scheduled for Thursday, June 11, 2026 at 4:00 p.m., at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium.

12. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting was adjourned.

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Hamilton Conservation Authority

Minutes

Budget & Administration Committee

June 25, 2026

Minutes of the Budget & Administration Committee meeting held on Thursday, June 25, 2026 at 2:00 p.m., at the HCA main office, 838 Mineral Springs Road, in Ancaster, and livestreamed on YouTube.

Present: Susan Fielding, in the Chair
Brad Clark
Lisa DiCesare
Alex Wilson
Maureen Wilson

Regrets: None

Staff Present: Lisa Burnside, Gord Costie, Marlene Ferreira, Scott Fleming, Liam Fletcher, Brandon Good, Rob Gray, Matt Hall, Amanda Martin, Scott Peck, Jaime Tellier, and Sandra Winninger

Others Present: None

1. Welcome

The Chair called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone present.

2. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

The Chair asked members to declare any conflicts under the HCA Administrative By-law. There were none.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair requested any additions or deletions to the agenda; there was none.

BA 2615

MOVED BY: Alex Wilson

SECONDED BY: Brad Clark

THAT the agenda be approved.

CARRIED

4. Delegations

There were none.

5. Consent Items

The following consent items were adopted:

5.1. Approval of Budget & Administration Committee Minutes – May 29, 2026

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

There was none.

7. Staff Reports/Memoranda

Reports for Recommendation

7.1. 2025 Reserve Balances & 2025 Accumulated Surplus Allocation

Scott Fleming provided an overview of the staff report indicating that for 2025, there was a surplus of \$913,803 which will be allocated to reserves: \$800,000 to be added to the General Land Acquisition Reserve and \$113, 803 to the Watershed Management Services Reserve.

BA 2616

MOVED BY: Brad Clark

SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommend approval by the Board of Directors the allocation of the accumulated surplus balance at December 31, 2025 of \$913,803 as follows:

- **\$800,000 to the General Land Acquisition reserve,**
- **and \$113,803 to the Watershed Management Services reserve.**

CARRIED

7.2. 2027 Budget Process and Year 3 Strategic Plan Initiatives

Lisa Burnside presented a summary of the staff report, noting that the 2027 budget process has been accelerated compared to previous years due various factors affecting time and approach. These include the upcoming fall municipal election, expected provincial direction to have budgets completed by or before year end and amalgamation of conservation authorities in early 2027. The 2027 operating budget will be a maintenance budget to help ensure continuity while preparing for the transition to the regional conservation authority. The Year 3 initiatives, from the 2025 – 2029 Strategic Plan, along with overall 2027 budget funding approach, were reviewed.

BA 2617

MOVED BY: Maureen Wilson

SECONDED BY: Brad Clark

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors;

THAT this report be received for information; and further,

THAT the Year 3 initiatives identified in the report that support all four priority areas in the 2025–2029 Strategic Plan be approved and incorporated into 2027 year budgeting.

CARRIED

7.3. Legislative Minimum Wage Increase to HCA Casual Wage Rates

Marlene Ferreira provided an overview of the staff report highlighting that the HCA needs to adjust the wage within Casual/Seasonal Wage Grid in order to comply with the legislated minimum wage increase. The wage of Level 1, Step 1 will increase to match the mandated wage rate that will come into affect on October 1, 2026. Additionally, staff recommend that Level 1, Step 2 wage be increased by seventeen cents to maintain appropriate differentiation between entry-level and returning employees.

BA 2618

MOVED BY: Alex Wilson

SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT the revised Casual/Seasonal wage grids for Hamilton Conservation Authority and Confederation Beach Park, Lakeland Pool and Wild Waterworks be approved, which provides for the following:

- a) The provincially mandated minimum wage rate of \$17.95, effective October 1, 2026, be applied to Level 1, Step 1 positions; and
- b) An additional increase of seventeen cents to be applied to Level 1, Step 2 positions for the 2027 hiring year.

CARRIED

8. New Business

There was none.

9. In-Camera Items for Matters of Law, Personnel and Property

BA 2619

MOVED BY: Brad Clark

SECONDED BY: Alex Wilson

THAT the Budget and Administration Committee moves *in camera* for matters of law, personnel and property.

CARRIED

During the *in camera* session, one security/legal matter and legal matter were discussed.

9.1. Confidential Report – BA/June 01-2026

Jaime Tellier provided an overview of the confidential report and answered members' questions.

BA 2620

MOVED BY: Lisa DiCesare

SECONDED BY: Alex Wilson

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT Confidential Report BA/June 01-2026 be approved.

CARRIED

9.2 Confidential Memorandum – BA/June 02-2026

Scott Fleming provided a summary of the confidential memorandum and answered members' questions.

BA 2621

MOVED BY: Brad Clark

SECONDED BY: Maureen Wilson

THAT the memorandum entitled, BA/June 02-2026 be received

CARRIED

BA 2622

MOVED BY: Alex Wilson

SECONDED BY: Brad Clark

THAT the Budget and Administration Committee moves out of closed session.

CARRIED

10. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Budget and Administration Committee will be held on Thursday, August 27, 2026 at 2:00 p.m. at the HCA Main Administration Office – Woodend Auditorium, 838 Mineral Springs Road, Ancaster, Ontario.

11. Adjournment

On motion, the meeting adjourned.

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City of Hamilton
Hamilton City Hall
71 Main Street West, 1st Floor
Hamilton, Ontario
Canada L8P 4Y5
www.hamilton.ca

Angela McRae
Manager, Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk
Office of the City Clerk
Phone (905) 546-2424 Ext. 5987
Fax # (905) 546-2095
angela.mcrae@hamilton.ca

July 6, 2026

Lisa Burnside
Chief Administrative Officer
Hamilton Conservation Authority
838 Mineral Springs Road
P. O. Box 81067
Ancaster, Ontario
L9G 4X

Email: Lisa.Burnside@conservationhamilton.ca

Subject: 2027 Operating Budget Submission for the Hamilton Conservation Authority

Dear Lisa Burnside:

This letter is to request that your organization submit a draft budget to the City of Hamilton; along with a copy of your organization's most recent audited financial statements, to the **attention of Matt Hilson, Supervisor, Budgets and Financial Planning, 71 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5, on or before October 1, 2026.**

If you have any questions respecting your budget submission, please contact Matt Hilson at (905) 546-2424 Ext.1444 or at Matt.Hilson@hamilton.ca.

Tentatively, the meeting to consider Boards and Agencies Budgets has been scheduled for **Tuesday, January 26, 2027. Your organization has been scheduled to present at 10:15 a.m. You will receive an Outlook Invitation, once this has been finalized.**

City of Hamilton meetings are held in a hybrid mode. Therefore, you are welcome to attend either in person or virtually. Please forward to my attention, the names, titles and emails of all parties from your organization that need to be included in the WebEx meeting, so that I can ensure that they have access to the meeting.

Please provide an electronic copy of your **final presentation no later than 12 noon on Monday, January 18, 2027** to my attention at angela.mcrae@hamilton.ca.

Should you have any questions respecting the meeting process or your presentation, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Angela McRae
Manager, Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk
Office of the City Clerk

Copied: Mike Zegarac, General Manager, Finance & Corporate Services
Kirk Weaver, Acting Director, Financial Planning, Administration & Policy
Matt Hilson, Supervisor, Budgets and Financial Planning
Kayla Petrovsky Fleming, Manager, Budgets and Fiscal Policy

Ontario Provincial
Conservation Agency

l'Agence ontarienne de
protection de la nature

July 15, 2026

Dear GMs/CAOs:

I am writing to share an important update on transition planning for regional consolidation. In May, the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency launched an expedited external recruitment process to identify Project Executives who will chair Transition Committees and subsequently serve as inaugural Chief Administrative Officers of the new Regional Conservation Authorities (RCA) for terms of up to two years.

The opportunity was circulated broadly across the conservation and municipal sectors and the recruitment process generated over 50 applications, and more than 20 interviews were conducted with a diverse range of candidates, including current CAOs/GMs, senior municipal leaders, and experienced public-sector executives.

We have now completed the recruitment for the role and are pleased to announce the appointment of eight new Project Executives:

- Davin Heinbuck – Western Lake Erie RCA
- Samantha Lawson – Eastern Lake Erie RCA
- Sommer Casgrain-Robertson – St. Lawrence River RCA
- Alison McDonald – Eastern Lake Ontario RCA
- Don Goodyear – Lake Huron RCA
- Tim Commisso – Northeastern Ontario RCA
- Jacqueline Johnson – Western Lake Ontario RCA
- Robert Baldwin – Central Lake Ontario RCA

While a Project Executive will not be appointed for the Northwestern RCA, the region will continue to be fully engaged and closely integrated in transition planning. Tammy Cook will continue to lead this work in her current capacity as CAO, ensuring continuity and collaboration as transition activities progress.

The appointment of the Project Executives is a critical step in ensuring experienced, stable leadership to support a successful transition, with continuity and clear accountability both before and after consolidation.

I would also like to thank all those who indicated interest in the Project Executive role and participated in the recruitment process.

Please join me in welcoming the successful Project Executives to these transformative and challenging roles. I have no doubt that you will extend your full support and professional collaboration as leaders of your respective Conservation Authority to achieve successful consolidation.

Thank you as always for your continued commitment and dedication.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Hassaan'.

Hassaan Basit
CEO
Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

Ontario Provincial
Conservation Agency

l'Agence ontarienne de
protection de la nature

July 15, 2026

Dear Conservation Authority Board Chairs:

I am writing to follow up on the recent announcement of Project Executives who will guide and support the transition to regional conservation authorities.

While your local CAO/GM may not have been selected for this position, I want to underscore that they will continue to play a critical leadership role throughout the transition activities ahead, both up to and following regional consolidation.

A strengthened conservation authority system depends on strong local leadership, informed input, and ongoing collaboration across all CAs. Your CAO/GM's knowledge, relationships, and experience will be essential to shaping and supporting this work.

The Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency team will be relying on their continued focus, engagement, and leadership as transition activities progress over the coming months.

Looking ahead, regional consolidation will also bring new organizational structures and evolving senior leadership roles. This will create additional opportunities for experienced leaders to contribute at a regional level as we move into and beyond consolidation.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Sincerely,



Hassaan Basit
CEO
Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

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Ontario Provincial
Conservation Agency

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protection de la nature

July 30, 2026

Dear Conservation Authority CAOs, General Managers, Board Chairs, Mayors and Heads of Council:

I am writing to announce the members of the transition committees that will support the implementation of regional conservation authority consolidation.

As you may recall, transition committees will provide advice and operational expertise to support transition activities, including the development of transition plans for each new regional conservation authority.

Committee membership includes the current CAO or General Manager and one board member from each existing conservation authority participating in a regional consolidation.

Each committee will be chaired by a dedicated project executive who will oversee transition activities and provide continuity by serving as the first Chief Administrative Officer of the new regional conservation authority for up to two years. Project executives were recently appointed.

Following a brief orientation period, project executives will convene their transition committees and begin transition planning activities in the coming weeks.

Please find below the membership of the transition committees for each of the eight new regional conservation authorities.

Thank you for your continued leadership and partnership as we work together to establish strong, effective regional conservation authorities.

Sincerely,



Hassaan Basit
CEO
Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency

Regional Conservation Authority	Transition Committee Members
Central Lake Ontario Project Executive: Robert Baldwin	Dave Barton, Toronto and Region Conservation John MacKenzie, Toronto and Region Conservation Bob Chapman, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority Chris Darling, Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority
Eastern Lake Ontario Project Executive: Alison McDonald	Brad McNevin, Quinte Conservation Kathryn Brown, Quinte Conservation Rhonda Bateman, Lower Trent Conservation Authority Sherry Hamilton, Lower Trent Conservation Authority Linda Laliberte, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Vicki Mink, Ganaraska Region Conservation Authority Mark Majchrowski, Kawartha Conservation Authority Pat Warren, Acting, Kawartha Conservation Authority David Ellingwood, Cataraqui Conservation Authority Paul Proderick, Cataraqui Conservation Authority Janette Loveys Smith, Otonabee Region, Crowe Valley Conservation Authority Conservation Authority, Crowe Valley Conservation Authority Michael Metcalf, Otonabee Region Conservation Authority, Crowe Valley Conservation Authority
Western Lake Ontario Project Executive: Jacqueline Johnson	Lisa Burnside, Hamilton Conservation Authority Brad Clark, Hamilton Conservation Authority Leilani Lee-Yates, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Robert Foster, Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Chandra Sharma, Conservation Halton Gerry Smallegange, Conservation Halton Terri LeRoux, Credit Valley Conservation Authority Michael Palleschi, Credit Valley Conservation Authority
Lake Huron	Jonathan Scott, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

Project Executive: Don Goodyear	Jennifer Vincent, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Raymond Chartrand, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Nathan Schoelier, Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Erik Downing, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Tom Hutchinson, Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority Phil Beard, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority Ed McGugan, Maitland Valley Conservation Authority Mark Critch, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Clare Riepma, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Tim Lanthier, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Jennifer Shaw, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority
St. Lawrence River Project Executive: Sommer Casgrain-Robertson	Sally McIntyre, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Roy Huet, Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority Glen McDonald, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Gary Waterfield, Rideau Valley Conservation Authority Lisa Van de Ligit, Raisin Region Conservation Authority Andrew Guindon, Raisin Region Conservation Authority Carl Bickerdike, South Nation River Conservation Authority Isabelle Skalski, South Nation River Conservation Authority
Eastern Lake Erie Project Executive: Samantha Lawson	Judy Maxwell, Long Point Region Conservation Authority Doug Brunton, Long Point Region Conservation Authority Elizabeth VanHooren, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority Sharron McMillan, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority John Challinor II, Grand River Conservation Authority Karen Armstrong, Grand River Conservation Authority

	Dusty Underhill, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority Morgaine Griffin, Catfish Creek Conservation Authority
Western Lake Erie Project Executive: Davin Heinbuck	Tim Byrne, Essex Region Conservation Authority Molly Allaire, Essex Region Conservation Authority Tracy Annett, Upper Thames Conservation Authority Brian Petrie, Upper Thames Conservation Authority Mark Peacock, Lower Thames Conservation Authority Sarah Bod, Lower Thames Conservation Authority Ken Philllips, St Clair Region Conservation Authority Greg Grimes, St Clair Region Conservation Authority
Northeastern Project Executive: Tim Commisso	Mark Signoretti, Nickel District Conservation Authority Carl Jorgensen, Nickel District Conservation Authority Liza Vandermer, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority Lana Mitchell, North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority Corrina Barrett, Sault Ste. Marie Conservation Authority Sandra Hollingsworth, Sault Ste. Marie Conservation Authority David Vallier, Mattagami Region Conservation Authority Andrew Marks, Mattagami Region Conservation Authority

Ontario Provincial
Conservation Agency

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protection de la nature

August 14, 2026

Dear Committee Members:

I am pleased to introduce myself as the Project Executive for **Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority** and the incoming Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of the regional authority.

I have more than 20 years of experience in large public-sector organizations, with much of my career focused on leading teams through complex change. I've led diverse portfolios with responsibility for more than 600 employees and operating budgets exceeding \$90 million. My previous roles at the Region of Peel and the City of Burlington included leading significant organizational transformations and integration initiatives across municipal government, while working closely with elected officials, boards, community partners and senior leaders.

I'm a skilled change management practitioner and Project Management Professional with a strong background in governance and stakeholder engagement. I bring a collaborative, people-centred approach to this work, grounded in calm judgment, strong relationships and a focus on achieving positive outcomes. I'm looking forward to bringing that experience to this transition and working alongside the committee.

In this role, I will lead transition planning activities for our region, chair the Transition Committee, and, upon consolidation in February 2027, serve as the first CAO of the regional authority. My focus will be on ensuring a smooth and successful transition by fostering collaboration, supporting informed decision-making, and helping establish the foundation for a strong and effective regional authority.

Our committee brings together CAOs and Board members from the originating conservation authorities that will form Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority. Over the coming months, we will work collaboratively to guide the transition process and support the establishment of our new regional authority.

Beginning in September, the Transition Committee will meet regularly to develop and oversee a comprehensive transition plan that will position us for operational readiness ahead of consolidation in 2027. Together, we will address key governance, operational, financial, and organizational matters to ensure a smooth transition.

You can expect to receive additional information in the coming weeks, including meeting schedules, materials, and details regarding committee activities.

Thank you in advance for your commitment, collaboration, and leadership throughout this important process. I look forward to working with all of you as we build the foundation for the future success of Western Lake Ontario RCA.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Johnson
Project Executive, Western Lake Ontario RCA
Incoming Chief Administrative Officer



HCA 2027 Draft Budget

Budget & Administration Committee – August 27, 2026



Executive Summary – 2027 Budget

- HCA's draft 2027 Budget outlines **\$23.1 million in planned operating and capital activities** to maintain programs and services, advance Board-approved priorities and support key capital investments
- **Budget Overview: \$23.1M Total Budget**
 - **\$18.3M Operating**
 - **\$4.8M Capital**
- **3.7% levy increase** in 2027 to support operating priorities
- Operating budget supported by self-generated revenue and reserve funding to maintain a cash-neutral (break-even) position
- Capital budget maintains **\$2.0M in block funding**, supplemented by **\$2.8M in grants and reserves** to advance the Saltfleet Wetland Restoration Program
- The 2027 budget has been developed in accordance with the Minister's direction under section 1.14 of the Conservation Authorities Act, applicable to conservation authorities during the transition period



Operating Budget Goals

- **Water Resources Management**
- **Organizational Excellence**
- **Natural Heritage Conservation**
- **Connecting People to Nature**

2027 Draft Operating Budget Summary

Table 1: Revenues and Expenditures (Operating)								
	2027 Budget \$000's	2026 Budget \$000's	\$ Change	% Change	2027 Budget By Division			
					Central Support Services	Conservation Areas	Westfield Heritage Village & Conservation Area	Watershed Management Services
Revenues								
Levy	5,412	5,219	193	3.7%	2,040	-	721	2,651
Admissions	3,901	3,881	20	0.5%	-	3,814	87	-
Camping/marina	3,982	3,948	34	0.9%	-	3,982	-	-
Equipment Rental	1,455	1,413	42	3.0%	1,455	-	-	-
Transfer from Reserves	125	111	14	12.6%	75	-	-	50
Other	3,498	3,631	(133)	-3.7%	1,535	823	250	891
Total Revenue	\$ 18,373	\$ 18,203	\$ 170		\$ 5,104	\$ 8,618	\$ 1,059	\$ 3,592
Expenditures								
Staffing	12,629	12,496	133	1.1%	4,904	3,998	662	2,984
Equipment	789	773	16	2.1%	65	725	-	-
Utilities	767	821	(54)	-6.6%	245	458	64	-
Materials/supplies	593	556	37	6.6%	69	369	57	97
Other	3,596	3,557	39	1.1%	1,611	1,280	275	511
Total Expenditures	\$ 18,373	\$ 18,203	\$ 170		\$ 6,893	\$ 6,830	\$ 1,059	\$ 3,592

Capital Budget

Funding Sources

	2027	2026
City of Hamilton (Block Funding)	2,000,000	2,000,000
Hamilton Conservation Foundation/HGCT	2,550,000	-
HCA Reserves (Saltfleet Reserve)	250,000	500,000
Total Capital Budget Funding	<u>\$ 4,800,000</u>	<u>\$ 2,500,000</u>

Year 3 – Water Resources Management

- **Strengthen our water monitoring network**
- **Improve the connectivity and reliability of streamflow, precipitation and snowpack monitoring across the watershed, building on the 2025 system review and work completed in 2026**
- **2027 Budget Key Initiatives:**
 - **10** new tipping-bucket rain gauges
 - **3** new rain gauges
 - **1** additional snow survey



Year 3 – Organizational Excellence

- **Advance organizational and digital transformation**
- **Undertake transition activities and key initiatives from the Digital Transformation Plan to strengthen operational efficiency, information management and collaboration across HCA**

2027 Budget Key Initiatives:

- **Undertake transition activities and work** stemming from the transition plan
- **Digitize Planning & Regulation records** and complete migration to the Conservation Authority Content Management System, with improved workflows and automated records management
- **Assess finance and HR business processes** to inform the planned evaluation of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system
- **Continue development of Microsoft 365/SharePoint** to modernize information management, collaboration and internal communications, supported by staff training
- **Investment:** IT/Records Reserve funds will be required to support these initiatives



Year 3 Priorities – Natural Heritage Conservation

- **Advance wetland restoration and priority natural heritage initiatives**
- Continue restoration and monitoring efforts that protect and enhance HCA's natural areas, while advancing the Saltfleet Wetland Restoration Program

2027 Budget Key Initiatives:

- **Construct the third Saltfleet wetland at Devil's Punchbowl** and initiate design of the fourth and final wetland
- **Continue priority restoration and monitoring**, including restoration works, invasive species management and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) treatments
- **Develop an integrated data framework** to better identify and visualize priority areas for restoration, stewardship and invasive species management



Year 3 Priorities – Connecting People to Nature

- **Improve access, inclusion and visitor experiences**
- **Implement recommendations from the 2025 Access and Amenities and Conservation Areas Program Reviews, building on work completed in 2026 to enhance accessibility and enrich visitor experiences**

2027 Budget Key Initiatives:

- **Expand accessible amenities**, including new accessible pathways and picnic table pads
- **Expand the Learn to Series**, including the new *Paint in the Park* program
- **Offer partner-led interpretive hikes** to connect visitors with nature
- **Introduce tackle share/loaner programs** to support accessible fishing opportunities
- **Promote disc golf tournaments** to encourage new and returning visitors to engage with conservation areas





Revenues & Expenses

New revenues through:

- Targeted fee increases at our conservation areas
- Levy increase
- Ongoing support from the Hamilton Conservation Foundation for environmental education
- Grant funding supporting eligible programs and initiatives

A Balanced Budget (000's)

	Budget <u>2027</u>	Budget <u>2026</u>	Actual <u>2025</u>	Actual <u>2024</u>
<u>Revenues</u>				
Levy	\$ 5,412	\$ 5,219	\$ 5,108	\$ 4,909
Admissions	3,901	3,881	3,746	3,482
Camping/marina	3,982	3,948	3,879	3,552
Equipment rental	1,455	1,413	1,362	1,336
Transfer from reserves	125	111	1,961	937
Other	<u>3,498</u>	<u>3,631</u>	<u>3,825</u>	<u>4,155</u>
	18,373	18,203	\$19,881	\$18,371
<u>Expenses</u>				
Staffing	12,548	12,496	11,819	10,842
Equipment	789	773	887	910
Utilities	767	821	760	751
Materials/supplies	593	556	549	495
Other	<u>3,676</u>	<u>3,557</u>	<u>5,693</u>	<u>4,817</u>
	18,373	18,203	19,708	17,815
Net surplus	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 173</u>	<u>\$ 556</u>

Watershed Management Services (000's)

	Budget <u>2027</u>	Budget <u>2026</u>	Actual <u>2025</u>	Actual <u>2024</u>
<u>Revenues</u>				
Levy	\$ 2,651	\$ 2,574	\$ 2,070	\$ 1,783
Permits, fees	290	295	425	338
Grants	404	456	317	497
Transfer from Reserves	50	17	1,615	696
Other	<u>197</u>	<u>196</u>	<u>696</u>	<u>737</u>
	3,592	3,537	5,123	4,051
<u>Expenses</u>				
Staffing	2,984	2,913	2,662	2,351
Contractors	319	313	2,216	1,457
Materials/supplies	97	107	50	35
Other	<u>193</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>195</u>	<u>208</u>
	3,592	3,537	5,123	4,051
Net surplus	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ (0)</u>	<u>\$ -</u>

Conservation Area Services (000's)

	<u>Budget 2027</u>	<u>Budget 2026</u>	<u>Actual 2025</u>	<u>Actual 2024</u>
<u>Revenues</u>				
Admissions	\$ 3,814	\$ 3,796	\$ 3,663	\$ 3,400
Camping	2,326	2,289	2,234	2,033
Marina	1,656	1,659	1,644	1,519
Other	<u>823</u>	<u>681</u>	<u>784</u>	<u>967</u>
	8,618	8,425	8,326	7,920
<u>Expenses</u>				
Staffing	3,998	3,952	3,892	3,664
Equipment	725	708	760	852
Materials/supplies	369	335	370	333
Utilities	458	399	459	374
Other	<u>1,280</u>	<u>1,197</u>	<u>1,338</u>	<u>1,234</u>
	6,830	6,591	6,819	6,457
Net surplus	<u>\$ 1,788</u>	<u>\$ 1,833</u>	<u>\$ 1,507</u>	<u>\$ 1,462</u>

Westfield Heritage Village & Conservation Area (000's)

	Budget <u>2027</u>	Budget <u>2026</u>	Actual <u>2025</u>	Actual <u>2024</u>
<u>Revenues</u>				
Levy	\$ 721	\$ 695	\$ 673	\$ 654
Events	129	145	107	119
School Programs	67	65	54	58
Admissions	87	85	83	82
Other	<u>55</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>91</u>
	1,059	1,043	953	1,004
<u>Expenses</u>				
Staffing	662	674	601	667
Promotion	95	92	30	36
Materials/supplies	57	45	54	48
Utilities	64	63	61	57
Other	<u>180</u>	<u>170</u>	<u>191</u>	<u>173</u>
	1,059	1,043	937	982
Net surplus	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 16</u>	<u>\$ 22</u>

Central Support Services (000's)

	Budget <u>2027</u>	Budget <u>2026</u>	Actual <u>2025</u>	Actual <u>2024</u>
<u>Revenues</u>				
Levy	\$ 2,040	\$ 1,950	\$ 2,366	\$ 2,472
Equipment	1,455	1,413	1,362	1,336
Management fees	618	600	618	571
Transfer from Reserves	75	94	346	241
Other	<u>917</u>	<u>1,141</u>	<u>787</u>	<u>775</u>
	5,104	5,198	5,479	5,396
<u>Expenses</u>				
Staffing	4,904	4,957	4,664	4,160
Utilities	245	359	240	320
Contractors	178	144	231	288
Materials/supplies	69	69	75	79
Equipment	65	65	127	58
Other	<u>1,433</u>	<u>1,438</u>	<u>1,493</u>	<u>1,420</u>
	6,893	7,032	6,829	6,325
Net surplus/(deficit)	<u>\$ (1,788)</u>	<u>\$ (1,833)</u>	<u>\$ (1,350)</u>	<u>\$ (929)</u>

2027 Draft Operating Budget Summary

Watershed Management Services	2027 Draft Budget	2027 Draft Operating Budget Funding Sources			
		General Revenue	Municipal Levy	Provincial Grants	Reserves
Watershed Services Administration	899,920	290,000	559,920	-	50,000
Conservation Services (Ecology, Invasives & Restoration)	842,267	39,000	803,267		
Permits & Compliance	501,417		501,417		
Watershed Stewardship Program	346,083	130,800	215,283		-
Water Engineering and Prov Water Control	402,756		402,756		
Water Quality Monitoring	271,778	56,000	30,778	185,000	
Climate Change Initiatives	100,000	100,000			
Provincial Supported Water Control Program	227,956		137,960	89,996	
Total Watershed Management Services	3,592,177	615,800	2,651,381	274,996	50,000

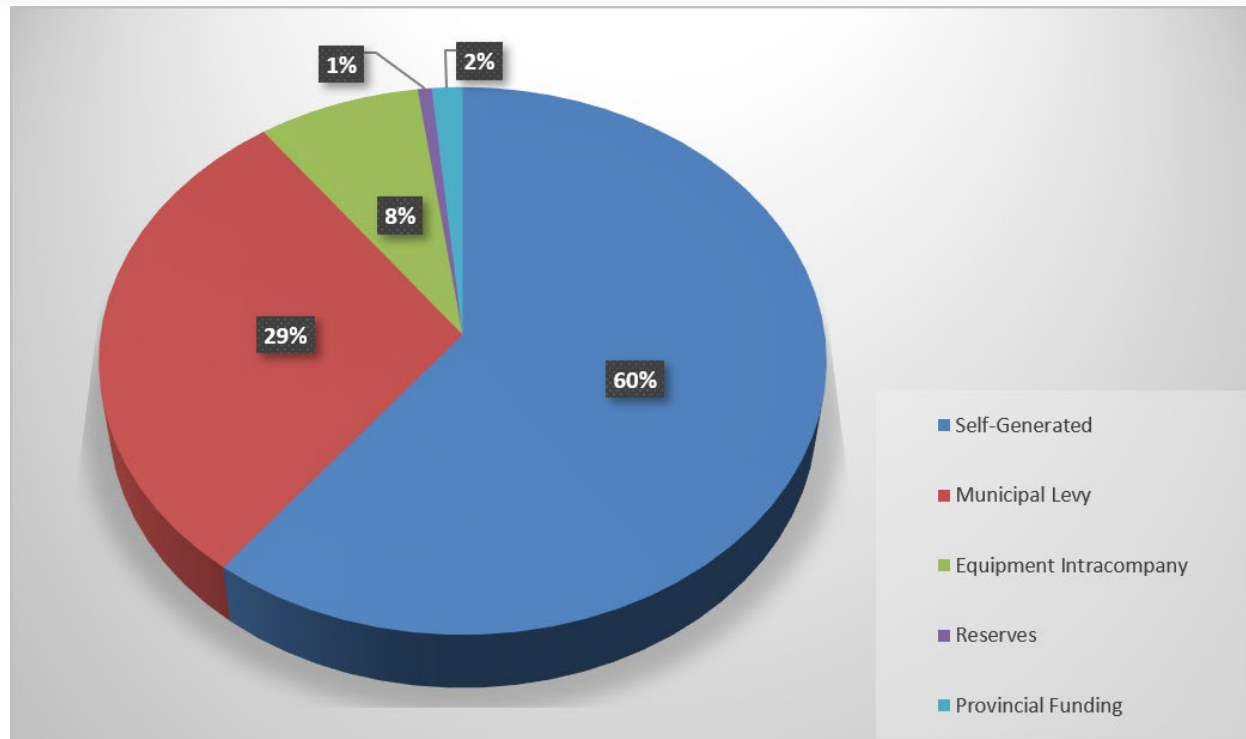
Conservation Areas	2027 Draft Budget	2027 Draft Operating Budget Funding Sources			
		General Revenue	Municipal Levy	Provincial Grants	Reserves
Fifty Point	2,361,453	3,019,678			
Valens Lake	1,606,557	2,744,525			
Christie Lake	1,292,390	1,781,526			
Dundas Valley	916,242	824,000			
Hamilton Mountain	652,885	248,700			
Total Conservation Areas	6,829,527	8,618,429	-	-	-

Westfield Heritage Village & Conservation Area	2027 Draft Budget	2027 Draft Operating Budget Funding Sources			
		General Revenue	Municipal Levy	Provincial Grants	Reserves
Westfield Operations	1,058,702	337,475	721,227		
Total Westfield Heritage Village & Conservation Area	1,058,702	337,475	721,227	-	-

2027 Draft Operating Budget Summary

Central Support Services	2027 Draft Budget	2027 Draft Operating Budget Funding Sources			
		General Revenue	Municipal Levy	Provincial Grants	Reserves
Administration	2,847,970	950,250	2,039,625		-
Information Technology	318,000				75,000
Equipment Pool Operation & Maintenance	806,055	1,459,500			
Central Workshop	636,518	77,250			
Marketing & Communications	618,546				
Human Resources	493,916				
Conservation Foundation	320,718	75,000			
Other (General Maintenance, Memorial Benches, Rentals)	283,230	168,000			
Millgrove Workshop	250,010				
Outdoor Environmental Education Program	222,551	259,500			
Admin Operations Trade	95,513				
Total Central Support Services	6,893,027	2,989,500	2,039,625	-	75,000
Total Operating Programs	18,373,433	12,561,204	5,412,233	274,996	125,000

2027 Sources of Operating Revenue



Operating Revenue	Amount
Self-Generated	11,106,204
Municipal Levy	5,412,233
Equipment Intracompany	1,455,000
Reserves	125,000
Provincial Funding	274,996
Total	18,373,433



Operating Budget Levy Request

- This year's Operating Budget Levy increase request is: **3.7%**
- Province provides allocation percentages annually, this year
 - **City of Hamilton** **99.24%**
 - **Township of Puslinch** **0.76%**
- Total Levy for 2027 \$5,412,233 (\$5,219,125 in 2026)
 - **City of Hamilton** **\$5,376,799**
 - **Township of Puslinch** **\$35,434**
- Year over year impact on Operating Levy is an increase of **\$193,108**



Capital Budget - \$4.8M

HCA's Asset Base:

- Nearly **100 bridges**
- **15 km** of internal roadways
- **2 km** of boardwalks
- **170 buildings**
- **180 km** of trails
- Plus fencing, utilities, gates and other infrastructure

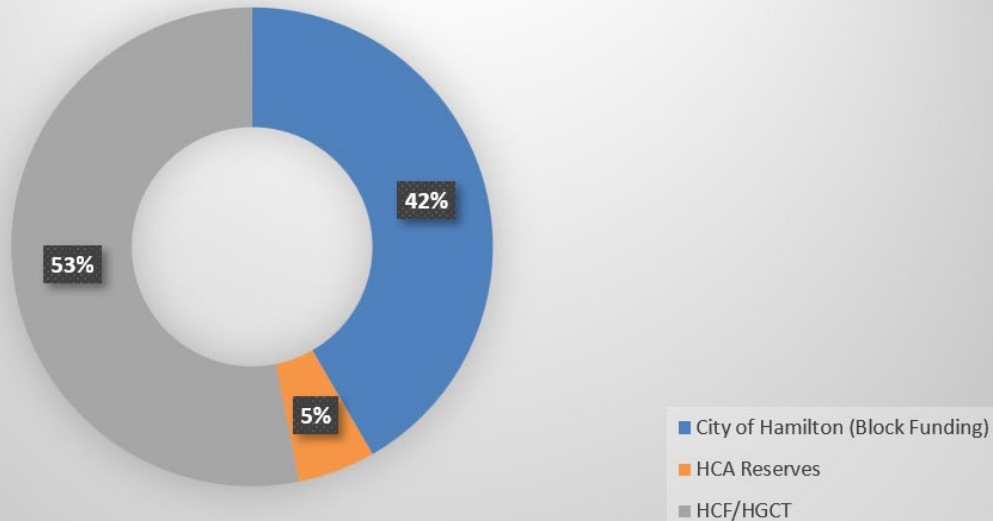
Capital Budget cont'd

<u>Specific Projects</u>					
<u>#</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>	<u>Subtotal By Area</u>	<u>Percent of Projects</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Fifty Point					
1	Dock & Boardwalk Repairs	\$ 25,000			
2	Marina Retaining Wall Repairs	100,000			
3	Boat Storage Compound Expansion	100,000			
4	H Dock Parking & Trail Connection Improvements	50,000			
5	Marina Optimization Review	25,000			
			300,000	8.6%	
Christie Lake					
6	Causeway Culvert Replacement - Phase 1	\$ 400,000			
			\$ 400,000	11.4%	
Watershed Management Services					
7	Saltfleet - initial design work of fourth wetland	\$ 250,000			
8	Saltfleet - construction of third wetland	2,550,000			
			2,800,000	80.0%	
			3,500,000	100.0%	72.9%

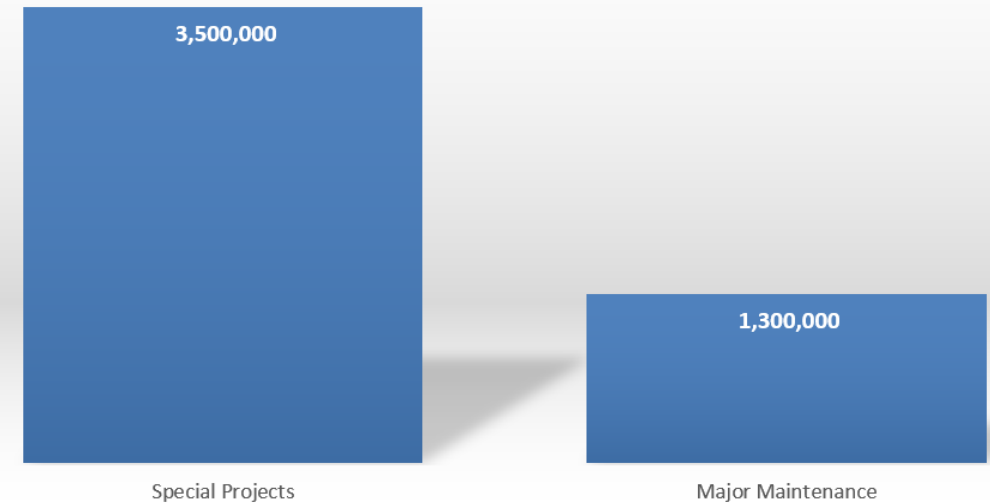
<u>Specific Projects</u>				
#	<u>Location</u>	<u>\$ Amount</u>	<u>Subtotal By Area</u>	<u>Percent of Projects</u> <u>Percent of Total</u>
<u>General Projects - Major Maintenance</u>				
	Building Maintenance	\$ 250,000		
	Roads & Parking	350,000		
	Trails	25,000		
	Signage	150,000		
	Bridges	250,000		
	Gates	25,000		
	Fencing	25,000		
	Utilities & Services	50,000		
	Masterplans	150,000		
	Natural Areas Management	25,000		
			<u>1,300,000</u>	<u>100.0%</u> <u>27.1%</u>
Total Capital and Major Maintenance Budget			<u>\$ 4,800,000</u>	<u>100.0%</u>

2027 Sources of Capital Budget Revenue

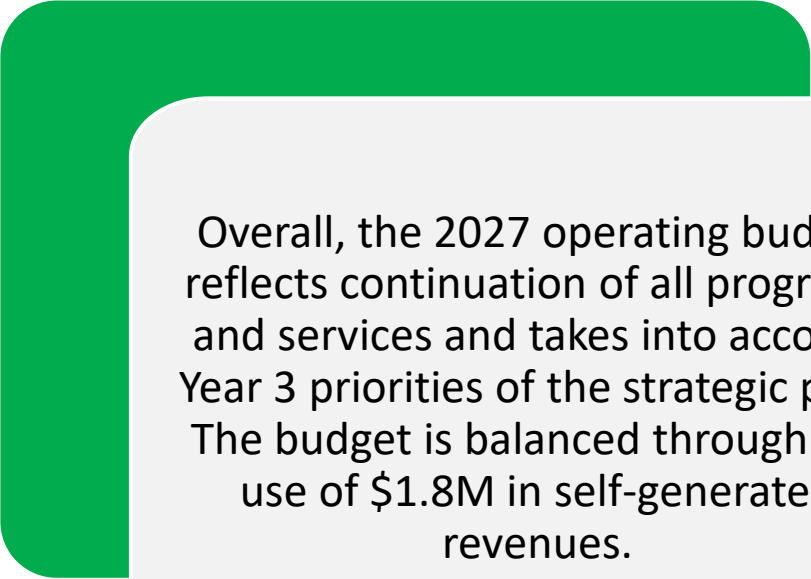
Capital Revenue Streams



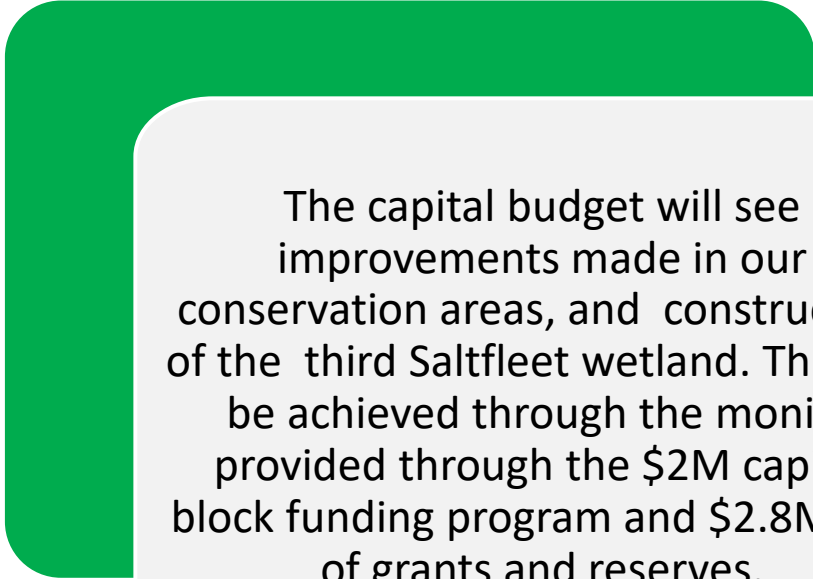
Capital Project Types



Budget Summary



Overall, the 2027 operating budget reflects continuation of all programs and services and takes into account Year 3 priorities of the strategic plan. The budget is balanced through the use of \$1.8M in self-generated revenues.



The capital budget will see improvements made in our conservation areas, and construction of the third Saltfleet wetland. This will be achieved through the monies provided through the \$2M capital block funding program and \$2.8M use of grants and reserves.



Staff Recommendation

- THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommend to the Board of Directors:
- THAT the 2027 Draft Operating and Capital Budgets, as presented, be endorsed for approval and further;
- THAT staff be directed to circulate to our participating municipalities for comment.

Questions?



Report to: Budget & Administration Committee

**Approved for
Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: Scott Fleming, Director, Finance and Central Support Services
Gord Costie, Director, Conservation Area Services

Prepared By: Brandon Good, Senior Manager, Conservation Area Services
Liam Fletcher, Senior Manager, Conservation Area Services
Jaime Tellier, Senior Manager, Central Support Services
Mike Stone, Senior Manager, Watershed Management Services

Meeting Date: August 27, 2027

Subject: 2027 Draft Fee Schedule

Recommendation:

THAT the Budget & Administration Committee recommends to the Board of Directors:

THAT effective January 1, 2027, HCA staff be directed to implement the revised fee schedule contained in this report.

Executive Summary:

Revenue generated from HCA's programs and services is an important part of the funding of the organization's operations. Staff support the 2027 fee recommendations, which are designed to maintain competitive and financially viable fees while remaining generally modest in nature.

For 2027, staff are recommending focused changes to selected fees. Key changes include no increase to the Membership Pass Program fee, \$1.00 increase to nightly camping at Fifty Point and Valens Lake; modest increases to pavilion and cabin rentals; and a \$1.00 increase to per-person daily admission fee while maintaining the current single occupant and vehicle entry fee.

Staff are also streamlining marina fee structures at Fifty Point marina by removing the 5% early-payment discount for seasonal boat docking to simplify the fee structure and help address increased operating costs without broadly increasing user fees.

Watershed Management Services fees for the review of planning applications and issuance of development permits will remain at 2026 levels in accordance with provincial fee freeze direction, and no increase is proposed for 2027.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

HCA administers a fee schedule for a wide variety of services offered through its many program areas and Conservation Area locations.

Policy Framework

As required by the Conservation Authorities Act, HCA maintains a written fee policy to accompany the fee schedule with respect to the fees that it charges for the programs and services it provides. In addition, at the Board of Directors meeting on July 3, 2025, the board approved the HCA Fee Development Framework, which establishes the principles, objectives and methodologies used to inform HCA's fee structure.

HCA's approach to fee collection is guided by five core principles – Accessible, Responsible, Transparent, Strategic, and Sustainable. The intent is to achieve sustainable self-generated revenue, attract and retain customers, ensure customer satisfaction, and align with HCA's values and priorities.

The fee policy and schedule are reviewed annually by the HCA Senior Leadership Team, in conjunction with the annual budgeting process. The review includes consideration of market comparators and inflation rates. This ensures pricing remains fair, competitive, and aligned with industry standards.

While the HCA fee policy and framework identifies a user-pay philosophy, and inflation as a consideration when establishing fees, the annual review also considers market

comparators, operating costs, affordability and the specific circumstances of individual services.

Following review by the Senior Leadership Team, staff prepare a revised fee schedule and report to the Budget & Administration Committee for their review and recommendation to the Board of Directors for their final approval.

Fee Schedule

The recommended 2027 fee increases are intended to contribute self-generated revenue to HCA's 2027 budget and support HCA's financial sustainability, program and service delivery and environmental and organizational excellence, as outlined in the 2027 Budget Assumptions and Process report.

For 2027, staff are recommending changes to specific fees rather than increasing all fees by an inflationary amount. In making these recommendations, staff considered comparable fees charged by neighbouring conservation authorities, Ontario Parks and local marinas along with inflation, operating costs, affordability and opportunities to harmonize fees across conservation areas.

The proposed fee adjustments are intended to help offset increasing operating costs, including wage pressures, and maintain the financial sustainability of HCA's programs and services.

Additionally, in the WMS division, direction from the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks to freeze plan review and permitting fees continues to apply. As such, no fee increases are proposed for 2027.

Key Points from 2027 Fee Schedule

Membership Pass Program:

In 2025, staff completed a comprehensive review of the Membership Pass Program to ensure the program remains current, financially sustainable, and aligned with the community's needs. Following recommendations from the program review, there is no proposed increase to the Membership Pass Program fee for 2027.

Conservation Area Services:

For the CAS division, the proposed fee schedule for 2027 represents an average 2.53% increase across all Conservation Areas.

Key aspects of the 2027 fee schedule include:

- **Daily Admission Fees to Conservation Areas:** the single occupant and vehicle entry fee will be held at current rates, while the per person entry fee will increase by one dollar (\$1.00).
- **Christie Lake Conservation Area:** Modest increase to pavilion rentals, in keeping with harmonization efforts across Conservation Areas.
- **Fifty Point Marina and Conservation Area:** Minor increase for camping of one dollar (\$1.00) per night, in keeping with harmonization efforts across Conservation Areas. The 5% discount previously offered for early payment of seasonal boat docking fees will be removed. This change is intended to streamline marina fee structures and help address increased operational costs without broadly increasing user fees.
- **Valens Lake Conservation Area:** A minor increase for camping of one dollar (\$1.00) per night, and a modest increase to cabin rental fees, in keeping with harmonization efforts across Conservation Areas.
- **Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area:** Minor rental building rental fee increase of 2.5%. A minor increase per student fee to harmonize with Environmental Education per student fee.
- **Wild Waterworks:** Minor increase of \$1.33 on all admission to address increasing minimum wage, utilities and operational costs.

Watershed Management Services:

As per the Minister's directive, fees related to the review of planning and development proposals and issuance of permits will remain at 2026 levels for 2027.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**

Agency Comments:

The Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks issued a directive a directive March 10, 2026, that conservation authorities are not to change the amount of the fee it charges related to reviewing and commenting on planning and development related

proposals or land use planning policies, or for permits issued by conservation authorities. This Direction is consistent with the Directions that were previously in place for the 2023, 2024 and 2025 calendar years.

Legal / Financial Implications:

This Fee schedule has been prepared to satisfy the requirements regarding the charging of fees for a program or service under Section 21.2 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

The attached Fee Schedule adheres to the HCA Fee Policy and is based on the principles, objectives and methodologies approved in the HCA Fee Development Framework, approved by the Board of Directors on July 3, 2025. The fees and revenues generated are intended to help cover the costs associated with administering and delivering the services on a program basis.

For the CAS division, proposed fee increases for 2027 are designed to help offset increasing operating costs, including inflation, wage pressures, job evaluation grid step increases and other cost increases.

Self-generated revenues are an important component of the overall funding model for Conservation area operations and contribute to the delivery of programs and services. The proposed fee adjustments are expected to generate additional revenue that will contribute to HCA's overall 2027 operating budget. The estimated financial impact of the proposed fee changes will be incorporated into the 2027 budget.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Appendix A – 2027 HCA Fee Schedule - Draft

Note that fees that have been changed are highlighted in yellow and items removed are shown in strikethrough.

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Hamilton Conservation Authority

2027 Draft Fee Schedule



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Hamilton Conservation Authority

Fee Policy

Approved September 5, 2024

Basis

This Fee Policy has been prepared as required under Section 21.2 of the Conservation Authorities Act.

The amount of a fee charged by an authority for a program or service it provides shall be:

- a) the amount prescribed by the regulations; or
- b) if no amount is prescribed, the amount determined by the authority.

The attached Fee Schedules are based on the user-pay principle.

Process

When developing and establishing fees, the Authority considers several factors including cost recovery for certain services, the fees of neighbouring Conservation Authorities, the nature and level of fees charged by local municipalities for related services and in some cases, the value of similar services provided by local agencies or the private sector.

Fees account for estimated staff time, travel, equipment, and material costs plus a reasonable charge to cover the administration of the program, including an allocation for shared corporate support. HCA staff may consider other issues and data where and when relevant to revise the fee schedule including analysis of trends, workload changes, shifts in the development market and types of applications, consultation with developers/municipalities regarding plan review and permit programs, new planning/legislative requirements and service targets, comments and feedback from conservation area users, etc.

The Fee Policy has been approved by the Board of Directors and is administered and applied by HCA staff. The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) may, only under extreme extenuating circumstances, waive or reduce fees.

When updating existing fee schedules or establishing new fees the policy direction will be:

- a. fees need to be set with regard to legislative requirements, and be based on a user-pay philosophy
- b. fee increases should include an inflationary component
- c. fees for service should not exceed the fully burdened costs of delivering the services
- d. refunds of fees may carry an administrative cost/penalty
- e. fee schedules are to be reviewed annually
- f. fee schedules will be approved on an annual basis for use in developing the budget for the following year

Hamilton Conservation Authority

Exemptions

The Authority may waive fees for non-profit conservation groups contributing to the protection and restoration of the natural environment as approved by the CAO on a case-by-case basis. Examples include but are not limited to: Ducks Unlimited, Nature Conservancy of Canada, Bruce Trail Conservancy, Royal Botanical Gardens and various “Friends of” groups. Projects carried out by HCA or under the supervision of HCA are also exempt.

To be consistent with Accessibility Standards for Customer Service Regulation (O.Reg.429/07) and the Human Rights Code, the Conservation Areas permit people with disabilities who use a support person to bring that person with them while accessing goods or services in premises open to the public or third parties, free of charge.

Reconsideration of Fees

In accordance with the Act, any person may request application for an administrative review of a fee for the following reasons:

- a) If a fee is contrary to the fees set out in the fee schedule, or
- b) the fee set out in the fee schedule is excessive in relation to the service or program for which it is charged.

Procedure for Requesting a Reconsideration

Request for an administrative review must be in writing to the CAO or designate and specify the reason(s) for the request for review. As per Section 21.2(12) of the Conservation Authorities Act, upon reconsideration of a fee that was charged by the Authority, the Authority may,

- a) order the person pay the fee in the amount originally charged;
- b) vary the amount of the fee originally charged, as the Authority considers appropriate; or
- c) order that no fee be charged for the program or service

The Authority will make its decision within 30 days after receiving the request. If not satisfied with the outcome of the review by the CAO, then an appeal will be referred to the HCA Board of Directors. Appeals will be dismissed or upheld through a resolution by the Board of Directors. The appellant will then be notified in writing of the Board’s decision.

Procedure for Reconsideration of Fees for Permit Applications

Request for administrative review must be in writing to the CAO or designate for reconsideration of a fee charged for an application for a permit made under subsection 28.1(2) of the Act. If after reconsideration of a fee charged for an application for a permit the CAO or designate orders an applicant to pay the original or a varied fee, the applicant may:

- a) When paying the fee, indicate to the Authority in writing that fee is being paid under protest; and

- b) Within 30 days after payment of the fee, appeal the amount charged by the Authority upon reconsideration to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

If the CAO or designate fails to reconsider a permit application within 30 days of receiving the request for reconsideration, the person who made the request may appeal the amount of the fee directly to the Ontario Land Tribunal.

Hamilton Conservation Authority

Policy Review and Public Notification

This fee policy and schedules will be reviewed annually by the HCA Senior Leadership Team, in conjunction with the annual budgeting process. The Senior Leadership Team will seek information regarding fees, from various sources as identified in this policy; prepare proposed revised fee schedules with a report to the Budget & Administration Committee for their review and recommendation to the Board of Directors for their final receipt and approval.

The public is notified of any proposed increases or revision to the Fee Policy or Schedule by way of public agenda posting of the Budget & Administration committee on the HCA website noting an agenda item that the fee policy and schedule will be reviewed on an identified date that will then also flow through to the Board of Directors at their next meeting. Both meetings are open to the public where correspondence or delegations may be received. Once approved, the revised HCA Fee Policy and Fee Schedules will be posted on HCA's website.

Hamilton Conservation Authority

Definitions and Clarifications

Senior

Individuals 65 years and up. Proof can be shown by drivers license, health card or seniors card.

Person with Disabilities

Individuals with a disability as defined by the Ontario Human Rights

Second Vehicles

Second vehicle membership passes are available to households who require 2 vehicle passes for the same household - second pass does

Additional Vehicles - Camping

Additional vehicles camping at Fifty Point or Valens Lake Conservation Areas require a camp permit to be displayed in the vehicle window for night security. Additional vehicle fees are posted under camping fees for Fifty Point or Valens Lake Conservation Areas for regular and passholder rates.

Mobile home towed vehicle is normally "No Charge".

Seasonal Campers at Fifty Point Only require a second membership pass for additional vehicles without additional charge as outlined above.

Bruce Trail Conservancy Members

All parking fees apply. If member(s) get dropped off or walk in, the admission fee does not apply. Reservation fees and restrictions may

Catering Fees

Private caterers must pay 10% of gross sales in advance of date to gain entry. Insurance of \$2 - \$5 million is required 2 weeks before event date from catering company listing Hamilton Conservation Authority (plus City of Hamilton, if at Confederation Beach Park or

Fees

Fees subject to change.

Hamilton Conservation Authority

HCA Annual Membership Passes

- Year round access for 12 months from the date of purchase.
- Passes can be purchased at all major HCA Conservation Areas, online or over the phone.
- Membership passes allow for up to 6 people per vehicle. Each passenger after 6 will pay the per passenger fee.
- Vehicle access at all autogates.
- Membership passes do not cover reservation fees when reservations are required.

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Passes that come with a reward	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Regular Annual Membership Pass	\$130.00	\$146.90	\$130.00	\$146.90
Senior/Disabled Pass - New or Renewal (15% discount)	\$110.50	\$124.87	\$110.50	\$124.87
Renewal Pass (10% discount)	\$117.00	\$132.21	\$117.00	\$132.21
Family Pass Plus	\$195.00	\$220.35	\$195.00	\$220.35
2 Year Pass - New or Renewal (comes with 2 rewards)	\$234.00	\$264.42	\$234.00	\$264.42
2 Year Senior/Disabled Pass (comes with 2 rewards)	\$221.00	\$249.73	\$221.00	\$249.73

Passes that do NOT come with reward **Must be same date as original**

Second Vehicle Pass	\$65.00	\$73.45	\$65.00	\$73.45
Lost/Stolen Replacement Pass	\$25.00	\$28.25	\$25.00	\$28.25

Park Prescription Program (PaRX)

Administration fee to provide PaRX HCA Access Card	\$8.85	\$10.00	\$8.85	\$10.00
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Persons with Disabilities, Support Person(s), Access 2 Program

Support persons for persons with disabilities are provided with free entry to all Conservation Areas and services

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Special Programs - with Director approval	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Ticketed Event, Program, Workshop, Guided Activity				
Per Ticket	\$10-\$75	\$11.30-\$84.75	\$10-\$75	\$11.30-\$84.75

Membership discounts 10%-25%

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Ancaster Well Access Card	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Ancaster Well Access Cards can ONLY be purchased at our Main Office and a new waiver MUST be signed annually.				
One time initial fee	\$8.85	\$10.00	\$8.85	\$10.00
Replacement pass if original is lost	\$4.42	\$5.00	\$4.42	\$5.00

Hamilton Conservation Authority

Film/Photo Shoot Location/Equipment/Building Rentals

Contact Manager of Marketing & Communications, 905-525-2181.

Some general guidelines:

1. Daily location fee applies
2. Liability Insurance of \$2 million or \$5 million required and must include 3rd party coverage (HCA named as additional insured plus City of Hamilton if event held at Confederation Beach Park/Wild Waterworks)
3. Staff required are chargeable at hourly rate, plus benefits and transportation +15%
4. Preparation and site restoration if by Authority forces at labour, materials, equipment plus benefits +15%
5. A security deposit is required prior to the location shoot based on estimates
6. Daily rates range from \$1800.00 - \$10,000.00 + HST

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Administration for Returned Cheques	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Administration fee per cheque	\$51.33	\$58.00	\$51.33	\$58.00

Permit to Cross Authority Lands for Construction & Similar Purposes

Contact Director of Capital Projects & Strategic Services, 905-525-2181.

Min. User Fee	As determined by CaPSS based on Scope of Works			
	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Security deposit for damage (refundable certified cheque)	\$250.00	\$282.50	\$250.00	\$282.50
Administration fee (non refundable)	\$250.00	\$282.50	\$250.00	\$282.50

Discount Promotions

Limited time offers and promotional pricing may occasionally be offered for HCA programs and services, e.g. nightly camping, rentals, events, etc.

Christie Lake Conservation Area	
1000 Hwy #5 West	
Dundas, Ontario L9H 5E2	
Phone: 905-628-3060	
Email: christie@conservationhamilton.ca	

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Entrance (Attended Gate)	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Per Vehicle and Driver	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Per Vehicle and Senior/Disabled Driver Discount	\$12.83	\$14.50	\$12.83	\$14.50
Per Passenger over 5 yrs of age	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Walk In's/Drop Off's	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Equestrians - Includes one horse, truck and trailer	\$19.03	\$21.50	\$19.03	\$21.50
Each additional horse with same trailer	\$2.21	\$2.50	\$2.21	\$2.50
Auto Gate (No Attendant)	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Middletown Road Parking Lot				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Crooks Hollow Conservation Area - 756 Crooks Hollow Road				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Special/School Rates				
School Events, Cross Country, Field Days, Track Meets, etc.				
Students - All ages	\$4.65	\$5.25	\$4.87	\$5.50
Facility Rental Fee			\$600.00	\$678.00
Bus Entry (15+ passengers) School Groups	\$185.00	\$209.05	\$200.00	\$226.00
Non School Groups	\$275.00	\$310.75	\$290.00	\$327.70
Area Rentals (Regular gate entrance fees apply)				
Group Picnic Areas	\$95.00	\$107.35	\$95.00	\$107.35
Beach Pavilion I	\$320.00	\$361.60	\$350.00	\$361.60
Beach Pavilion II	\$255.00	\$288.15	\$265.00	\$288.15
Lakeside Pavilion	\$320.00	\$361.60	\$350.00	\$361.60
McCoy Pavilion	\$255.00	\$288.15	\$265.00	\$288.15
Marina Pavilion	\$320.00	\$361.60	\$350.00	\$361.60
Additional Picnic Fees				
BBQ's/Volleyball Nets (with no pavilion rental)	\$35.00	\$39.55	\$40.00	\$45.20
Cancellation Fee for Rental Areas				
Pavilions	\$115.00	\$129.95	\$115.00	\$129.95
Group Picnic Areas	\$40.00	\$45.20	\$40.00	\$45.20

Christie Lake Conservation Area		2026	2026	2027	2027
Boat Rentals		Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
2 Hour Rental		\$35.40	\$40.00	\$35.40	\$40.00
4 Hour Rental		\$61.95	\$70.00	\$61.95	\$70.00
Full Day Rentals (4hrs - 8hrs)		\$88.50	\$100.00	\$88.50	\$100.00
Camper/Overnight Fees					
Organized Youth/Specialty Groups					
Per person per night		\$7.50	\$8.48	\$7.50	\$8.48
Minimum fee per group		\$93.00	\$105.09	\$93.00	\$105.09
Organized Adults (min. 20 people)					
Per person per night		\$12.50	\$14.13	\$12.50	\$14.13
Minimum fee per group		\$240.00	\$271.20	\$240.00	\$271.20
Miscellaneous					
Wedding Pictures (admission included, reservation required)		\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Family/Engagement Photo Permit		\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65

Confederation Beach Park

680 Van Wagners Beach Road
 Hamilton, Ontario L8E 3L8
 Phone : 905-547-6141
 Email: confed@conservationhamilton.ca

No entrance or parking fees, but fees may apply to prearranged or booked events.

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Rentals				
Pavilions				
Willow Cove Pavilion	\$550.00	\$621.50	\$550.00	\$621.50
Edgewater Pavilion	\$975.00	\$1,101.75	\$1,050.00	\$1,186.50
300+ *Groups over 300 guests are by special arrangements with Park Superintendent* at \$3.50/Per Person + HST (\$3.96)				

NOTE:

- Large organized family groups or Corporate picnics in excess of 20 people must preregister for a pavilion or group area in accordance with City of Hamilton Bylaw 01-219.

- Charcoal (only) BBQ use is permitted at designated spaces only in accordance with City of Hamilton Bylaw 01-219.

Group Areas

The Orchard	\$210.00	\$237.30	\$215.00	\$242.95
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Cancellations

Cancellation fee Willow Cove	\$165.00	\$186.45	\$165.00	\$186.45
Cancellation fee Edgewater	\$320.00	\$361.60	\$320.00	\$361.60
Cancellation fee for The Orchard	\$60.00	\$67.80	\$64.50	\$72.89

The Lakeview Hall

All inquires should be directed to Carmen's 905-383-4100 Ext: 223

Confederation Beach Park

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Weddings				
Wedding Photos (reservation required)	\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Beach Wedding (without Pavilion rental)	\$155.00	\$175.15	\$155.00	\$175.15
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65

Charity Walks/Events

Walkathons and similar events regularly take place at Confederation Beach Park. All walkathons are required to be registered to co-ordinate the usage of the Hamilton Beach Trail. Organizers must have a user agreement and insurance for all events. Please contact the Confederation Beach Park Superintendent.

100 or less	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65
101-250	\$255.00	\$288.15	\$255.00	\$288.15
251-500	\$505.00	\$570.65	\$505.00	\$505.00
500+ * Groups over 500 guests by special arrangements through Marketing and Events Manager & Park Superintendent.				

Dundas Valley Conservation Area
650 Governors Road Dundas, Ontario L9H 5E3 Phone: 905-627-1233 Email: dvalley@conservationhamilton.ca

Entrance (Attended Gate)	2026	2026	2027	2027
Dundas Valley Conservation Area	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Main Entrance - 650 Governors Road				
Per Vehicle	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Per Vehicle and Senior/Disabled Driver Discount	\$8.41	\$9.50	\$8.41	\$9.50
Walk In's/Drop Off's				
Equestrians - Includes one horse, truck and trailer	\$19.03	\$21.50	\$19.03	\$21.50
Each additional horse with same trailer	\$2.21	\$2.50	\$2.21	\$2.50
Bus Entry (15+ passengers) School Groups	\$185.00	\$209.05	\$185.00	\$209.05
Non School Groups	\$275.00	\$310.75	\$275.00	\$310.75
Auto Gate (No Attendant)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Hermitage Parking Lot - 621 Sulphur Springs Road				
Auto Gate (per entry)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Merrick Orchard Parking Lot - 380 Lions Club Road				
Auto Gate (per entry)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Artaban Road Parking Lot - 720 Artaban Road				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Tiffany Falls Parking Lot - 900 Wilson Street East				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Monarch Trail Parking Lot - 855 Old Dundas Road				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Summit Bog Parking Lot - 525 Highway #52, Jerseyville				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$10.18	\$11.50	\$10.18	\$11.50
Special/School Rates				
School Events, Cross Country, Field Days, Track Meets, etc.				
Students (all ages)	\$4.65	\$5.25	\$4.87	\$5.50
Facility Rental Fee				\$600.00

Dundas Valley Conservation Area

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Area Rentals (Regular gate entrance fees apply)				
Group Picnic Area (non school groups)	\$95.00	\$107.35	\$95.00	\$107.35
Group Picnic Area (school group)	\$85.00	\$96.05	\$85.00	\$96.05
Stacey Meadow Pavilion	\$295.00	\$333.35	\$255.00	\$288.15
Ishkode Crossing (Fire Pit Area Rental)				
- Available to Bruce Trail Members Only - Restrictions Apply	\$45.00	\$50.85	\$45.00	\$50.85
- Regular entrance fees apply				
Wedding Picture and Photography Permit				
- Fee per session (Admission not included, reservation required)				
Dundas Valley Conservation Area (natural settings)	\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Hermitage Ruins Location	\$385.00	\$435.05	\$385.00	\$435.05
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65
Wedding Ceremonies - Restrictions Apply 2 hour maximum				
Dundas Valley Conservation Areas (Trails, Wooded Areas)				
Outdoor Natural Setting Wedding Ceremony	\$480.00	\$542.40	\$480.00	\$542.40
Stacey Meadow Pavilion				
Outdoor Ceremony (2 Hour time allotment)				
Outdoor Ceremony with Pavilion	\$800.00	\$904.00	\$800.00	\$904.00
Outdoor Ceremony and Pavilion Reception				
Hermitage Ruins				
Outdoor Ceremony	\$800.00	\$904.00	\$800.00	\$904.00
On Site Reception				
Outdoor Ceremony and On Site Reception				
Trail Centre				
Trail Centre Rental by special arrangement				
Per day				

Dundas Valley - Environmental Education

650 Governors Road
Dundas, Ontario L9H 5E3
Phone: 905-690-3371
Email: hcaenved@conservationhamilton.ca

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Public Educational Programs				
Destination Conservation Programs				
Half day Program (2 hrs, 30 person max.)	\$415.00	\$468.95	\$415.00	\$468.95
Additional person over the 30 max.	\$7.50	\$8.48		
Additional person over the 30 max. for full day program				
(2 x 2hr programs)	\$11.00	\$12.43		
Cancellation Fees (Destination Conservation) (No HST)	\$175.00		\$175.00	
If cancelled less than 15 business days (3 weeks) in advance of date.				
Summer Day Camp				
Per child (ages 7 - 11) per one week session	\$315.00	\$355.95	\$315.00	\$355.95
Membership Holder Discount 15%				
March Break Day Camp				
Per child (ages 7 - 11) per day	\$ 65.00		\$ 65.00	\$73.45
Per child (ages 7 - 11) per one week session	\$ 315.00		\$ 315.00	\$355.95
Membership Holder Discount 15%				

Fifty Point Conservation Area	
1479 Baseline Road Winona, Ontario L8E 5G4 Phone: 905-525-2187 Email: fiftypt@conservationhamilton.ca	

	2026 Before HST	2026 After HST	2027 Before HST	2027 After HST
Entrance (Attended Gate)				
Per Vehicle and Driver	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Per Vehicle and Senior/Disabled Driver Discount	\$12.83	\$14.50	\$12.83	\$14.50
Per Passenger over 5 yrs of age	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Walk In's/Drop Off's	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$4.87	\$5.50
Auto Gate (No Attendant)	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Boat Launch				
Weekday Boat Launch (Monday to Thursday)				
Vehicle with boat on trailer	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$15.50	\$17.52
Weekend Boat Launch (Friday to Sunday Including Holidays)				
Vehicle with boat on trailer, minimum	\$26.00	\$29.38	\$27.00	\$30.51
Month Boat Launch (30-Days from date of Purchase)	\$80.00	\$90.40	\$40.00	\$45.20
Commercial Boat/Trailer				
Vehicle with commercial trailer, minimum	\$55.50	\$62.72	\$56.00	\$63.28
Boat Launch Annual Pass				
Annual boat launch pass	\$168.00	\$189.84	\$170.00	\$192.10
Renewal boat launch pass	\$158.00	\$178.54	\$160.00	\$180.80
Senior/Disabled boat ramp pass	\$148.00	\$167.24	\$150.00	\$169.50
Triaxle/Hydraulic	\$208.00	\$235.04	\$210.00	\$237.30
Launch-sticker-with-HCA-Membership-pass	\$50.00	\$56.50	\$59.00	\$66.67
Special/School Groups				
For school groups special event x-country, field days, track meets etc.				
Per student (all ages)	\$4.65	\$5.25	\$4.87	\$5.50
Bus Entry (15+ passengers)				
School Groups	\$185.00	\$209.05	\$185.00	\$209.05
Non School Groups	\$275.00	\$310.75	\$275.00	\$310.75

Fifty Point Conservation Area				
	2026	2026	2027	2027
RV/Trailer Storage (October 1 - May 1)	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Daily Rate	\$14.25	\$16.10	\$14.25	\$16.10
Monthly Storage				
- Must Hold a Valid Annual Membership Pass				
Minimum	\$60.00	\$67.80	\$65.00	\$73.45
25 ft or More - Per Foot	\$3.00	\$3.39	\$3.25	\$3.67
Seasonal Summer Storage			\$185.00	\$209.05
RV/Boat Launch Ramp				
Subject to availability and in addition to RV site fee, docking may be arranged separately at the marina office at an additional charge per night fee. Boat and trailer to be stored in the secure compound when not in the water. No on-site boat or trailer storage permitted.				
	\$14.50	\$16.39	\$15.00	\$16.95
Area Rentals (Regular gate entrance fees apply)				
Group Picnic Areas	\$95.00	\$107.35	\$95.00	\$107.35
Winona Pavilion	\$257.00	\$290.41	\$257.00	\$290.41
Lakeside Pavilion	\$360.00	\$406.80	\$360.00	\$406.80
- Additional fees may apply depending upon the level of service required				
Cancellation Fee for Rental Areas				
Pavilions	\$115.00	\$129.95	\$115.00	\$129.95
Group Picnic Areas	\$40.00	\$45.20	\$40.00	\$45.20
Miscellaneous				
Wedding Photos (admission included, reservation required)	\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65
Trailer Dump	\$22.50	\$25.43	\$22.50	\$25.43
Camping				
Recreational Vehicle Site Fee (Individual)				
Shortening Stay on Long Weekend				
Reservation Fees (Non-Refundable)	\$13.50	\$15.26	\$14.00	
Changes Fee	\$8.50	\$9.61	\$9.00	\$10.17
Cancellation Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$16.95
Electric/Water/Sewer 30 amp	\$54.00	\$61.02	\$55.00	\$62.15
Electric/Water/Sewer 50 amp	\$57.00	\$64.41	\$58.00	\$65.54
Additional Vehicle	\$14.00	\$15.82	\$14.50	\$16.39

Fifty Point Conservation Area

	2026	2026	2027	2027
R/V Sites - Seasonal Campers	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Seasonal camping May 1, 2027 to October 31, 2027 (6 months) includes water, sewer and hydro site and vehicle pass. Deposit of \$300.00 required by Dec. 1, 2025. Balance due by May 1, 2026 or before trailer is moved onto the site. Additional vehicle pass required for second vehicle. Additional fees apply to storage trailers, boats/personal water craft, day use visitors and overnight visitors. Note that under Marina Services, Items 2, 3, 4, & 5 will apply to all Seasonal Camping sites. Water and sewer may not be available at the site. Seasonal campers are not permitted to become permanent.				
Reservation Fees (Non-Refundable)			\$14.00	
Electric/Water/Sewer 30 amp	\$5,900.00	\$6,667.00	\$6,010.00	\$6,791.30
Electric/Water/Sewer 50 amp	\$6,200.00	\$7,006.00	\$6,310.00	\$7,130.30
Seasonal Camper Deposit	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00	
Seasonal Camping Site Maintenance Fee (Charge as required)			\$25.00	\$28.25
Group Camping				
Organized groups, must be pre-approved by Area Manager				
Youth per person	\$7.00	\$7.91	\$7.50	\$8.48
Adult per person	\$12.00	\$13.56	\$12.50	\$14.13
Youth minimum fee	\$93.00	\$105.09	\$93.00	\$105.09
Adult minimum fee	\$212.00	\$239.56	\$212.00	\$239.56

Fifty Point Marina

	2026 Before HST	2026 After HST	2026 Before HST	2027 After HST
Mooring				
Seasonal				
Mooring from April 15 - Oct 15 includes 2 HCA membership passes, a seasonal pump out pass (some weekend restrictions apply), and 2 guest passes. Additional guest passes can be purchased. A 5% discount will be applied to all summer mooring fees if paid and received by April 1st by cash, debit, cheque or e-transfer. Fifty Point offers two plans which incorporate the approximate 20% discount offered on the seasonal mooring rate to those boaters who winter store at Fifty Point Marina. Contact Park For Pricing.				
Late Payment Fee - Per Day Past Payment Due			\$10.00	no tax
Plan "A" For those who winter stored previous winter				
Hydro, per foot	\$102.00	\$115.26	\$103.00	\$116.39
Non-hydro, per foot	\$96.50	\$109.05	\$97.50	\$110.18
Requiring more than normal hydro and footage	\$108.00	\$122.04	\$109.00	\$123.17
Plan "B" For those who have not winter stored				
Hydro, per foot	\$128.00	\$144.64	\$130.00	\$146.90
Requiring more than normal hydro and footage	\$133.00	\$150.29	\$135.00	\$152.55
Administration fee			\$14.00	
Overnight				
Over night mooring rate includes day use admission to the area by boat				
Per foot	\$2.25	\$2.54	\$2.75	\$3.11
Minimum Fee	\$47.50	\$53.68	\$48.00	\$54.24
Reciprocal FPYC	\$47.50	\$53.68	\$48.00	\$54.24
Day Time Mooring				
Regular watercraft entry charge applies to boat/driver/passengers (April1 - Nov1)				
No discount for restaurant use				
Weekdays	\$15.75	\$17.80	\$16.00	\$18.08
Weekends (Friday, Saturday, Sunday & Holidays)	\$26.25	\$29.66	\$26.50	\$29.95
Monthly Mooring				
Subject to availability, includes trailer parking if required. Per foot per month.				
June - August	\$34.50	\$38.99	\$36.50	\$41.25
April/May and September/October	\$23.50	\$26.56	\$25.50	\$28.82
Dock "A" non-hydro docks min 20ft				
Plan "A"	\$77.00	\$87.01	\$79.00	\$89.27
Plan "B"	\$98.00	\$110.74	\$100.00	\$113.00
Replacement of south parking lot access card	\$15.00	\$16.95	\$25.00	\$28.25
Additional Guest Pass (Entrance ONLY, Not Provided for ramp use)	\$70.00	\$79.10	\$72.00	\$81.36
Reservation Fees (Non-Refundable, Overnight, Monthly Mooring)			\$14.00	

Fifty Point Marina		2026	2026	2027	2027
Marine Service		Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
1. Minimum mooring charges apply as follows: Dock "A"- 20ft, 25ft. With hydro, A48 30ft. Dock "B, C, D, H - 25ft. min with hydro. Dock "E"- 30ft min with hydro. Dock "F" - 37ft min with hydro. Dock "G"- 32ft min with hydro. Dock "J" - even #'s 40ft min, odd #'s 37ft min. Boat length is measured from the furthest projection at the bow to the transom.				Contact For Pricing	
2. A 5% discount will be applied to all summer moorings paid and received by April 1st with cash, debit, cheque or e-transfer.				Contact For Pricing	
3. \$300 deposit is required by December 31st to hold docks for the following year. This deposit is non-refundable after January 31st.				Contact For Pricing	
4. For refund application on a seasonal mooring, monthly rate is used to pro-rate charges based on when the dock is re-rented, until August 1st.				Contact For Pricing	
5. Pro-rating for dockage will begin if dockage is contracted after July 1st, based on a 100 day season.				Contact For Pricing	
6. Boats requiring special docks, price by docking arrangement. Docks requiring additional premium are: A48, B33, E25, F29, F30 G37, G38, end of C, D and H. Walls 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.				Contact For Pricing	
7. A surcharge of double the price per foot for every foot over 40ft.				Contact For Pricing	
8. Pump out pass is only valid for boat to which it was issued.				Contact For Pricing	
9. Add Boat to Marina Wait list Deposit - non-refundable				Contact For Pricing	
Storage		2026	2026	2027	2027
Dry Sailing Summer Storage		Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Monohulls on trailer		\$575.50	\$650.32	\$577.50	\$652.58
Triaxle Trailers, Add		\$239.00	\$270.07	\$241.00	\$272.33
Catamarans (over 9ft width) on trailer, Add		\$347.00	\$392.11	\$349.00	\$394.37
Boat on Trailers under 10 Ft		\$270.50	\$305.67	\$272.50	\$307.93
Boat Trailer Storage					
Per Night		\$12.00	\$13.56	\$13.00	\$14.69
Seasonal Rate	Returning Customer	\$184.00	\$207.92	\$185.00	\$209.05
	Non Customer	\$343.05	\$387.65	\$344.05	\$388.78
Triaxle Trailers	Returning Customer	\$305.00	\$344.65	\$306.00	\$345.78
	Non Customer	\$460.40	\$520.25	\$461.40	\$521.38

Fifty Point Marina

Winter Storage (Seasonal Boaters)

Includes haul out, wash and launch, per square foot Oct 1 - May. A 5% discount will be applied to all winter storage fees if paid and received by Oct 1 with cash, debit, e-transfer or cheque. A \$100.00 per week fee applies to any boat in winter storage launched after the normal spring lift-in schedule to a maximum of the normal launch fee for the boat. This applies to customers who are renting a dock seasonally. Additional fees may apply for Winter storage for sailboats for mast stepping in fall and spring or leaving the mast lying on the deck. Winter storage only customers will receive a HCA membership pass expiring May 1 of the following year. Contact For Pricing

2026
Before HST
Contact For
Pricing

2026
After HST

2027
Before HST
Contact For
Pricing

2027
After HST

Winter Storage (Non-Seasonal Boaters)

Includes haul out, wash and launch, per square foot Oct 1 - May. A 5% discount will be applied to all winter storage fees if paid and received by Oct 1 with cash, debit, e-transfer or cheque. A late launch fee will be applied for the full normal amount for the boat lift-in immediately after the spring lift period is over. Additional fees may apply for sailboats for mast stepping in the fall and spring or leaving the mast lying on the deck. New winter storage sailboat customers will require a cradle that will properly support the boat with the mast standing as we will no longer be taking these masts down. Winter storage only customers will receive a HCA membership pass expiring May 1 of the following year. Contact For Pricing

Contact For
Pricing

Contact For
Pricing

\$0.00

Late Payment Fee - Per Day Past Payment Due

\$10.00

no tax

Winter Storage**Sail Boats**

Per sq. ft.

Minimum fee 200 sq ft

(For boats that require the MML40 for moving to storage)

2026
Before HST

2026
After HST

2027
Before HST

2027
After HST

\$6.75
\$1,350.00
\$6.75

\$7.63
\$1,525.50
\$7.63

\$7.00
\$1,400.00
\$7.00

\$7.91
\$1,582.00
\$7.91

Power Boats

Per sq ft

Minimum fee 200 sq ft

(For boats that require the MML40 for moving to storage)

\$5.75
\$1,150.00
\$5.75

\$6.50
\$1,299.50
\$6.50

\$6.00
\$1,200.00
\$6.00

\$6.78
\$1,356.00
\$6.78

Storage only (No haul out or wash, October 1 - May 1)

Per sq. ft.

Minimum 200 sq ft

Boat on trailer under 10' length

\$4.60
\$950.00
\$302.25

\$5.20
\$1,073.50
\$341.54

\$4.85
\$970.00
\$302.50

\$5.48
\$1,096.10
\$341.83

Fifty Point Marina				
	2026	2026	2027	2027
Boat Handling and Miscellaneous Services	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Launch or Lift-out with mobile marine lift, per foot of boat				
Minimum fee	\$322.50	\$364.43	\$322.50	\$364.43
Up to 35ft.	\$12.00	\$13.56	\$12.25	\$13.84
36-40ft	\$14.00	\$15.82	\$14.25	\$16.10
41ft and over (restrictions may apply - up to 14' beam)	\$16.00	\$18.08	\$16.25	\$18.36
Late Launch (per week after scheduled date)	\$95.00	\$107.35	\$96.00	\$108.48
Sling Time				
Per Hour	\$158.00	\$178.54	\$158.50	\$179.11
Per Night	\$295.00	\$333.35	\$295.50	\$333.92
Boat Wash	\$65-\$135		\$66-\$136	
Cradle Storage	\$0- \$262		\$0-\$270	
May - October depends on size and type. Applies to cradles that do not fold and for boats that do not winter store.				
November to April	\$265.00	\$299.45	\$267.00	\$301.71
Mast Stepping				
Per foot (min. 25ft)	\$7.50	\$8.48	\$8.00	\$9.04
Minimum extra fee	\$175.25	\$198.03	\$175.75	\$198.60
(For those masts with special handling and/or require additional crane time)				
Mast Storage				
Per foot	\$6.75	\$7.63	\$8.75	\$9.89
Minimum	\$110.00	\$124.30	\$112.00	\$126.56
Dockside Pump out (per tank)				
Weekday	\$18.75	\$21.19	\$19.25	\$21.75
Weekend	\$22.75	\$25.71	\$23.25	\$26.27
Emergency Spill Response Fee	\$350.00	\$395.50	\$350.00	\$395.50
Emergency Response	\$877.50	\$991.58	\$877.50	\$991.58
Fee is based on a 3hr minimum response time, extra charges will apply outside of 3 hour response time				
Marina Wait List	\$200.00	\$226.00	\$200.00	no tax

Fifty Point Marina				
	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Cradle Rental Minimum Fee	\$153.00	\$172.89	\$155.00	\$175.15
Power boats, included in winter storage fee. Sail boat per foot subject to availability. Boat stands do not count as a cradle (extra charges apply).				
Cradle Feet (minimum)	\$200.50	\$226.57	\$202.50	\$228.83
Cradle Pick up/Load				
Per hour man/vehicle	\$158.00	\$178.54	\$160.00	\$180.80
Load/Unload	\$26.75	\$30.23	\$27.75	\$31.36
Hydraulic Trailer Use				
Per hour	\$196.00	\$221.48	\$198.00	\$223.74
Minimum Charge	\$98.00	\$110.74	\$100.00	\$113.00
Labour - Hourly rate				
Standard charge for each staff	\$97.50	\$110.18	\$98.00	\$110.74
Minimum	\$49.00	\$55.37	\$50.00	\$56.50
Boat Towing - Fee Range				
In harbor	\$100.00	\$113.00	\$105.00	\$118.65
Land Storage				
Summer Months - Per sq ft	\$1.25	\$1.41	\$1.50	\$1.70
Summer Seasonal (equal to rate for Winter storage-Storage Only)	\$4.60	\$5.20	\$4.85	\$5.48
Contractor Pass	\$178.00	\$201.14	\$180.00	\$203.40
Contractors must register with the marina office for registration of insurance and approval of jobs. A season pass issued to commercial operators provides free admission only for when they are working on boats that are renting mooring or in dry land storage. Contractor pass is only valid for using the boat ramp when towing boats that rent seasonal mooring space. Contractors using the marina to perform work for non-marina mooring or storage clients are subject to normal daily fees.				

Hamilton Mountain Conservation Areas
185 Ridge Road Stoney Creek, ON L8J2W1 Phone: 289-860-2363 Email: mountain@conservationhamilton.ca

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Entrance (No Attendant)	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Eramosa Karst Conservation Area - 86 Upper Mount Albion Road				
Pay and Display (per entry)	\$7.52	\$8.50	\$8.41	\$9.50
Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area - 185 Ridge Road				
Auto Gate (per entry)	\$7.52	\$8.50	\$8.41	\$9.50
Saltfleet Conservation Area - 444 First Road East				
Pay and Display (per entry)	\$7.52	\$8.50	\$8.41	\$9.50
Chippawa Rail Trail Parking Lot - 55 Dartnall Road				
Pay and Display (per entry)	\$7.52	\$8.50	\$8.41	\$9.50
Wedding Picture and Photography Permit				
- Fee per session (Admission not included, reservation required)				
Natural settings	\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65
Wedding Ceremonies and Receptions - Restrictions Apply				
Hamilton Mountain Conservation Areas (Trails, Wooded Areas)				
Outdoor Natural Setting Wedding Ceremony (2 Hour time allotment)	\$465.00	\$525.45	\$465.00	\$525.45

Lakeland Pool

180 Van Wagners Beach Road

Hamilton, Ontario L8E 3L3

Phone : 905-547-6141

Email: lakeland@conservationhamilton.ca

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Lakeland Pool - Day Pass				
General (11 - 64 yrs)	\$7.96	\$9.00	\$8.19	\$9.25
Child (3 - 10 yrs)	\$5.75	\$6.50	\$5.97	\$6.75
Toddler <3	Free		Free	
Seniors/Disabled Seniors (65 yrs +)	\$5.75	\$6.50	\$5.97	\$6.75
Persons with Disabilities	\$5.75	\$6.50	\$5.97	\$6.75
Family Ticket (1 Adult (16 yrs+) and 2 Children)	\$16.60	\$18.75	\$16.81	\$19.00
Family Ticket (2 Adult (16 yrs+) and 4 Children)	\$34.30	\$38.75	\$34.51	\$39.00
Sunset Special - Adults	\$5.09	\$5.75	\$5.31	\$6.00
Sunset Special - Children/Seniors/Disabled	\$4.42	\$5.00	\$4.65	\$5.25
Organized Group rates (schools/day care)	\$4.64	\$5.25	\$4.87	\$5.50
Lakeland Pool - Season Pass *				
Seasons Pass (Adult) General (11 - 64 yrs)	\$81.42	\$92.00	\$81.64	\$92.25
Seasons Pass (Child) Child (3 - 10 yrs)	\$59.29	\$67.00	\$59.51	\$67.25
Seniors (65 yrs +)	\$59.29	\$67.00	\$59.51	\$67.25
Persons with Disabilities	\$59.29	\$67.00	\$59.51	\$67.25
Family Season Pass				
1 Adult (12+) and 2 Children or 2 Adults and 1 child	\$166.16	\$187.75		
2 Adults and 4 Children	\$303.99	\$343.50		
Group Rate				
General (11-63 yrs)	\$7.08	\$8.00	\$7.19	\$8.12
Child (3-10)	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$4.98	\$5.62
Senior (65yrs+)	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$4.98	\$5.62
Person with Disabilities	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$4.98	\$5.62

Spencer Gorge Conservation Area
Tew Falls/Dundas Peak - 590 Harvest Road Webster Falls - 28 Fallsview Road Dundas, Ontario 905-628-3060 christie@conservationhamilton.ca

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Entrance (Attended Gate) Reservations Required During Certain Periods	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Admission Fees (Tew Falls and Webster Falls Parking Lot)				
Per Vehicle and Driver	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Per Vehicle and Senior/Disabled Driver Discount	\$12.83	\$14.50	\$12.83	\$14.50
Per Passenger over 5 yrs of age	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Walk In's/Drop Off's	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Auto Gate (No Attendant)	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Buses (any vehicle over 15 passengers, must pre-book)	\$270.00	\$305.10	\$275.00	\$305.10
Reservation Fee				
Per Reservation* (reservation period)	\$8.85	\$10.00	\$8.85	\$10.00
* reservations must be made online one day in advance of visit				
Miscellaneous				
Wedding Pictures (admission included, reservation required)	\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65

Valens Lake Conservation Area
1691 Regional Road 97 Cambridge, Ontario N1R 5S7 Phone: 905-525-2183 Email: valens.ca@conservationhamilton.ca

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Entrance (Attended Gate)	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Per Vehicle and Driver	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Per Vehicle and Senior/Disabled Driver Discount	\$12.83	\$14.50	\$12.83	\$14.50
Per Passenger over 5 yrs of age	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Walk In's/Drop Off's	\$4.87	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Auto Gate (No Attendant)	\$14.60	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Fletcher Creek Ecological Preserve - 3921 Concession 7 Road				
Pay and Display (per day)	\$7.52	\$8.50	\$7.52	\$8.50
Additional Fees				
Trailer Dump Fee	\$22.00	\$24.86	\$22.50	\$24.86
Bus Entry (15+ passengers)		School Groups	\$185.00	\$209.05
		Non School Groups	\$275.00	\$310.75
Area Rentals (Regular gate entrance fees apply)				
Powell Pavilion (Glassed In)		Whole	\$360.00	\$406.80
			\$400.00	\$406.80
Cancellation Fee for Rental Areas				
Pavilions	\$115.00	\$129.95	\$115.00	\$129.95
Boat Rentals				
4 Hour Rental	\$61.95	\$70.00	\$61.95	\$70.00
Full Day Rentals (4hrs - 8hrs)	\$88.50	\$100.00	\$88.50	\$100.00

Valens Lake Conservation Area				
	2026	2026	2027	2027
Camping	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
- Minimum 3 night reservation on Long Weekends (Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day)				
- HCA Annual Pass holders receive a 10% discount				
Reservation Fees (Non-Refundable)	\$13.50	\$15.26	\$14.00	\$15.82
Shortening Stay on Long Weekend				
Changes Fee	\$8.50	\$9.61	\$9.00	\$10.17
Cancellation Fee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15.00	\$16.95
Non-hydro	\$47.00	\$53.11	\$48.00	\$54.24
Hydro and Water 15/30 amp	\$54.00	\$61.02	\$55.00	\$62.15
Premium Camp Site - coming soon	\$61.00	\$68.93	\$62.00	\$70.06
Additional Vehicle	\$14.00	\$15.82	\$14.50	\$16.39
Winter Program (December 1 - March 31)				
Pre Paid 20 Nights - Trailer Storage inclusive				
Non-Premium	\$985.00	\$1,113.05	\$990.00	\$1,118.70
Premium			\$1,120.00	\$1,265.60
(Must Have Valid HCA Membership, 10% per night discount applies)				
Reservation Fees (Non-Refundable)	\$13.50	\$15.26	\$14.00	\$15.82
Roofed Accommodations				
- Minimum 2 night reservation (3 nights on Long Weekends)				
- No pets allowed				
Reservation Fees (Non-Refundable)	\$13.50	\$15.26	\$14.00	\$15.82
Change Fee			\$9.00	\$10.17
Cancellation Penalty - see Cancellation Framework				
Shortening Stay				
Cancellation/Change – minimum 1 week in advance				
Cancellation/Change – less than 1 week in advance				
Drumlin Cabins (per night)	\$165.00	\$186.45	\$175.00	\$197.75
Drumlin Cabins - Deluxe (per night)	\$195.00	\$220.35	\$205.00	\$231.65
Additional Vehicle	\$14.00	\$15.82	\$14.50	\$16.39

Valens Lake Conservation Area				
	2026	2026	2027	2027
Group Sites	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Group Area Fees				
- Per night, two night minimum plus reservation fee				
Cancellation Penalty - see Cancellation Framework				
Fox Run (maximum 15 people)	\$33.00	\$37.29	\$35.00	\$39.55
Forest Edge	\$75.00	\$84.75	\$77.00	\$87.01
Maplenook	\$145.00	\$163.85	\$147.00	\$166.11
White Tail (hydro)	\$100.00	\$113.00	\$102.00	\$115.26
Aspen Cove (hydro)	\$100.00	\$113.00	\$102.00	\$115.26
Wilderness Pavilion (no hydro)	\$90.00	\$101.70	\$92.00	\$103.96
Pinegrove Pavilion (hydro)	\$90.00	\$101.70	\$92.00	\$103.96
Organized Groups & Family Groups				
Youth Per Night	\$7.00	\$7.91	\$7.50	\$8.48
Adult Per Night	\$12.00	\$13.56	\$12.50	\$14.13
RV/Trailer Storage				
Daily Storage Rate	\$13.27	\$15.00	\$14.25	\$16.10
Monthly Trailer Storage - Must Hold a Valid Membership Pass			\$70.00	\$79.10
Inside Compound				
Minimum charge	\$60.00	\$67.80	\$65.00	\$73.45
Over 20 ft - Per Foot	\$3.00	\$3.39	\$3.50	\$3.96
Miscellaneous				
Wedding Pictures (admission included, reservation required)	\$310.00	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$105.00	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65
School Events (Track and Field, Meets, etc.)				
All ages	\$4.64	\$5.00	\$5.50	\$6.22

Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area 1049 Kirkwall Road Rockton, Ontario L0R 1X0 Phone: 519-621-8851 Email: westfield@conservationhamilton.ca
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	2026	2027	2027
Entrance (Attended Gate)	After HST	Before HST	After HST
No Event Day			
Per Vehicle and Driver	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Per Vehicle and Senior/Disabled Driver Discount	\$14.50	\$12.83	\$14.50
Per Passenger over 5 yrs of age	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Walk In's/Drop Off's	\$5.50	\$5.31	\$6.00
Auto Gate (No Attendant)	\$16.50	\$14.60	\$16.50
Equestrians - Includes one horse, truck and trailer	\$21.50	\$19.03	\$21.50
Each additional horse with same trailer	\$2.50	\$2.21	\$2.50
Education Programs			
Full Day Program Per Student	\$12.43	\$11.50	\$13.00
Ironwood Lunch Room Rental	\$45.20	\$40.00	\$45.20

Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area

	2026	2027	2027
Special Programs - with Director approval	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Ticketed Event, Program, Workshop, Guided Activity			
Per Ticket	\$11.30-\$84.75	\$10-\$75	\$11.30-\$84.75
Room and Building Reservations - Fee Based on Event Date			
Ironwood Hall (Special occasion permits are required)			
2026			
Full Day	\$2,356.05	\$2,135.00	\$2,356.05
Weekdays (Mon - Thurs)	\$694.95	\$630.00	\$694.95
Early Set up (3 - 7pm)	\$508.50	\$460.00	\$508.50
Mountsberg Church / Bandstand Rental			
Per 2 hour intervals	\$627.15	\$625.00	\$627.15
Additional Hour Rental Fee (after 7pm)	\$87.01	\$79.00	\$87.01
Guided Tours - 2 hours (Regular entry fee applies)			
Minimum	\$79.10	\$70.00	\$79.10
Per additional person beyond 6 people	\$11.30	\$10.00	\$11.30
Photo Permits			
Wedding Photos Per session (reservation needed if not packaged)	\$350.30	\$310.00	\$350.30
Family/Engagement Photo Permit	\$118.65	\$105.00	\$118.65

Cancellation Policy and Deposits

A non-refundable reservation deposit of \$250.00 is required. The balance due one month before rental. Special occasion permits and insurance required or personal insurance liability is required and to identify the serving of alcohol. Deposit of \$150.00 is required for a wedding ceremony rental and a deposit of \$400.00 is required for the rental of Ironwood.

Wild Waterworks 680 Van Wagners Beach Road Hamilton, Ontario L8E 3L8 Phone: 905-547-6141 Email: wildww@conservationhamilton.ca

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Day Admission				
General (11-64 yrs. of age)	\$34.96	\$39.50	\$36.28	\$41.00
Children (3-10yrs of age)	\$23.45	\$26.50	\$24.78	\$28.00
Senior (65+ yrs. of age)	\$30.53	\$34.50	\$31.86	\$36.00
Person with Disability	\$23.45	\$26.50	\$24.78	\$28.00
Attendant for Person with Disability Access 2 Program	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Toddler (0-2 yrs of age)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

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	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Sunset Special (After 4pm)				
General (11-64 yrs. of age)	\$28.76	\$32.50	\$30.09	\$34.00
Children (3-10yrs of age)	\$19.03	\$21.50	\$20.35	\$23.00
Senior (65+ yrs. of age)	\$24.78	\$28.00	\$26.11	\$29.50
Person with Disability	\$19.03	\$21.50	\$20.35	\$23.00
Attendant for Person with Disability Access 2 Program	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Toddler (0-2 yrs of age)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Wristband Only Group, no pavilion rental				

Minimum of 25 paying guests, paid on one transaction to receive group discount. Must be pre-booked within 24 hours and a \$200 deposit prior to arrival. \$4.50 discount applied to wristband only group.

General (11-64 yrs. of age)	\$30.46	\$34.42	\$31.79	\$35.92
Children (3-10yrs of age)	\$18.95	\$21.41	\$20.28	\$22.92
Senior (65+ yrs. of age)	\$26.03	\$29.41	\$27.36	\$30.92
Person with Disability	\$18.95	\$21.41	\$20.28	\$22.92
Attendant for Person with Disability Access 2 Program	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Toddler (0-2 yrs of age)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

	2026	2026	2027	2027	2027	2027
	Level 3 (501-1000)	Level 4 (1000+)	Level 1 (25-250)	Level 2 (251-500)	Level 3 (501-1000)	Level 4 (1000+)
Group Picnic						
Minimum of 25 paying guests to receive group discount. Must be pre-booked a minimum of 5 days in advance and \$500 deposit prior to arrival. Renting a pavilion + BBQ required.	Discount of \$5.75 from general admission	Discount of \$6.25 from general admission	Discount of \$4.75 from general admission	Discount of \$5.25 from general admission	Discount of \$5.75 from general admission	Discount of \$6.25 from general admission
	Before HST	Before HST	Before HST	Before HST	Before HST	Before HST
*Shipping fees applied, if wristbands are shipped out						
General (11-64 yrs. Of age)	\$29.21	\$28.71	\$31.53	\$31.03	\$29.53	\$29.03
Children (3-10yrs of age)	\$17.70	\$17.20	\$20.03	\$19.53	\$19.03	\$18.53
Senior (65+ yrs. of age)	\$24.78	\$24.28	\$27.11	\$26.61	\$26.11	\$25.61
Person with Disability	\$17.70	\$17.20	\$20.03	\$19.53	\$19.03	\$18.53
Attendant for Person with Disability Access 2 Program	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Toddler (0-2 yrs of age)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE

Contact for price

Wild Waterworks

DRAFT 2027 Fee Schedule

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Day Camp				
One Supervisor free with every 10 paying campers. Minimum of 25 paying guests, paid on one transaction to receive the daycamp discount. Must be pre-booked within 24 hours and a \$200 deposit prior to arrival. \$4.50 discount applied to wristband only group				
*Shipping fees applied, if wristbands are shipped out				
General (11-64 yrs. Of age)				
Children (3-10yrs of age)	\$30.46	\$34.42	\$31.79	\$35.92
Senior (65+ yrs. of age)	\$18.95	\$21.41	\$20.28	\$22.92
Person with Disability	\$26.03	\$29.41	\$27.36	\$30.92
Attendant for Person with Disability Access 2 Program	\$18.95	\$21.41	\$20.28	\$22.92
Toddler (0-2 yrs of age)	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Season Passes				
Unlimited entry into Wild Waterworks				
Unless closed for special event or park has reached max capacity				
Valid for current summer season. Early Entry at 10:30am				
Single Season Pass				
Individual Season Pass (Ages 3+)	\$121.50	\$137.30	\$126.98	\$143.49
Replacement pass	\$10.00	\$11.30	\$10.00	
Four Pack Season Pass				
Four Pack Season Pass (Four season passes)	\$368.50	\$416.41	\$399.00	\$450.87
\$10 off season pass renewal if reusing previous season pass wristbands				
Additional Pack Member Pass	\$98.50	\$111.31	\$100.50	Remove FEE
* must be purchased with Pack Season Pass, maximum of 3 additional Pack members				

Wild Waterworks

DRAFT 2027 Fee Schedule

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Rentals	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Pay And Go Lockers (located in washrooms)	\$0.89	\$1.00	\$0.89	\$1.01
Day Use Lockers				
Small	\$12.39	\$14.00	\$12.39	\$14.00
Medium	\$16.81	\$19.00	\$16.81	\$19.00
Large	\$22.12	\$25.00	\$22.12	\$25.00
Day Use Lockers - Sunset Special				
Small	\$7.08	\$8.00	\$7.08	\$8.00
Medium	\$11.50	\$13.00	\$11.50	\$13.00
Large	\$16.81	\$19.00	\$16.81	\$19.00
BBQ's				
Medium - commercial (6 hrs)	\$180.00	\$203.40	\$185.00	\$209.05
Large - commercial (6 hrs)	\$265.00	\$299.45	\$270.00	\$305.10
Tubes				
All tubes require a \$5.00 deposit in addition to cost of rental. Deposit refundable upon return of tube and matching wristband.				
Tube - Full Day Rental	\$4.42	\$5.00	\$4.42	\$5.00
Tube - Sunset Rental (after 4:00pm)	\$2.65	\$3.00	\$2.65	\$3.00
Pavilions				
Available to catered and non-catered groups. Must be pre-booked, pre-ordered with 50% deposit upon booking. Group discounts on paid admission and pre-paid bulk sales may apply.				
Weekend Pavilion 1 or 2	\$275.00	\$310.75	\$277.00	\$313.01
Weekend Pavilion 3	\$225.00	\$254.25	\$227.00	\$256.51
Weekday Pavilion 1 or 2	\$75.00	\$84.75	\$77.00	\$87.01
Weekday Pavilion 3	\$50.00	\$56.50	\$52.00	\$58.76

For Catered Groups with Private Caterers:

Insurance of \$5 million is required 2 weeks before event date from catering company listing Hamilton

Wild Waterworks

DRAFT 2027 Fee Schedule

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Cabanas (Online Booking Only, subject to service fee)				
Regular Cabana Rental	\$118.50	\$133.91	\$125.00	\$141.25
	\$138.50	\$156.51	\$145.00	\$163.85
Cabana Rental, 1 all day locker rental, 4 tube rentals and wait service.				
Deluxe Pool Side Cabana Rental	\$236.75	\$267.53	\$243.25	\$274.87
	\$256.75	\$290.13	\$263.25	\$297.47
Cabana Rental, 1 all day locker rental, 4 tube rentals and wait service. 4 park admission.				
Sunset Package (after 4pm - Walk up Only)				
	\$40.25	\$45.48	\$42.25	\$47.74
	\$79.25	\$89.55	\$81.25	\$91.81
Cabana Rental and 1 all day locker rental and 4 tube rentals.				
Regular Cabana All Day Family Rental				
	\$219.50	\$248.04	\$226.00	\$255.38
	\$239.50	\$270.64	\$246.00	\$277.98
Cabana Rental, 2 all day locker rental, 8 tube rentals and wait service, 4 Wild Waterworks Tumblers				
Poolside Cabana All Day Family Delux Rental				
	\$432.50	\$488.73	\$439.00	\$496.07
	\$452.50	\$511.33	\$459.00	\$518.67
Cabana Rental, 2 all day locker rental, 4 tube rentals and wait service. 8 park admission. 8 Wild Waterworks Tumblers				
Administration fee for any returned cheque	\$50.00	\$56.50	\$50.00	\$56.50

Other Items

Staff Discounts

20% off in Waves

Discounts

10% off purchases in Waves for Season Passholders

100% discount for prize winners (season pass giveaways, cabana giveaways)

20% off end of season sale in Waves for patrons

40% off end of season sale in Waves for staff

\$10 off season pass renewal if reusing previous season pass wristbands

\$2 off full day admissions when purchased online

HCA Plan Review & Permit Fees				
	2026	2026	2027	2027
Plan Review Service Fees	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Subdivision and Condominiums				
Minor	\$1,691.16	\$1,911.01	\$1,691.16	\$1,911.01
Intermediate	\$6,761.58	\$7,640.59	\$6,761.58	\$7,640.59
Major	\$12,201.24	\$13,787.40	\$12,201.24	\$13,787.40
Applicant Driven Revision	\$4,288.08	\$4,845.53	\$4,288.08	\$4,845.53
Clearance Fees				
Per Phase Charge (on top of Major clearance fee above)	\$1,203.60	\$1,360.07	\$1,203.60	\$1,360.07
Consents				
Minor	\$1,113.84	\$1,258.64	\$1,113.84	\$1,258.64
Major	\$2,981.46	\$3,369.05	\$2,981.46	\$3,369.05
Minor Variances				
Minor	\$618.12	\$698.48	\$618.12	\$698.48
Major	\$1,344.36	\$1,519.13	\$1,344.36	\$1,519.13
Official Plan Amendments				
Minor	\$1,509.60	\$1,705.85	\$1,509.60	\$1,705.85
Major	\$5,157.12	\$5,827.55	\$5,157.12	\$5,827.55
Zoning By-law Amendments				
Minor (including H-Zone Removal)	\$1,509.60	\$1,705.85	\$1,509.60	\$1,705.85
Major	\$4,992.90	\$5,641.98	\$4,992.90	\$5,641.98
Site Plan Approval Application				
Minor	\$2,016.54	\$2,278.69	\$2,016.54	\$2,278.69
Intermediate	\$6,631.02	\$7,493.05	\$6,631.02	\$7,493.05
Major	\$8,123.28	\$9,179.31	\$8,123.28	\$9,179.31
Resubmission - 15% of full application fee				
Formal Consultation	\$674.22	\$761.87	\$674.22	\$761.87
Niagara Escarpment Plan Amendments - Applicant-Driven	\$3,899.46	\$4,406.39	\$3,899.46	\$4,406.39
Niagara Escarpment Plan Development Permits	\$1,623.84	\$1,834.94	\$1,623.84	\$1,834.94
Complex Applications	\$12,206.34	\$13,793.16	\$12,206.34	\$13,793.16
The application fee will be paid at the time of filing an application to the municipality.				
All subdivisions, vacant land condominiums, major and complex site plans (i.e. Community living projects, golf courses, cemeteries, etc.) continue to be circulated to the Hamilton Conservation Authority.				
Aggregate Extraction Applications	\$30,215.46	\$34,143.47	\$30,215.46	\$34,143.47
The application fee will be paid at the time of filing an application to the municipality.				
This fee relates to large aggregate extraction applications.				

HCA Plan Review & Permit Fees

Notes and Definitions:

1. Subdivisions/Condominiums/Site Plans:

Major – The area is equal to or greater than 4.5 hectares in size and technical studies (i.e. SWM, EIS or Geotechnical) are required.

Intermediate – The area is less than 4.5 hectares in size and technical studies (i.e. SWM, EIS or Geotechnical) are required.

Minor – In the area of interest to the HCA.

2. Other Applications:

Major – Technical studies (i.e.. SWM, EIS or Geotechnical) are required.

Minor – In the area of interest of the CA.

3. Area of Interest – Natural Heritage, Natural Hazard areas on a CA screening map, checklist, OP and/or ZB.

4. Complex Applications are Planning Act (e.g.. OPA/ZBA) and/or Site Plan applications for commercial/industrial/residential applications equal to or greater than 4.5 hectares in size, golf courses, trailer parks, campgrounds, and cemeteries, etc., that involve complex policy considerations and/or the review of extensive multi-disciplinary technical studies.

5. Combined Applications - Combined applications will be charged at 100% of the highest fee rate and 50% of the combined fee rate for other review categories.

6. Refunds may be provided directly to the applicant if it is found that an application charged at the "major" rate only required the level of review normally associated with the minor or intermediate rates. In such cases, the minor or intermediate rate will be retained and the difference refunded.

7. Additional Fees may be charged directly to the applicant if it is determined that an application requires a greater level of review effort than normally associated with the application type and fee collected at the time of submission. HCA may also charge additional fees based on current fee schedule rates for applications that have been inactive for two years or more.

8. Subdivision Revision Fees will be paid directly to the HCA and must be paid prior to issuance of revised draft conditions. A draft plan revision fee will be applicable to developer driven amendments to a subdivision or condominium application.

9. Resubmission Fees will be charged directly to the applicant for the review of technical studies and plans, drawings, models, etc., beyond the first submission and two resubmissions. A fee will be charged for each resubmission and will be based on 15% of the original application fee.

10. Formal Consultation fees will be charged to provide preliminary pre-consultation comments on all proposed planning applications circulated as part of the City's Formal Consultation process. This fee will be deducted from the application fee when a formal application is submitted.

HCA Plan Review & Permit Fees

Permit Fees

Pursuant to the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 41/24: Prohibited Activities, Exemptions and Permits, within HCA regulated areas, a permit is required for:

- Development activities and;
- Interference with Wetlands and Watercourses

1. Minor Development:

Is considered to be minor landscaping works and minor filling and grading activities, (between 0.05 m and 0.3 m in depth) OR minor additions to an existing structure (including decks) that involves less than a 50% increase in size of the original ground floor area or accessory structure to a maximum area of 28m².

	2026	2026	2027	2027
	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Basic applications (no technical studies required)	\$744.60	\$841.40	\$744.60	\$841.40
Applications involving review of technical studies	\$1,370.88	\$1,549.09	\$1,370.88	\$1,549.09

2. Major Development:

Is considered to be the construction, reconstruction, and erection of a new building or structure, OR the construction of an addition to an existing structure that involves a 50% or greater increase in size of the original ground floor area, OR any change to an existing building or structure that would have the effect of altering the use or potential use of the building or structure or increase the number of dwelling units, OR site alterations involving the temporary or permanent placing, dumping or removal of fill material resulting in significant grade changes.

Basic applications (no technical studies required)	\$2,207.28	\$2,494.23	\$2,207.28	\$2,494.23
Applications involving review of technical studies.	\$4,796.04	\$5,419.53	\$4,796.04	\$5,419.53

3. Fill Placement:

The temporary or permanent placing, dumping or removal of any material, originating on the site or elsewhere, and the placement of material/fill is the primary activity.

Minor - Less than 500 m3 and no technical studies required	\$473.28	\$534.81	\$473.28	\$534.81
Intermediate - Less than 500 m3 and technical studies required	\$3,022.26	\$3,415.15	\$3,022.26	\$3,415.15
	plus \$0.50/m3		plus \$0.50/m3	
Major - Greater than 500 m3	\$6,019.02	\$6,801.49	\$6,019.02	\$6,801.49
	plus \$0.50/m3		plus \$0.50/m3	

HCA Plan Review & Permit Fees
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4. Interference with Wetlands and Watercourses:

Activities to straighten, change, divert or interfere in any way with the existing channel of a river, creek, stream or watercourse or to change or interfere in any way with a wetland.

		2026	2026	2027	2027
		Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Minor - works not requiring supportive technical studies such as minor repairs or adjustments to existing shoreline protection/watercourse structures, simple culvert replacements, small full-span pedestrian bridges, buildings and structures, fill placement, jack and bore and directional drill activities.					
		\$1,380.06	\$1,559.47	\$1,380.06	\$1,559.47
Intermediate - works limited in scope/extent which may require supportive technical studies such as moderate-scale repairs to shoreline protection works, localized watercourse alterations and stream bank stabilization, buildings and structures, fill placement.					
		\$3,876.00	\$4,379.88	\$3,876.00	\$4,379.88
Major - works requiring supportive technical studies such as channel re-alignments and natural channel design, major shoreline protection works, new large-scale bridge crossings, buildings and structures, fill placement.					
		\$5,642.64	\$6,376.18	\$5,642.64	\$6,376.18
5. Multi-lot/Unit Development (10 or more lots or units) and Major Infrastructure Works:					
Infrastructure works (storm water management ponds, services, roads, bridges, etc.), new golf courses and major alterations to existing golf courses.					
		\$6,378.06	\$7,207.21	\$6,378.06	\$7,207.21
6. Violation Surcharge					
75% surcharge will be applied when activities which require a permit under Regulations are undertaken without a permit.					
7. Minor Revisions to Permits		\$389.64	\$440.29	\$389.64	\$440.29
8. Expired Permits		\$323.34	\$365.37	\$323.34	\$365.37
9. Letter Of Permission (Administrative Permit)	With Site Visit	\$335.58	\$379.21	\$335.58	\$379.21
	No Site Visit	\$231.54	\$261.64	\$231.54	\$261.64
10. Resubmissions (per hour of review time)		\$110.49	\$124.85	\$110.49	\$124.85

HCA Plan Review & Permit Fees

NOTES:

Permits are normally issued for a two (2) year period. Permits may be issued for a longer period, however, the maximum period of validity for any permit is five (5) years. Permit extensions may be granted, but any extension shall not exceed the total maximum allowable period of validity of five (5) years.

- Significant alteration to an activity or changed ownership will be subject to a new permit application. All fees are to be made payable to the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority.

Where a permit has expired and the same applicant re-applies for a new permit within 6 months of the expiry of the original permit, and there have been no changes to the proposed works, HCA may issue a new permit for an administrative fee of \$323.34 +HST.

- Resubmission fees will be charged directly to the applicant for the review of technical studies and plans, drawings, models, etc., beyond the first submission and two resubmissions. A fee will be charged for each resubmission and will be based on total staff review time at the hourly review rate charged by the HCA.

	2026	2026	2027	2027
Service/Reforestation/Planning Fees/Misc. Fees	Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
Natural Areas Inventory Database Private Requests				
Per hour preparation time	\$112.20	\$126.79	\$112.20	\$126.79
Reforestation Tree Planting Service				
The Authority provides a Reforestation Tree Planting Service to private landowners who own a minimum of 2 ha (5 acres) free of buildings. To recover the cost of this service, a charge to the private landowner applies. Landowner pays cost of trees in addition to planting costs. Replanting at same terms and conditions. This charge is based on full cost recovery of crew, equipment materials, benefits + 22% administration. Estimates are prepared on request.				
Fees for Seed Collection and Cuttings				
All work to be performed by purchaser and must satisfy authority environmental criteria. Volumes for uncleaned seed as collected.				
Cuttings per cubic meter	\$19.69	\$22.25	\$19.69	\$22.25
Seed Collections by weight per lb.				
Grass seed	\$45.90	\$51.87	\$45.90	\$51.87
Wildflower seed	\$66.56	\$75.21	\$66.56	\$75.21
Conifer seed	\$34.02	\$38.44	\$34.02	\$38.44
Walnut, Hickory, Oak seed	\$7.96	\$8.99	\$7.96	\$8.99
Other deciduous tree and shrub seed	\$3.01	\$3.40	\$3.01	\$3.40
Seed Collections by volume per litre				
Conifer cones	\$0.61	\$0.69	\$0.61	\$0.69
Walnut, Hickory, Oak seed	\$1.48	\$1.67	\$1.48	\$1.67
Other deciduous tree and shrub seed	\$1.02	\$1.15	\$1.02	\$1.15

HCA Plan Review & Permit Fees
--

		2026	2026	2027	2027
		Before HST	After HST	Before HST	After HST
GIS Mapping					
Colour Printing (includes ortho photo or area fill)	per sq.ft.	\$15.81	\$17.87	\$15.81	\$17.87
Colour printing (no ortho photo or area fill)	per sq.ft.	\$5.41	\$6.11	\$5.41	\$6.11
(any size up to 40" wide)					
Digital files (email)					
Ortho photography 1km X 1km (ecw, jpg or geotiff) per file		\$38.51	\$43.51	\$38.51	\$43.51
- Ortho photography available for 2002, 2010, 2015					
Custom maps (including HCA scanned maps) based on size	per sq.ft.	\$5.97	\$6.74	\$5.97	\$6.74
Vector Data (high detail e.g. Contours, dem)	per sq.km.	\$59.01	\$66.68	\$59.01	\$66.68
Vector Data (low detail e.g. Watercourse etc.)	per hour	\$112.71	\$127.36	\$112.71	\$127.36
Custom Map Preparation (plus printing or digital file cost)		\$113.22	\$127.94	\$113.22	\$127.94
Photocopies					
per sheet		\$0.28	\$0.31	\$0.28	\$0.31
Stream Flow/Weather/Fishery Data					
Per hour staff time		\$112.71	\$127.36	\$112.71	\$127.36
Stream flow Discharge measurement, per hour + mileage		\$112.71	\$127.36	\$112.71	\$127.36
Technical Data staff time relates to hourly engineering, Ecology, IT and GIS staff time to prepare data as requested.					
Tables/Charts/Plans/Maps					
Computer Disc		\$36.62	\$41.38	\$36.62	\$41.38
Electronic Files		\$27.23	\$30.77	\$27.23	\$30.77
Solicitor and Real Estate Agent Requests RE:Property					
A. Solicitor, Real Estate, Consultant Request, and Property Reports (requiring a site visit)					
		\$316.20	\$357.31	\$316.20	\$357.31
B. Solicitor, Real Estate, Consultant Request, and Property Reports (no site visit)					
		\$275.40	\$311.20	\$275.40	\$311.20
Property Reports include building permit inquiries and input to general inquires as to development constraints on a property. All requests are payable in advance. In all cases, this fee includes a written reply to the landowner/agent/consultant. The municipal building department will be copied, when building permits are being sought.					
Administration Fee For Returned Cheques					
Administration fee per cheque		\$53.40	\$60.34	\$53.40	\$60.34
Borrowed Reports					
Deposits are normally held for borrowed reports until returned in good condition.					
Amount is based on 2 x value of report.					

Report to: Conservation Advisory Board

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: Matthew Hall, Director; Capital Projects & Strategic Services

Prepared By: Madolyn Armstrong, Landscape Architect; Capital Projects & Strategic Services

Meeting Date: August 13, 2026

Subject: Final Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan for Approval

Recommendation:

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors;

THAT this report and accompanying Master Plan of June 2026 be received as information for project background and general understanding; and further

THAT the Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan of June 2026 be approved; and further

THAT staff be directed to submit the Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan to the NEC and the MNR for final approval.

Executive Summary:

HCA staff have completed the final draft of a new Master Plan for Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. The Plan will guide the management, and future development of the conservation area over the next ten years.

Internal and external review and commenting on this Plan has concluded, and comments and feedback received have been incorporated into the document. HCA staff

are recommending that the Plan be endorsed by the Conservation Advisory Board and recommend its approval by the HCA Board of Directors. Following HCA approval, the Plan will be forwarded to the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Ministry of Natural Resources for final approval.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

1. Background

The HCA Ten Year Master Plan Update Strategy was approved by CAB and the Board of Directors in early 2019 for properties that HCA owns and manages. As per this strategy document, the scheduled study area for review in 2022 was the Saltfleet Study Area, which included Saltfleet Conservation Area, Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area, the Dofasco 2000 Trail, and Winona and Vinemount Conservation Areas.

Work on these plans began in January 2022. An informational memo was brought to CAB in April 2022 to inform members about the project. An update was brought to CAB in November of 2022 to share progress on the development of these plans. The Plans for Saltfleet, Dofasco Trail and Winona and Vinemount were finalized and approved by CAB in April 2024 and the Board of Directors in May 2024.

The Devil's Punchbowl Master Plan was not finalized at the same time due to ongoing review with the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) and Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR). This review has now been completed and the Plan is finalized.

HCA staff developed the Devil's Punchbowl Master Plan through a process of four phases as follows:

- Phase 1 Background began in January 2022 and was completed in summer 2022. This phase included engagement with HCA staff in all departments and forming the HCA staff steering committee, collection of background information, and the assembling of existing mapping information.
- Phase 2 Inventory included the collection and assembly of natural areas field surveys and mapping information, ecological reports, trail counter data and public surveys. Three facilitated workshop sessions were held with the HCA staff working group covering: site concept and strategic visioning; day use operations, marketing and financial sustainability; and capital project priorities and plans. Two public information booths were held by staff at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area in July and August 2022. Two visitor surveys were available on the Bang the Table website. One survey was posted from May 18 to September 9, 2022, and a second one focused on the Punchbowl Market lands was posted from July 9 to September 9, 2022. 100 public surveys were received for the main DPCA survey and another 32 were received for the Market lands survey. Visitors to the information booths and to HCA's online public engagement website were also able to register to receive updates on the project.

- Phase 3 Draft Document included developing the first draft of the plan using the information gathered in Phase 2 from staff, stakeholders and the public. The draft plan was reviewed internally by the HCA staff working group and revised following feedback received. The revised document was then distributed for external review and open to commenting for all HCA staff, HCA's Boards, stakeholder agencies, Indigenous communities, and the public through Bang the Table. The review and commenting period for the plan took place from February 2023 to April 2023, with the exception of further consultation with the NEC, MNR and First Nations. The feedback from this consultation has been incorporated into the final draft for approval.
- Phase 4 Final Document included revisions to the Master Plan to incorporate the feedback received from the external review period. The final draft plan will be completed upon endorsement by the HCA's Conservation Advisory Board and approval by the Board of Directors, followed by endorsement from the NEC and approval from the MNR.

2. Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan

This Master Plan for Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area (DPCA) updates and replaces the 1980 Devil's Punchbowl Master Plan. DPCA is a 158-acre day-use conservation area located on top of the Escarpment in Hamilton. It is a popular day-use area for hiking, scenic waterfall and Escarpment views, and nature appreciation. The Bruce Trail passes through this conservation area both below and above the Escarpment. The property contains the provincially designated Devil's Punchbowl Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), as well as the Devil's Punchbowl Escarpment Environmentally Significant Area (ESA).

During the development of the Master Plan in July of 2022, the HCA acquired a 50-acre property on the south side of Ridge Road including the Punchbowl Market buildings and associated farmland. These lands were acquired with the intention of constructing a new wetland complex as part of the ongoing Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Project. The acquisition of this land had a significant impact on the scope of this Master Plan. This Plan includes direction for management and improvement of the existing Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area facilities, as well as the recently acquired market buildings and property.

Key items that are addressed in this Master Plan include:

- Natural Areas
 - Updated terrestrial and aquatic ecological inventories were conducted across the property.
 - Recommended actions to enhance biodiversity and long-term forest resiliency through control of invasive species and restoration plantings.

- The purpose and function of the new wetlands that will be created on the south side of Ridge Road and anticipated monitoring and maintenance.
- Natural succession of former agricultural land on the market lands property that is outside the wetland creation area.
- Conservation Area Development
 - Creation of the new SC-5 wetlands on the lands south of Ridge Road as part of the Saltfleet Wetland Complex.
 - Improvements to the existing DPCA parking lot north of Ridge Road.
 - Change in use of the recently acquired market buildings to function as a visitor centre with washrooms and HCA staff offices.
 - Addition of a new parking lot with gatehouse and autogates on the south side of Ridge Road to serve the visitor centre and expanded conservation area.
 - Demolition of the brick residential building that is currently serving as an office for the HCA East Mountain staff team to accommodate the new wetland.
- Day Use Activity Areas
 - Creation of new trail connections around the wetland, including realignment of the Dofasco 2000 Trail connecting to Saltfleet CA and a reroute of the Bruce Trail to bring it off of Ridge Road.
 - Formalization of a waterfall lookout area below the Escarpment.
 - Addition of trailhead and wayfinding signage through the property.
 - Addition of interpretive materials through the property, including in the visitor centre, interpretive signage along trails, and digital media.

Summary of Consultation and Engagement

HCA received feedback on the DPCA Master Plan from a variety of stakeholders, groups and individuals. Below is a summary of key updates that resulted from consultation.

HCA Staff

- Section 3.2 Goals – The key areas of focus from HCA's Climate Change Strategy were added.
- Section 3.2 Goals – HCA's Land Acknowledgement Statement was added.

Niagara Escarpment Commission

- Updates and corrections related to the NEP were made where needed.

- Section 3.6 Master Plan Zones – More detail has been added to Tables 1 – 5 to specify permitted uses and descriptions that are unique to DPCA.
- Section 4.3.1 Ridge Road Market Lands – This new section was added into the document to provide more detail on the proposed change in use of the market lands and buildings and how this change will be supported within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area.
- Section 4.6 Cultural Heritage – A description of the archaeological work being undertaken as part of the wetland creation was added, along with some historical context from the Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment.
- Section 6.2 Conservation Area Development – Background information about the Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Program has been added to support the creation of the SC-5 wetlands.
- Appendix 1 Mapping – Maps have been revised to show a more recent wetland design concept and new information gathered about the market lands. On the Site Concept Map, the parking lot has been shifted further south, and the rerouted Bruce Trail has been moved in front of the visitor centre.
- Appendix 2 Capital Development Priorities and Detail Drawings – Table 2 has been revised to show which development items will be exempted from an NEC Development Permit through the approval of this Master Plan, including the SC-5 wetland. As well, additional detailed drawings of the market building, parking lots and the SC-5 wetland have been added.

Ministry of Natural Resources

- References to MECP's Species Conservation Act have been updated.
- Appendix 6 HCA Visitor and Parking Management Review – This appendix item has been added to provide some background on the recommendation for a new parking lot at DPCA.
- Appendix 4 – A new table has been added summarizing the results of the public surveys, Public Surveys – Summary of Key Comments and Resolutions.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Natural Heritage Conservation**
Initiative – Manage natural areas on HCA lands through monitoring, inventories, strategies and approved master and management plan recommendations to ensure enhancement of natural areas and ecosystems.
- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**

Initiative – Increase our engagement with First Nations Peoples to learn about and incorporate traditional knowledge in stewardship and teachings on the Treaty and traditional lands within the HCA watershed.

Initiative – Uphold our ties to federal, provincial, and municipal partners to work together to advance conservation efforts.

- **Strategic Priority Area – Connecting People to Nature**

Initiative – Manage and enhance conservation lands utilising best management practices to support nature appreciation and recreation activities, as communities continue to grow and look to HCA's conservation areas to spend time in nature.

Initiative – Continue development of master and management plans and implementation of priority capital reinvestments.

Agency Comments:

This Plan includes lands within the municipal boundaries of the City of Hamilton and within the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area under the jurisdiction of the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the Ministry of Natural Resources. These agencies were circulated for their comments during the external consultation period. The City of Hamilton provided limited comments on the draft plan. Extensive review and consultation was completed with the NEC and all comments have been incorporated into the final draft.

Legal / Financial Implications:

Not Applicable.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Attachment A – 2026 Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan



Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan

Draft - June 2026



Hamilton
Conservation
Authority

A Healthy Watershed for Everyone



Prepared by: Hamilton Region Conservation Authority (HCA).

Photo Credits: HCA staff unless otherwise specified.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	APPROVAL STATEMENT.....	1
2.0	PREFACE.....	2
3.0	INTRODUCTION.....	4
3.1	Executive Summary	4
3.2	Goals	6
3.3	Objectives	7
3.4	Site Concept	8
3.5	Policy and By-Law Framework.....	9
3.6	Master Plan Zones.....	11
3.7	Development Priorities.....	18
4.0	BACKGROUND.....	20
4.1	Study Area	20
4.2	Property History	21
4.3	Planning and Development Controls.....	24
4.4	Buildings	26
4.5	Physical Features	28
4.6	Cultural Heritage	28
4.7	Heritage Designation and Historic Buildings	30
4.8	Natural Areas	31
5.0	NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY.....	32
5.1	Physiography and Topography	32
5.2	Soil Composition	34
5.3	Hydrology and Surface Drainage.....	35
5.4	Biophysical Inventory Methodology.....	36
5.5	Ecological Land Classification.....	37
5.6	Flora/Botanical Inventory	37
5.7	Fauna Inventory	37
5.8	Breeding Bird Surveys	38
5.9	Ecological Land Classification Results.....	38
5.10	Flora/Botanical Inventory Results	38
5.11	Fauna Inventory Results	39
5.12	Aquatic Inventory	40
5.13	Significant Ecological Features.....	41
5.14	Biophysical Inventory – Analysis.....	42
5.15	Natural Areas Recommendations	51
6.0	OVERALL SITE CONCEPT	53
6.1	Natural Areas Development.....	53
6.2	Conservation Area Development	53
6.3	Day Use Activity Areas	55
6.4	Marketing	55

7.0 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT	56
7.1 Land and Water Management.....	56
7.2 Vegetation Management.....	56
7.3 Fish and Wildlife Management.....	58
7.4 Cultural Heritage Management	58
7.5 Conservation Area Operations.....	59
7.6 Education.....	59
7.7 Research.....	60
7.8 Recreation.....	60
7.9 Partnerships.....	61
7.10 Paid Staff	61
8.0 FINANCIAL.....	62
8.1 Attendance and Revenue Forecasts.....	62
8.2 Capital Projects.....	62
8.3 Funding Sources.....	65
8.4 Business Model.....	65
9.0 PROGRAMMING.....	66
9.1 Special Events and Programming.....	66
9.2 Education and Interpretive Programs.....	66
10.0 SUMMARY	67
11.0 APPENDIX CONTENTS.....	68
APPENDIX 1	69
APPENDIX 2	70
APPENDIX 3	96
APPENDIX 4	98
APPENDIX 5	105
APPENDIX 6	118
APPENDIX 7	131

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.	Context Map	5
Figure 2.	HCA 10-Year Master Plan Study Area	10
Figure 3.	Tourism Region	20
Figure 4.	City of Hamilton Zoning	27
Figure 5.	Soil Composition	33
Figure 6.	Subwatersheds	36

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.	Natural Reserve Zone	13
Table 2.	Natural Environment Zone	14
Table 3.	Cultural Heritage Zone	15
Table 4.	Development Zone	16
Table 5.	Resource Mangement Zone	17
Table 6.	Summary of Ecological Field Studies	37
Table 7.	Floristic Summary & Assessment.....	39
Table 8.	Fish species Captured in this Area of Stoney Creek	40
Table 9.	Federal & Provincial Species at Risk	42
Table 10.	Locally Rare & Uncommon Species	43
Table 11.	Species of Conservation Concern	46

1.0 APPROVAL STATEMENT

We are pleased to approve the Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan as the official policy document for the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority (HCA).

This plan supports HCA's current Strategic Plan and reflects our Vision of a healthy watershed for everyone and Mission to lead in the conservation of our watershed and connect people to nature.

Moving forward over the next ten years this plan will provide guidance for management of the conservation area in support of these goals.

Lisa Burnside
Chief Administrative Officer
Hamilton Conservation Authority

Date

Brad Clark
Chair, Board of Directors
Hamilton Conservation Authority

Date

Shawn Carey
Director
NEC

Date

Stephen Casselman
Director, Fish and Wildlife Policy Branch
MNR

Date

2.0 PREFACE

The Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area Master Plan is the guiding policy document for the development and management of this conservation area which is owned and administered by the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority (HCA). The recommendations in this Master Plan are intended to help provide direction and guidance for sustainable development and operation of Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area (DPCA) over the next ten years.

This Master Plan was developed by HCA staff utilizing in-house expertise and resources, with a public consultation process to receive input from stakeholders and the public as follows:

Phase 1 Background

Background review was initiated January 2022 with the HCA executive team review of the work plan, engagement of staff, collection of mapping information, and gathering information through staff and stakeholder meetings. An information report was presented to the HCA Conservation Advisory Board in April 2022, and Phase 1 was completed by October 2022.

Phase 2 Inventory

Inventory includes the collection and assembly of natural areas field surveys and mapping information, ecological reports, trail and vehicle counter data, and visitor surveys. Natural areas reviews began in 2021 by HCA staff. An unexpected change to the project happened in July 2022 when HCA acquired the new land parcel with the Punchbowl Market buildings. Scope and project schedules were adjusted at that time to include this acquisition in the field inventory and public surveys.

A public engagement site was launched on HCA's website in May 2022. A visitor survey for DPCA was conducted online through the HCA website. Flyers were also posted and distributed on site giving visitors QR codes and weblinks to take them to the surveys on their mobile devices. Once the former Market property was acquired, a second survey was created focusing on that part of the conservation area. The main DPCA survey ran from May 18 to September 9, 2022 with 100 surveys submitted. The Market Lands survey ran from July 9 to September 9, 2022, and 32 surveys were submitted. Two public information booths were operated by staff in the conservation area on July 16 and August 6, 2022 to share information on the plan, respond to questions, and sign up people interested in receiving the draft plan for review and comment. Visitors to the public engagement site during this phase were also able to register to receive and comment on the draft Master Plan in Phase 4.

Phase 3 Concepts

Concepts in this plan were completed in-house by HCA staff and refined with the information in the public surveys and input from stakeholders. Staff's professional expertise and experience, plus lessons learned from operating the DPCA for decades helped inform this plan. Four facilitated workshop sessions were held with staff covering: site concept and vision planning; financial sustainability; day use and marketing; and capital project priorities and plans. All information

gathered in this phase was presented internally to HCA staff for review and comment and then compiled in the draft plan circulated in Phase 4.

Phase 4 Summary

Finalizing the draft Master Plan includes reviews of the compiled draft plan by staff, stakeholders, and board advisory members, and circulation to the public who registered in Phase 2. The final draft document integrates comments and feedback received during the external review. After receiving final comments, the plan is to be presented to the HCA Conservation Advisory Board, the HCA Board of Directors as well as the Niagara Escarpment Commission and Ministry of Natural Resources, for endorsement and approval.



3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Executive Summary

Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area (DPCA) is a 64 ha (158 acre) day-use area located along the Stoney Creek Escarpment in the City of Hamilton. The property was acquired by Hamilton Region Conservation Authority (HCA) in 1969 for its significant location on the Escarpment. In July 2022, HCA acquired an additional 20.3 ha (50 acre) property on Ridge Road with the Punchbowl Market buildings and associated farmlands. This acquisition will provide additional space for visitors to enjoy nature, as well as for the construction of wetlands to help prevent flooding and erosion in lower Stoney Creek. The DPCA lands are shown on Figure 1. Context Map.

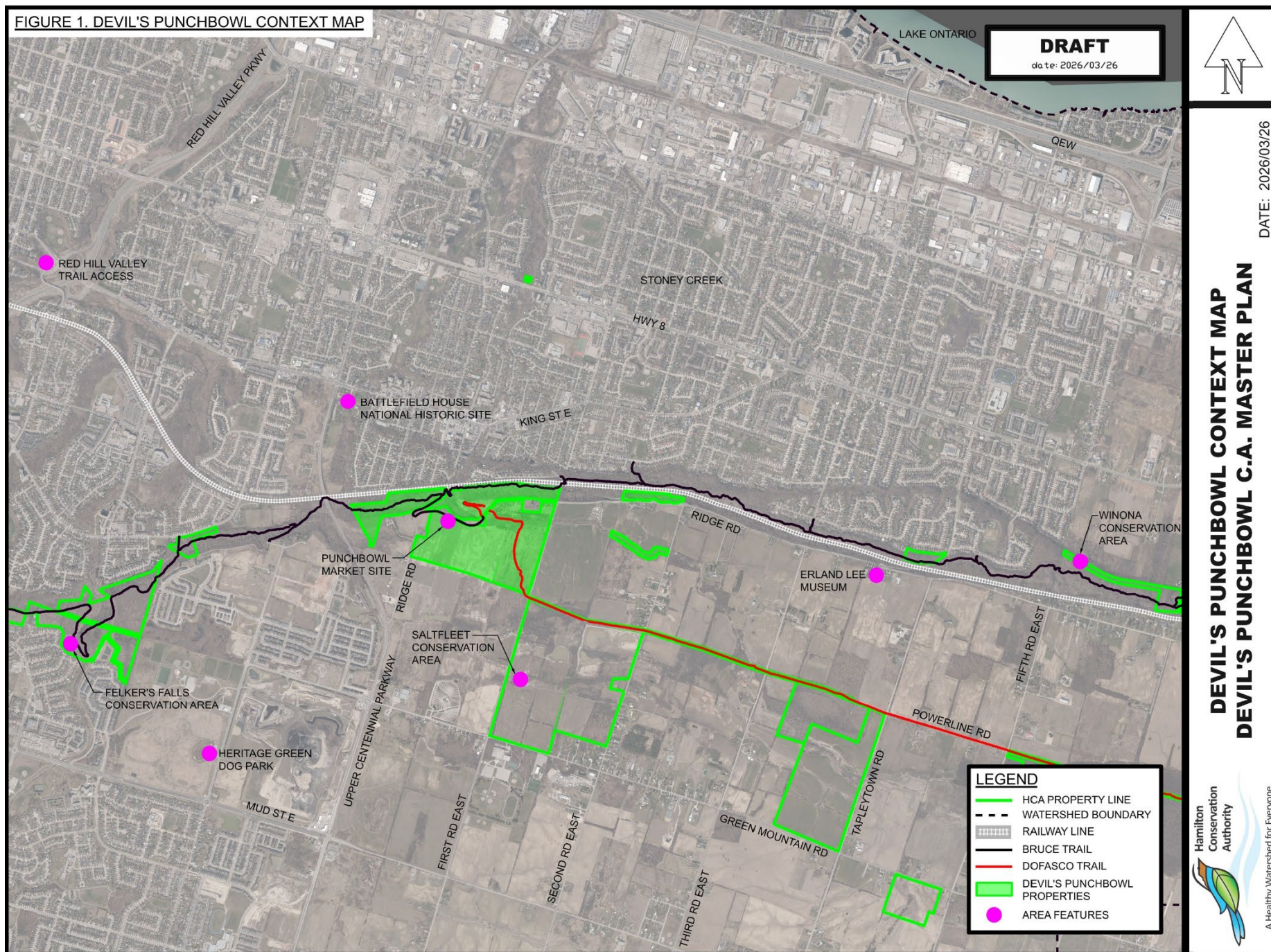
DPCA is part of the Niagara Escarpment Park and Open Space System (NEPOSS) and classified as Natural Environment in the Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP). It is also part of the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve (NEBR). This classification identifies the Escarpment and the land in its vicinity as a nationally and internationally significant landform (NEPOSS, 2021). This classification and designation serve to protect the outstanding natural heritage features, cultural heritage resources, and scenic resources at DPCA. This Master Plan supports the Biosphere Reserve principles so that the Escarpment will remain substantially as a natural environment for future generations.

The conservation area contains a waterfall that plunges over the Escarpment and offers visitor parking and trail access to lookout areas with spectacular views of Stoney Creek, Hamilton Harbour, and the Punchbowl gorge. From the parking lot visitors may also access the Bruce Trail and Dofasco 2000 Trail which connects to Saltfleet Conservation Area.

In 1980 The Devil's Punchbowl Master Plan was approved by the HCA Board of Directors. Since then, this day-use area has become very popular, and high visitation is now straining the parking capacity and site facilities. This ten-year Master Plan updates and replaces the 1980 plan. This plan consolidates all studies of DPCA since 1980, supplies current mapping and site analysis, and provides guidance for HCA's visitor management, natural area conservation, and operation of the newly expanded conservation area.



FIGURE 1. DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL CONTEXT MAP



3.2 Goals

This Master Plan outlines the long-term goals for conservation and land management at DPCA and is intended to be a living document that will be updated completely in ten years' time. If any significant changes to the developmental or operational direction of the conservation area arise during the ten-year timeframe, an amendment can be made to this Plan through the HCA Boards, the NEC and the MNR to incorporate these changes.

These goals set out by HCA in the 1980 Master Plan will be carried forward in this plan:

- To maintain the water management function of the property
- To preserve and enhance all natural features both living and non-living within the conservation area.
- To provide passive recreational opportunities in a manner that will enhance the appreciation of all features within the conservation area, without compromising same.
- To develop a visitor services program which will generate an understanding of the property with particular attention to geological features.
- To establish an appropriate use for the existing buildings located on the property.

Along with these goals, a new goal will be added for the conservation area:

- To enhance the natural and hydrologic function of the land through the creation of wetlands on former agricultural property.

These goals are intended to meet the objectives of the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the NEPOSS and the Niagara Escarpment UNESCO Biosphere Reserve (NEBR) and recognize these designations through sustainable park planning, ecological management, community involvement, environmental monitoring, research and education.

Land Acknowledgement

The HCA joins in stewardship of lands and waters with Indigenous Peoples who have cared for them since time before memory. We acknowledge that the land on which we gather, and the HCA watershed, is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee.

As an organization, we are committed to learning about the shared history and experiences of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and creating relationships based on respect, trust and friendship. In our shared gratitude for every aspect of the natural world, may we create a lasting legacy now and for future generations.

HCA Strategic Plan

Through consultation and analysis of current operations, this plan also supports the following long-term goals as outlined in HCA's current strategic plan:

Vision

- A healthy watershed for everyone.

Mission

- To lead in the conservation of our watershed and connect people to nature.

Strategic Priority Areas

- **Organizational Excellence** - Focused on our organizational resources to ensure efficient and responsive operations are available to meet the needs of the future.
- **Water Resources Management** - Focused on safeguarding the health of the watershed and protecting people and property from natural hazards.
- **Natural Heritage Conservation** - Focused on the management and conservation of natural areas, which include the forests, wetlands, meadows, and watercourses within the watershed.
- **Connecting People to Nature** - Focused on the conservation of HCA lands and connecting communities to natural areas.

HCA Climate Change Strategy

The goal of HCA's Climate Change Strategy is to work towards achieving net zero status across HCA's operations through the reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG's), while also working to increase our overall adaptive capacity to changing climatic conditions

Key Areas of Focus

- Environment and Natural Heritage
- Experience, Education and Awareness
- Partnerships

City of Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan

The HCA is a dedicated partner of the Hamilton Biodiversity Action Plan. Developing updated Master and Management Plans for HCA owned and managed natural areas directly supports Action 7.6 in the Biodiversity Action Plan. Management Plans help guide the protection of biodiversity in these natural areas and help to inform local decision making.

3.3 Objectives

The goals and objectives in the previous Master Plan have been assessed, and through consultation and analysis of current operations, the HCA supports the following long-term objectives for the Devil's Punchbowl:

- Maintain the existing natural environment of the gorge, along the Escarpment face and brow with management of vegetation, wildlife, and visitors.
- Maintain the hydraulic capacities of the watercourse at the Punchbowl.
- Provide for storm water retention on the conservation area lands.

- Provide for enhanced safe access, parking and visitor amenities with the Punchbowl Market property.
- Provide access to trails including the Bruce Trail to support passive recreation.

3.4 Site Concept

DPCA contains physical features, flora and fauna of significance and these lands were acquired by HCA to preserve these features while providing public opportunities for appropriate passive recreation and environmental education.

This day-use conservation area has become very popular, with high visitation straining the parking capacity and site facilities. In response to visitation here and at other areas in HCA's watershed, in 2019 HCA staff prepared an "HCA Visitor Management and Vehicle Parking Review" with the following recommendations for DPCA approved by HCA's Board of Directors. See Appendix 6 for the full report, the following are highlights from this report:

"Recommendation #1: HCA staff implement immediate parking enhancement opportunities at...Devil's Punchbowl...to optimize number of parking spaces, traffic flow and signage;

And

Recommendation #3: HCA staff undertake steps to establish an interim parking lot and trail connection to the Dofasco Trail for the Devil's Punchbowl at the Saltfleet Conservation Area;"

Three key strategies were also presented for DPCA in this report:

- That improvements to the parking lot "could optimize traffic flow, number of parking spaces and visitor experience."
- That there are opportunities "for additional parking to be created within the adjacent lands that comprise part of the Saltfleet Conservation Area...Signage and promotional materials would be needed to inform the public of this option."
- And "In the longer term, as additional lands are acquired, there is potential for a gateway to service the Devil's Punchbowl area."

These further recommendations are identified in the Site Concepts for this plan:

.1 Above the Escarpment:

- Optimize the existing parking lot at the Punchbowl.
- With the addition of the Punchbowl Market property provide enhanced visitor services, HCA staff work areas, and safe trail crossings at Ridge Road.
- Improve the existing trail system and associated signage.
- Provide for new wetland creation south of Ridge Road.
- Accommodate the new market lands in this plan.

.2 Below the Escarpment:

- Improve the existing trail system in partnership with the Bruce Trail Conservancy.
- Market and provide educational information on protecting the sensitive natural areas.
- Manage waterfall visitation in the gorge to protect the natural areas.

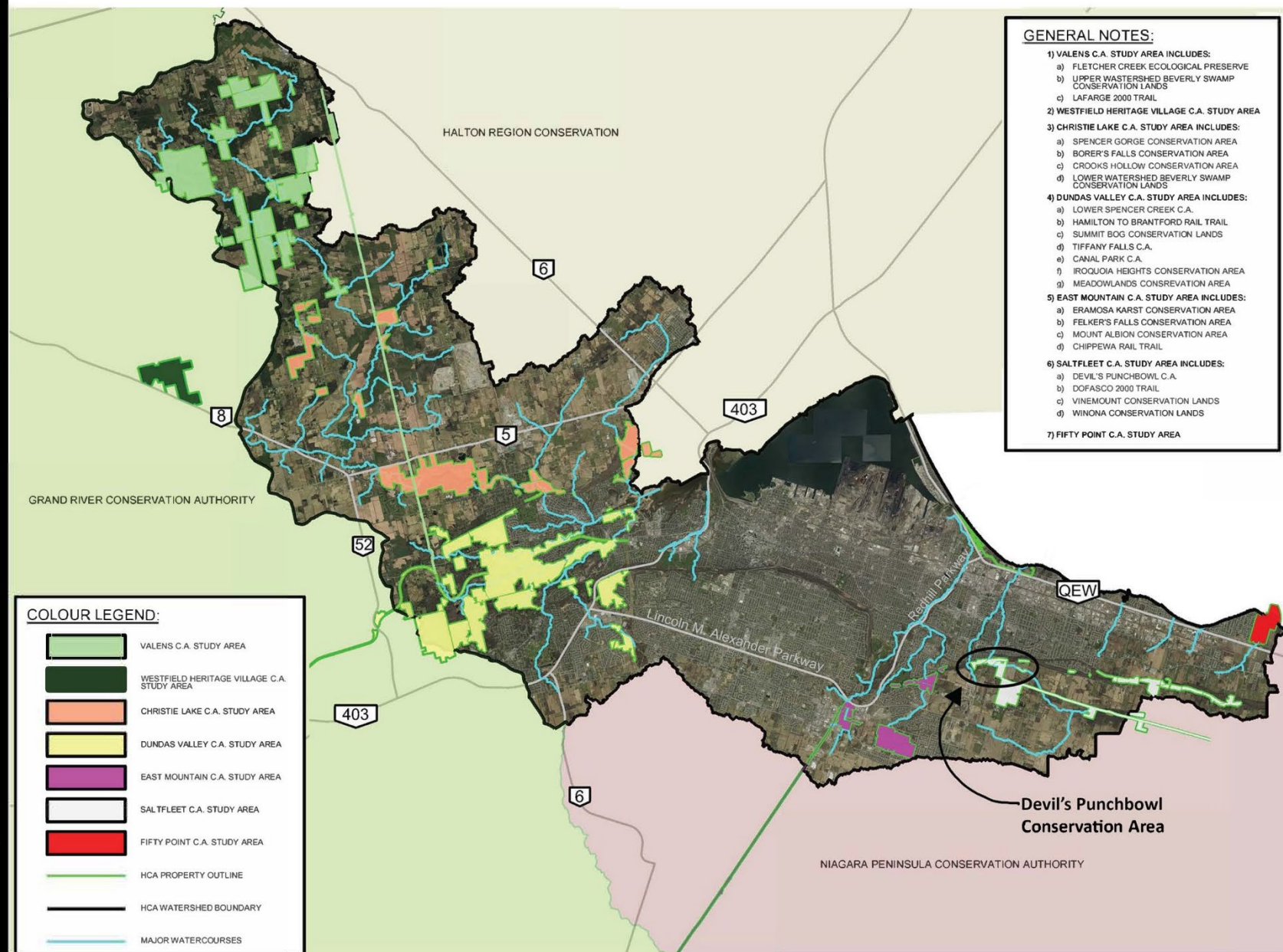
3.5 Policy and By-Law Framework

Conservation areas owned and operated by the HCA are diverse in nature and spread across the HCA watershed. DPCA is near the south-eastern boundary of HCA's watershed. See Figure 2. 10 Year Master Plan Study Area for more information.

HCA has approached this Master Plan with the mindset that all conservation areas in the HCA portfolio requiring Master or Management Plan updates will follow a consistent methodology. A 10 Year Masterplan Update Strategy for properties that HCA owns and manages was approved by HCA's Board of Directors in 2019 and updated in 2022. As per this strategy, guidelines were set out for the completion of HCA Master Plans (including Management Plans and Study Areas). This strategy noted that HCA lands that lie within the boundary of the Niagara Escarpment Plan will need Master Plan endorsement from the Niagara Escarpment Commission (NEC) for HCA to formally ratify them and approval from the Ministry of Natural Resources. Consequently, HCA strategically decided to develop all HCA Master Plans within the guidelines of the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Spaces System (NEPOSS), which is a requirement of the NEP for any public agency NEPOSS park Master Plans. The NEPOSS policy framework ensures HCA follows a consistent methodology for all plans, and the plans are developed to an appropriate level of detail with sufficient public consultation for all proposed land improvements and uses.

HCA recognizes that certain public infrastructure such as utility corridors, trails, or transportation links may be required to cross conservation area lands. HCA policy for planning review and regulation of these features adheres to the Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O.1990, C.27. See Section 7.1 for more information.

FIGURE 2. HCA 10-YEAR MASTER PLAN STUDY AREA



DATE: 2023/01/27

MASTER PLAN STUDY AREA MAP

The DPCA Master Plan adheres to policies of the Hamilton Conservation Authority, City of Hamilton, and provincial policy. HCA will consult with approval agencies and obtain the required permits when implementing projects flowing from this Master Plan.

3.6 Master Plan Zones

DPCA is located within the jurisdiction of the Niagara Escarpment Commission and Greenbelt Area. The policies of the Niagara Escarpment Plan and guidelines of the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System Planning Manual (2021) have been observed in the preparation of this Master Plan. The Niagara Escarpment Plan Area is shown on Map 2 in Appendix 1.

This Master Plan follows the current NEPOSS planning manual and identifies five land use zones for DPCA. These zones are intended to help guide future planning, development, and management of the conservation area. The zone boundaries are shown in more detail in Appendix 1 on Map 3. Conservation Area Zones.

Zones are intended to fulfill a variety of functions in the conservation area, including the following as outlined in the current NEPOSS manual:

- Identification and recognition of the features and attributes (values).
- Protection of key natural heritage and cultural heritage resources.
- Confirmation of the appropriate locations for activities (i.e. directing activities with higher impacts to the least sensitive areas and low impact activities to areas that are more sensitive, if appropriate).
- Delineation of areas based on their requirements for management (e.g. management plan objectives).
- Standardization to support management objectives and actions, based on values (e.g. Nature Reserve Zones supports protection of sensitive natural heritage features and landforms and provincially significant Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest).
- Balancing of public use with the preservation of the natural environment.

The five land use zones identified for DPCA are:

- Nature Reserve Zone
- Natural Environment Zone
- Cultural Heritage Zone
- Development Zone
- Resource Management Zone

The following sections briefly describe each zone. The tables in each section provide a zone description, management direction, and permitted uses, including types of development in each zone. All resource, recreational, and facility development uses are subject to Canadian legislation and policies governing public lands and conservation areas, as well as the resource management policies identified in Section 7.

Appendix 5 contains the natural inventory species lists from background research and field work completed for the preparation of the Master Plan. In this Master Plan, “species at risk” means species listed by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) or Government of Canada as threatened, endangered, extirpated or extinct in Ontario including:

- Species designated as endangered, threatened, or special concern by the Species at Risk Act (federal) via the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) and listed in Section 5.14.
- Species designated as endangered, threatened, or special concern by the Species Conservation Act (provincial) via the Committee on the Status of Species at Risk in Ontario (COSSARO).



Nature Reserve Zone

Nature reserve zones include significant earth and life science features which require management distinct from that in adjacent zones, as well as a protective buffer with an absolute minimum of development. DPCA's nature reserve zones contain the Punchbowl gorge, waterfalls and water courses, and environmentally sensitive Escarpment.

Table 1. Nature Reserve Zone

Zone	Description	Management Direction	Permitted Uses (subject to management planning)
Nature Reserve	Includes the most sensitive natural heritage features and areas that require careful management to ensure long-term protection. Intended to protect in perpetuity features and values of selected life and earth science areas such as: Devil's Punchbowl Provincially Significant Earth Science Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI) • Punchbowl gorge • Waterfall and watercourse • Environmentally significant Niagara Escarpment	These areas are predominantly natural and should contain naturally functioning ecosystems. This zone is intended to protect and where possible enhance the natural heritage and hydrological systems within the zone.	Sustainable recreational activities that are supported by a detailed environmental review and that are identified as compatible with the natural heritage features and areas of the park or open space. Examples include: • Bruce Trail • Nature appreciation from designated recreational trails and lookout stations • Temporary scientific research • Conservation practices (e.g. tree maintenance and monitoring, invasive species control, erosion control) • Education and interpretation facilities where justified • Public safety practices e.g. guards, barriers, protective fencing

Natural Environment Zone

Natural environment zones include natural, cultural, and aesthetic landscapes in which minimum development is permitted to support low-intensity recreational activities. DPCA's natural zones are primarily the wooded area below the Escarpment brow.

Table 2. Natural Environment Zone

Zone	Description	Management Direction	Permitted Uses (subject to management planning)
Natural Environment	Includes scenic landscapes in which minimum development is permitted to support recreational activities that have minimal impacts on the Escarpment environment. • Significant woodlands • Devil's Punchbowl Environmentally Significant Area (ESA)	This zone may function as a buffer between Nature Reserve Zones and Development Zones, Cultural Heritage Zones and Access Zones. Management guidance should maintain and enhance the scenic resources and open landscape character of the environment.	Sustainable recreational activities that have minimal impact on the environment may be permitted. Examples include: • Bruce Trail • Nature Appreciation from designated recreational trails and lookout stations • Temporary scientific research • Conservation practices (e.g. tree maintenance and monitoring, invasive species control, erosion control) • Education and interpretation facilities where justified • Infrastructure required for safety or accessibility may be permitted where there is no feasible alternative.

Cultural Heritage Zone

Cultural heritage zones are intended to protect significant built heritage resources, archaeological resources, and cultural heritage resources. DPCA's cultural heritage zone includes the Cross and associated structures and landscaping.

Table 3. Cultural Heritage Zone

Zone	Description	Management Direction	Permitted Uses (subject to management planning)
Cultural Heritage	This zone includes cultural heritage resources that require management to ensure long-term conservation. • Illuminated Cross • Electrical infrastructure for the Cross • Cross planting beds • Cross lookout platform and associated structural elements such as retaining walls. • Archaeological site west of the market building	Management guidance will ensure long-term conservation, enhancement and potentially restoration of cultural heritage resources.	Development will ensure long-term conservation of cultural heritage resources. Examples include: • Structural maintenance • Infrastructure maintenance • Interpretive/educational signage • Compatible landscaping • Compatible site furnishings (benches) • Public safety practices e.g. guards, barriers, protective fencing

Development Zone

Development zones provide visitor access, orientation, and operational facilities in the conservation area.

DPCA's development zones include all park roads and parking areas, day use recreational areas, buildings, and work areas for conservation area operations.

Table 4. Development Zone

Zone	Description	Management Direction	Permitted Uses (subject to management planning)
Development	Development Zones provide the main visitor access to the conservation area, and facilities and services to support nature appreciation, recreational activities and watershed management. This zone may include areas designed to provide facilities and supporting infrastructure for recreational purposes. • Existing gated parking • Market site parking • Punchbowl Market main building • Market workshop building • East Mountain office building	Management guidance should note that recreational uses and development may be accessory or secondary to the protection of natural heritage features and to the conservation of cultural heritage resources, depending on classification. Retail and visitor facilities should be appropriately scaled for the site. Facility development must be undertaken in a way that will minimize the impact on the Escarpment environment.	Examples of permitted uses that provide access, orientation and operational facilities to support nature appreciation and recreational activities include: • Roadways • Parking areas • Recreational trails • Picnic Areas • Temporary events • Public washrooms • Visitor reception • HCA work areas • Small scale commercial or retail operations

Resource Management Zone

Resource management zones provide for sustainable resource management of agricultural lands, previously disturbed sites, forest products, and land that has a long-term resource agreement such as a managed forest.

DPCA's resource management zones include the agricultural lands (fallow fields, orchard, vineyards) south of Ridge Road.

Table 5. Resource Management Zone

Zone	Description	Management Direction	Permitted Uses (subject to management planning)
Resource Management	Provides for sustainable resource management of forests, fisheries, watersheds, wildlife, or flood control. Previously disturbed sites (e.g. old farm fields, abandoned quarries) where active measures are being taken to re-establish natural vegetation. • SC-5 Wetland Study Area • Watershed management and flood control • Transitioning the orchards, vineyards, fallow fields and farm pond into natural heritage and hydrologic features • Section of Dofasco Trail for recreational use	Management guidance should support: • Experimenting with alternative resource management practices. • Understanding ecosystem structures and functions. • Activating effective conservation and stewardship practices.	These areas may be used to demonstrate ecologically sustainable resource management practices. Examples may include: • Recreational trails • Site furnishings, interpretive features and lookout stations • Wetlands • Educational tours • Rehabilitation / naturalization projects • Research • Recreation uses in this zone are subject to HCA policies and management planning.

3.7 Development Priorities

The capital development priorities and cost estimates for DPCA over the next ten years are shown on the maps in Appendix 1 and the tables and drawings in Appendix 2.

All development projects are to be reviewed annually for the life of this Master Plan, and the capital development priority list updated as necessary. Capital projects should not be started until a long-term strategy with timelines and costs for each project are clearly defined and sufficient resources are available to complete them. See Section 8.2 for further information.

The Visitor Management and Vehicle Parking Review analysis noted in Section 3.4 and Appendix 6 identified Devil's Punchbowl as a high use conservation area with visitor and parking issues. The development priorities outlined in this plan are intended to address the recommendations in this report to meet visitation demands over the next ten years.

Significant capital development for DPCA over the next ten years falls within these categories:

.1 Replace Significant Park Features

These significant park features require ongoing repairs for public safety, are nearing or past the end of their life cycle, and are proposed to be replaced or expanded upon:

- Optimize the existing visitor parking lot to improve traffic flow and function.
- Conduct structural reviews and risk assessment of all park features (buildings, lookout platforms, retaining walls etc.) with report recommendations for long-term care and maintenance.
- Repurpose the Punchbowl Market buildings for visitor and operational use.
- Accommodate the Dofasco 2000 Trail connection to Saltfleet Conservation Area with the wetland project.
- Demolish the existing staff office on Ridge Road to accommodate the SC-5 wetland.

.2 Add New Park Features

These capital projects are proposed to serve a greater number of visitors, generate revenue, and enhance the ecological function of these lands:

- Design and construction of a new wetland area, noted as SC-5 on the Punchbowl Market property, to function with the Saltfleet wetland complex.
- With the SC-5 wetland complex, provide passive recreational trails and interpretive features.
- Enhance the market lands south of Ridge Road for visitor and staff use. This will include a new parking lot with autogate system, trailhead amenities, and improvements to the main market building to create a visitor centre with public washrooms and staff offices.
- For visitor management and natural area protection in the Punchbowl gorge, provide waterfall interpretive signage at the Bruce Trail and install boundary signage marking areas off-limits to the public. More information on development in the Punchbowl gorge can be found in Section 8.2.

.3 Enhance Existing Park Features

These capital projects are proposed to enhance existing park features and improve customer service:

- Work with the Bruce Trail Conservancy to improve the trail system and restore degraded natural areas.
- Install perimeter fencing and guards for public safety and to protect natural areas and cultural heritage areas.
- Provide more educational information for visitors online and on site.
- Manage the naturalization of fallow farm fields, remnant vineyards and orchards that are outside the boundaries of the new wetland area in order to improve the ecological function and connectivity of the former agricultural areas.



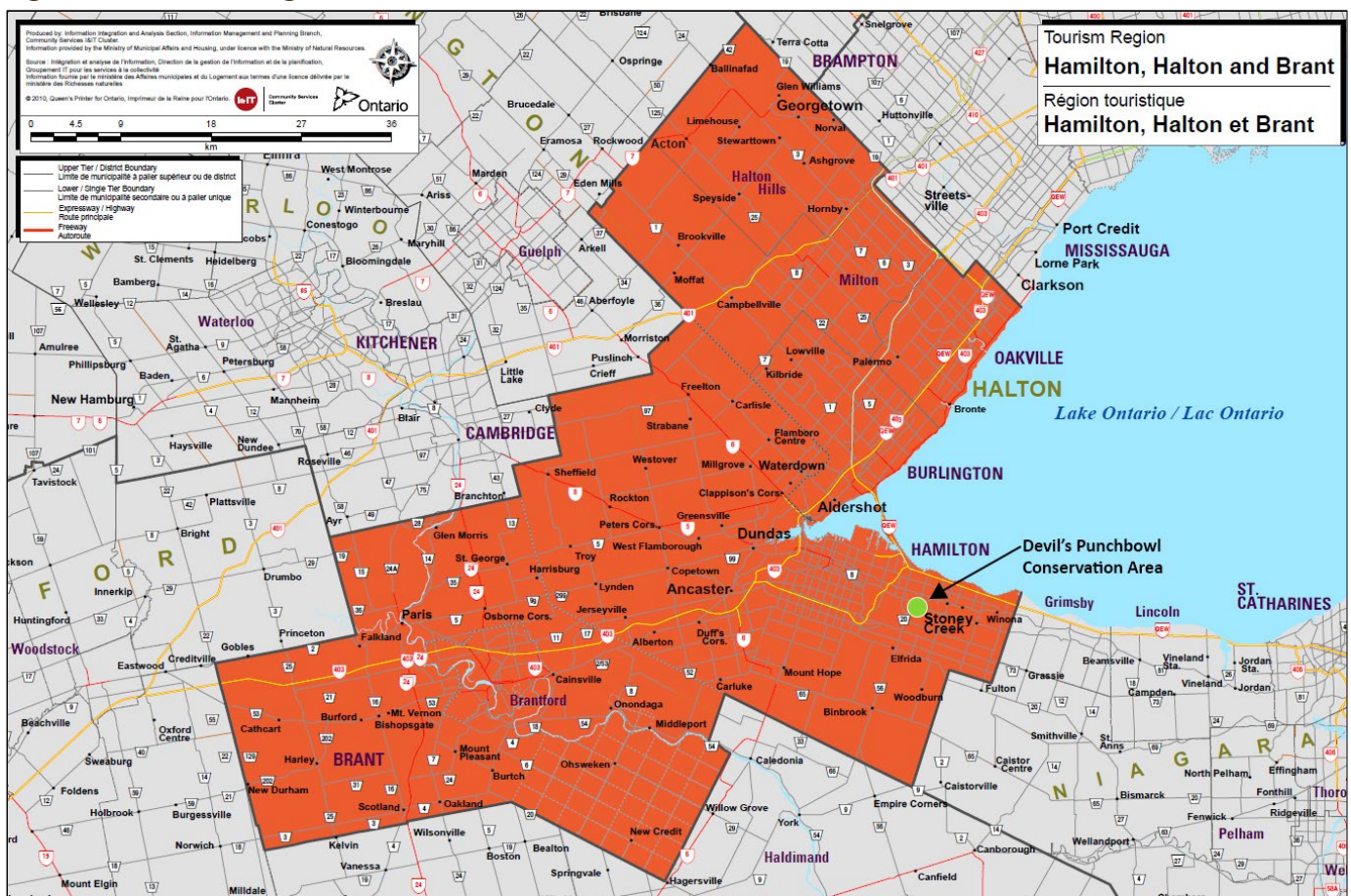
4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 Study Area

Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area (DPCA) is located in the south-eastern area of HCA's watershed in Stoney Creek, City of Hamilton. Other HCA lands nearby include the Dofasco 2000 Trail, Saltfleet, Vinemount and Winona Conservation Areas. The DPCA property encompasses 64 ha (158 acres) of land in the former Township of Saltfleet, with a newly acquired 20.3 ha (50 acre) Punchbowl Market property on Ridge Road. Ridge Road bisects the conservation area in an east-west direction. The property on the east and south of Ridge Road is tableland and includes the Dofasco 2000 Trail. The north side of Ridge Road is the main draw for the visitor with Escarpment views, Punchbowl waterfall, and a short trail loop with lookout areas. The Bruce Trail, as well as the Canadian Pacific Railway freight line mark the northern boundary below the Escarpment bordering on the creek.

DPCA is a popular day-use area and tourist attraction within easy driving distance from the Greater Toronto and Hamilton area as well as Niagara Region. Figure 3 shows the tourism market area considered by this Master Plan.

Figure 3. Tourism Region



Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

During the preparation of this plan, two visitor surveys for DPCA were distributed online and two public information tables were held in the park during the public commenting period. One public survey ran from May 18 to September 9, 2022, and a second survey from July 8 to September 9, 2022. See Section 6.4 Marketing for the survey analysis, and Appendix 4 for the visitor data.

Development proposed for DPCA will require review by the Hamilton Conservation Authority, the City of Hamilton, and the Niagara Escarpment Commission. Draft copies of this document were circulated to these agencies, and their comments addressed in the finalized Master Plan.

Figure 1 in Section 3.1 shows the study area for this plan. This Master Plan update is part of a ten-year strategy for reviewing HCA lands across the watershed as shown in Figure 2 in Section 3.5. HCA staff are following this strategy to systematically glean valuable scientific data and site information from targeted study areas and using this information in the preparation of master and management plans.

4.2 Property History

.1 Background

HCA initially acquired two small parcels of land in 1969 and in the succeeding years purchased an additional 21.2 ha of lands surrounding the Stoney Creek flood plain above the Escarpment on the south side of Ridge Road to create DPCA. This land contained a vineyard that was left to naturalize following its acquisition by the HCA. The suitable location and special geologic features of the property provided for passive recreational use such as picnicking, viewing, and hiking. HCA began developing modest facilities on the property to accommodate these uses.



Orchards in production on the properties fell under the management of a local farmer who leased land from HCA. A major fruit tree replacement program was initiated in 1978 at the expense of the lessee. Many of the lands surrounding DPCA above the Escarpment were in agricultural production. As well, a small fruit stand operated on Ridge Road in the immediate vicinity of the conservation area. The only farmland remaining in production today is south of Ridge Road on the newly acquired Market property.

The conservation area officially opened in October 1971. Facilities at that time included pit privy toilets and a parking lot accommodating a maximum of 20 cars. Picnic tables and an interpretive plaque of the geologic history had been placed on site but were subjected to vandalism. The main

lookout area was developed with a stone wall along the Escarpment crest for safety precautions and a split rail fence extending along Ridge Road.

A campground was considered; however, HCA could not justify removing the orchards and vineyards for this use, especially when there was an adequate supply of campsites in the Hamilton vicinity.

.2 Rental Homes

Two homes were located on Lot 23, Concession 4 approximately 300m apart. One was a unique frame home while the other was a newer brick residence. Both homes were used for residential purposes and were leased from HCA on an annual basis in the early years of operation. The frame house was demolished for the parking lot construction, and the brick home has recently been repurposed by HCA for the Hamilton Mountain superintendent's office and base of operations.

.3 The Cross

When HCA acquired the property in 1969, the cross was a feature already in place as installed by the Stoney Creek community. The cross we see on site today originally was a smaller wooden cross installed on the Escarpment brow in 1960. That cross was replaced in 1966 by a larger metal structure, and the lights refurbished in 1968 and 1991. The platform and interpretive signage was installed in 1992.

Between 2013 and 2015 the structure and electrical system was refurbished and new LED lighting installed. A memorial plaque was mounted on the cross from the Goemans family, recognizing Tony Goemans support of this refurbishment project.



The cross has an interesting cultural history. In the early 1960's the local community organized with the goal of seeing an illuminated cross on the Escarpment by Christmas of 1966. A "Cross Committee" was formed, through which purchases and financial arrangements were to be directed. Marie Kott, a well-known public figure in Stoney Creek helped initiate the community fundraising for the project, with the Toronto Dominion Bank receiving donations. The committee was successful in their financial outreach and also received the support of local industries and businesses, the councils of the Town of Stoney Creek and Saltfleet Township, service clubs, churches, and Stoney Creek Hydro.

Bill Sinclair, a linesman with Stoney Creek Hydro also helped champion and guide the project with the Cross Committee. With a group of Stoney Creek Hydro linesmen, 182 meters (600 feet) of buried cable were installed from the powerline to supply power to the cross. Stoney Creek Hydro supported the illumination of the cross during certain holiday seasons.

The Cross Committee learned that a hydro tower on Birch Avenue, Hamilton, owned by Ontario Hydro, was available for repurposing. The tower, which was more than 50 feet tall, was obtained, and the Foran Crane Company gave time and materials to erect the tower on site. The tower was anchored to a concrete base prepared by Delta Ready Mix Concrete Co. and formed the structural base for the stainless-steel cross.

As well as Marie Kott mentioned earlier, Stanley Kott and Charles Kott of Wentworth Industries, a local steel fabricating company on Lake Avenue, were responsible for building the cross. They supplied the stainless steel and assembled the labourers for the project. As their company was in the heart of Stoney Creek, they were keen to be involved with the project and were inspired by Marie to donate the steel. A local hardware store donated the lights.

.4 Site Improvements

Since 1980 HCA has initiated modest capital improvements on site for visitor management. A small overflow parking area was added to the parking lot. In 2018 automated parking gates and barriers were installed. The Bruce Trail Conservancy maintains the Bruce Trail running through the property under a partnership agreement with HCA. The City of Hamilton is responsible for capital improvements on the adjacent city lands, including road improvements along Ridge Road, local public access below the Escarpment near the railroad tracks, and infrastructure maintenance of services traversing the site. The post and rail perimeter fencing at the brow was replaced in 2021 with decorative metal picket fencing, consistent with fencing HCA has installed at other Escarpment properties for visitor management. Safety rail fencing along the Escarpment brow and at the lookout platform has been replaced at various times over its lifespan related to emergency rescue operations. Ongoing maintenance and replacement of safety items such as guardrails and barriers is part of the annual operation at DPCA.

.5 Punchbowl Market Land Acquisition

On June 3, 2022, HCA announced the acquisition of an additional 20.3 ha (50 acres) of land south of Ridge Road, including the associated market buildings (see maps in Appendix 1). The land transferred to HCA ownership on July 16, 2022. The Punchbowl Market bakery operation continued to operate under a tenant agreement with HCA until December 23, 2022, at which time it closed. The following year, HCA East Mountain Conservation Area staff began using the workshop building behind the Market for storage and maintaining and securing the property. Reviews of the building's systems including septic, water and hydro are currently underway to gain an understanding of capacity and needed improvements before it can be modified for use by visitors. This land acquisition creates new space for the creation of wetlands, and will provide additional space for visitor access, parking, and enjoyment of the Punchbowl area and the new Saltfleet Conservation Area.



At the time that HCA acquired the Market lands in 2022, only a portion of the property was under active agricultural use. A field at the west end of the property was leased out and farmed in 2023. Most of the orchard area is in decline as a result of not being maintained for several years prior to HCA acquiring the land. HCA is not looking to revive fruit production operations, and the orchards are intended to be naturalized over time through biodiverse natural succession and most areas becoming part of the wetland.

4.3 Planning and Development Controls

See Figure 4. City of Hamilton Zoning Map, and Map 2. NEP Area in Appendix 1 for the location of the planning areas described below.

The properties are under the City of Hamilton's Urban and Rural Official Plans (OP, City of Hamilton 2018) and Stoney Creek Zoning By-law. DPCA is located within City of Hamilton (Stoney Creek) Wards 5, 9 and 10. The lands in Ward 9 are classified as P4 Open Space, and A1 Agricultural. The lands in Ward 10 and Ward 5 are classified as OS-3 Open Space for the Niagara Escarpment Slope.

As the property is within the Niagara Escarpment Commission Area of Development Control, the Niagara Escarpment Plan guides permitted uses and development criteria. The City of Hamilton Planning Department has also been consulted in the preparation of this Master Plan.

In the Greenbelt Plan, Niagara Escarpment Plan (NEP), and City of Hamilton Official Plans several planning designations are identified for the property including:

- Section 3.3 of the Greenbelt Plan applies within the NEP area.
- The entire conservation area is in the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area of Development Control.
- Portions of the conservation area are in the NEP Escarpment Natural Area, Escarpment Protection Area, and Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System (NEPOSS).
- The Niagara Escarpment Slope is part of the City Natural Heritage System – Core Areas and Key Natural Heritage Features – Environmentally Significant Area and Significant Woodlands (Urban OP, Schedule B).
- Provincial Planning Statement (PPS) as well as the NEC have provisions for Significant Woodland, Fish habitat, Significant Wildlife Habitat, habitat for Species at Risk.
- Ontario Species Conservation Act which has implications for endangered and threatened species and their habitat observed on the properties.
- Canada Migratory Birds Convention Act which protects numerous bird species and their breeding season generally extending between late March to August. Timing of construction activities and especially vegetation clearing must take this act into account.
- Ontario Heritage Act governing lands which contain archaeological resources or areas of archaeological potential.
- Canadian Fisheries Act for any work completed in the vicinity of Battlefield Creek.
- Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act.

- Conservation Authorities Act, R.S.O. 1990.
- Rural Hamilton Official Plan.
- City of Hamilton Rural Private Tree By-Law.
- Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks Environmental Protection Act.

Representatives from the Niagara Escarpment Commission and Ministry of Natural Resources were engaged in the scoping component in the preparation of this Master Plan.

With these planning and development controls in the area, there are very few active development applications near the conservation area of concern.

A review of demographic trends reveal over the lifespan of this Master Plan population growth is estimated to add 68 thousand more residents within 15 minutes travel to the conservation area. (2022 City of Hamilton Recreation Master Plan). See Section 8 for more information.

.1 Ridge Road Market Lands

The property south of Ridge Road that was acquired by HCA in 2022 is proposed to be added to the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System (NEPOSS). These new DPCA lands will provide opportunities for sustainable recreation and play a role in protecting the natural and cultural heritage of the Escarpment, making it a valuable addition to the NEPOSS. To support the addition of this land to the NEPOSS, this master plan aims to guide the management of the property in a manner that is consistent with NEP policies and objectives. The following points guide and support the addition of the new DPCA lands into the NEPOSS, and the transition of the agricultural lands into natural heritage and hydrologic features as proposed in this Plan.

- The development proposed south of Ridge Road is within the NEP Escarpment Protection Area. The area is also recognized as specialty crop area in the Agricultural Land Base for the Greater Golden Horseshoe. As this property is now owned by HCA, the focus of this land will shift from agriculture towards natural heritage protection, to be aligned with Section 2.7 Development Affecting Natural Heritage of the NEP: “The objective is to protect and where possible enhance natural heritage features and functions, in order to maintain the diversity and connectivity of the continuous natural environment.” The proposed wetland development and naturalization of adjacent fallow fields will enhance several of the key natural heritage features listed in Section 2.7.1 of the NEP. As the DPCA lands south of Ridge Road do not have any identified natural heritage features, the naturalization and creation of wetlands on this property will help to enhance and connect with the Escarpment and natural heritage features north of Ridge Road. It will also help to establish natural heritage and hydrological connectivity to Saltfleet Conservation Area to the south.
- The wetland creation is also aligned with NEP Section 2.6 Development Affecting Water Resources: “The objective is to ensure that hydrologic features and functions including the quality, quantity and character of groundwater and surface water, at the local and watershed level, are protected and where possible enhanced.” The purpose of the wetland project is watershed management to reduce flooding downstream. More information about the wetland project can be found in Section 6.2.

- Permitted uses for Escarpment Protection Areas are outlined in the NEP Section 1.4.3. The creation of the wetland complex will mean a change from agriculture and an “on-farm-diversified use” to “watershed management and flood and erosion control carried out by a public body”. Converting the former market buildings for staff and public use would establish Institutional use within this area. This use will support public access to green space and to the Escarpment.
- With the exception of the new wetland, capital development is to remain confined within the Development Zones noted on Map 3. Conservation Area Zones. This area includes the current parking area, former residence, and former Punchbowl Market area (market buildings, road entrances, parking areas, laneways, work yard, and mown areas). The existing recreational trail and pedestrian bridge in the SC-5 wetland study is to be maintained as-is while this area is under review, to maintain visitor access to the Dofasco Trail and Saltfleet Conservation Area.
- Specialty crop areas are designated on Map 3. Conservation Area Zones as “Resource Management”. Management of these areas is to follow the zone definitions and recommendations in this plan. While the property may not continue under agricultural use, HCA aims to protect the ecological integrity of the land.

Devil’s Punchbowl Conservation Area is classified as a Natural Environment Park in the Niagara Escarpment Plan, the definition of such a property being “These lands are characterized by, and serve to protect, a variety of outstanding natural heritage resources and cultural heritage resources, and scenic resources. Activities may range from back-country hiking in the interior of these areas to car-camping and day use activities in more developed or accessible areas.” (NEPOSS, 2021). As stated in the NEPOSS Planning Manual, classifications are subject to confirmation each time a management plan is prepared, reviewed or amended. It is proposed that classification of DPCA as a Natural Environment Park remains the same following the acquisition of the new property on the south side of Ridge Road. The reasoning is that the intent of the conservation area to protect the natural, cultural and scenic resources of the Niagara Escarpment remains the same following the acquisition of the new property. Natural resources will be enhanced with the wetland creation.

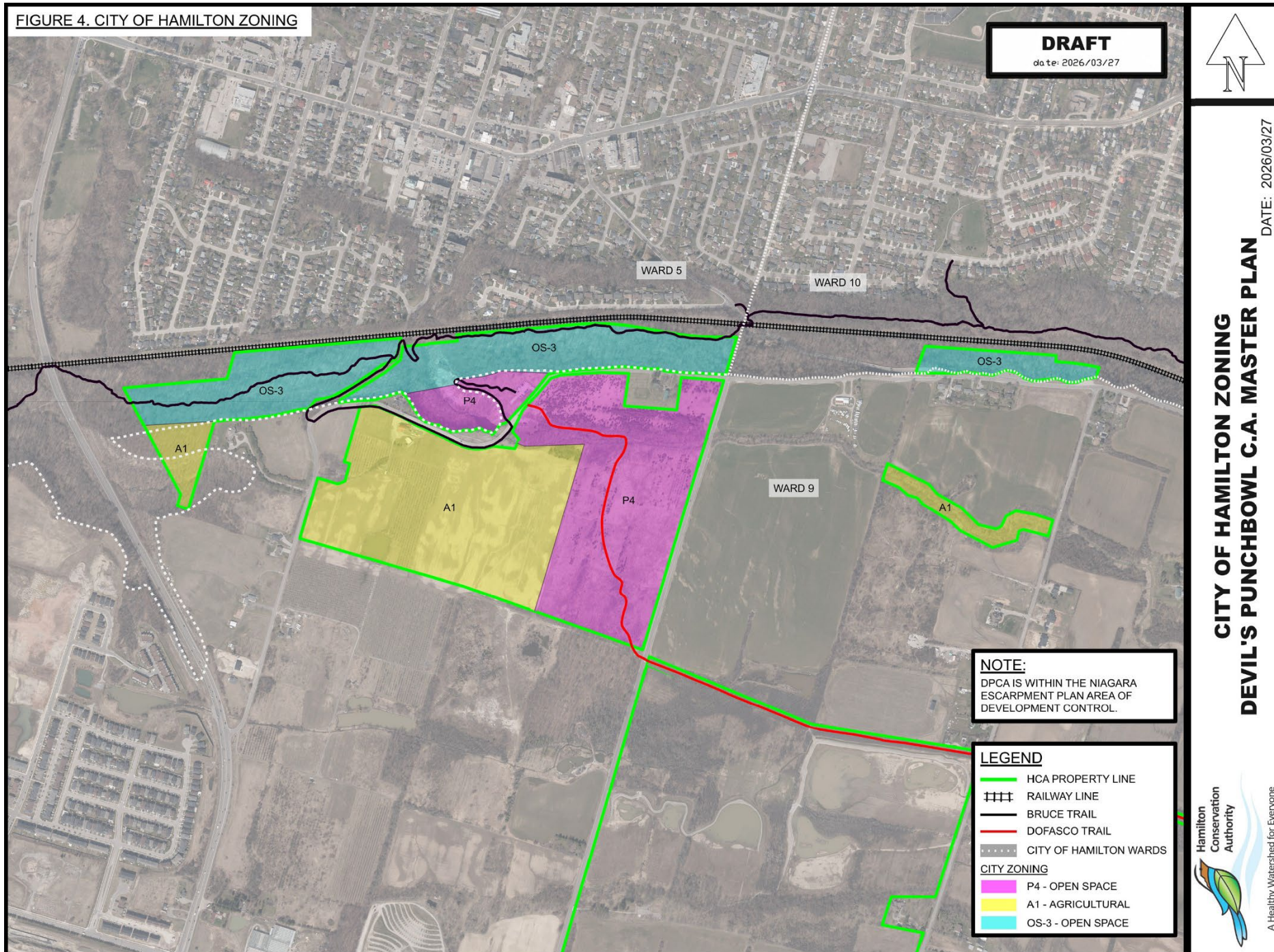
4.4 Buildings

See maps in Appendix 1 for building locations and Section 4.7 for information on nearby Cultural Heritage designations.

The two buildings included on the Punchbowl Market property are the main market building and the workshop building. A plastic hoop-house style greenhouse was removed from the site by the previous owner. For more information on HCA’s plans for the remaining buildings, see Section 6.2. A cursory exterior review of the buildings was conducted by HCA staff during the summer of 2022 when the property was acquired, and more detailed reviews are currently in progress. Observations from these reviews have helped to inform the site concepts included in this plan.

The third building located within the DPCA property is the brick residence located at 174 Ridge Road across from the existing conservation area parking lot. This building has previously been rented out to tenants and is currently serving as an office for HCA’s East Mountain staff unit. This building is proposed to be demolished during the construction of the new wetland.

FIGURE 4. CITY OF HAMILTON ZONING



4.5 Physical Features

DPCA contains a beautiful, wooded glen, traversed by a small creek, situated on the Niagara Escarpment. The glen resembles a large bowl with a 40m waterfall descending the edge of the Escarpment. The geologic history dates back at least 450 million years when the materials which formed the Niagara Escarpment were originally deposited in a large inland sea. The area is a fine example of the geologic strata present in this major landmark of Southern Ontario. See Section 5.1 for more information on these physical features.

The combined watercourses of Stoney and Battlefield Creeks represent a major flood plain area. The Stoney Creek drainage area shows that an ancient floodway previously passed the edge of the Escarpment. It is thought that perhaps at one time all run-off flowed down Battlefield Creek. Both creeks have sections with relatively steep slopes and high flow velocities. The waterfall is fed by run-off from upstream farmland, and the Stoney Creek watercourse at this location normally runs dry during the summer months. Soils on top of the Escarpment are moderately fertile and support orchards containing grape, pear, plum and cherry trees as well as crop lands. Immediately below the Escarpment is the highly urbanized area of the Town of Stoney Creek.



4.6 Cultural Heritage

The HCA recognizes that these conservation area lands were inhabited by First Nations peoples including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation, the Haudenosaunee, and the Huron-Wendat. The HCA also recognizes that this area has been, and continues to be, home to many Indigenous peoples including the Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous communities.

The Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation and Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation were included in the external review and commenting process for this Plan. They will continue to be engaged as this Plan is finalized and on proposed development projects where archaeological

studies are required. First Nations monitors were on site for the archaeological assessments that have been completed on the market property and will continue to be involved for the upcoming Stage 4 assessment.

Stage 1, 2 and 3 archaeological assessments have been completed as part of the SC-5 wetland design on the market property south of Ridge Road. Stage 4 work will begin in spring of 2026 and be completed prior to the construction of the wetland. The Stage 3 assessment identified five areas with archaeological potential and to the extent possible, has guided the siting of development. In this regard, the site located west of the market building will be avoided and protected. While it is the HCA's preference to avoid and protect features, due to the design requirements of the wetland, the four archaeological sites within the wetland area cannot be avoided and a Stage 4 Archaeological Assessment is being undertaken. As a result, to the extent possible, the proposed development demonstrates the conservation of known and potential archaeological resources through avoidance, consistent with applicable cultural heritage and archaeological conservation objectives.

The following historical context has been excerpted from the Devil's Punchbowl Wetland Design Stage 2 Archaeology Assessment completed in March 2025 by Archaeological Research Associates Inc (ARA Inc.).

"After a century of archaeological work in southern Ontario, scholarly understanding of the historical usage of the area has become very well-developed. With occupation beginning in the Palaeo period approximately 11,000 years ago, the greater vicinity of the study area comprises a complex chronology of Indigenous and Euro-Canadian histories." (ARA Inc., 2025).

"The Pre-Contact history of the region is lengthy and rich, and a variety of Indigenous groups inhabited the landscape. Archaeologists generally divide this vibrant history into three main periods: Palaeo, Archaic and Woodland. Each of these periods comprise a range of discrete sub-periods characterized by identifiable trends in material culture and settlement patterns, which are used to interpret past lifeways." (ARA Inc., 2025).

"Although Iroquoian-speaking populations tended to leave a much more obvious mark on the archaeological record and are therefore emphasized in the Late Woodland entries above, it must be understood that Algonquian-speaking populations also represented a significant presence in southern Ontario. Due to the sustainability of their lifeways, archaeological evidence directly associated with the Anishinaabeg remains elusive, particularly when compared to sites associated with the more sedentary agriculturalists. Many artifact scatters in southern Ontario were likely camps, chipping stations or processing areas associated with the more mobile Anishinaabeg, utilized during their travels along the local drainage basins while making use of seasonal resources. This part of southern Ontario represents the ancestral territory of various Indigenous groups, each with their own land use and settlement pattern tendencies." (ARA Inc., 2025).

"During Pre-Contact and Early Contact times, the vicinity of the study area would have comprised a mixture of coniferous trees, deciduous trees and open areas. Indigenous communities actively utilized the land and its resources well into Post-Contact times, and they would have managed the landscape to varying degrees (e.g., establishing clearings for campsites, plant cultivation,

etc.). During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, Euro-Canadian settlers arrived in the area and began to clear the forests for agricultural and settlement purposes.” (ARA Inc., 2025).

This Master Plan sets out a cultural heritage zone surrounding the cross, and associated structure and landscaping, with the intent to maintain the heritage value of this feature for the community. The features within this zone, while not designated historic, shall be maintained as necessary for public viewing and safety. Further detailed evaluation of the structure is recommended, and to develop a specific HCA management plan for the continued care and operation of this feature within DPCA. See Section 7.4 Cultural Heritage Management for more information.

4.7 Heritage Designation and Historic Buildings

The Ontario Heritage Act enables municipalities to protect and manage Ontario’s cultural heritage resources. Part IV of the Act provides for municipal designation of individual properties as having cultural heritage value. Properties are designated by a municipal by-law, with reasons for designation or a description of heritage attributes which must be retained to conserve the cultural heritage value. Heritage property designation serves to: recognize the importance of a property to the community; identify and protect the property’s cultural heritage value; encourage good stewardship and conservation; and promote knowledge and understanding about the property and the development of the community.

There are no heritage designations for the conservation area buildings or land.

The City of Hamilton Cultural Heritage Resources Inventory notes the following properties near the conservation area of heritage designation, historic value, or heritage interest.

.1 Spera House, 228 Ridge Road

The following information is excerpted from the historic designation for the Spera House:

“The Spera family has long been associated with the Saltfleet and Stoney Creek area. The land upon which the Spera House now stands may have been the site of the original Adam Green log house where Billy the Scout, hero of the Battle of Stoney Creek, was born.....The 1859 map shows Henry Spera, son of Henry and Barbara, as land owner. William, and perhaps John Spera, built the house that now stands on site, circa 1874. The infant Arthur Harris Spera was brought to the house at that time when he was only three days old. He later planted the orchard, known as Montmorency Farm, because it produced Montmorency cherries. It was at the time the largest cherry farm in the area producing 75 to 100 tons of cherries annually as well as plums, grapes and pears...The two-storey Gothic Revival “Ontario Farmhouse” in the vernacular is clad with horizontal wood siding. The gable over the main entrance partially encloses a window with a circular head. This shape is unusual.”

The following buildings near DPCA are also recognized by the City of Hamilton for heritage designation, historic value, or heritage interest:

- ◆ 30 Ridge Road, Billy Green House, circa 1820, designated

- ◆ 174 Ridge Road circa 1880
- ◆ 136 Ridge Road circa 1890
- ◆ 552 Ridge Road, Erland Lee (Museum) Home, circa 1801, designated
- ◆ 77 King Street West, Battlefield House, Park and Museum, circa 1796, designated

4.8 Natural Areas

Devil's Punchbowl natural areas include Environmentally Significant and Sensitive Areas (ESA's), Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), Significant Woodlands, Escarpment, Significant Earth Science Features, watercourses and springs, and ecological function. DPCA contains physical features, flora and fauna of significance along with former agricultural lands, meadows, waterfalls and watercourses, and recreational trails above and below the Escarpment. The Escarpment forest is a rich system with a diversity of ground flora and shrubs. A wide variety of bird species use this area for breeding and migration. The talus and cliff communities are provincially rare and occur throughout this conservation area.

All future development from this Master Plan is to follow the Master Plan Zone guidelines outlined in Section 3.6 and the natural areas recommendations noted in Section 5.15.



5.0 NATURAL AREAS INVENTORY

5.1 Physiography and Topography

The Devil's Punchbowl is the product of water erosion, dating from at least 16,000 years ago. It exhibits one of the largest and most complete vertical natural exposures of Silurian stratigraphy along the Escarpment. Vast quantities of water released by melting glaciers formed huge streams that etched the landscape. Stoney Creek, plunging over the Escarpment, has eroded the soft un-resistant rocks near the base of the Escarpment causing undercutting of the gorge.

The bedrock and soils at Devil's Punchbowl are as follows:

.1 Main Plunge Pool Exposure

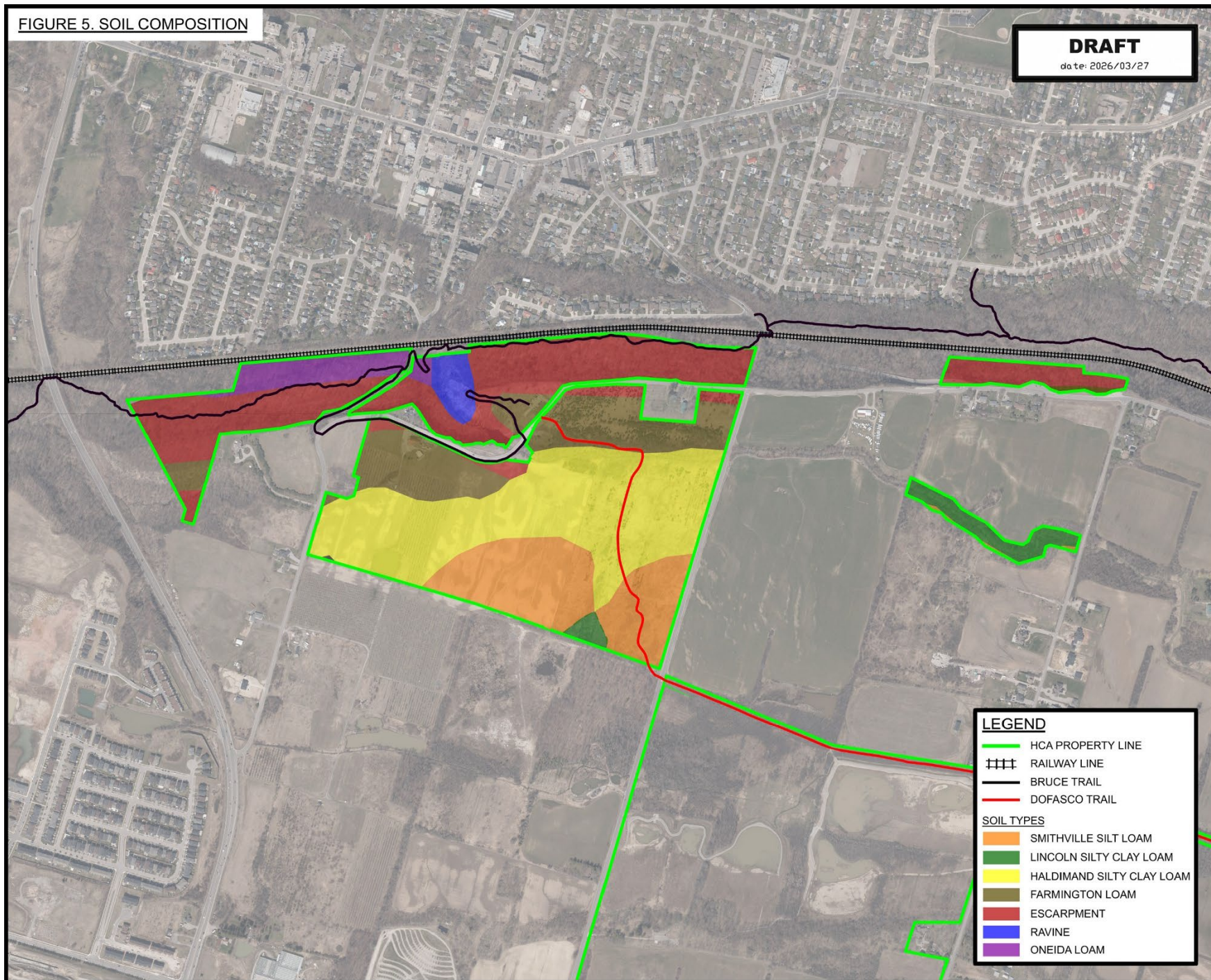
Lockport Formation:	Goat Island Member – Ancaster chert beds; Gasport Member – crinoidal dolomite.
Decew Formation:	Conchoidally weathered dolomites
Rochester Formation:	Dolomitic shale
Irondequoit Formation:	Crinoidal dolomitic limestone
Reynales Formation:	Dolomite with thin shale partings
Thorold Formation:	Greenish sandstone and shale
Grimsby Formation:	Red shale and sandstone
Cabot Head Formation:	Grey shale (most southeasterly exposure)

.2 Lower Cataract Exposure

Manitoulin Formation:	Shaley dolomite (most southeasterly exposure)
Whirlpool Formation:	Cross-bedded sandstone
Queenston Formation:	Red shale



FIGURE 5. SOIL COMPOSITION



SOIL COMPOSITION
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTER PLAN

DATE: 2026/03/27

5.2 Soil Composition

See Figure 5. Soil Composition for more information.

.1 Haldimand Series

Included are the imperfectly drained, grayish clay soils. The grayish-brown parent materials are relatively impermeable to water and very sticky when wet. The surface soils consist of up to 30cm of brown silt loam overlying the heavier material. These soils are most suited to the production of hay, pasture and spring grains. However, on occasion, the land may be suitable for more productive forms of agriculture such as orchard production.

.2 Smithville Series

Moderately well-drained, grayish clay till soils overlain by lacustrine silt loam characterize the Smithville series. The depth of silt loam over the clay materials ranges from 30cm to 50cm. These soils are the most productive for growing fruit trees. The gently sloping topography and silt loam surface allow excess water to drain away. Drainage may be temporarily impeded in level areas, resulting in periodic damage to certain crops.

.3 Stoney Creek Series

Topsoil consisting of brown to dark silty clay with organics is evident throughout the creek. The thickness of this stratum generally ranges between 15cm to 300cm. A thin stratum of brown till measuring approximately 1.5m in depth underlies the topsoil. Gravel and cobbles are occasionally present in the topsoil.

The very steep slope of the Niagara Escarpment provides sufficient relief for stream erosion to expose all of the above formations. This site contains the most southerly natural exposures of the Manitoulin and Cabot Head formations. The latter is the northern equivalent of the Power Glen sandstones and shales which continue east and south of Stoney Creek.

Most of the geological units exposed at Devil's Punchbowl are typical of those units occurring throughout the Niagara Peninsula.

.4 Escarpment Face Soils

The soils of the Escarpment face are generally non-arable and have been poorly mapped. However, three broad patterns generally occur and are summarized as follows:

- A very stony boulder scree soil with a slight finer matrix on the talus slopes.
- A rolling loamy soil with scattered boulders along the middle and lower slopes.
- A rather shallow, poorly drained fine soil derived from the shales along the bedrock.

.5 Tableland Soils

Soils above the Escarpment have been mapped by the Ontario Department of Agriculture (1965) and consist of the following in addition to the series mentioned previously:

- Farmington Series: The Farmington series includes well-drained, shallow soils with a depth of soil over bedrock that does not exceed 30cm. Most of these soils occur on level or very gently sloping areas where the topography is controlled by the underlying flat bedded dolomite bedrock. These soils usually do not promote extensive agriculture due to numerous stones and bedrock outcroppings as well as summer moisture deficiency.

5.3 Hydrology and Surface Drainage

Drainage patterns in the study area have been heavily altered by the agricultural land use but still flow through the landscape. This study area is divided between two different subwatersheds of the Stoney Creek watershed. The moraine is split into two lobes which affects the drainage pattern. All the watercourses are intermittent or ephemeral and have limited substrate sorting. See Figure 6. Subwatersheds for more information.

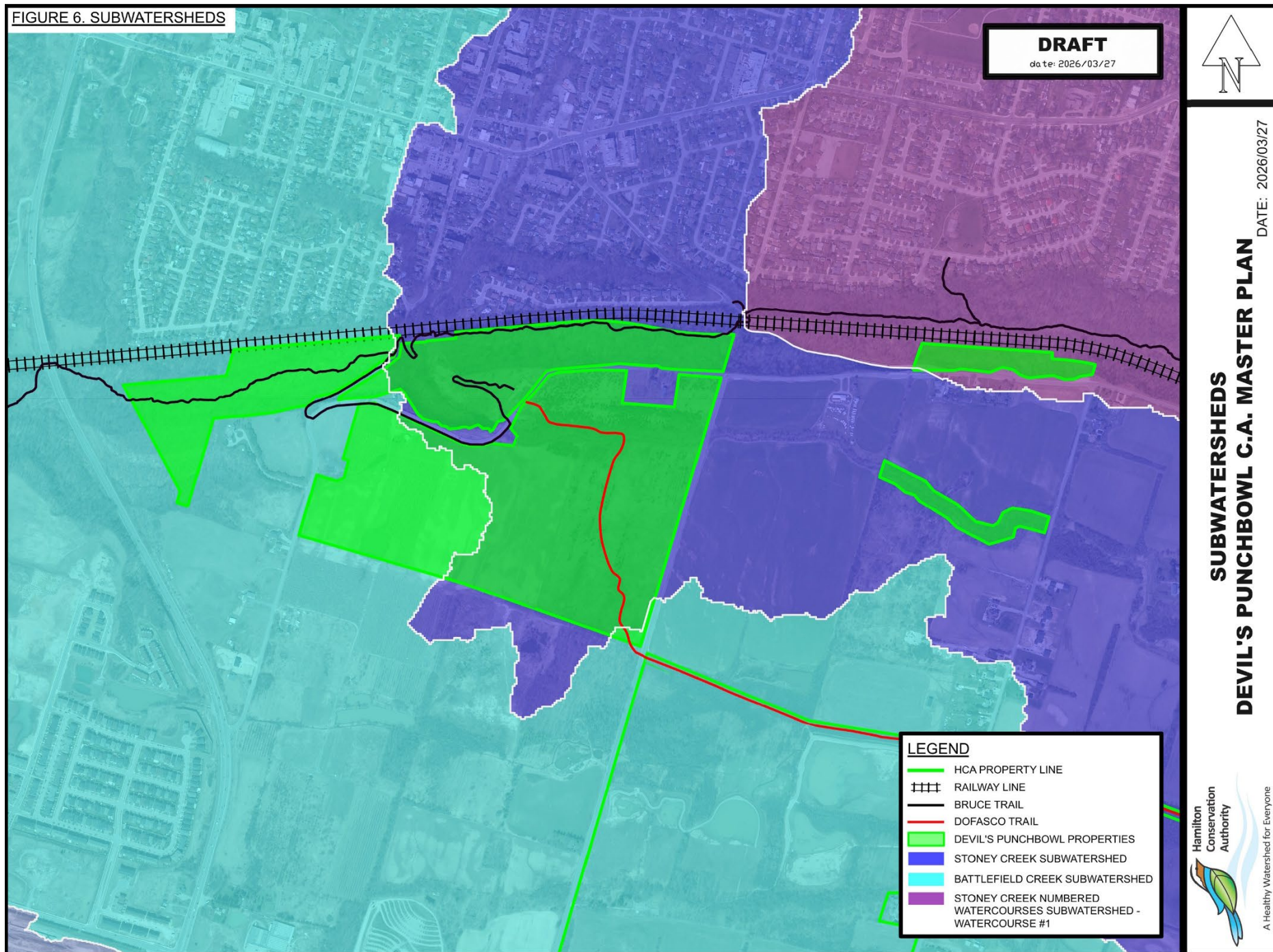
The Battlefield Creek headwaters come from the northwestern edge of the southern moraine lobe and generally flow in a north west direction toward the centennial road cut in the Escarpment. The majority of the flows bypass the Devil's Punchbowl CA to the south but there is a small portion of the western portion of the CA property that drains west towards Battlefield Creek at Centennial Road before the combined Battlefield creek flows over the Niagara Escarpment. Battlefield Creek joins Stoney Creek below the Escarpment about 4.5 km downstream before Stoney Creek flows directly into Lake Ontario after about another 1.5 km.

Hydrology on the site will be altered with the creation of the SC-5 wetland complex. For more information on this wetland creation project, see Section 6.2 on page 55.

.1 Stoney Creek

Stoney Creek has two main source branches. The first begins south of the Battlefield Creek headwaters along the southern side of the southern moraine lobe. It flows east and then turns north entering the gap between the lobes in the area of Green Mountain Rd. From there, it confluences with the flows coming west out of the Provincially significant Vinemount Swamp branch just upstream of Tapleystown Road. From here Stoney Creek flows northwest through the lobe gap picking up a small amount of flow from the northern lobe before entering this conservation area through First Road East. It continues east until falling over the Niagara Escarpment at the Devil's Punchbowl. Stoney Creek below the Escarpment flows north for about 4.5 km before being joined with Battlefield Creek. Stoney Creek flows directly into Lake Ontario after about another 1.5 km.

FIGURE 6. SUBWATERSHEDS



5.4 Biophysical Inventory Methodology

Biophysical inventories completed by HCA staff at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area were mainly restricted to Ecological Land Classification and breeding bird surveys in 2021 and 2022. Ecological Land Classification was completed across the property and is shown in Appendix 1 – Map 1. Species lists are included in Appendix 5.

Table 7. Summary of Ecological Field Studies

Survey Type	Dates	
	Year	Day(s)
Floral Inventory	2020, 2021	Concurrent with ELC surveys
Breeding Bird Surveys	2021, 2022	June 7 2021, June 17 2022
Ecological Land Classification (ELC)	2021, 2022	May 6 and Sept 10 2021, June 17 and August 29 2022.
Incidental Wildlife	Recorded when encountered during all visits – 2021 and 2022	
Aquatic Surveys	Summers 2000, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2018, 2021	

5.5 Ecological Land Classification

The Ecological Land Classification (ELC) system for Ontario was used to describe the vegetation communities at DPCA. Staff conducted multi-season inventories of the property in 2021-2022. Details on the canopy, sub canopy, shrub and ground layers of each vegetation community were recorded. Vegetation community boundaries were determined using air photo analysis and further refined in the field.

5.6 Flora/Botanical Inventory

Botanical inventories were conducted as a part of the Ecological Land Classification surveys of the property. Specific floristic inventories occurred in the fall of 2022 to further identify asters and goldenrod species as they bloom late in the season. An additional survey in the spring of 2021 was conducted for spring ephemerals (early spring flowers). Species in this group die back by mid-summer and therefore are missed when spring surveys are not conducted. Species nomenclature is based on the Natural Heritage Information Centre (NHIC) Plant Species list (updated yearly). Species and community ranks are determined provincially by the Ministry of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Information Centre Database (S ranks) and locally via the Hamilton Natural Areas Inventory (Schwetz 2014).

5.7 Fauna Inventory

No specific surveys were conducted for wildlife on the property. All wildlife encounters were incidental while conducting other aspects of field work. These surveys involved general coverage recording all species observations and signs (e.g. tracks/trails, scat, and burrows, dens, browse

and vocalizations). Background data including older survey material was used to develop a list of butterflies, mammals and dragonflies that have been recorded by naturalists at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area over the last 10 years. A summary of the findings is in Appendix 5. Frog call surveys were not conducted on this property due to the lack of suitable habitat.

5.8 Breeding Bird Surveys

Breeding bird surveys were conducted on June 7, 2021 and June 17, 2022. Surveys followed the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas (Cadman 2010) methodology.

5.9 Ecological Land Classification Results

Field surveys were conducted on May 6 and September 10, 2021, June 17 and August 29, 2022. The subject property was delineated into 10 vegetation communities. Community classifications are on Map 1. Ecological Land Classification in Appendix 1.

5.10 Flora/Botanical Inventory Results

Over the course of multiple survey dates including ELC surveys, staff identified 177 species of plants. Of these, 123 are considered native plant species (69%) while 54 are non-native species (31%) and there were an additional 21 species identified to genus only. The Hamilton NAI (HCA 2014) indicates that there are 1496 species of plants in the Hamilton-Wentworth jurisdiction. Plant species at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area represent 12% of that regional flora.

The Floristic Quality Index (FQI) and the Native Mean Coefficient of Conservatism (CC) have been calculated for the entire property. The CC is a measure of the species specificity of habitat requirements, with a coefficient of 0 indicating a plant tolerant of a wide range of conditions and 10 indicating a plant that has the most specific habitat requirements. FQI is a measure of vegetation quality and is based on both the habitat fidelity of each species and species richness. The FQI for Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area is 46.83 and the mean CC value is 4.22. These are considered moderate to high for FQI and mean CC.

This is likely reflective of the rural nature of this conservation area. See Table 8 for more information.



American Kestrel

Table 8. Floristic Summary & Assessment

FLORISTIC SUMMARY & ASSESSMENT		
<i>Species Diversity</i>		
	Total Species:	198
	Total ID to species level	177
	Native Species:	123
	Exotic Species	54
	Species ID'd to sp. only	21
	Percentage native species	69%
	Percentage non-native species	31%
	Total Taxa in Region (NAI 2014)	1496
	% Regional Taxa Recorded	11.8%
<i>Co-efficient of Conservatism and Floral Quality Index</i>		
<i>Co-efficient of Conservatism (CC) (average)</i>		4.22
<i>CC 0 to 3</i>	<i>lowest sensitivity</i>	40
<i>CC 4 to 6</i>	<i>moderate sensitivity</i>	73
<i>CC 7 to 8</i>	<i>high sensitivity</i>	13
<i>CC 9 to 10</i>	<i>highest sensitivity</i>	0
<i>Floral Quality Index (FQI)</i>		46.83

5.11 Fauna Inventory Results

.1 Breeding Birds

Breeding bird surveys were conducted at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area in the spring of 2021 and 2022.

These surveys identify 31 species of birds likely breeding within the conservation area. Background data was also collected from the following sources, iNaturalist, Natural Areas Inventory, and eBird. Surveys in 2012 for the NAI identified an additional 48 bird species while eBird and iNaturalist identified an additional 45 species. These were mainly composed of spring and fall migratory species and hawks and owls. These combined data sources have identified 124 species in the area. Of these 11 are provincial or federal species at risk, 21 are locally rare and 35 are locally uncommon.

.2 Butterflies and Dragonflies

Surveys completed for the Natural Areas Inventory (2012) identified 29 species of Lepidoptera, as well as 10 species of Odonata. An additional two species of Lepidoptera were recorded in the area by incidental observation and iNaturalist observations. The Monarch is provincially at risk while three others are locally uncommon (Compton Tortoiseshell, Silvery Blue and Common Sootywing) and one locally rare butterfly species (White Admiral) were recorded.

.3 Mammals

All incidental wildlife encounters were recorded while conducting other aspects of field work. Mammal sightings were also recorded during historical surveys conducted for the Natural Areas Inventory. These surveys involved general coverage recording all species observations and signs (e.g. tracks/trails, scat, burrows, dens, browse, and vocalizations). Thirteen mammal species have been recorded for this area by staff and during the Natural Areas Inventory. iNaturalist sightings identified one additional mammal species, the muskrat. All mammal species recorded are common to the area.

.4 Herpetofauna

The only species of herpetofauna seen by staff in this area was the Northern Leopard Frog. iNaturalist observations in this area identified three other species; the American Toad, Eastern Gartersnake, and Eastern Red-backed Salamander. No rare species were encountered.

5.12 Aquatic Inventory

.1 Stoney Creek

HCA has a long-term Aquatic monitoring station located in Stoney Creek in the conservation area. Records date back to the 2000's. Stoney Creek in this area is intermittent in nature and the soils are shallow. The portion directly upstream of the waterfall flows directly over bedrock. The harsh conditions in this reach of Stoney Creek are further represented by the fish species captured; see Table 9.

Most sampling years the creek is dry, so no fish are present, and when they are captured, only two species have been found. They are tolerant to intermediately tolerant species and indicate a coolwater thermal regime. The portion below the Escarpment is an even more harsh environment. From a safe ingress/egress perspective, HCA ecologists have avoided sampling in this reach. The rail line culvert at the northern end of the property would potentially create a barrier to fish movement up into this reach. Sampling may be required if there is proposed development in the bowl of the conservation area.



Brook Stickleback

Table 9. Fish Species Captured in this Area of Stoney Creek

Common Name	Scientific Name
Brook Stickleback	<i>Culaea inconstans</i>
Central Mudminnow	<i>Umbra lima</i>

.2 Tributary of Battlefield Creek

This tributary was not assessed at the time that other fieldwork was completed for this plan because access was not available. Assessment of this watercourse is planned for summer 2026 prior to the completion of the design of the SC-5 wetland complex. Results will be included in a future update to this plan.

.3 Pond in South-West Corner

This pond was not assessed at the time that other fieldwork was completed for this plan because access was not available. Assessment of this pond is planned for summer 2026 prior to the completion of the design of the SC-5 wetland complex. Results will be included in a future update to this plan.

5.13 Significant Ecological Features

.1 Significant Woodlands

All of the properties within the Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area are considered by the City of Hamilton to be significant woodland, excluding the Punchbowl Market property. Significant woodlands for the City of Hamilton mean an area which is ecologically important in terms of features (species composition, age of trees and stand history) and function (contributes to the broader landscape because of its location, size or the amount of forest cover in the planning area) (City of Hamilton, 2019).

.2 Environmentally Sensitive Area

The Devil's Punchbowl Escarpment Environmentally Significant Area (ESA) includes the entire conservation area, excluding the Punchbowl Market property and the small parcel of land east of the market property. The ESA was designated because it meets many of the 2003 ESA criteria including:

1. Significant Earth Science Feature
 - a. The area encompasses regionally significant landforms
2. Significant Ecological Function
 - a. The area contains significant species
 - b. The area contains rare biotic communities
 - c. The Riparian area serves as a link between natural areas along the Niagara Escarpment
 - d. The area is representative of the natural features of the Niagara Peninsula section of the Niagara Escarpment

ESA area protected within the rural official plan for the City of Hamilton. No new development or site alterations are permitted within or adjacent to ESA's unless it can be shown, through an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), that there will be no negative impacts on the ecological features or functions of the ESA.

.3 Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

The entire conservation area, excluding the Punchbowl Market property, is part of the provincially significant Devil's Punchbowl Earth Science ANSI and Niagara Escarpment Section Life Science ANSI.

5.14 Biophysical Inventory – Analysis

.1 Species at Risk and Locally Rare Species

.1 Significant Flora

Butternut, federally and provincially endangered, was the only plant species considered provincially rare that was found in DPCA. There were only a few still surviving the Butternut canker. Of the plant species recorded on the subject lands through the 2020 and 2021 field surveys, two plant species were found to be locally rare and two to be locally uncommon by the City of Hamilton. Riverbank Wild Rye and Canada Rye are locally rare. Thin-leaved sedge is locally uncommon in the area. All of these species are considered provincially secure (G5/S5 or G4/S4).

.2 Significant Fauna

The following eight species recorded at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area, listed in Table 10 are considered species at risk either federally (SARA) or provincially (SCA). These species were recorded within DPCA through different data sources all observed during the breeding season except Olive-sided flycatcher which was noted on migration.

Table 10. Federal and Provincial Species at Risk (END and THR)

Common name	Scientific name	SARA status (Schedule 1)	SCA status	Documented
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	THR	THR	NAI
Bobolink	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>	THR	THR	NAI
Eastern Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella magna</i>	THR	THR	NAI
Olive-sided Flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	THR	SC	eBird
Wood Thrush	<i>Hylocichla mustelina</i>	THR	SC	NAI
Bank swallow	<i>Riparia riparia</i>	THR	THR	NAI
Chimney swift	<i>Chaetura pelagica</i>	THR	THR	NAI
Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	END	SC	2022

The Barn Swallow has been reassessed recently (2020) by the federal Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) to Special Concern. Its status has not been changed on Schedule 1 of SARA as of the writing of this Master Plan so they will be treated as SAR in this document. Adult Monarchs have been observed throughout the fields and open portions of the forested habitats of this conservation area. This species is considered a species of "Special Concern" on the Species at risk in Ontario (SARO) list. This means that the species lives in the wild in Ontario but may become threatened or endangered due to a combination of threats and biological characteristics. In 2016 COSEWIC recommended that this species be up listed to endangered on Schedule 1 of the federal SAR listing. This has not occurred. Many of

these species at risk noted above are from background documents and their exact location within the conservation area is not known. It is likely that the Chimney Swift, Barn and Bank Swallows were seen flying over this conservation area. The Olive-sided Flycatcher is a migratory species. While the Eastern Meadowlark and Bobolink may have been recorded in the large fields south of Ridge Road. Although not surveyed for it is likely that species at risk bats use this conservation area for parts of their life cycle.



Monarch Butterfly

Threatened and endangered species habitat is protected under the Species Conservation Act (provincially) and the Species at Risk Act (federally). Permits maybe required for development within the habitat for threatened and endangered species.

There were also a large number of locally rare (24) and uncommon (39) species recorded during field surveys and found in the background research (Table 11). These include birds, plants and butterflies and are mostly concentrated within the forested sections of the Niagara Escarpment.

Table 11. Locally Rare and Uncommon Species

Common Name	Scientific name	City of Hamilton Status
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<u><i>Setophaga coronata</i></u>	rare
Carolina Wren	<u><i>Thryothorus ludovicianus</i></u>	rare
Ring-necked Pheasant	<u><i>Phasianus colchicus</i></u>	rare
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	<u><i>Coccyzus americanus</i></u>	rare
Blackburnian Warbler	<u><i>Setophaga fusca</i></u>	rare
Black-throated Green Warbler	<u><i>Setophaga virens</i></u>	rare
Blue-headed Vireo	<u><i>Vireo solitarius</i></u>	rare
Broad-winged Hawk	<u><i>Buteo platypterus</i></u>	rare
Common Raven	<u><i>Corvus corax</i></u>	rare
Golden-crowned Kinglet	<u><i>Regulus satrapa</i></u>	rare
Long-eared Owl	<u><i>Asio otus</i></u>	rare
Magnolia Warbler	<u><i>Setophaga magnolia</i></u>	rare
Osprey	<u><i>Pandion haliaetus</i></u>	rare
Clay-colored Sparrow	<u><i>Spizella pallida</i></u>	rare
Hooded Warbler	<u><i>Setophaga citrina</i></u>	rare
Merlin	<u><i>Falco columbarius</i></u>	rare
Northern Harrier	<u><i>Circus hudsonius</i></u>	rare
Red-shouldered Hawk	<u><i>Buteo lineatus</i></u>	rare
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<u><i>Accipiter striatus</i></u>	rare
Bald Eagle	<u><i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i></u>	rare

Peregrine Falcon	<u><i>Falco peregrinus</i></u>	rare
White Admiral	<u><i>Limenitis arthemis arthemis</i></u>	rare
Red-bellied Woodpecker	<u><i>Melanerpes carolinus</i></u>	Uncommon
Alder Flycatcher	<u><i>Empidonax alnorum</i></u>	Uncommon
Turkey Vulture	<u><i>Cathartes aura</i></u>	Uncommon
Chestnut-sided Warbler	<u><i>Setophaga pensylvanica</i></u>	Uncommon
Common Name	Scientific name	City of Hamilton Status
American Kestrel	<u><i>Falco sparverius</i></u>	Uncommon
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	<u><i>Polioptila caerulea</i></u>	Uncommon
Herring Gull	<u><i>Larus argentatus</i></u>	Uncommon
Orchard Oriole	<u><i>Icterus spurius</i></u>	Uncommon
American Redstart	<u><i>Setophaga ruticilla</i></u>	Uncommon
Hairy Woodpecker	<u><i>Dryobates villosus</i></u>	Uncommon
Least Flycatcher	<u><i>Empidonax minimus</i></u>	Uncommon
Purple Martin	<u><i>Progne subis</i></u>	Uncommon
Scarlet Tanager	<u><i>Piranga olivacea</i></u>	Uncommon
Winter Wren	<u><i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i></u>	Uncommon
White-throated Sparrow	<u><i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i></u>	Uncommon
Black-and-white Warbler	<u><i>Mniotilta varia</i></u>	Uncommon
Black-billed Cuckoo	<u><i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i></u>	Uncommon
Brown Creeper	<u><i>Certhia americana</i></u>	Uncommon
Eastern Phoebe	<u><i>Sayornis phoebe</i></u>	Uncommon
Great Blue Heron	<u><i>Ardea herodias</i></u>	Uncommon
Nashville Warbler	<u><i>Oreothlypis ruficapilla</i></u>	Uncommon
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<u><i>Sitta canadensis</i></u>	Uncommon
Wood Duck	<u><i>Aix sponsa</i></u>	Uncommon
Vesper Sparrow	<u><i>Poocetes gramineus</i></u>	Uncommon
Mourning Warbler	<u><i>Geothlypis philadelphia</i></u>	Uncommon
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	<u><i>Archilochus colubris</i></u>	Uncommon
Northern Mockingbird	<u><i>Mimus polyglottos</i></u>	Uncommon
Red-tailed Hawk	<u><i>Buteo jamaicensis</i></u>	Uncommon
Eastern Bluebird	<u><i>Sialia sialis</i></u>	Uncommon
Cooper's Hawk	<u><i>Accipiter cooperii</i></u>	Uncommon
Wood Thrush	<u><i>Hylocichla mustelina</i></u>	Uncommon
Eastern Meadowlark	<u><i>Sturnella magna</i></u>	Uncommon
Bank Swallow	<u><i>Riparia riparia</i></u>	Uncommon
Chimney Swift	<u><i>Chaetura pelagica</i></u>	Uncommon
Bobolink	<u><i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i></u>	Uncommon
Compton Tortoiseshell	<u><i>Nymphalis l-album</i></u>	Uncommon
Common Sootywing	<u><i>Pholisora catullus</i></u>	Uncommon
Silvery Blue	<u><i>Glaucopsyche lygdamus</i></u>	Uncommon
Thin-leaved Sedge	<u><i>Carex cephaloidea</i></u>	Rare
Canada Wildrye	<u><i>Elymus canadensis</i></u>	Rare
Eastern Riverbank Wildrye	<u><i>Elymus riparius</i></u>	Uncommon

.2 Significant Wildlife Habitat

The Significant Wildlife Habitat Technical manual (Ontario 2000) along with the Ecoregional criteria tables for Ecoregion 7E (OMNR 2015) were used to determine and define significant wildlife habitat (SWH) on the DPCA property. Significant wildlife habitat includes broad categories of habitats for flora and fauna. SWH has been identified under the provincial policy statement for Ontario. No new development is allowed within identified portions of significant wildlife habitat unless there will be no negative impact to the form and function of this habitat type. The broad categories for significant wildlife habitat include seasonal concentration areas of animals, rare vegetation communities or specialized habitat for wildlife, habitats for species of conservation concern and animal movement corridors.

Seasonal concentration areas of animals are areas where wildlife species occur annually in aggregations (groups) at certain times of the year (Ontario 2015). This can include single species concentrations or aggregations of multiple species.

.1 Land Bird Migratory Stopover Areas

These are areas with woodlots or forests within 5km of either Lake Ontario or Lake Erie that migratory birds, especially song birds, use as rest stops before or after crossing the great lakes during migration. Land bird migration should be studied in woodlots 2-5 ha in size where woodlots are rare in this area of shoreline (Ontario 2015). Studies are needed to confirm the use of the habitat by > 200 birds/day and with > 35 species with at least 10 bird species recorded on at least five different survey dates (Ontario 2015). Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area is within 5km of Lake Ontario. Staff did not undertake migratory land bird studies on these properties. It is assumed due to the position on the landscape, both the proximity to Lake Ontario and being some of the remaining forest stands that this area would function as migratory bird habitat. Migration occurs in the spring from April – May and then again from late July – October.

.2 Bat Hibernation and Maternity Colonies

Although not surveyed, suitable habitat exists in this conservation area for both bat hibernation caves and maternity colonies. There are cliffs and talus within this conservation area that may support bat hibernation. There are also a number of snag trees within the forested communities that may support bat maternity colonies.

.3 Reptile Hibernaculum

This is a difficult type of significant wildlife habitat due to the cryptic nature of snakes. Fire fighters that practice rope rescues along the cliff face at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area reportedly regularly encounter snakes. It is assumed from this correspondence that there are hibernacula in the cliff face. The steep terrain prevented staff from confirming these reports.

.3 Rare Vegetation Communities

Rare Vegetation Communities include areas that contain a provincially rare vegetation community, as defined by the NHIC and/or areas that contain a vegetation community that is rare within the planning area.

.1 Cliff and Talus Slopes

Cliff and talus slopes occur throughout this conservation area. Cliffs are any vertical or near vertical rock that is greater than 3m in height. While talus slopes are rock rubble at the base of the cliff. They are rare in the province and support sensitive vegetation communities.

.4 Specialized Habitats of Wildlife

This is a community or diversity-based category as many wildlife require large areas of suitable habitat for successful breeding. The largest and least fragmented habitats within the planning area will support the most significant wildlife populations.

.1 Seeps and Springs

These are areas where groundwater comes to the surface and are often found within forested areas. The criteria include the presence of two or more seeps or springs. There are many springs along the talus slope within Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. These areas are often used as water sources for wildlife in the winter when other water sources are frozen.

.5 Habitat for species of Conservation Concern

Habitat for species of conservation concern includes wildlife that are listed provincially as special concern or are rare and declining. Table 12 provides a list of the 5 species located within the Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. This list includes migratory species such as the Rusty Blackbird and species seen flying over the conservation area such as Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon. Eastern Wood Pewee was noted in several locations within the forested section of the Niagara Escarpment while the Monarch was seen in canopy gaps and small forest openings.

Table 12. Species of Conservation Concern

Common name	Scientific name	SARA status (Schedule 1)	SCA status	Documented
Eastern Wood-Pewee	<i>Contopus virens</i>	SC	SC	2022
Bald Eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	NAR	SC	eBird
Rusty Blackbird	<i>Euphagus carolinus</i>	SC	SC	eBird
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	NAR	SC	eBird
Monarch	<i>Danaus plexippus</i>	END	SC	2022

.6 Invasive Species at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area

The species detailed below are a threat to the biodiversity and conservation values at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. Trails throughout the conservation area are movement pathways for a number of invasive species. The following section details the invasive species that occur at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. Recommendations for prioritization for each species are detailed here.

.1 Common Buckthorn

Common buckthorn is a small tree or shrub that was introduced to Ontario from Eurasia. It was widely planted in farm hedgerows and fencerows as a wind break. It can survive in a wide

range of conditions making it very good at invading a variety of habitats (Anderson, 2012a). Birds and small mammals feed on the berries of this plant, which has caused it to spread in the conservation area. Moderate numbers of Common buckthorn are growing in the upper punchbowl field as well as the border of Ridge Road between First Road and Second Road East. While the spread of this species is currently limited, an effort will need to be undertaken to prevent future dominance of this species within the area. The focus should begin where buckthorns are sparse to eradicate the population and then on all fruiting female trees in denser locations. These fruiting females can be treated with herbicides and the remaining smaller stems removed through volunteer events and workdays. The larger tree-like shrubs may require the cut-stump method of removal.

.2 Phragmites

This species of common reed from Eurasia is a perennial grass. It is not clear how it was transported to North America. It is an aggressive plant that spreads quickly and out competes other native species in wetland habitats (Nichols, 2020). It forms large monocultures that decrease plant biodiversity and create poor habitat for wildlife. It is a top priority species to be controlled at HCA. There is a patch of phragmites currently growing on the West side of First Road East in the upper punchbowl. An effective control strategy would likely include pesticide application during the dry period for this community (September/ October) (Nichols, 2020).

.3 Spotted Knapweed

Knapweeds were introduced to North America over 100 years ago in contaminated agricultural seed and soil in discarded ballast water. It spreads easily by seed (Sherman and Powell, 2017). This species reduces habitat for other meadow species as it becomes dominant. At present, there are 5 small patches of spotted knapweed in the upper punchbowl.

This species forms a tap root and can be controlled with cultivation to a depth of 18 cm or hand removal. Persistent hand removal (pulling or digging) can control this species if the upper 7.5 cm of the crown portion of the plant are removed before it produces seeds (Sherman and Powell, 2017). A targeted mowing in early August could prevent seed production and keep the Knapweed from spreading further. Removal along the upper punchbowl trail would be a priority to keep the species from spreading to other areas along the Dofasco 2000 Trail. Finally, Knapweed can be shaded out, tree planting in some areas where this plant is starting to dominate could help reduce its presence.

.4 Garlic Mustard

This species was introduced in the 1800's from Europe as an edible herb for early pioneers in the spring. It is a biennial plant that produces seed in its second year (Anderson, 2012b). It can grow in a variety of conditions making it a very good invader in a variety of habitats. It easily outcompetes other native ground cover and can change the soil environments to favour its growth over others. Garlic Mustard can be found growing in patches within the upper and lower punchbowl. The majority of the garlic mustard growing in the lower punchbowl is on the lower end of the slope between the Bruce Trail and the railway. In the upper punchbowl, it can be found at the northern end of the property. Removal of this species is fairly straight forward with hand picking between April and June, before the plant goes to seed. With a dedicated

effort over 5 years removal of this species can be achieved. This is a high priority because it is easy to remove and there is limited extent of this species in the conservation area.

.5 Cut – leaved Teasel

A perennial plant that occurs in a variety of habitats including meadows, waste areas and roadsides. Teasel has high seed production and can spread and take over areas. In its first year it is a large rosette and by its second year can grow up to 2m high, shading out other meadow species (MDA, n.d.). It can be found in the upper punchbowl field in low numbers. Annual cutting of these plants can occur in the spring to damage the taproot since its full removal can be difficult (MDA, n.d.). Alternatively, the plant responds well to annual herbicide treatment during the main growing season. Eradication can be achieved in 3-5 years when the seed bank is depleted.

.6 European Privet

European privet is a highly invasive ornamental shrub or small tree that is native to Europe, western Asia and northern Africa. It was introduced in the early 1800s, and has since colonized a range of different habitats due to its tolerance for a variety of soil types and environmental conditions (CABI, 2021). Plants may produce 10,000 fruits per tree, which are then spread by wildlife to seed in different areas. European Privet also reproduces vegetatively by its roots, so care must be taken not to spread root fragments during control efforts (CABI, 2021). Small shrubs in newly established populations can be pulled or dug up and properly disposed of. Larger populations require foliar sprays of herbicide mixed with a surfactant between August and December. Larger trees which are difficult to foliar spray can receive a basal spray (Miller, 2003). A small amount of European privet is growing in the lower punchbowl. Prioritize treatment of privet alongside that of Common buckthorn.

.7 Greater Celandine

Greater celandine was introduced to North America from Europe in the 1600s as a medicinal plant (Tree Canada, n.d.). It can grow in dense stands shading out any native diversity, and spreads readily by seed with the help of ants (Invasive Plant Atlas, n.d.). There is currently greater celandine growing along much of the trails in the Lower Punchbowl. A toxic sap is released when any part of the plant is crushed that could be irritating to the skin and eyes. Therefore, if manual removal is chosen care should be taken by staff to wear the appropriate personal protective equipment. It is likely plants will readily grow again from root fragments using manual removal, however this method could be used to limit the spread. In order to fully eradicate the species, it is likely the application of a systemic herbicide will be required to attack the roots of the plant (late fall or early spring) (Tree Canada, n.d.).

.8 Honeysuckle sp.

There are four main species of invasive honeysuckle in Ontario which can be difficult to identify due to their tendency towards hybridization, and the lack of identifying characteristics (flowers and fruits) throughout much of the field season (Tassie and Sherman, 2014). These plants have been brought to North America for three centuries from Europe and Asia as an ornamental. Invasive honeysuckles can rapidly reproduce, grow quickly, and outcompete

beneficial vegetation including our native honeysuckles. Their fruits are attractive to birds and mammals, which aid their spread. Within Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area there is a small population of the invasive honeysuckle, *Lonicera tatarica*, in the upper punchbowl field. There is also a small number of unidentified honeysuckles in the lower punchbowl. While species identification is easiest in the spring during bloom, hand pulling and weed wrenching smaller shrubs should be conducted in the fall as not to disturb the growth of any nearby spring ephemerals. Cutting and girdling larger shrubs should always be paired with the application of herbicide to newly exposed woody material to prevent excessive suckering come next season. For large areas, a foliar spray of chemical herbicide can be applied between August and October. It is likely control multiple years (Tassie and Sherman, 2014). Identification of the unknown honeysuckles should occur first in the spring to ensure only invasive honeysuckles are treated.

.9 Multiflora Rose

Multiflora rose is a large perennial shrub that was introduced to North America in the late 1700s for horticultural purposes and was widely promoted in the 20th century for a variety of uses (Warne, 2018). This plant grows quickly, can self pollinate, produce up to 500,000 seeds a year or more, and forms dense thorny thickets rapidly crowding out native biodiversity. Seeds are widely spread through animal's consumption of the plant's fruits and can be viable in the seed bank for up to 20 years (Warne, 2018). There are a few seedlings located in the lower

punchbowl along the Bruce Trail, as well as a small population of larger shrubs in the upper punchbowl field. Hand pulling is an effective control method for seedlings, however larger shrubs will aggressively re-sprout if cut without removing the roots. Therefore, a weed wrench and/or shovels should be used to fully remove the plant. This is a labour-intensive solution and should prioritize small populations and sensitive areas. Alternatively, glyphosate-based chemical herbicide can be applied in late summer or early fall. A follow up-treatment may be required the following year, with ongoing monitoring to eliminate new seedlings (Warne, 2018).

.10 Periwinkle

Common Periwinkle is a small herbaceous ground cover that was introduced to North America in the 1700s as an ornamental due to its attractive purple flowers (Center for Invasive Species and Ecosystem Health, 2010). However, it has spread throughout forests creating thick mats that prevent tree seedlings and other native plants from growing. Small populations can be hand-pulled, whereas larger patches may require a foliar spray of chemical herbicide. These control measures will likely have to be repeated for multiple years to fully eradicate it. There is a couple small population of periwinkle growing in the lower punchbowl by the rail line.

.11 Oriental Bittersweet

Oriental bittersweet is a fast-growing vine native to East Asia that is popular in floral arrangements. It will wrap around native trees and shrubs until it overcrowds them and outcompetes them for light resources. Additionally, it is displacing native American Bittersweet through its high competitiveness (NRCS, n.d.). Oriental Bittersweet can be distinguished from native bittersweet through the positioning of the fruits it produces. However, these fruits are only present in the fall, which makes identification difficult for much of the season. There is

currently a small amount of bittersweet growing in the unofficial trails of the lower DPCA which needs to be identified before continuing with treatment.

If the unknown bittersweet is identified as the invasive variety, there are several options for control. Vines can be cut so the upper portion of the plant dies while the lower portion must be pulled from the ground. Vines can also receive a foliar spray of herbicide in October or November when the native host plants are dormant but oriental bittersweet still has living leaves. Alternatively, vines can be treated with herbicide using the cut stump method or basal bark method year-round (NRCS,n.d.).

.12 Common Burdock

Common burdock is a biennial plant that is native to Europe which presents as a large rosette in its first year, and grows multiple bur-like seed heads in its second year (USDA Forest Service, n.d.). The harmful effects of Common Burdock mainly pertain to agricultural settings, however due to its invasive nature it should be removed from the conservation area to promote native diversity. Common Burdock is growing along several sections of the trail in the lower punchbowl. Manual removal of this species is difficult due to the plant's large taproot that will sprout again if not fully removed. Therefore, the best management practice for common burdock at this site would be the application of chemical herbicide to rosettes before they go to seed in July (Van Vleet, 2013).

.13 Black Locust

Black Locust is a fast-growing species of tree native to the southeastern United States made popular to plant due to its adaptability and durability for woodworking (Warne, 2016). Black locust can readily invade dry areas with poor nutrient availability, giving it competitive advantage over many species. It does best in full sun and can be extremely problematic in early successional communities where it can quickly dominate the ecosystem before other plants have had a chance to establish. The large number of seeds produced by this tree are hearty, staying viable in the seed bank for decades. A well-established seed bank and the immense suckering make the control of this tree so difficult. This species occurs intermittently in the Punchbowl gorge. Chemical herbicide application is the recommended treatment for black locust. Any cutting without systemic herbicide application will result in prolific suckering. Smaller trees can be foliar or basal sprayed in late summer. Larger trees will require the cut stump, hack and squirt, or injection application methods. Any portions of the roots that remain viable after treatment will sucker, therefore treatment and monitoring will have to be completed for several years (Warne, 2016).

.14 Dame's Rocket

This Eurasian biennial wildflower was introduced to North America in the 1600s and has since invaded many moist woodlands and open spaces (Johnson, 2010). The plant spreads through abundant seed production during its three month long blooming period. A small amount of Dame's Rocket can be found growing in the upper punchbowl. Dame's Rocket can be pulled relatively easily from moist soil before the seeds mature in the spring. Alternatively, chemical herbicide can be applied in the late fall to rosettes over the course of a few years until the seed bank is depreciated (Johnson, 2010).

.15 Reed Canary Grass

The Reed Canary Grass that has become invasive in Ontario is thought to be a Eurasian cultivar brought to Ontario as forage for cattle (Anderson 2012c). It displaces native wetland plants and can decrease biodiversity. This plant can grow in a range of habitats and spreads quickly in wetlands. It spreads by both seeds and rhizomes. Several patches of Reed Canary Grass can be found throughout the upper punchbowl. This species can be shaded out through the addition of trees and shrubs to invaded areas. Mulch can also be used to suppress the growth of reed canary grass. Alternatively, a chemical herbicide can be applied in the early growing season (Anderson, 2012c).

5.15 Natural Areas Recommendations

HCA is a supporting partner of the City of Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan and a supporter of the Province of Ontario Biodiversity Action Plan. One method that helps us to protect and strengthen biodiversity on our properties is the development of natural areas recommendations in our master and management plans. The natural habitat features at DPCA have been evaluated for restoration opportunities and invasive species removals. Restoration in certain areas can assist with buffering the natural habitats from the impacts of moderate to high levels of visitor use.

Biodiversity conservation targets are a limited number of species or ecological communities that ecologists select to represent the biodiversity of a protected area, and that therefore serve as the focus for conservation investment. Thus, conservation targets are simply those ecosystems, communities, or species upon which we focus planning and management efforts. Because only a handful of targets can be used to plan for biodiversity conservation, selecting the appropriate suite of targets is crucial to successful conservation planning and adaptive management. A coarse filter/fine filter approach looking at both broad-scale ecosystem protection and targeted, species-specific efforts was used when analyzing and describing conservation targets for Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. Focusing on the health of the talus and forest communities provides an appropriate umbrella to encompass a number of biodiversity targets at this conservation area. There are few impacts to the Sugar Maple forests, talus and cliffs. A very low level of invasive species was found and a diversity of species were recorded. The table land areas near Ridge Road are impacted by recreational use and past farming practices. This target and issues were used to as an umbrella to provide restoration and enhancement opportunities in the next section.

.1 Restoration/Enhancement Opportunities in the Nature Reserve, Natural and Resource Management Zones

The existing natural habitat features at Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area have been evaluated for restoration opportunities. Restoration in certain parts of this property can assist with enhancing biodiversity and habitat resiliency for the forest and talus along the Niagara Escarpment. Priorities for natural areas restoration are as follows.

.1 Enhance Biodiversity and Long-Term Forest Resiliency

The talus and forested slopes along the Niagara Escarpment are dominated by Sugar Maple. There is a very low diversity of other tree species within these forested areas. Butternut and White Ash used to form a canopy along with the Sugar Maple. These two species have been lost to invasive forest pests. In order to ensure that these forests remain resilient and stable in the long term it is recommended that a variety of trees be planted. Recommendations would include diseases resistant Butternut, Shagbark and Bitternut Hickory, Basswood and Black Walnut.

.2 Removing Old Vineyard Wires and Posts

The large cultural meadow south of Ridge Road and to the west of First Road has many wires and posts remaining from an old vineyard that existed on the property. These will be removed prior to the creation of the new wetland.

.3 Invasive Species Management

There are low levels of several invasive species located within Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area. As these populations are low this would be a great opportunity to control these species before large populations establish. Details on the invasive species present on the property and methods to manage them are included in Section 5.14.6.

An overall invasive species prioritization plan should be developed supplementary to this Master Plan.



Carolina Wren

6.0 OVERALL SITE CONCEPT

This Master Plan for DPCA balances the need to conserve the natural environment with the need to accommodate day use visitors. The property will continue to be divided between the protected natural areas of the Escarpment, and active recreational areas on the tableland south of the Escarpment.

This section outlines the key concepts for this Master Plan that have come out of public and stakeholder consultation, staff workshops, meetings, detailed design sessions and inventory results. See Appendix 1 for more information.

6.1 Natural Areas Development

The priority of this plan is to conserve and protect the sensitive and environmentally significant natural areas of the Escarpment. Accordingly, Nature Reserve and Natural Environment zones have been identified in this plan with management guidelines as outlined in Section 3.6. The ecological mapping and species documented within this plan are also provided as a baseline inventory to help guide future land management decisions and project planning. See Section 5.15 for more information on the natural area recommendations.

Development in the natural areas will be strictly limited by HCA and may also be subject to review by the City of Hamilton and the Niagara Escarpment Commission. HCA's development focus in the natural areas will be enhancing biodiversity and long-term forest resiliency; management of the existing trail system in collaboration with the Bruce Trail Conservancy; hazard tree removals; invasive species management; restoration of degraded areas; and closure of unauthorized trails. Site monitoring, annual maintenance and restoration programs, and ongoing visitor education will be necessary to support this goal.

DPCA's largest natural areas are found below the Escarpment in the Punchbowl gorge. More information on development items for the gorge can be found in Section 8.2.

6.2 Conservation Area Development

Within this compact conservation area, the main development priority will be to construct a new wetland complex south of Ridge Road and improve the site watercourses. This will supplement HCA's Saltfleet wetland complex to help reduce flooding and erosion in lower Stoney Creek. Within this compact conservation area, the main development priority will be to construct a new wetland south of Ridge Road and improve the site watercourses as part of the overall Saltfleet Conservation Area Wetland Restoration Program (SCAWRP). The SCAWRP proposes 4 wetlands to be constructed in upper Stoney and Battlefield Creeks to address flooding and erosion in urban Stoney Creek below the Niagara Escarpment, restore and increase natural heritage features associated with the wetlands and provide passive recreation trails.

The Battlefield and Stoney Creek Watersheds drain approximately 3089 ha at the outlet to Lake Ontario. Flooding and erosion conditions along the lower Stoney Creek and Battlefield Creek have been historical concerns and have impacted private property and municipal infrastructure in the City of Hamilton. To address this issue, further detailed study was required to properly assess the

flooding and erosion conditions. The HCA in partnership with the City of Hamilton completed the 2011 'Draft' Conservation Ontario Class Environmental Assessment for the Lower Stoney Creek and Lower Battlefield Creek. This EA recommended remedial measures to address flooding and erosion. The EA was not implemented due to cost and private land requirements. As part of the 2011 EA as well as other historical studies, it was determined that the area above the Niagara Escarpment had the potential to store water to address the flood risk.

Flowing from this work, the HCA had a Flood and Erosion Control Environmental Assessment completed in 2018, which identified four areas above the Niagara Escarpment including the site immediately upstream from the Devil's Punchbowl along the main branch of Stoney Creek as areas that could store water through the creation of wetlands. The acquisition of the land on the Market property south of Ridge Road was pursued by HCA with the goal of creating a wetland as part of the SCAWRP project. The design of the wetland on the former market property is approximately 60% complete. The wetland will be approximately 45 acres in size and have capacity to hold 204,000 cubic meters of water, which is equal to 81.6 Olympic sized swimming pools. Information regarding the SCAWRP can be found at this link - <https://conservationhamilton.ca/saltfleet-conservation-area-wetland-restoration-program/>.

The wetland will be created on former agricultural lands including fallow fields, orchards and a remnant vineyard. The fields and orchards outside of the SC-5 wetland study area are Resource Management Zones and are to be protected from development. The agricultural areas within the SC-5 wetland study area are to remain protected from development while plans for this area are being developed. Remnant vineyard posts and wires in the wetland study area are to be removed for public safety.

Further, the creation of this wetland supports Hamilton's Biodiversity Action Plan Key Priority 6: "Enhance local aquatic habitats through sustainable stormwater management practices and restoration of degraded watercourses, waterbodies and wetlands."

The secondary development priority will be to support visitation while protecting the natural areas. The Punchbowl Market property south of Ridge Road will be the development focus to provide a visitor hub including a new main entrance, more parking, trailhead amenities, picnic area and trail connections to the Punchbowl, Bruce Trail, Dofasco Trail, and Saltfleet Conservation Area. The existing buildings on the Market property will be repurposed for HCA use. For both existing building locations and proposed uses, see the maps in Appendix 1 and drawings in Appendix 2.

- The existing Market building will provide visitor amenities such as, but not limited to, washrooms, wayfinding, conservation area information, outdoor education opportunities, as well as office facilities for HCA staff.
- The existing storage building will become a staff workshop, and a designated area behind the market building will be fenced off for HCA staff use only.
- The existing parking area on the north side of Ridge Road is to be improved in addition to this development of the Punchbowl Market lands.

6.3 Day Use Activity Areas

DPCA's day use activity areas include the new visitor hub at the existing Punchbowl Market buildings (visitor main entrance, parking, trail-head amenities), recreational trail system and scenic lookout stations. Picnic areas are to be located only near the parking areas. New constructed wetlands will provide opportunity for nature appreciation, passive recreation and education. Wetland lookout points, rest areas, and interpretive information is to be provided with the wetland recreational trails.

The former agricultural lands will be a priority for natural restoration. Cultivated and manicured areas will be reduced, and the naturalized areas that evolve will be managed for invasive species and supplemented with plantings by HCA staff and volunteers. The agricultural lands include fallow fields, orchard, and remnant vineyard. Any remaining fallow fields and orchards outside of the new wetland will be managed for invasive species and to support biodiverse natural succession. Tree planting will be a priority to supplement trees in the conservation area lost to disease and age, as well as provide shade for visitors. Restoration of the former agricultural fields is to be co-ordinated with the implementation of the natural areas recommendations noted in Section 5.15.

6.4 Marketing

There are marketing and communications activities for DPCA provided by HCA including promotion through print, the HCA website, and on various social media platforms.

During public engagement for this plan, two visitor surveys were conducted to gather information on the current conservation area and the newly acquired Punchbowl Market lands. From May 18 to September 9, 2022, 132 surveys were submitted by the public. These surveys will be reviewed by HCA staff when preparing marketing materials for DPCA.

Key marketing items from the surveys and staff workshops to be addressed in the lifespan of this Master Plan include the following:

- This is a popular community landmark that attracts repeat visitors to the lookout, waterfall and Bruce Trail. Continue marketing the value of the HCA membership pass for repeat visits to this site and nearby conservation areas such as Saltfleet and Dofasco Trail.
- The site attracts new tourists and sightseers from outside the community who are unfamiliar with the trail system and the Escarpment. Better wayfinding signage, rest areas, and visitor amenities are appreciated by these visitors, as well as guided and self-guided educational tours.
- The most popular recreational activities are hiking the trails and cycling the Dofasco Trail and area roadways. Safe trails and improved trail connections are desired by these visitors. Signage indicating where activities are permitted (ex. no cycling on the Bruce Trail) should also be incorporated.
- Provide information on the importance of preserving nature and protecting it from damage. Look for opportunities to work with community partners on initiatives to reduce littering, vandalism, and staying on the trails.

7.0 CONSERVATION AREA MANAGEMENT

7.1 Land and Water Management

Land management planning will be accomplished through adherence to the guidelines of the management zones noted in this plan, and through additional resource management plans developed by HCA as necessary. The overall intent will be to ensure protection and conservation of the significant natural areas noted as Nature Reserve (Wetland) and Natural Zones on the Conservation Area Zone Map appended.

The ecological mapping and species data documented within this plan are provided as a baseline inventory to help guide future land management decisions and project planning. Where active management is required for a particular species, it will be accomplished through an HCA approved resource management strategy considering the guidelines outlined in this plan, and in accordance with policies of all governing agencies.

.1 Public Infrastructure – Utilities, Trails and Transportation

Public infrastructure such as utility corridors (watermains, storm and sanitary sewers, natural gas or oil pipelines, hydro and communication corridors), trails (footpaths, boardwalks) and transportation links may cross conservation area lands.

These uses may also have associated rights-of-way, land use agreements, licenses of occupation, permits etc. that are to be considered in the management of the ecological preserve and when implementing items from this management plan.

When new public infrastructure projects are proposed within conservation area owned lands, such uses will be subject, but not limited to, the following criteria:

- The need for the project, area of construction disturbance, and potential site disruption such as soil erosion, flooding, and vegetation loss.
- To maintain or where possible improve or restore key ecological linkages, habitat, and wildlife movement corridors.
- The potential public benefits of the project for research, education, or recreation.

HCA may require detailed environmental assessments, studies, and resource management plans in order to support such land uses.

7.2 Vegetation Management

Where active management is required for a particular plant or animal species, it will be accomplished through an acceptable HCA resource management strategy considering the guidelines outlined in this Master Plan, and in accordance with policies of all governing agencies. Forests will be managed in accordance with the MNR approved HCA Managed Forest Plan 2018 - 2037. Forest plantations and treed areas will also be managed to remove hazard trees and fallen logs in areas of public use such as recreational trails and picnic areas. Forest management is to be carried out with generally accepted sustainable forestry practices.

Invasive species are in the conservation area and HCA places a high priority on invasive species management to maintain biodiversity and conservation values. See Section 5.14.6 for more information on invasive species vegetation management.

Additional non-native plant species will not be deliberately introduced into the conservation area. Introduction of any new plant species by HCA will consider the biodiversity of this site, historical data of species present in the area, research, and additional relevant species inventories and contiguous surroundings within an approved restoration and stewardship strategy. In this plan “non-native” means species not native to Ontario as well as species native to Ontario but not to Hamilton. If established non-native plant species threaten natural heritage values, a program for their eradication will be developed subject to specific guidelines noted in the natural heritage inventory of this plan.

Vegetation may be mowed only:

- Along the conservation area boundary, where mowing would assist in clearer boundary identification.
- In the development zone of this Master Plan to support public usage of the open space, and only to the extent necessary.
- As required along roadways and recreational trails for safety.
- To assist in the control of invasive species, trees and brush may be cut and pruned only.
- To enable resource management or facility development specifically authorized by this Master Plan or an HCA approved resource management or other implementation plan.
- To ensure public safety.
- In service easements i.e., Utility corridors, subject to specific service agreements.

Trees may not be cut for the sole purpose of providing firewood. Trees and brush cut in nature reserve and natural zones outside of the forest plantations will be left to deteriorate naturally as close as possible to where they have been felled, or if that is not feasible, may be used for firewood or wood chips in the conservation area.

Native insects and diseases affecting vegetation will be allowed to progress naturally, except where they threaten significant natural heritage values in nature reserve and natural zones, or significant aesthetic and infrastructure values in development zones. Non-native insects and diseases will be controlled where feasible. Where controls are undertaken, it will be directed as narrowly as possible to the specific insect or disease so as to have minimal effects on the surrounding environment. Biological controls will be used whenever possible.

Chemical fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and suppressants will not be used for any vegetation management purpose except:

- Insect and disease control under the conditions set out in this section of the Master Plan.
- Eradication of non-native species where it has been demonstrated other methods are not feasible.
- Control of poison ivy in development zones.

7.3 Fish and Wildlife Management

Where applicable on the Conservation Area property, fisheries management will seek to maintain and enhance native, self-sustaining fish populations. Fishing is regulated through the Ontario Fishery Regulations under the Federal Fisheries Act. If necessary, fishing may not be permitted in certain areas of the property due to fisheries or wildlife research, or habitat and natural areas management.

The fish species present are not game species, and their numbers are small so no commercial or recreational fishery/harvest should occur on these CA lands. Further assessment of the aquatic areas is recommended as noted in Section 5.12.

For Terrestrial Flora and Fauna there is no harvest allowed within DPCA to protect the populations with an exception for Research (see Section 7.7).

For wildlife/human conflict HCA has developed the Hamilton Conservation Authority Wildlife Conflict Management Strategy. This strategy outlines the process and methods staff are to follow when dealing with any animal related issues within all conservation areas. This document was produced by the Hamilton Conservation Authority Wildlife Management Committee (WMC). The WMC was a special HCA committee that was established in May 2014 based on HCA staff recommendation and at the direction of the HCA Board of Directors. The purpose of the WMC was to develop best management protocols and practices for the management of wildlife on HCA lands.

Additional non-native animal species will not be deliberately introduced to the conservation area. If already established non-native species threaten the conservation area values, a program for their eradication may be developed if feasible and practical. Missing native species may be reintroduced, and existing populations replenished if feasible and acceptable to HCA.

7.4 Cultural Heritage Management

The Cultural Heritage Zones set out in this plan are shown on Map 3 Conservation Area Zones in Appendix 1. Incompatible resource uses and recreational activities will be restricted or prohibited where necessary to protect cultural heritage resources in this zone. The structures in the zone around the lookout platform and cross will be reviewed for public safety, more detailed studies are to be conducted by HCA as necessary to determine appropriate maintenance, repair or restoration programs for this area.

Capital projects recommended for this zone will require approval by the HCA Board of Directors and may require approval from the City of Hamilton and the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

Archaeological assessments will be completed as needed for development items proposed in this plan. As outlined in Section 4.6, Stage 1, 2 and 3 archaeological assessments have been completed for the wetland complex on the property south of Ridge Road. Archaeological work completed for the wetland has included First Nations monitors on site.

Management strategies for any archaeological sites found in the future may range from allowing the sites to remain without interference, to research, excavation, and rehabilitation. Archaeological and historical artifacts may only be removed, and heritage landscapes altered, in accordance with all applicable legislation. Protection and management will be undertaken in consultation with First Nations and governing agencies.

7.5 Conservation Area Operations

The Punchbowl Market building operation will be reviewed in more detail supplementary to this plan. HCA will review the operation plan for these lands annually and update as required. HCA will provide staff with information and resources as required to operate the conservation area on a day-to-day basis. This will include specific direction for the management and operation of all facilities and activities and address such topics as budgets, staffing, maintenance, enforcement and emergency services.

Self-serve facilities may be developed, and individual volunteers and partner organizations may be involved in programs as approved by the HCA, within the conservation area.

The HCA has the right to suspend operations of any facilities or services due to funding limitations, but in so doing will ensure that heritage values are not impaired and customer service standards are affected as little as possible.

New business practices may be introduced into the conservation area operations in accordance with HCA policy such as:

- Improving operating efficiency and controlling costs.
- Contracting out some operating functions.
- Improving customer service standards.

7.6 Education

Education in the conservation area is intended to develop visitors' awareness and appreciation of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage, fostering a commitment to protect that heritage for all generations. Education opportunities are meant to be educational and recreational, formal and informal, and accessible to all. Information, education, and outdoor recreation are the three main components of education in the conservation area. The level of service provided at DPCA will be determined by its significance and visitation. A priority will be placed on providing natural areas education in support of the goals and objectives outlined in this plan.

HCA encourages further research to provide interpretive and educational information on the natural features and history of this area. HCA provides online information about the significance of these natural areas and their need for protection. As HCA updates and develops new park-related brochures, maps and interpretive materials for this conservation area, the Escarpment's status as a World Biosphere Reserve should be recognized, as well as these public lands being within NEPOSS and including a portion of the Bruce Trail. Developing visitors' awareness and appreciation of Ontario's natural and cultural heritage and fostering a commitment to protect that

heritage for all generations is supported in the goals and objectives of this plan. Where there is an opportunity, HCA may consider partnering with local Indigenous communities when developing educational programming in order to incorporate topics such as Indigenous history, culture and connections to the land.

7.7 Research

DPCA, like all of HCA's properties, provide in essence an opportunity for living laboratories. HCA Ecologists monitor the health of lands using established protocols and can, when needed, develop special research programs to answer resource related questions.

Outside Research by qualified individuals that contributes to the knowledge of natural and cultural history and to environmental and recreational management will be encouraged by HCA staff.

All research projects will require authorization from HCA and authorization is obtained by contacting the staff ecologists who administer the process and issue research authorizations.

7.8 Recreation

The conservation area is open from sunrise to sunset, year-round. Entry to DPCA will be controlled year-round and HCA will enforce the collection of entrance fees from visitors. Day use parking spaces are provided on a first come, first serve basis and visitors may be restricted from entering the conservation area when the parking areas are full.

See Appendix 4 for highlights of key items from the day-use visitor surveys for DPCA and the Punchbowl Market lands.

The following recreational activities will not be permitted in the conservation area:

- All-terrain vehicle use
- Bicycles on the Bruce Trail
- Motor bikes on trails
- Snowmobiling
- Personal unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV / Drone)
- Personal watercraft (fishing boats, canoes, kayaks, SUPS) in the watercourses and wetlands
- Ice skating on frozen waterbodies
- Horseback riding
- Rock climbing or scaling the Escarpment slopes

The following recreational activities are permitted in the conservation area:

- Hiking
- Bicycles on HCA trails including the Dofasco 2000 Trail
- Dog Walking
- Picnicking
- Nature Appreciation
- Geocaching
- Winter Activities: Snowshoeing, Cross Country Skiing

A long-term goal of this Master Plan is to provide visitors with appropriate, high quality, sustainable recreational experiences. Recreational opportunities are to be provided that are appropriate to the conservation area and Master Plan zones outlined in Section 3.6.



7.9 Partnerships

HCA values the community support from area residents and landowners, businesses, service clubs, interested First Nations, volunteers, and volunteer organizations that currently or could contribute in a variety of ways at DPCA. HCA will continue to nurture existing support and will seek out new opportunities for partnerships. Current support provided by the Hamilton Conservation Foundation and the Bruce Trail Conservancy is encouraged and welcomed.

HCA also values community relationships and help from volunteers to manage natural areas and the species that utilize and inhabit them. HCA Stewardship Action Plans, public consultation, and stewardship work are examples of this and are to be encouraged for the life of this Master Plan. Volunteers are governed by volunteer policies set by HCA for recruitment, orientation, training, supervision, health and safety instruction, evaluation and recognition. Volunteer programs shall be considered in all business decisions made by HCA in the operation of this conservation area.

7.10 Paid Staff

A supplemental operation plan is recommended to be developed for DPCA by HCA staff once this Master Plan is adopted.

DPCA, similar to staffing at other conservation areas, includes full time permanent employees and part time casual employees to undertake its operations. In addition, staff from other departments at HCA are involved in varying capacities with the management and operation of DPCA. Staff may also be involved in supervising the activities of outside consultants, partners, or contractors retained by HCA.

8.0 FINANCIAL

8.1 Attendance and Revenue Forecasts

Visitor attendance, visitor surveys and operating revenue and expenses for DPCA are listed in Appendices 3 and 4.

Visitation to DPCA during the COVID-Pandemic increased significantly from 2020 to 2022. Visitation is anticipated to remain strong for the life of this plan, as population growth and development transform the community. Expanded parking and visitor facilities on the Punchbowl Market lands are intended to support this anticipated growth away from the Escarpment brow.

DPCA's financial success is expected to rely heavily on day-use admissions by visitors seeking to see the punchbowl waterfalls and lookouts, with opportunity to increase revenue by offering amenities to those arriving to the site by the Bruce Trail and Dofasco Trail. The Punchbowl Market property also has space for increased revenue generation through special events and programs. Enhancing existing features in the day use area, and providing new amenities such as more parking and washrooms, will also help to attract and retain repeat visitors.

8.2 Capital Projects

The capital development priorities list in Appendix 2 provides preliminary estimates for the development envisioned in the Master Plan. As noted in Section 3.7, the following capital development priorities are proposed for the next ten years at DPCA:

.1 Replace Significant Park Features

These features require ongoing repairs for public safety, are nearing or past the end of their life cycle and are proposed to be replaced or expanded upon.

Improvements are recommended for the existing Punchbowl parking lot on the north side of Ridge Road. Improvements would include formalizing the grass overflow area with gravel and parking curbs, adding an exit laneway and automatic gate alterations in order to enhance traffic flow through the lot.



The existing trails leading from the parking lot to the lookout platform, and the trail along the edge of the Punchbowl, should be improved to be in line with HCA trail standards.

Structural features such as the lookout platforms, Cross and associated supports, retaining walls, guard rails etc. are to be reviewed annually by HCA and maintained for public safety. Within the

first five years of this Master Plan, it is recommended that an engineering review of these items be conducted with report recommendations provided to HCA for care and maintenance.

Adjacent City lands on the tableland, and Ridge Road itself are close to the Escarpment brow and may be subject to erosion. HCA has observed that construction maintenance of City property around the culvert is required. HCA will work with the City to investigate other items that could pose a hazard and provide City access to attend to maintenance projects on their lands.

The former rental house (brick residence) at 174 Ridge Road has been repurposed for HCA's Hamilton Mountain business unit, consistent with HCA's strategy to repurpose existing buildings for operations before considering adding new buildings to a conservation area. This building will need to be demolished to accommodate the new wetland on the site.

The main building on the newly acquired Punchbowl market property was previously operated as a bakery and store. There is also an existing workshop building that is currently being utilized by HCA East Mountain staff. The main market building will be repurposed by HCA as a visitor centre and as staff offices.

Ontario Regulation 826/90 under the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act (NEPDA) applies to DPCA which is designated as an Area of Development Control. NEC Development Permits could be required for certain types of development (see Ontario Regulations 826/90 and 828/90). Development Permit Exemption for the planned changes and improvements to the market building can be granted by the NEC through the approval of this Master Plan. Detailed drawings of the proposed changes to the building are included in Appendix 2.

HCA will adhere to these regulations and the following development principles for the re-purposing of the market buildings.

- Total floor area of the building or structures will not be increased.
- Height of the buildings and structures will not increase by more than 2.5 metres.
- Changes to roof lines will not exceed the height of the highest part of the roof line.
- The existing driveway entrances will be used for access and egress to Ridge Road.
- Interior renovations to the market building will be for public washrooms, visitor reception area and staff space.
- The workshop building and associated work yard will be solely for HCA park operations.
- Utilities review and studies are currently being conducted by HCA for project scoping. (electric, water supply, septic system etc.)

The Dofasco Trail, including the pedestrian bridge over the watercourse on the DPCA lands south of Ridge Road will be rerouted to accommodate the new wetlands proposed in this plan. The long-term goal is to provide recreational trail access for visitors from DPCA to the Dofasco Trail and Saltfleet Conservation Area. This goal will be accommodated in the design for the new wetlands. The area for the new SC-5 wetland is shown on the maps in Appendix 1.

.2 Add New Park Features

These capital projects are proposed to serve the community, generate revenue, and improve customer service:

- The Punchbowl Market lands south of Ridge Road are identified as a priority area for new wetland development in connection with the new Saltfleet wetland complex. More detail on this wetland project can be found in Section 6.2. Similar to the Saltfleet Conservation Area wetlands that were constructed in 2023, the wetlands will have berms to retain water and support trail connections through the site. The detailed design of the new wetland complex is currently in progress.
- The Punchbowl Market lands south of Ridge Road are also targeted as a priority area for new capital development to improve customer service and support revenue. New capital investment to improve traffic flow into the conservation area, more parking, visitor amenities, site security, and pedestrian and cyclist access are targeted for this area. Capital projects are recommended to be phased in with the wetland project, and as HCA undertakes reviews and takes on operation of the former market buildings. See Section 6.2 for more information on the proposed repurposing of the existing market facilities.
- There are a few unauthorized trails in the gorge below the Escarpment brow, with associated degradation of the natural environment. During the preparation of this plan, HCA installed trail counters in the area to assess the number of visitors in the gorge viewing the waterfall. See Appendix 4 for the trail counts. Based on these counts and observed damage to the natural areas, it is recommended that HCA further study this area, consult with the Bruce Trail Conservancy, City of Hamilton, and other agencies who have experienced similar issues at natural attractions. This approach is recommended to develop comprehensive solutions for site improvements and management best practices, further to this plan. At a minimum for visitor management and natural area protection in the punchbowl gorge, it is recommended that waterfall interpretive signage be provided at the Bruce Trail and boundary signage installed to clearly identify natural areas off-limits to the public. As shown on the Site Concept map in Appendix 1, the formalization of an existing unauthorized trail and creation of a waterfall lookout station could also be considered after further review of the area with Bruce Trail representatives. No structures are proposed for the lookout station. A lookout station may consist of any of the following: firm trail surfacing, fencing, barriers, interpretive signage, or directional and safety signage.

.3 Enhance Existing Park Features

Rounding out the capital improvements for this Master Plan is the enhancement of existing park features to improve the natural areas and customer service.

Existing HCA trails, lookout areas, and platforms are to be improved for public safety and to restore adjacent degraded areas. Perimeter fencing and guards will be installed as required to protect natural areas, budgeting for this item is accounted for the life of this plan.

The Resource Management Zone in this plan sets out the former cultivated lands including the farmlands with the market buildings. A large portion of this zone is under study for the SC-5 wetland.

Lastly, more educational information is to be provided to visitors to enhance their experience of the lookouts, recreational trails, new wetlands, and the Escarpment. HCA will build on their experience with interpretive signs, digital story telling applications, website and social media, partnerships, and educational programs to support this initiative.

Capital projects should not be started until a long-term strategy with timelines and costs for each project are clearly stated and sufficient resources are available to complete them. As well, the additional operational costs for each item should be factored into the capital strategy.

8.3 Funding Sources

HCA's operation of DPCA is entirely self-funded. User and membership fees generated by the properties in the East Mountain business unit are anticipated to be the primary funding source for operations. Revenue generated through both gate admissions and other sources in 2025 is outlined in Appendix 3.

Financial statements are audited every year and are available to the public once approved by the HCA Board of Directors.

Permitted special events and programs may provide a source of additional revenue. These potential revenue sources may require outside agency approval and permits to proceed and are to be weighed against the disruption to the daily activities and revenue generation in the conservation area.

Financing for special projects and annual capital development will continue to be provided through grants, sponsorship, corporate donations, and private donations. The Hamilton Conservation Foundation also provides funding for specific projects. There is good potential for increasing donor funding, donor recognition is also a key element that needs to be nurtured and sustained.

8.4 Business Model

HCA receives a levy from the City of Hamilton and also the Township of Puslinch that forms part of the operating budget. The remainder of the budget is funded through user fees, membership fees, grants and donations. These dollars directly contribute to conservation work throughout HCA's watershed and preserve heritage sites on HCA lands. Financial statements are audited annually and available to the public once approved by HCA's Board of Directors.

Cost recovery is a prime requirement for all services and programs delivered at DPCA. In the development of programs, the following factors will be considered: anticipated attendance, income sources, market, volunteer resources, HCA staffing requirements, advertising, insurance, administration, operation costs and maintenance expenses.

The new parking area proposed for the Market lands south of Ridge Road will have a large impact on future revenue generation. Supplemental detailed site analysis and operations planning for the Market lands is recommended for DPCA once this Master Plan is adopted.

9.0 PROGRAMMING

9.1 Special Events and Programming

DPCA has been used as a filming location, and filming on site will continue to be supported by HCA with strict procedures so the integrity of the site is not sacrificed.

The Development Zone outlined in this Master Plan offers HCA opportunities to host special events, programming, and services in a location away from the Escarpment environment. Wedding parties have used the market site in the past for outdoor service, photographic opportunities, outdoor reception and more. These uses are to be explored further by HCA for the market site moving forward.



There is potential for school and community groups to reserve use of the market property for day-use camps, educational visits, etc. HCA will investigate this need further in the life of this plan, to determine if additional capital improvements such as group picnic shelters or storage areas are required to support this activity.

Events and day-use rentals will take place only within the Development Zone identified for this area on Map 3 in Appendix 1 as per NEC guidelines.

9.2 Education and Interpretive Programs

Education and interpretive programs are an opportunity to attract new visitors and provide variety for repeat visitors. Opportunities range from self-guided tours with interpretive signs and storytelling mobile applications along the trail system, to hands-on activities, educational demonstrations, live shows, workshops, and more. Some potential themes that could be explored include:

- Water Management
- Wildlife and Bird Watching
- The Niagara Escarpment
- Local History
- Indigenous Perspectives, History and Connections with the Land
- Role of Conservation Authorities
- Climate Change

All programs should relate to HCA's strategic value of providing outdoor learning experiences and increasing knowledge and awareness of the value of our environment and heritage.

10.0 SUMMARY

DPCA is a unique natural area with environmentally sensitive lands. The overall intent of this Master Plan is to ensure protection and conservation of the natural areas while creating a visitor hub on the tablelands with connections to the Dofasco 2000 Trail and Saltfleet Conservation Area.

Continued safe enjoyment of the property will require capital work to be completed. See Appendices 1 and 2 for more information. The following items are recommended to be implemented in order to achieve this goal:

Natural Areas:

The former agricultural lands south of Ridge Road will be the focus of HCA's restoration management activities and new wetland development. The wetland development will be the most significant capital investment in the life of this plan.

HCA's development focus in the natural areas of the gorge will be enhancing biodiversity and long-term forest resiliency, management of the existing trail system, hazard tree removals, invasive species management, tree planting, restoration of degraded areas, and closure of unauthorized trails. Site monitoring, annual maintenance and restoration programs, and ongoing visitor education will be necessary to support this goal.

Conservation Area:

The recent acquisition of the Punchbowl Market lands south of Ridge Road is a significant change for DPCA. This acquisition expands the potential for DPCA to provide a visitor hub for exploration of the Escarpment, Bruce Trail, Dofasco 2000 Trail and Saltfleet Conservation Area. These lands are targeted as a priority area for capital development to enhance the visitor experience and provide additional revenue. New capital investment to improve traffic flow into the conservation area, more parking, visitor amenities, site security, and pedestrian and cyclist access are targeted for this area.

Day Use Activities:

The new land acquisition provides opportunity for improved day use activity areas at the market buildings. This plan outlines new opportunities for recreational activities and educational programs that could occur at this location. This location will also help serve a growing number of visitors and provide operating revenue for the Hamilton Mountain Conservation Areas.

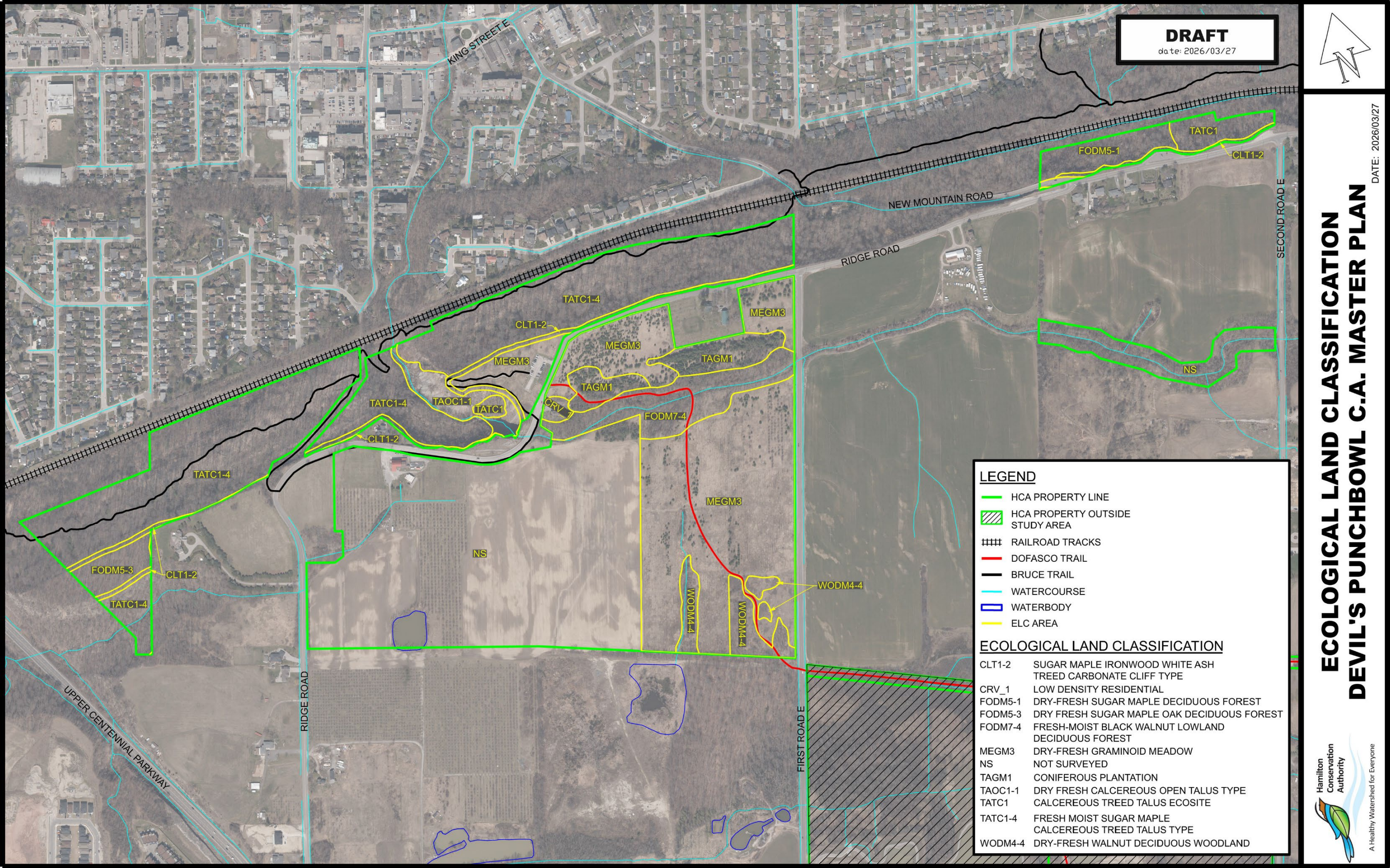


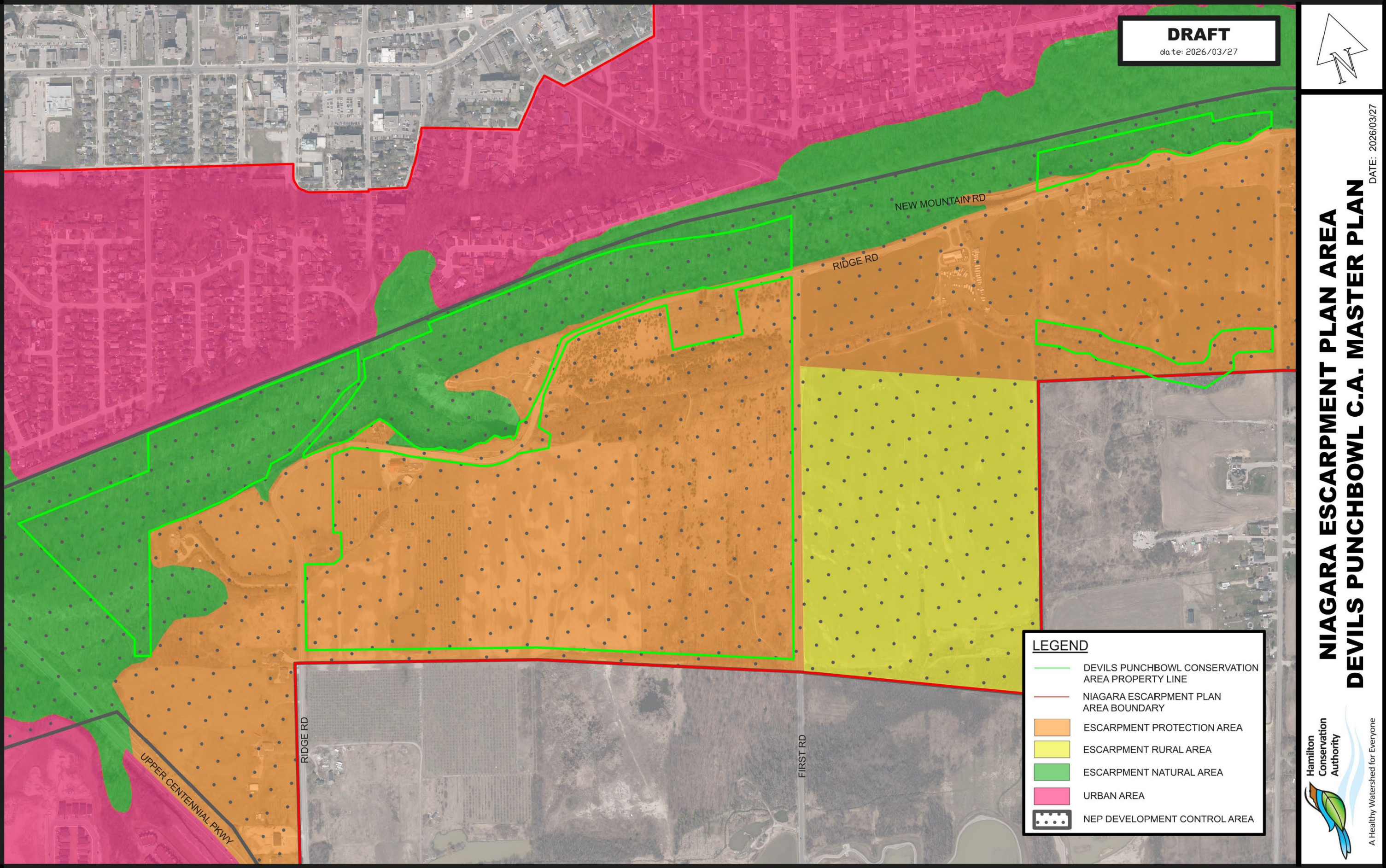
11.0 APPENDIX CONTENTS

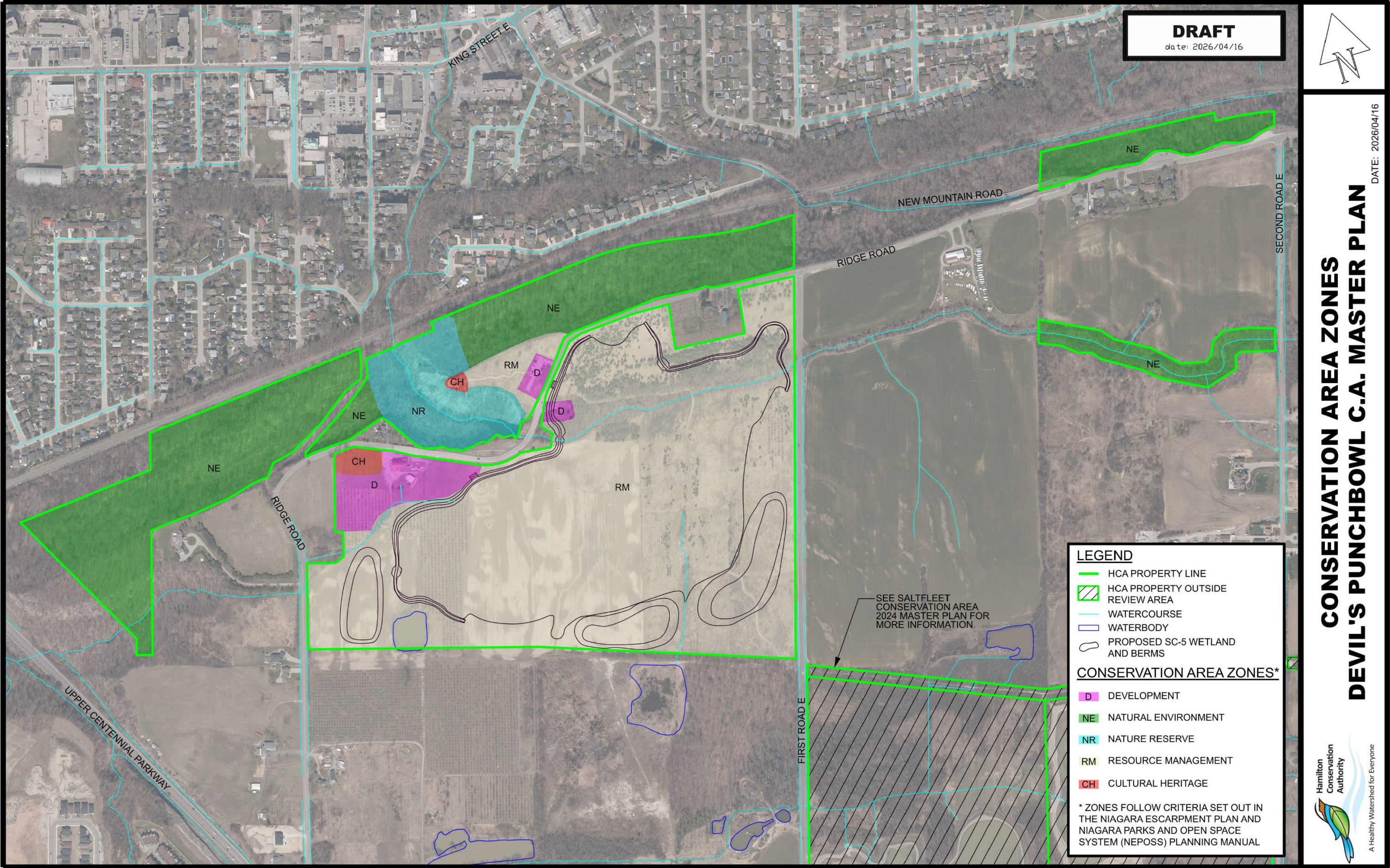
APPENDIX 1	Mapping
APPENDIX 2	Capital Development Priorities and Detail Drawings
APPENDIX 3	Operational Revenue and Expenses - 2025
APPENDIX 4	Visitor Data – Trail Counter Summary and Public Survey Results
APPENDIX 5	Natural Inventory – Species Lists
APPENDIX 6	HCA Visitor Management and Vehicle Parking Review
APPENDIX 7	References

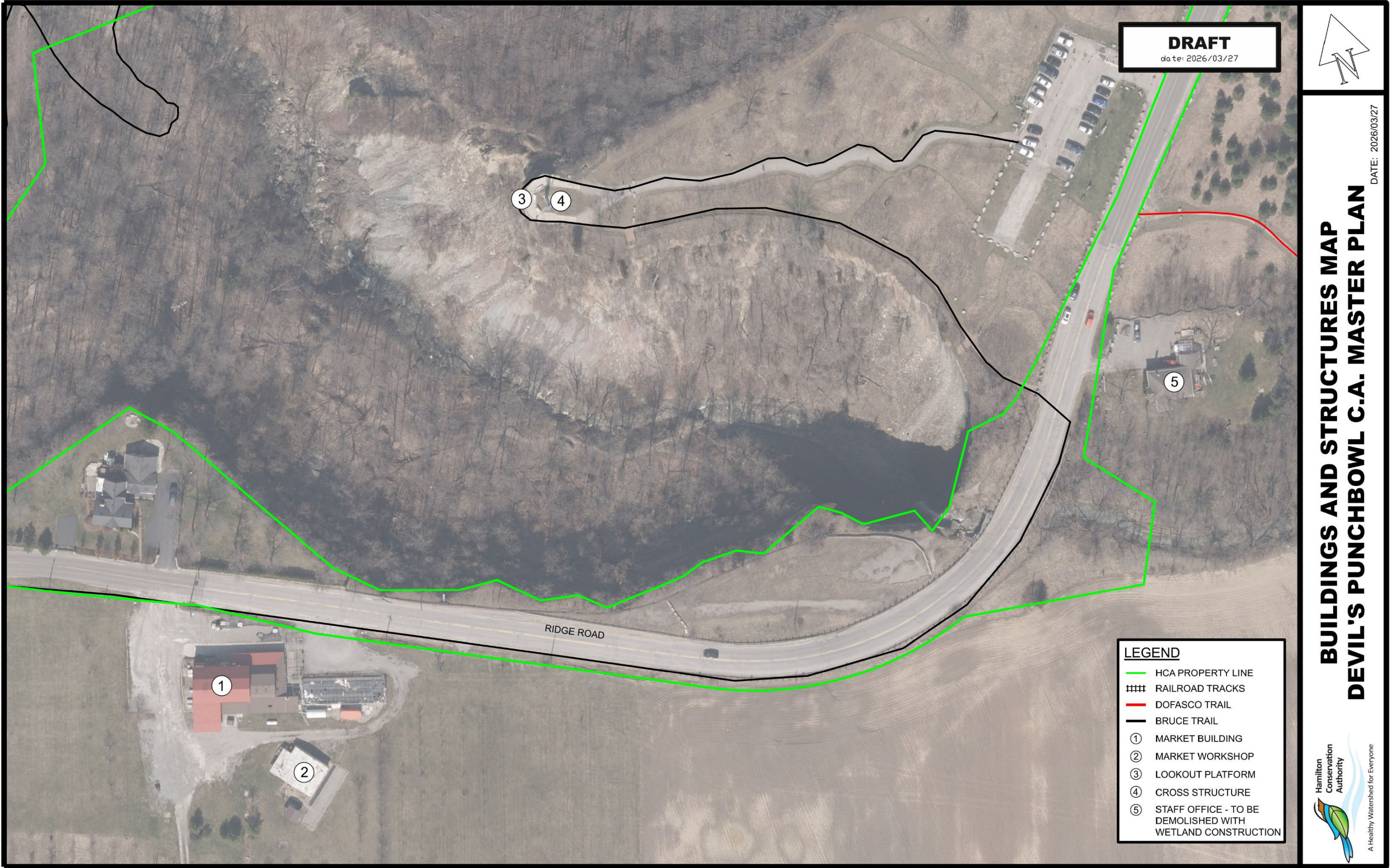
Mapping

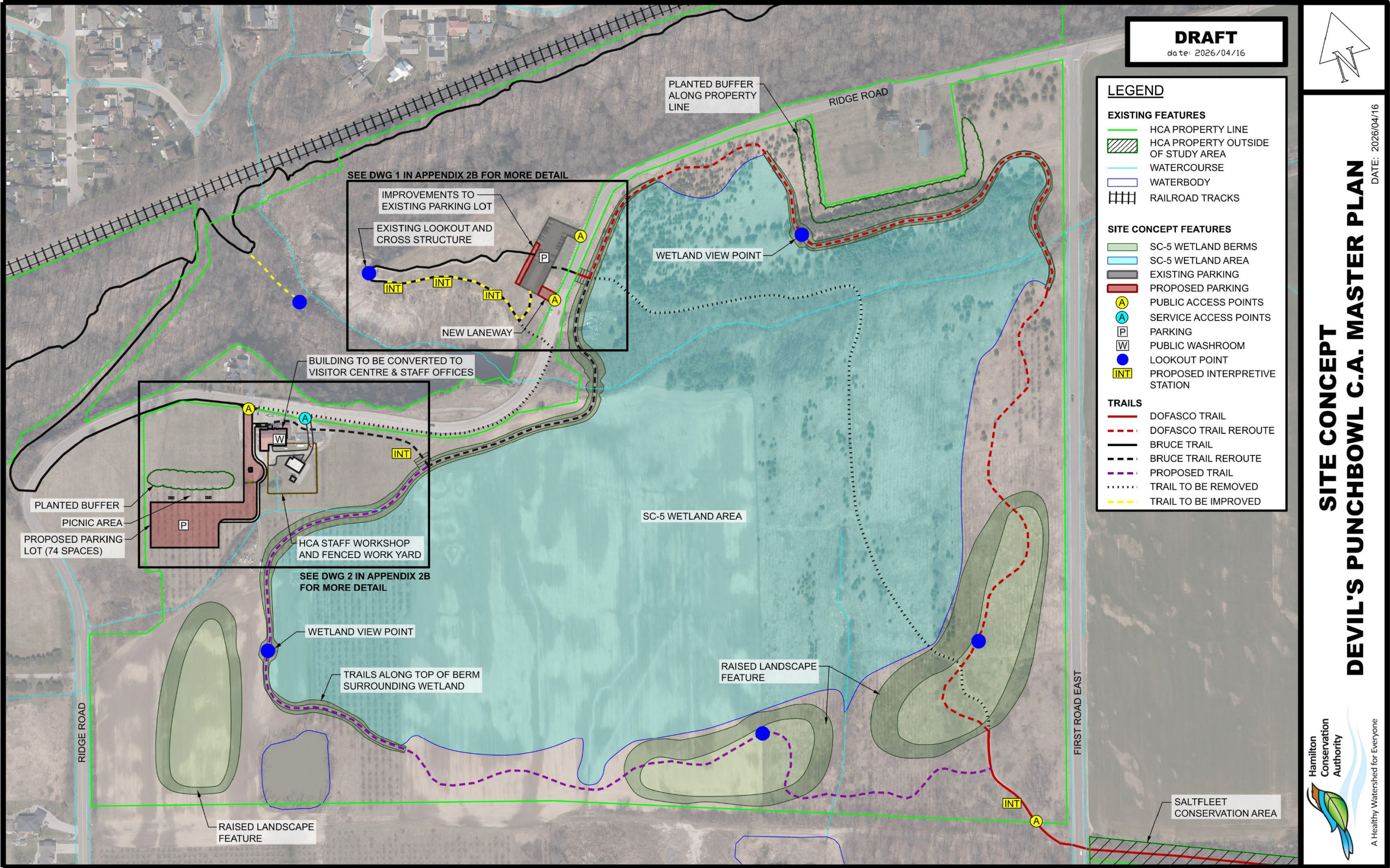
Map 1	Ecological Land Classification
Map 2	Niagara Escarpment Plan Area
Map 3	Conservation Area Zones
Map 4	Buildings and Structures
Map 5	Site Concept
Map 6	Trails Master Plan









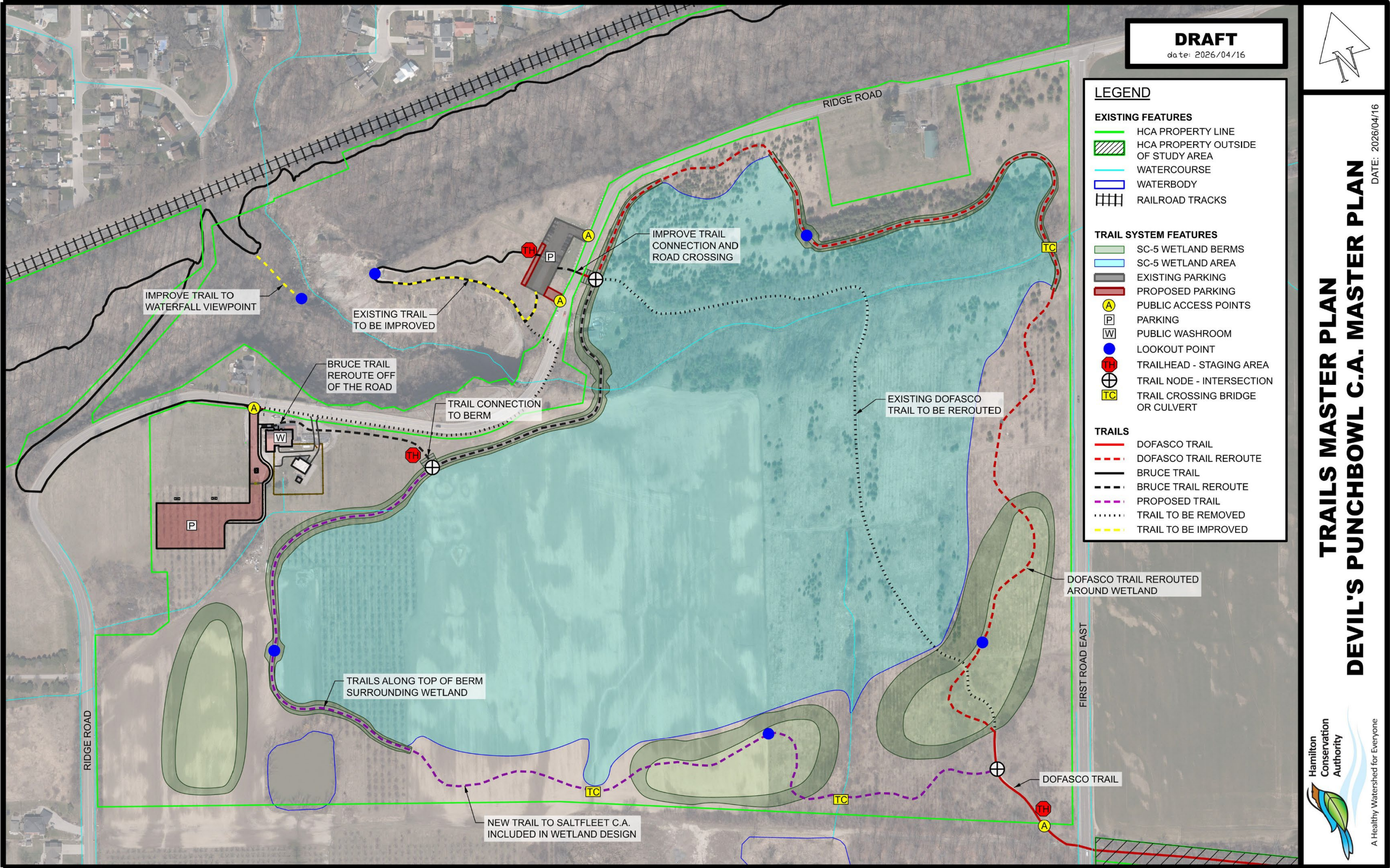


SITE CONCEPT
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTER PLAN

DATE: 2026/04/16



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone



TRAILS MASTER PLAN
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTER PLAN

DATE: 2026/04/16

APPENDIX 2

Capital Development Priorities and Detail Drawings

2A. Development Priorities

Table 1	Devil's Punchbowl Capital Development Priorities: 2026 – 2036
Table 2	Devil's Punchbowl Proposed Capital Review and Requirements

2B. Site Plans and Building Details

Drawing 1	Existing Parking Lot Site Plan
Drawing 2	Market Building Site Plan
Drawing 3	Existing Floor Plan
Drawing 4	Proposed Floor Plan
Drawing 5	Front Elevations
Drawing 6	Rear Elevations
Drawing 7	Side Elevations

2C. SC-5 Wetland Design Drawings

Drawing 1	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 1
Drawing 2	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 2
Drawing 3	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 3
Drawing 4	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 12
Drawing 5	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 13
Drawing 6	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 14
Drawing 7	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 16
Drawing 8	SC-5 Wetland Design Package – Sheet 26

Table 1 – DEVIL’S PUNCHBOWL CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES: 2026 - 2036

<u>A. Site Concept Improvements</u>		<u>*Budget (1.82M)</u>
A1	North Ridge Road Parking Lot Improvements	\$ 60,000
A2	Bruce Trail Re-Route	\$ 20,000
A3#	Ridge Road Trail Crossings	\$ 5,000
A4	Lower Gorge Interpretive Area	\$ 10,000
A5	Interpretive Signage	\$ 25,000
A6	Replace Entrance Sign – North Ridge Rd Lot	\$ 15,000
A7	New Entrance Sign – Market Property	\$ 35,000
A8+	Market Building Improvements, Partial Demolition and Washroom Addition	\$ 1,000,000
A9	Market Site Visitor Parking Lot	\$ 230,000
A10	Market Site Gatehouse and Autogates	\$ 70,000
A11	Operations Work Yard Fencing	\$ 100,000
A12	Office Building Demolition	\$ 50,000
A13+	Market Building Services – Septic, Water Cistern	\$ 175,000
A14	Market Site Picnic Shelters	\$ 25,000
<u>B. Conservation Area Improvements</u>		<u>*Budget (580K)</u>
B1	Perimeter Fencing	\$ 150,000
B2	Perimeter Service Gates	\$ 10,000
B3+	General Building Maintenance	\$ 25,000
B4	Existing Site Structure Maintenance	\$ 100,000
B5	Trail Maintenance	\$ 50,000
B6	Site Signage	\$ 20,000
B7+	Invasive Species Management	\$ 100,000
B8+	Natural Area Restoration	\$ 25,000
B9	Site Furnishing	\$ 20,000
B10	Vegetative Buffers	\$ 80,000
<u>C. Outside Fundraising Dependent Improvements</u>		<u>*Budget (4.425M)</u>
C1	New SC-5 Wetland South of Ridge Road	\$ 4,425,000

* Budget costs are in 2026 dollars, projects and budgets to be reviewed annually.

+ Costs subject to further site and structure investigations and recommendations.

Costs subject to further consultation with the City of Hamilton.

Table 2 – DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL PROPOSED CAPITAL REVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS*

No.	Proposed Development**	NEC Development Permit Exempted***	NEC Development Permit Exemption through approved Master Plan	NEC Development Permit Required	City of Hamilton Review or Approval Required
A. Site Concept Improvements					
A1	North Ridge Road Parking Lot Improvements		X		X
A2	Bruce Trail Re-Route	X			
A3	Ridge Road Trail Crossings	X			X
A4	Lower Gorge Interpretive Area	X			
A5	Interpretive Signage	X			
A6	Replace Entrance Signage	X			X
A7	New Entrance Sign	X			X
A8	Market Building Improvements, Partial Demolition and Washroom Addition		X		X
A9	Market Site Visitor Parking Lot		X		X
A10	Market Site Gatehouse and Autogates	X			
A11	Operations Work Yard Fencing		X		
A12	Demolition of Building at 174 Ridge Road	X			X
A13	Market Building Services – Septic, Water Cistern		X		X
A14	Market Site Picnic Shelters	X			
B. Conservation Area Improvements					
B1	Perimeter Fencing	X			
B2	Perimeter Service Gates	X			
B3	General Building Maintenance	X			
B4	Existing Site Structure Maintenance	X			
B5	Trail Maintenance	X			
B6	Site Signage	X			
B7	Invasive Species Management	X			
B8	Natural Area Restoration	X			
B9	Site Furnishing	X			
B10	Vegetative Buffers	X			
C. Outside Fundraising Dependent Improvements					
C1	New SC-5 Wetland		X		X

* DPCA is in the Niagara Escarpment Plan Area of Development Control. The NEC exemptions and City Permit items are proposed by HCA for NEC and City review.

** Projects and Budgets to be reviewed annually by HCA.

*** Exempted from an NEC Development Permit through R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 828: Development within the Development Control Area.

APPENDIX 2B – Site Plans and Building Details



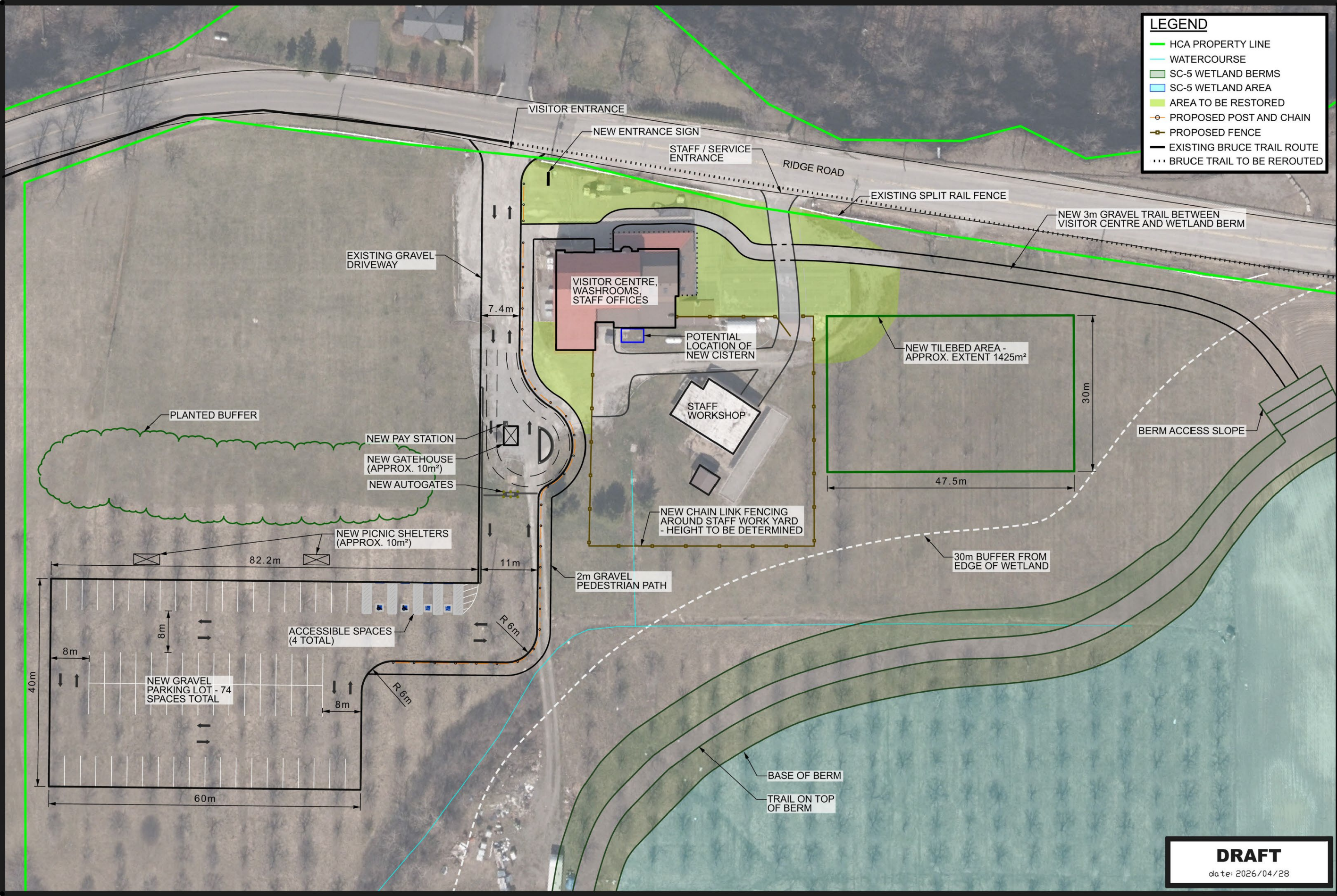
SCALE: 1 : 650

EXISTING PARKING LOT SITE PLAN DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTER PLAN

DATE: 2026/04/01

DRAFT

date: 2026/04/02



SCALE: 1 : 650

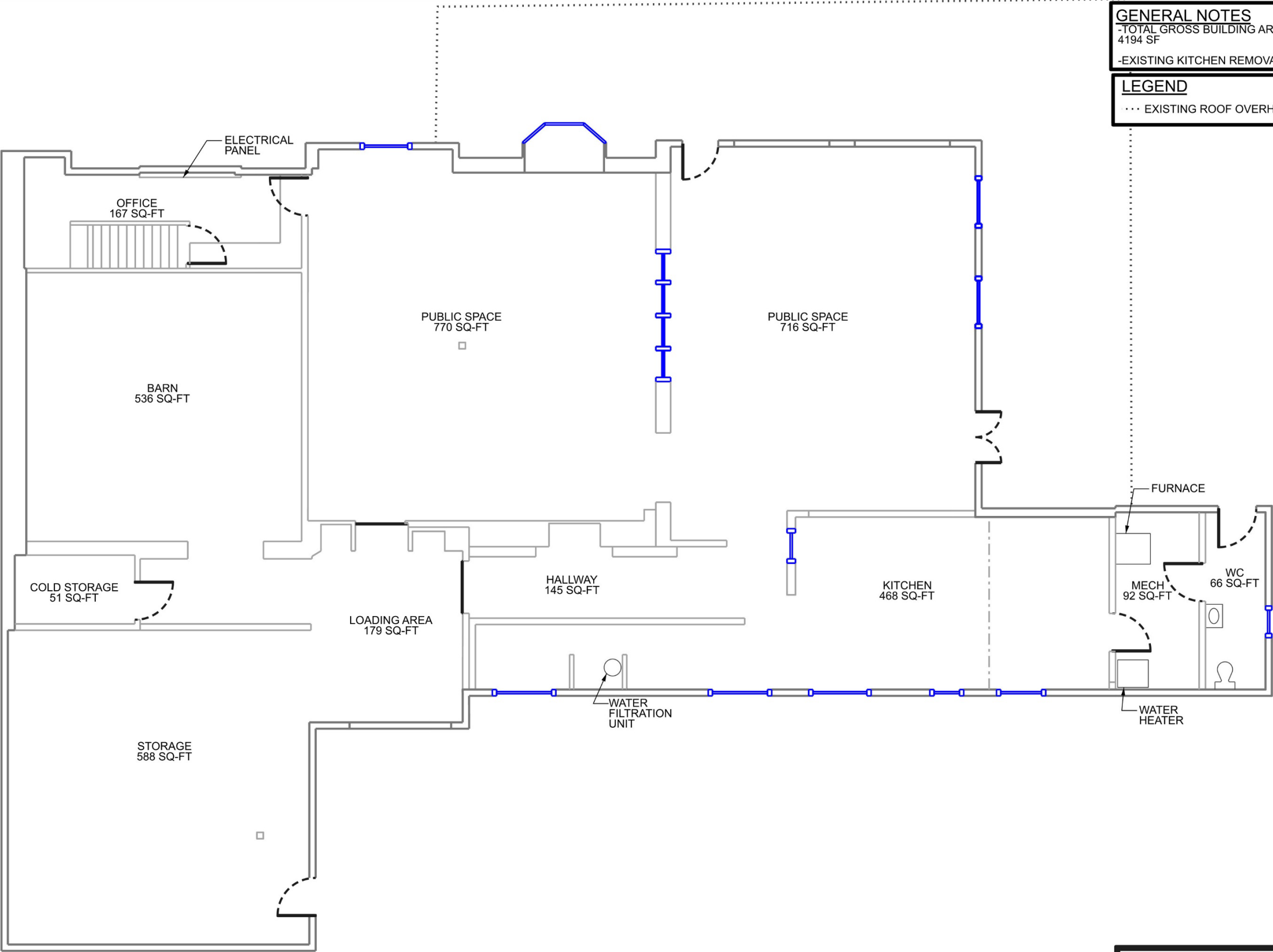
**MARKET BUILDING SITE PLAN
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTERPLAN**

DATE: 2026/04/28



DRAFT

date: 2026/04/28



GENERAL NOTES
-TOTAL GROSS BUILDING AREA:
4194 SF
-EXISTING KITCHEN REMOVAL

LEGEND
... EXISTING ROOF OVERHANG



SCALE: 1/8" = 1'- 0"

MARKET BUILDING - EXISTING FLOOR PLAN
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTERPLAN

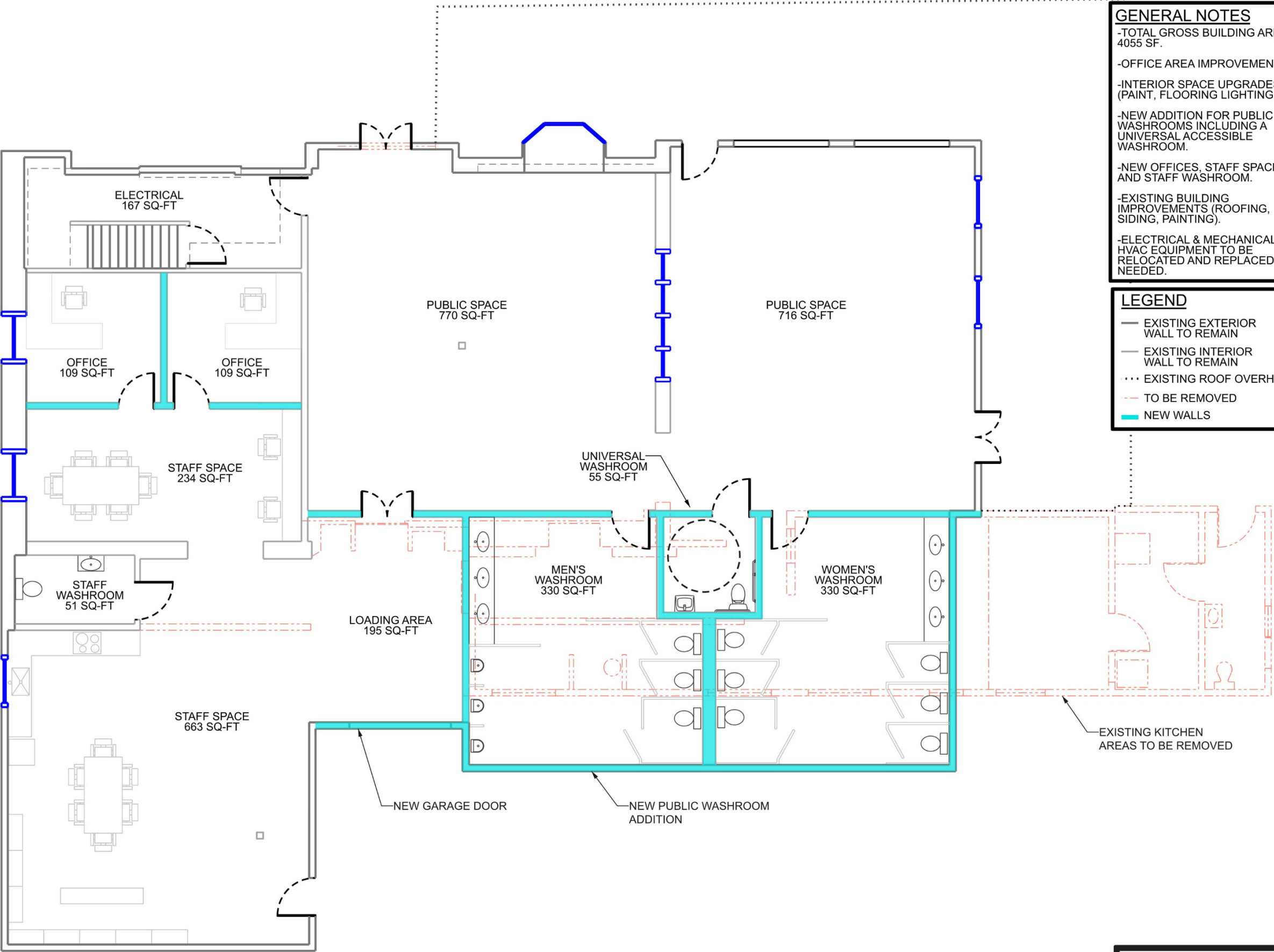
DATE: 2026/04/02

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date: 2026/04/02



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GENERAL NOTES

- TOTAL GROSS BUILDING AREA: 4055 SF.
- OFFICE AREA IMPROVEMENTS.
- INTERIOR SPACE UPGRADES (PAINT, FLOORING LIGHTING).
- NEW ADDITION FOR PUBLIC WASHROOMS INCLUDING A UNIVERSAL ACCESSIBLE WASHROOM.
- NEW OFFICES, STAFF SPACE AND STAFF WASHROOM.
- EXISTING BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS (ROOFING, SIDING, PAINTING).
- ELECTRICAL & MECHANICAL HVAC EQUIPMENT TO BE RELOCATED AND REPLACED AS NEEDED.

LEGEND

- EXISTING EXTERIOR WALL TO REMAIN
- EXISTING INTERIOR WALL TO REMAIN
- ... EXISTING ROOF OVERHANG
- - - TO BE REMOVED
- NEW WALLS

SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

DATE: 2026/04/02

MARKET BUILDING - PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN

DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTERPLAN

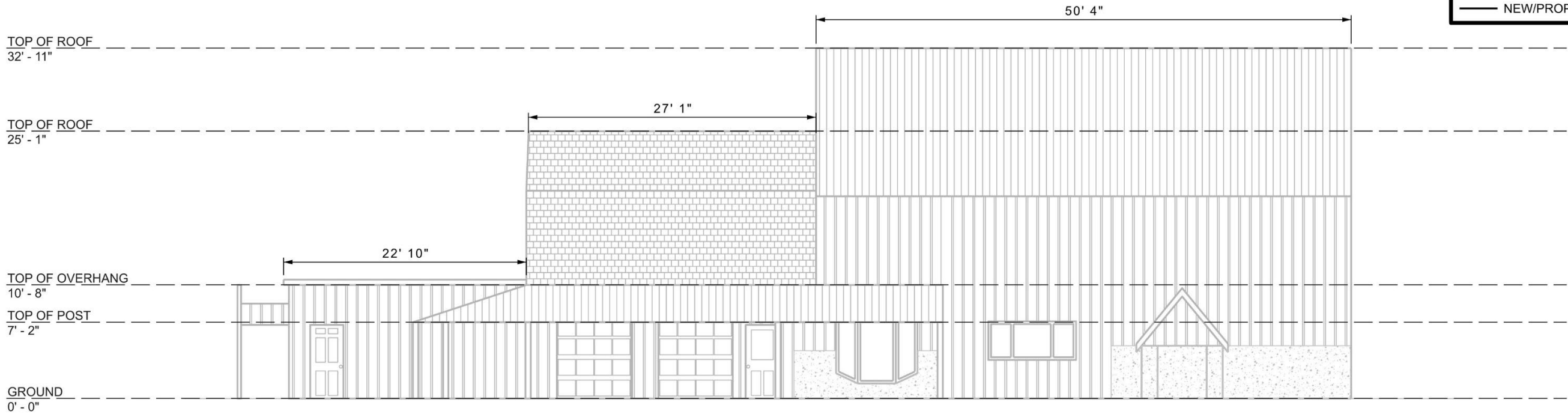
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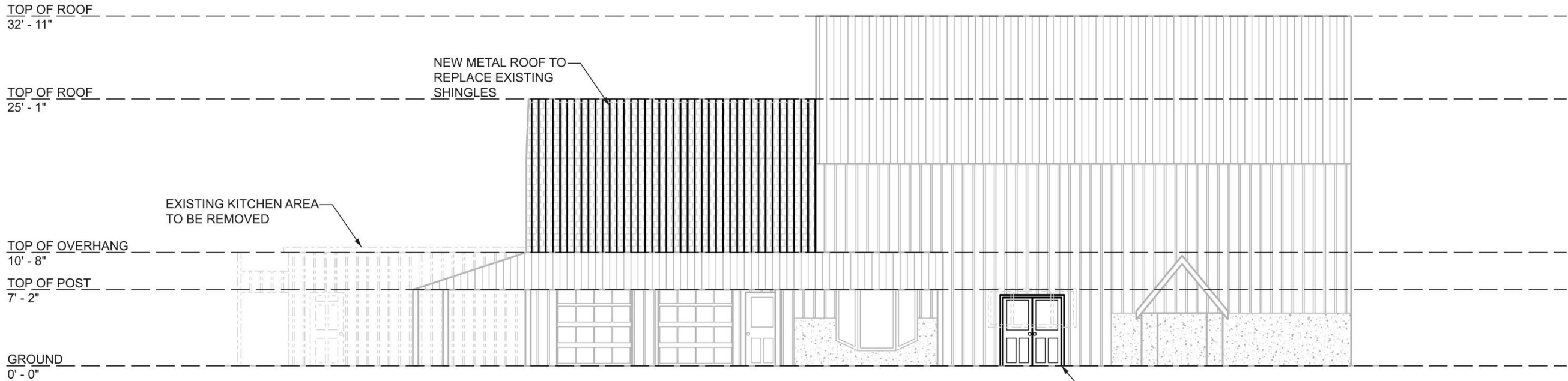


LEGEND

- EXISTING/TO REMAIN
- TO BE REMOVED
- NEW/PROPOSED



FRONT ELEVATION
(EXISTING)



FRONT ELEVATION
(PROPOSED)

DRAFT

date: 2026/04/02

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

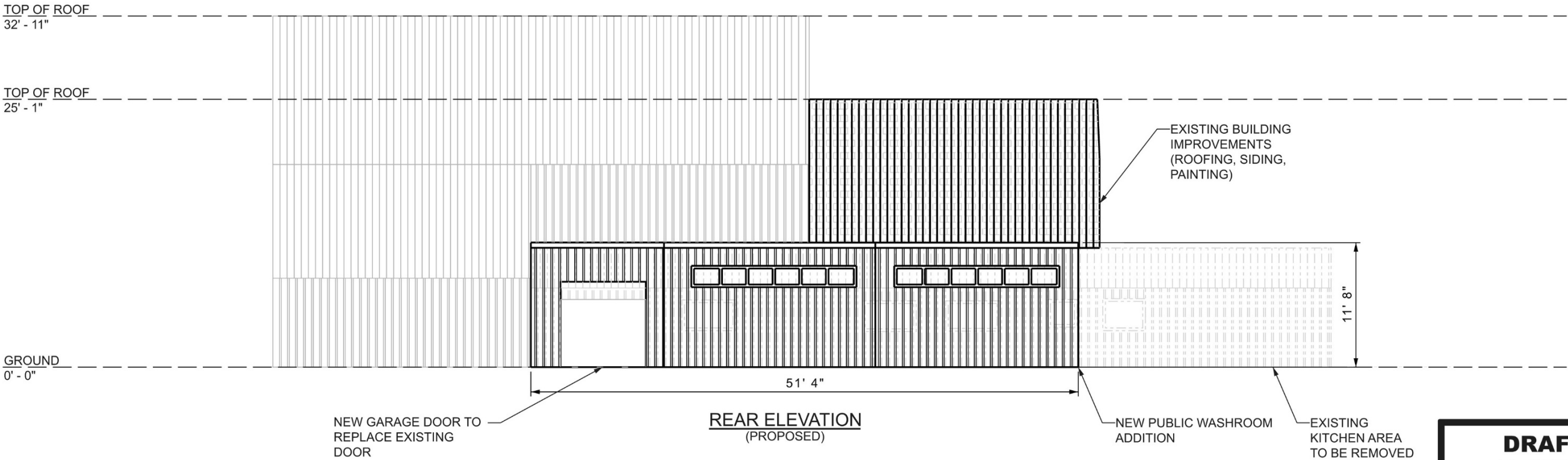
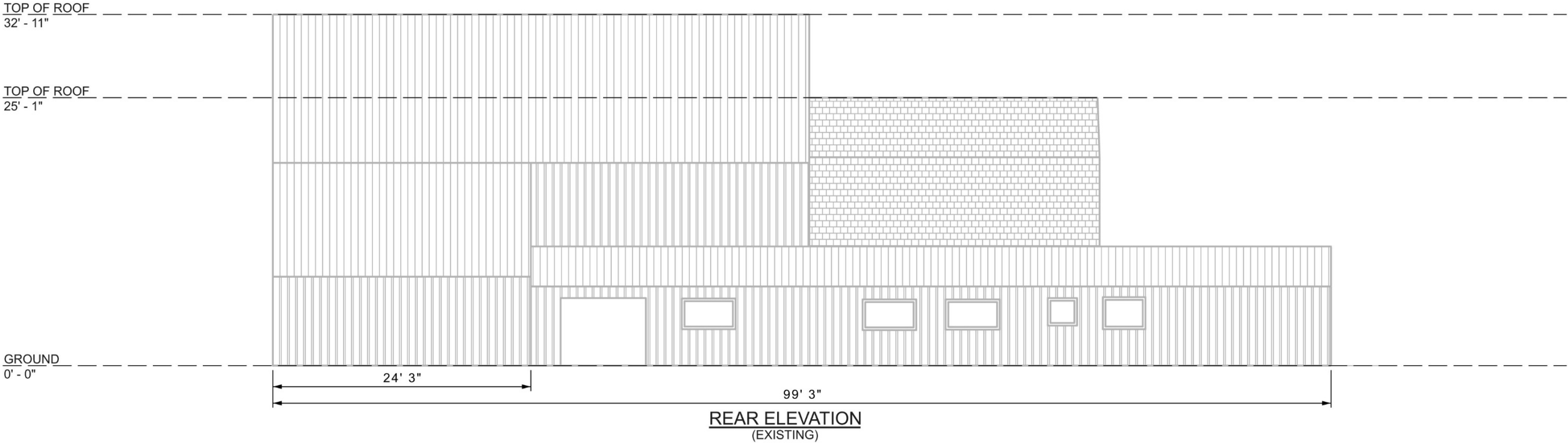
MARKET BUILDING - FRONT ELEVATIONS
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTERPLAN

DATE: 2026/02/25



LEGEND

- EXISTING/TO REMAIN
- TO BE REMOVED
- NEW/PROPOSED



DRAFT

date: 2026/04/02

SCALE: 3/32" = 1'-0"

MARKET BUILDING - REAR ELEVATIONS
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTERPLAN

DATE: 2026/02/25



LEGEND

- EXISTING/TO REMAIN
- TO BE REMOVED
- NEW/PROPOSED

TOP OF ROOF
32' - 11"

TOP OF ROOF
25' - 1"

TOP OF OVERHANG
10' - 8"

TOP OF POST
7' - 2"

GROUND
0' - 0"

EXISTING KITCHEN AREA
TO BE REMOVED

SIDE ELEVATION (EAST)
(EXISTING)

SIDE ELEVATION (WEST)
(EXISTING)

TOP OF ROOF
32' - 11"

TOP OF ROOF
25' - 1"

TOP OF OVERHANG
10' - 8"

TOP OF POST
7' - 2"

GROUND
0' - 0"

NEW PUBLIC
WASHROOMS
WITH WINDOWS

SIDE ELEVATION EAST
(PROPOSED)

NEW WINDOWS IN THE
STAFF OFFICE AREA AND
KITCHENETTE/LOCKER
AREA

SIDE ELEVATION (WEST)
(PROPOSED)

DRAFT

date: 2026/04/02

SCALE: 3/32" = 1' - 0"

MARKET BUILDING - SIDE ELEVATIONS
DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL C.A. MASTERPLAN

DATE: 2026/02/25

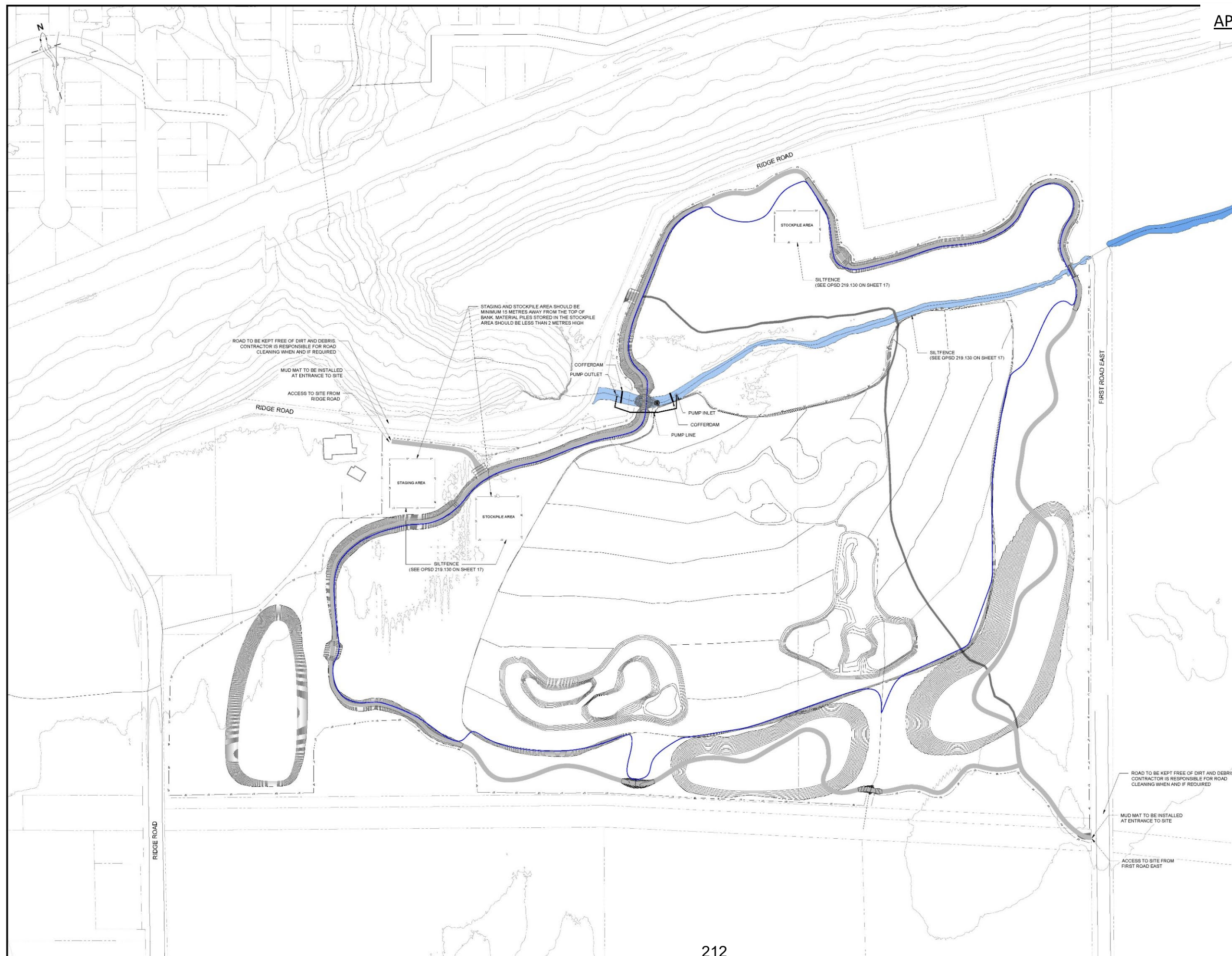


APPENDIX 2C – Wetland Design Drawings



DRAFT
date: 2026/04/08

1	20260227	EEG	60% DESIGN SUBMISSION	
No.	DATE	BY	REVISIONS	
DATE				
February 27, 2026				
SCALE				
1:1500				
CONSULTANT				
				
				
Hamilton Conservation Authority				
A Healthy Watershed for Everyone				
SALTFLEET CONSERVATION AREA				
SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN				
GENERAL PLAN				
DESIGN	EEG		PROJECT No.	22051
CHECKED	EG		SHEET No.	1



date: 2026/04/08

1	20260227	EEG	60% DESIGN SUBMISSION
No.	DATE	BY	REVISIONS

DATE:
February 27, 2026

SCALE:
HORIZONTAL - 1:1500

CONSULTANT **water's edge**
ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS TEAM

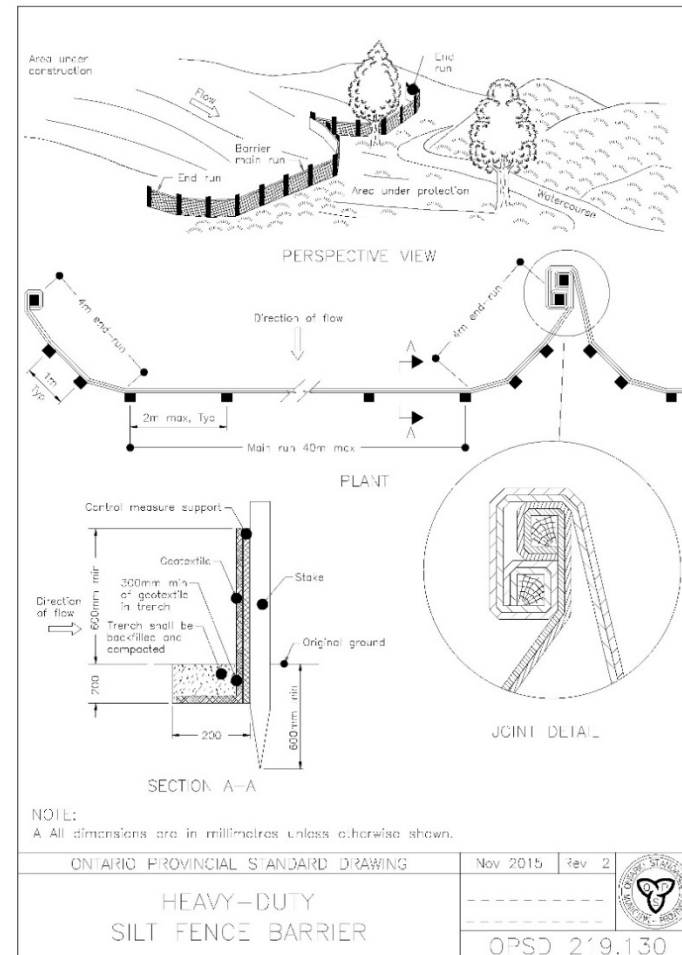


A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

SALTFLEET CONSERVATION AREA
SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN

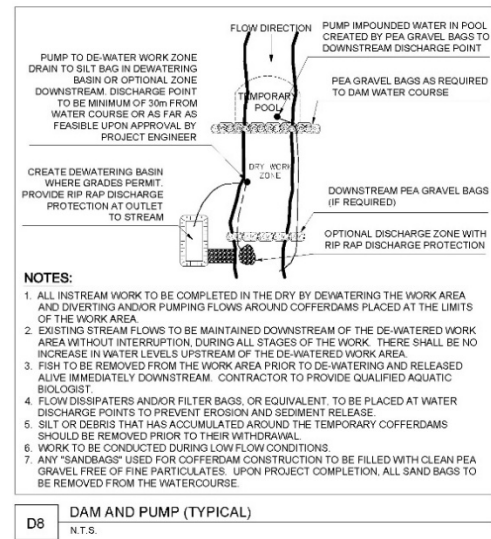
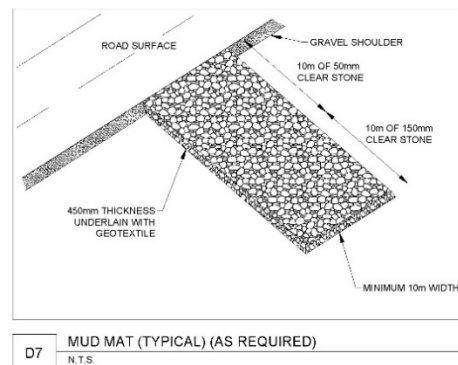
EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN

DESIGN	PROJECT No.
EEG	22051
CHECKED	SHEET No.
EG	2



- CONSTRUCTION ACCESS:**
1. ACCESS TO THE CONSTRUCTION SITE WILL BE OFF RIDGE ROAD.
 2. SHRUBS TO BE TRIMMED OR REMOVED FROM ACCESS AS APPROVED BY CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR AND MUNICIPALITY.
 3. SAFETY FENCE TO BE ERCTED AS REQUIRED TO LIMIT PUBLIC ACCESS TO TEMPORARY CONSTRUCTION ACCESS ROAD AND CONSTRUCTION SITE.
 4. SITE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY WILL INCLUDE THE REPAIR OF THE CREEK ACCESS AND BLOSSER AREA AS PER DESIGN.
 5. UPON COMPLETION OF THE CONSTRUCTION, THE ACCESS WAY IS TO BE REPAIRED TO EXISTING CONDITIONS OR BETTER.
 6. CONTRACTOR TO MEET ON SITE WITH THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR, CONSERVATION AUTHORITY STAFF AND MUNICIPAL STAFF PRIOR TO INITIATION OF CONSTRUCTION.
 7. ROAD TO BE KEPT FREE OF DIRT AND DEBRIS, CONTRACTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ROAD CLEANING WHEN AND IF REQUIRED.

- ### CONSTRUCTION SEQUENCING AND STAGING NOTES:
1. CONTRACTOR TO NOTIFY MUNICIPALITY, AGENCIES AND CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR TWO (2) DAYS PRIOR TO ACTUAL CONSTRUCTION.
 2. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL PROVIDE GENERAL ARRANGEMENT DRAWINGS AND A STAGING PLAN FOR THE PROJECT TO DEMONSTRATE METHODOLOGY AND DEMONSTRATE THAT THE APPROACH CAN ADEQUATELY ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS (VARYING FLOW CONDITIONS, CHANNEL CAPACITIES, WET WEATHER RESPONSE).
 3. CONSTRUCTION STAGING MUST HAVE REGARD FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECTS OF THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION. THIS WILL ENSURE THAT AMPLE TIME IS PROVIDED TO ENSURE THE TIMELY ARRIVAL OF REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS AND THE APPROPRIATE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES.
 4. INSTALL CONSTRUCTION FENCING AND SILT FENCING AS PER SPECIFICATIONS. FENCE TO BE INSTALLED PRIOR TO CONSTRUCTION AND SHALL BE THE LIMIT OF CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY.
 5. INSTALL MUD MAT AT ENTRANCES TO SITE AS PER DETAIL D7.
 6. REMOVE AND DISPOSE OF EXISTING VEGETATION WITHIN THE WORK AREA.
 7. PLACE DAM & PUMP CONTROLS IN DESIGNATED AREA.
 8. REMOVE AND STOCKPILE TOPSOIL ALONG PROPOSED BERM.
 9. SUPPLY AND PLACE ENGINEERED FILL FOR BERM.
 10. SUPPLY AND PLACE OUTLET STRUCTURES AND OUTFALL STONE.
 11. GRADE AND SHAPE WETLANDS.
 12. ALL EXCESS MATERIAL STOCKPILED ON SITE TO BE USED IN BERMS.
 13. COMPLETE SLOPING AND PLANTING AS PER APPROVED PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS.
 14. STABILIZE ALL SLOPES AS NOTED ON PLAN.
 15. REMOVE DAM & PUMP CONTROLS
 16. REMOVE ANY EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROLS ONCE ALL VEGETATION HAS BECOME SUFFICIENTLY ESTABLISHED.

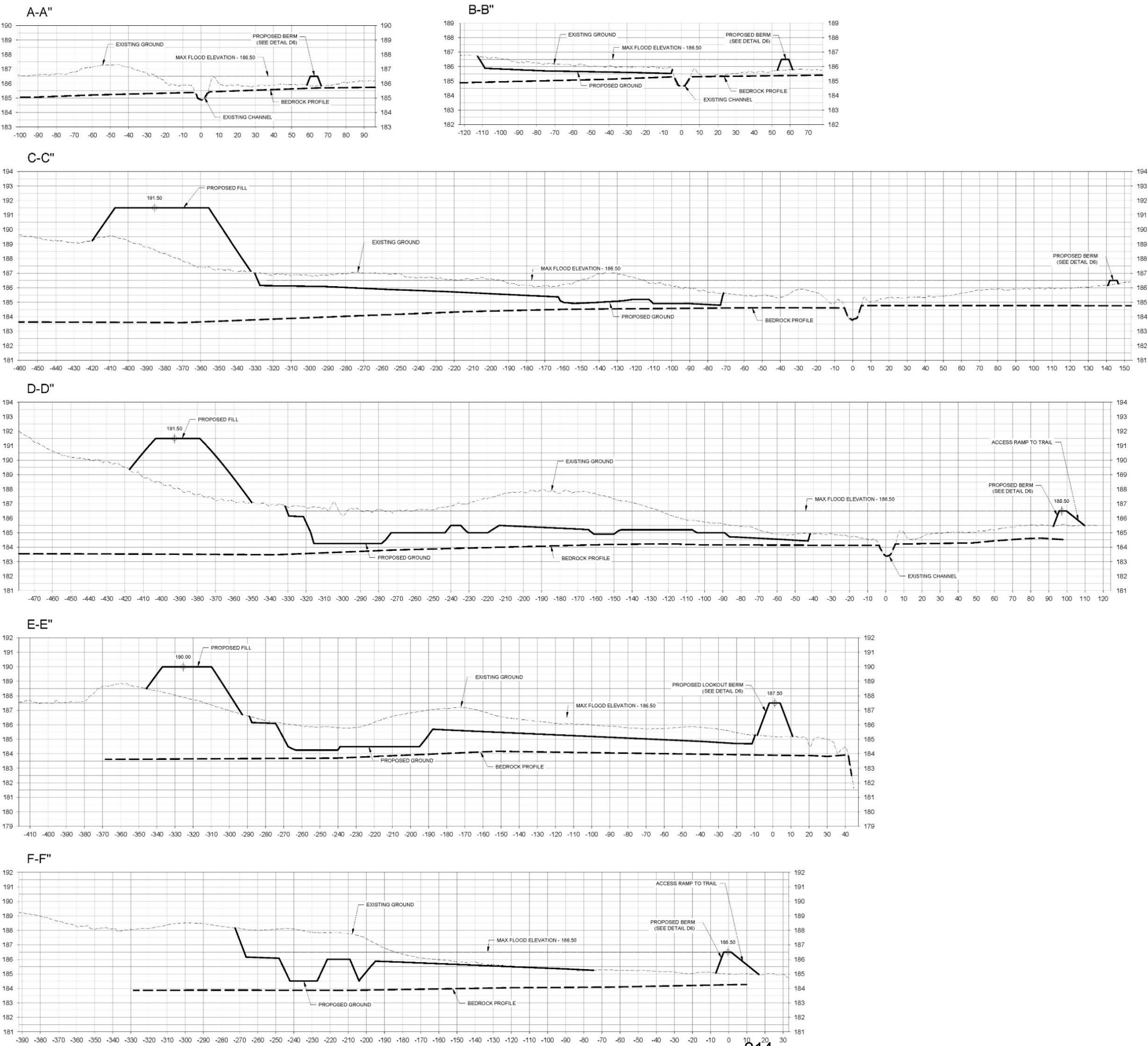


- ## EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL STRATEGY
1. PRIOR TO COMMENCEMENT OF CONSTRUCTION, THE CONTRACTOR SHALL SUBMIT A DETAILED SCHEDULE AND WORK PLAN FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR AND EXTERNAL AGENCIES AS REQUIRED, INDICATING HOW HE WILL IMPLEMENT SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROLS, AND HOW HE WILL CONTROL/DIVERT CREEK FLOWS AROUND OR THROUGH THE CONSTRUCTION AREA.
 2. SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROL MEASURES MUST BE IMPLEMENTED PRIOR TO WORK, AND MAINTAINED DURING THE WORK PHASE, TO PREVENT ENTRY OF SEDIMENT INTO THE WATER OR RE-SUSPENDED SEDIMENT.
 3. ANY STOCKPILED MATERIALS SHOULD BE STORED AND STABILIZED AWAY FROM THE WATER. EXCESS MATERIAL SHALL BE REMOVED IMMEDIATELY FROM THE CHANNEL AREA AND TEMPORARILY STOCKPILED IN SUITABLE LOCATIONS IDENTIFIED BY THE DESIGN DRAWINGS AND ON-SITE AREAS APPROVED BY THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR.
 4. ALL WORK IS TO BE PERFORMED DURING LOW FLOW CONDITIONS AND WORK IS NOT TO BE INITIATED WHEN WEATHER FORECASTS SUGGEST EXTENSIVE RAIN.
 5. THE CONSTRUCTION ZONE IS TO BE ISOLATED FROM ADJACENT STREAM FLOWS USING A DAM & PUMP TECHNIQUE AND BY USING ADEQUATE SILT FENCING, STONE OR ANY OTHER METHOD AS APPROVED BY THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR.
 6. ALL WORK IS TO BE COMPLETED AS EXPEDITIOUSLY AS POSSIBLE AND ANY WORK THAT HAS BEEN INITIATED MUST BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE WORKING DAY. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, THEN THE CONTRACTOR MUST ENSURE, TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR, THAT THE WORK SITE IS ADEQUATELY STABILIZED.
 7. ONCE EACH GRADING COMPONENT OF THE PROJECT HAS BEEN COMPLETED BY THE CONTRACTOR, THE SITE IS TO BE REVEGETATED AS PER THE PLANS AND STABILIZED.
 8. ANY EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROLS ARE TO BE REMOVED AT THE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT AFTER A JOINT INSPECTION BY THE CONTRACTOR AND CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR.
 9. ANY DEVIATIONS FROM THE APPROVED STRATEGY MUST BE APPROVED BY THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR.
 10. CONTRACTOR TO AVOID ANY UNNECESSARY DISRUPTION OF THE EXISTING CHANNEL.
 11. SEDIMENT LADEN DEWATERING DISCHARGE SHOULD BE PUMPED TO A SETTLING BASIN OR FILTERING SYSTEM RIMMAY AWAY FROM THE WATERCOURSE AND ALLOWED TO SETTLE AND/OR FILTER THROUGH THE RIPARIAN VEGETATION BEFORE RE-ENTERING THE WATERCOURSE DOWNSTREAM OF THE CONSTRUCTION AREA.

DRAFT

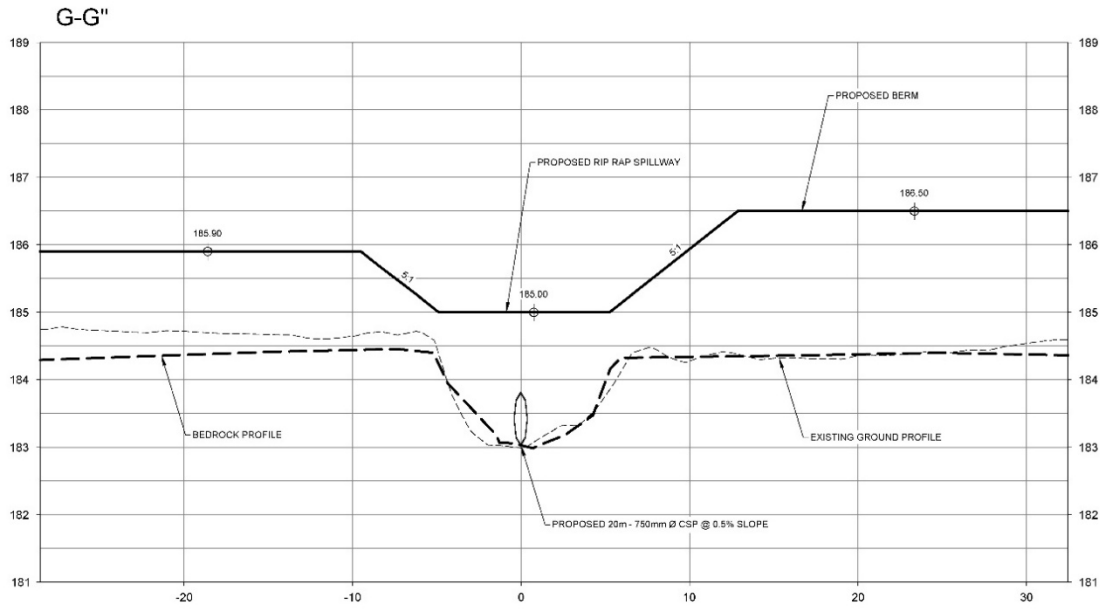
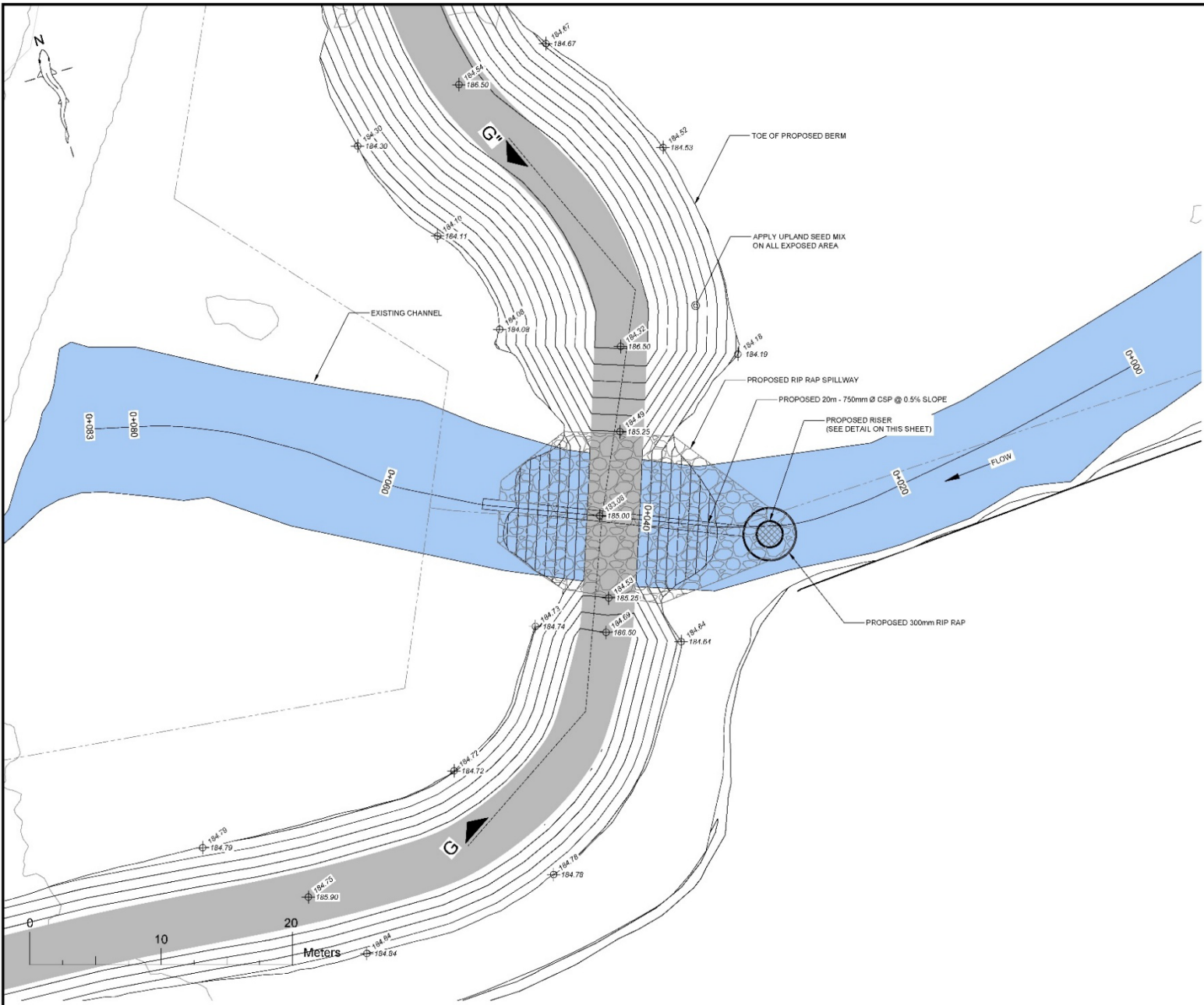
date: 2026/04/08

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No.	DATE	BY	REVISIONS
DATE February 27, 2026			
SCALE: HORIZONTAL - 1:1500			
CONSULTANT			
			
 Hamilton Conservation Authority			
A Healthy Watershed for Everyone			
SALTFLILET CONSERVATION AREA SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN			
EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL DETAILS			
DESIGN		PROJECT No.	
EEG		22051	
CHECKED		SHEET No.	
EG		3	

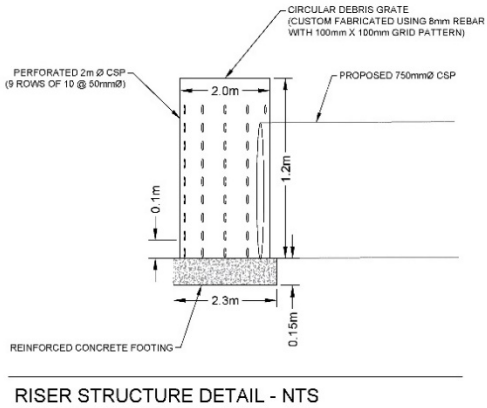
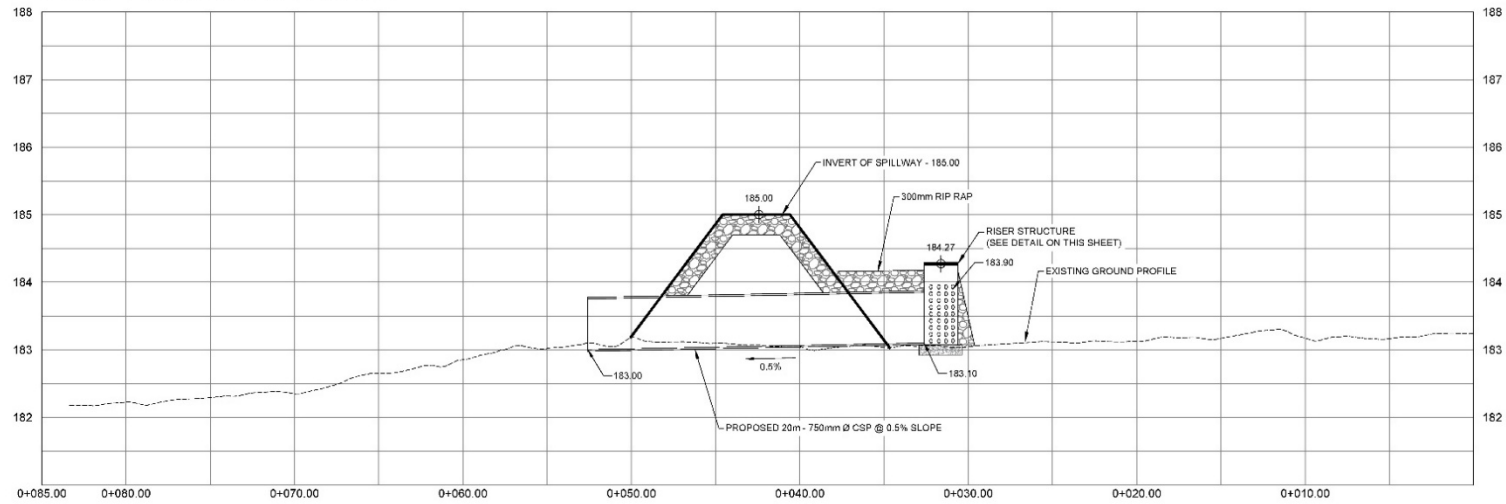


DRAFT
date: 2026/04/08

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No.	DATE	BY	REVISIONS									
DATE: February 27, 2026												
SCALE: HORIZONTAL - 1:1000 VERTICAL - 1:800												
CONSULTANT												
 water's edge ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS TEAM  Hamilton Conservation Authority A Healthy Watershed for Everyone SALTFLEET CONSERVATION AREA SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN CROSS SECTIONS <table><tr><td>DESIGN</td><td>EEG</td><td>PROJECT No.</td><td>22051</td></tr><tr><td>CHECKED</td><td>EG</td><td>SHEET No.</td><td>12</td></tr></table>					DESIGN	EEG	PROJECT No.	22051	CHECKED	EG	SHEET No.	12
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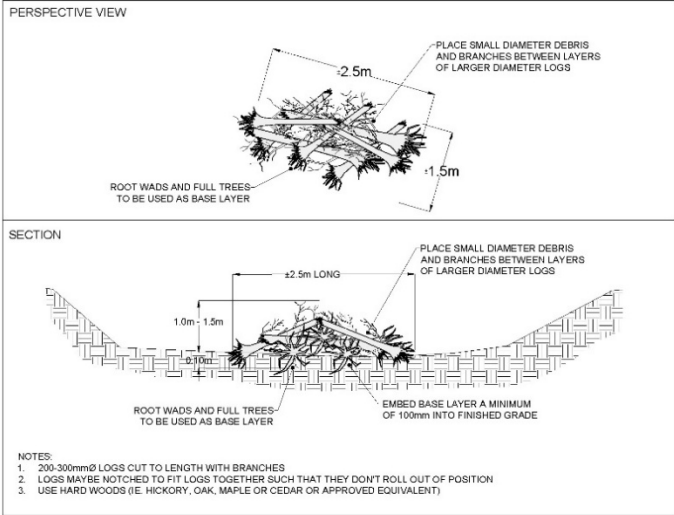


OUTLET STRUCUTRE PROFILE

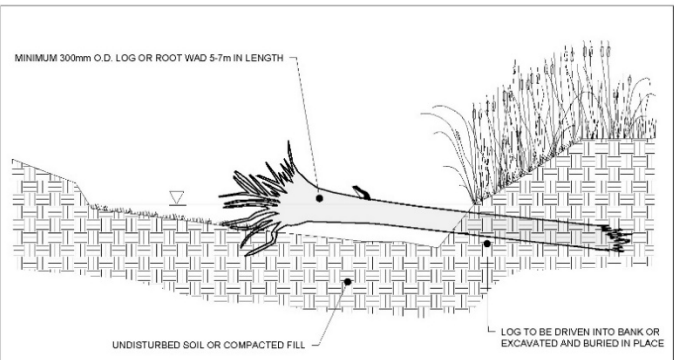


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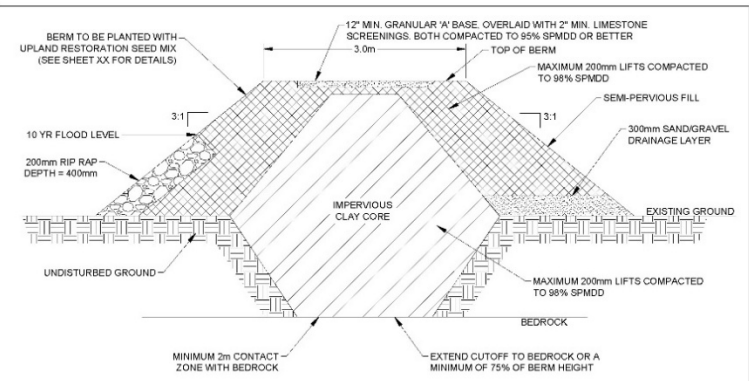
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CONSULTANT					
 ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS TEAM USA					
 Hamilton Conservation Authority					
A Healthy Watershed for Everyone					
SALTFLEET CONSERVATION AREA SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN					
OUTLET STRUCTURE					
DESIGN		PROJECT No.		22051	
EEG					
CHECKED		SHEET No.		13	
EG					



D2 WOODY DEBRIS DETAIL
N.T.S.



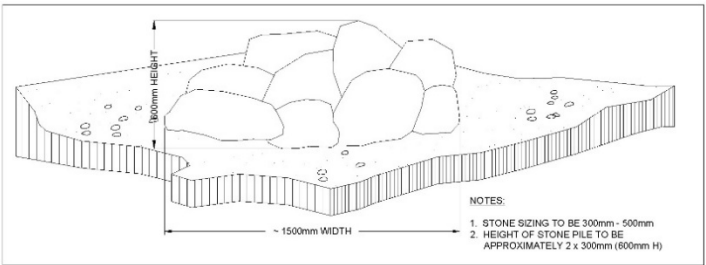
D4 SUNNING LOG
N.T.S.



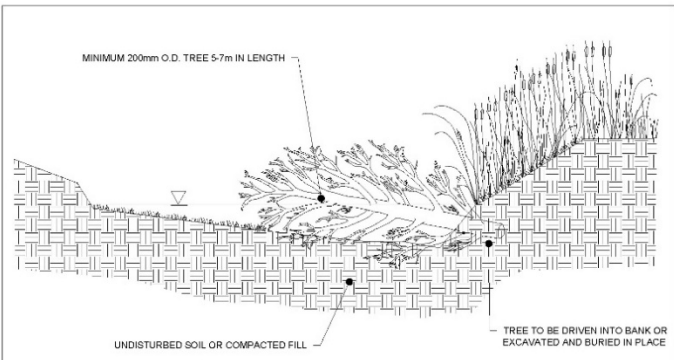
D6 BERM (TYPICAL)
N.T.S.

D50 - STONE SIZING GRADATION 500mm RIFFLESTONE (mm)	
800 - 900	10%
700 - 800	10%
600 - 700	15%
500 - 600	15
400 - 500	10%
300 - 400	5%
150 - 300	5%
< 150	5%
Granular "B" TYPE I	25%
SUM	100%

NATIVE BANK MATERIAL TO BE MIXED WITH GRANULAR B TO FILL INTERSTITIAL VOIDS



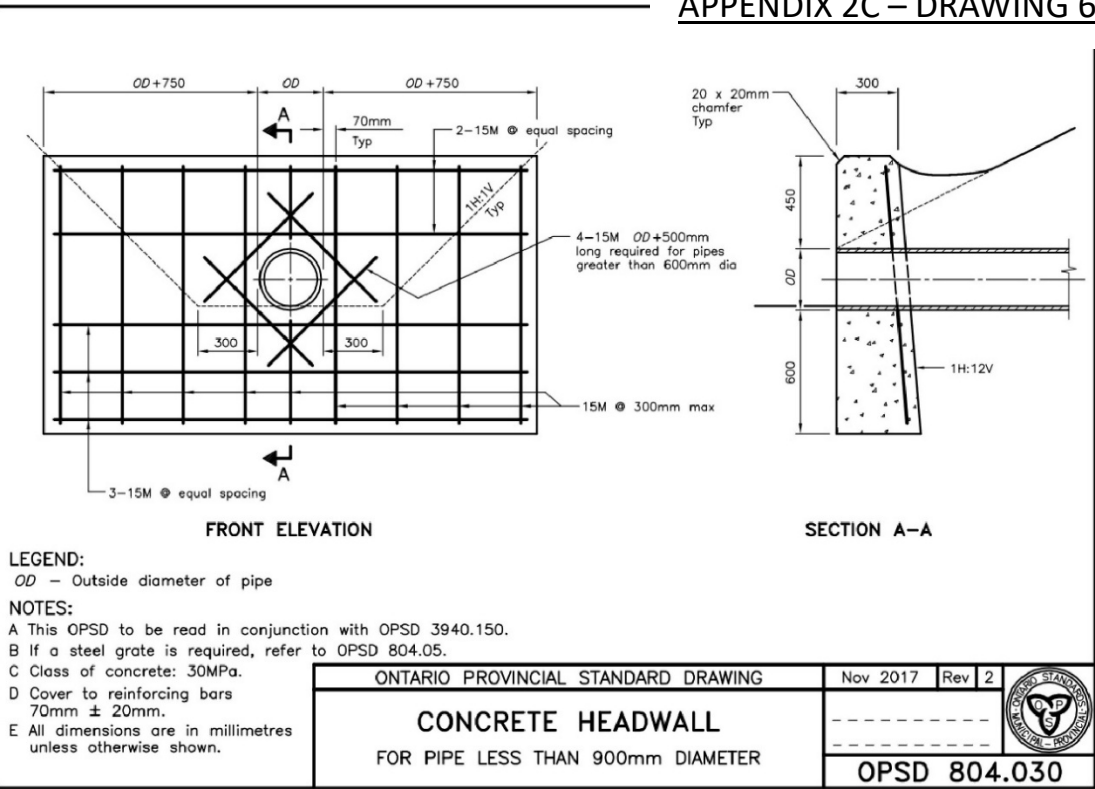
D3 STONE PILE (TYPICAL)
N.T.S.



D5 TREE HABITAT
N.T.S.

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL NOTE:

1. THE EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL STRATEGIES OUTLINED ON THE PLANS ARE NOT STATIC AND MAY NEED TO BE UPGRADED/AMENDED AS SITE CONDITIONS CHANGE TO MINIMIZE SEDIMENT LADEN RUN-OFF FROM LEAVING THE WORK AREAS. IF THE PRESCRIBED MEASURES ON THE PLANS ARE NOT EFFECTIVE IN PREVENTING THE RELEASE OF A DELETERIOUS SUBSTANCE, INCLUDING SEDIMENT, THEN ALTERNATIVE MEASURES MUST BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY TO MINIMIZE POTENTIAL ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS.
2. STAGING AND STOCKPILE AREA SHOULD BE MINIMUM 15 METRES AWAY FROM THE TOP OF BANK.
3. MATERIAL STORED IN THE STOCKPILE AREA SHOULD BE LESS THAN 2 METRES HIGH.
4. CONTRACTOR SHALL MONITOR THE WEATHER ON AN ONGOING BASIS. SHOULD AN UNEXPECTED STORM ARISE, CONTRACTOR SHALL REMOVE ALL UNFIXED ITEMS FROM THE REGIONAL STORM FLOOD PLAIN THAT WOULD HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO CAUSE A SPILL OR AN OBSTRUCTION TO FLOW, E.G. FUEL TANKS, PORTA-POTTIES, MACHINERY, EQUIPMENT, CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS, ETC.



FISHERIES TIMING WINDOW:

THERE SHALL BE NO IN-WATER WORK OR ACTIVITY FROM SEPTEMBER 30TH TO JULY 15TH.

NOTE:

ALL TREE REMOVAL TO OCCUR OUTSIDE OF BAT ACTIVE PERIOD (APRIL 1 - SEPTEMBER 30). IF THIS TIMING IS NOT FEASIBLE, A DETAILED ASSESSMENT OF AVAILABLE ROOST TREES IS RECOMMENDED TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN TREED AREAS PROPOSED TO BE IMPACTED.

CHANNEL OPENING NOTES:

1. AFTER STABILIZATION OF THE BANKS IS CONFIRMED, FLOW IS TO BE REINITIATED INTO CHANNEL UNDER SUPERVISION OF THE PROJECT FLUVIAL GEOMORPHOLOGIST.
2. CONTRACTOR SHALL ENSURE THAT CHANNEL REMAINS ISOLATED FROM FLOWS UNTIL THE BANK WORK IS COMPLETE.

AREA STABILIZATION:

EROSION CONTROL BLANKETS ARE TO BE PLACED ON THE BERM AND NATURAL CHANNEL AREA TO CONTROL EROSION AFTER SEEDING. ECB TO BE COIR 400 BLANKET OR APPROVED EQUIVALENT AND INSTALLED AS PER MANUFACTURER'S SPECIFICATIONS.

CONSTRUCTION SUPERVISION:

THE FLUVIAL GEOMORPHOLOGIST SHALL BE ON SITE OR AVAILABLE DURING ALL PHASES OF CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHANNEL AND IN-WATER WORKS.

GENERAL CREEK NOTES

1. BATTLEFIELD CREEK IS CLASSIFIED AS A COLDWATER SYSTEM WITH AQUATIC HABITAT WITHIN THE CONSTRUCTION AREA. AS A RESULT OF THESE CHARACTERISTICS A CONSTRUCTION TIMING WINDOW THAT PROHIBITS IN-WATER CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES BETWEEN SEPT 30TH AND JULY 15TH MUST BE RESPECTED.
2. ALL CHANNEL ACTIVITIES MUST BE COMPLETED IN THE DRY USING CONVENTIONAL DAM AND PUMP METHODS (IN-STREAM PLUG AND BYPASS PUMPING), OR A COMBINATION OF DIVERSION PIPING AND DAM AND PUMP METHODS.
3. NEW BANKS TO BE INTEGRATED INTO EXISTING BANK HEIGHT IN BOTH UPSTREAM AND DOWNSTREAM DIRECTIONS AND BE KEVED IN FOR 2-5M.
4. ANY FILL MATERIAL IS TO BE COMPACTED TO 95% SPD AND CONFIRMED WITH COMPACTION TESTING.
5. PROPER EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL MEASURES TO BE USED AT ALL LOCATIONS TO PREVENT SEDIMENT FROM ENTERING WATER COURSE.
6. BANKS TO BE REVEGETATED AS PER THE DESIGN DRAWINGS WITH COIR FABRIC, SEED AND STABILIZED WITH NATIVE VEGETATION AS PER SPECIFICATIONS.
7. CONTRACTOR TO RESTORE ANY DAMAGED AREAS TO THE EXISTING CONDITION OR TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE CLIENT AND CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR.

FISHERIES MITIGATION NOTES

1. FISH ARE TO BE COLLECTED AND RELOCATED FROM THE CONSTRUCTION AREA PRIOR TO THE BYPASS PUMPING/DIVERSION PIPING AND SUBSEQUENT CHANNEL DEWATERING, AND RELEASED ALIVE IMMEDIATELY DOWNSTREAM. ANY FISH COLLECTION AND RELOCATION SHALL BE COMPLETED BY A QUALIFIED FISHERIES PROFESSIONAL UNDER A SCIENTIFIC COLLECTORS PERMIT, ISSUED BY THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES.
2. THE CONTRACTOR WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THE CONTINUOUS OPERATION OF THE BYPASS PUMPING/DIVERSION PIPING, TO ENSURE THAT THE WATER FLOW WILL BE MAINTAINED CONTINUOUSLY DOWNSTREAM OF THE WORK AREA (DURING ALL STAGES OF THE WORK), AND DISCHARGED BACK INTO THE CHANNEL USING A DIFFUSER/DISSIPATER TO ENSURE THAT THE RETURNING WATER DOES NOT SCOUR OR ERODE THE STREAMBED AND BANKS. BYPASS PUMPING/DIVERSION PIPING IS TO BE ADEQUATELY SIZED TO CONTROL A RANGE OF ANTICIPATED CREEK FLOWS. THE ANTICIPATED BASE FLOW RATE WITHIN THE CHANNEL DURING THE CONSTRUCTION TIMING WINDOW IS UNKNOWN AT THIS TIME.

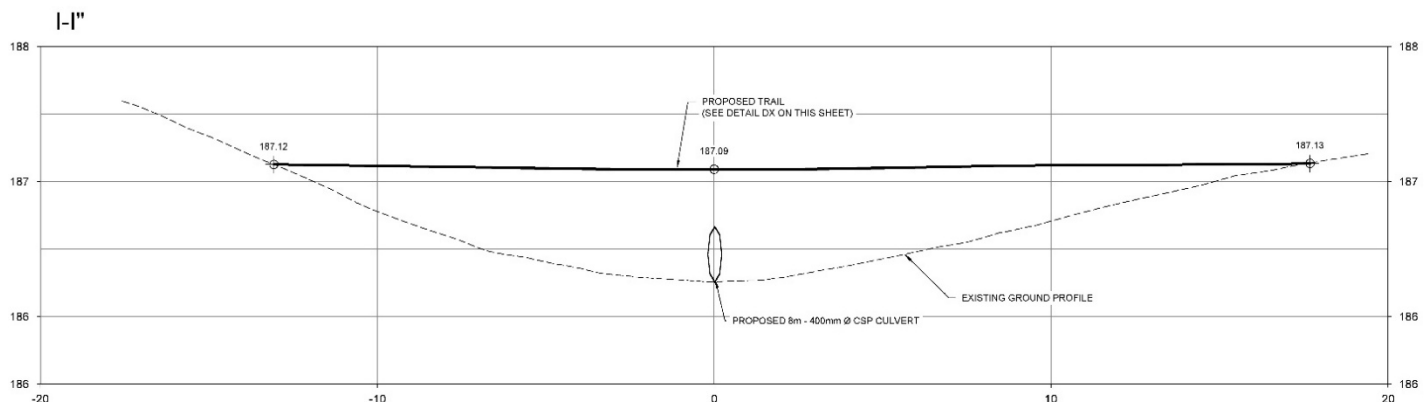
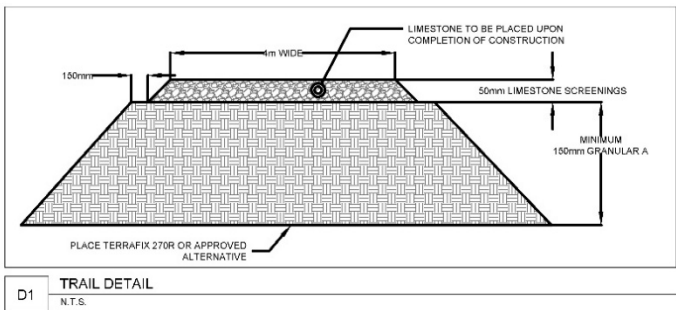
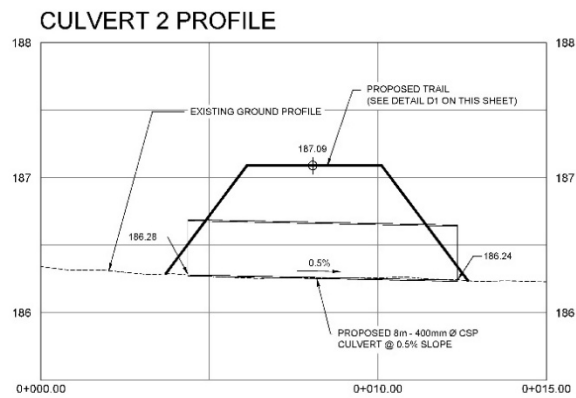
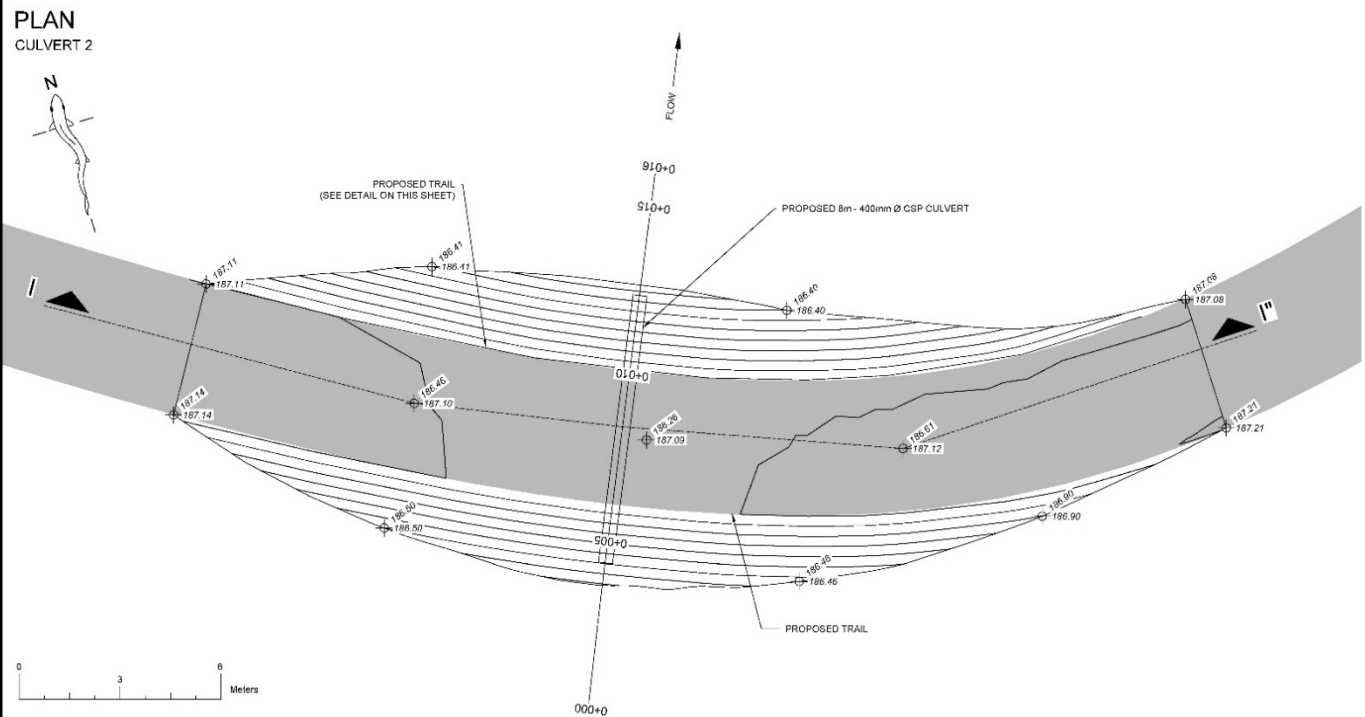
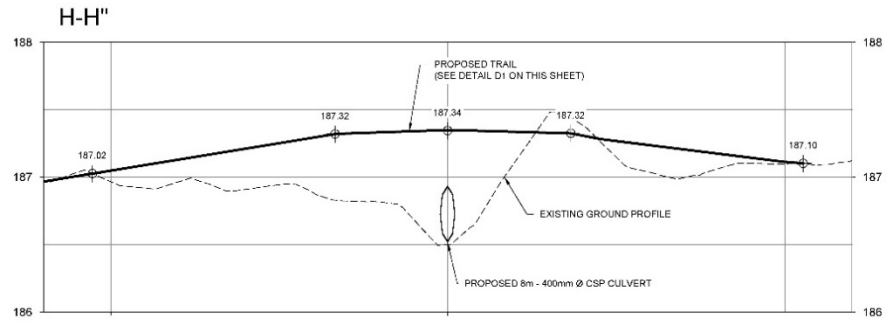
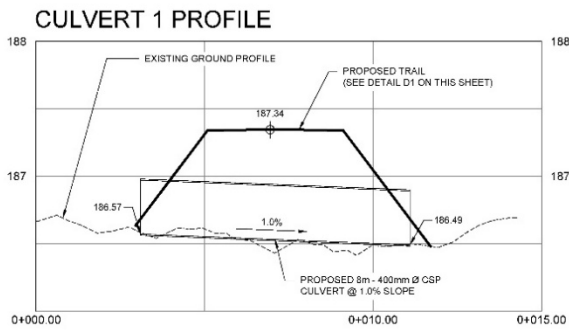
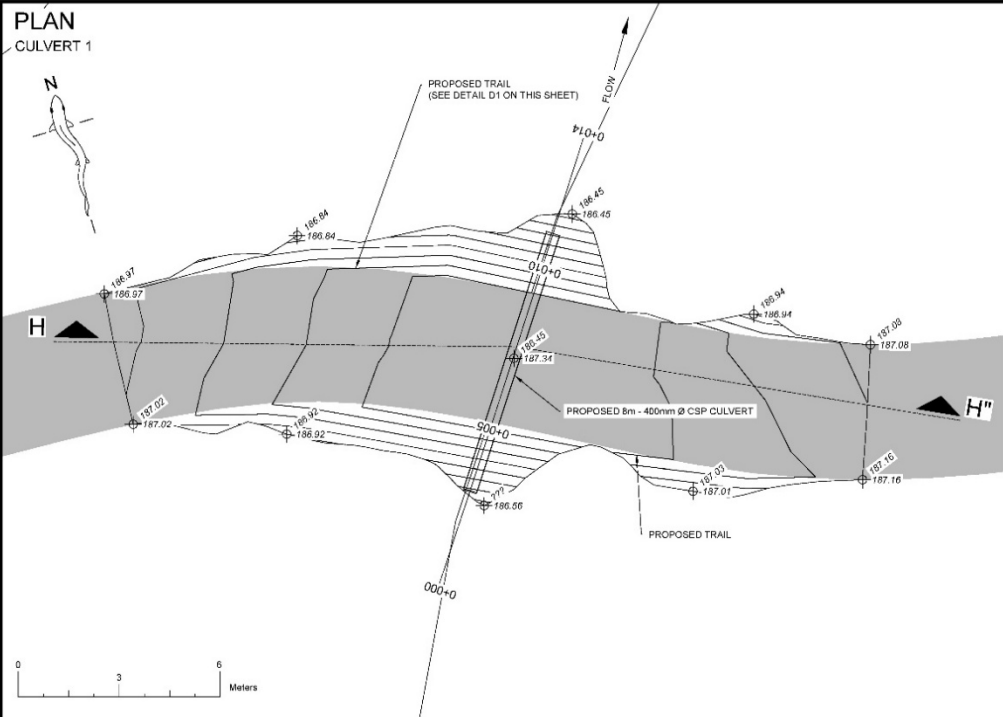
ENVIRONMENTAL NOTES

1. IN ORDER TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COMMON REED OR OTHER NON-NATIVE SPECIES, EQUIPMENT SHOULD ARRIVE ON SITE CLEAN AND FREE OF PLANT MATERIALS AND MUD.
2. REFUELLING ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE CONDUCTED IN AN ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE MANNER. THIS INCLUDES KEEPING THE FUELLING OPERATIONS 30 M SETBACK FROM THE WATER'S EDGE, DRAINAGE PATHWAY OR UNLESS OTHERWISE DIRECTED BY THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR. SPILL KITS AND SUFFICIENT AMOUNT OF SORBANT MATERIAL SHOULD BE AVAILABLE ON THE FUEL OR SERVICE VEHICLES.
3. ANY PART OF EQUIPMENT ENTERING THE WATER SHOULD BE FREE OF FLUID LEAKS AND EXTERNALLY CLEANED AND DEGREASED TO PREVENT ANY DELETERIOUS SUBSTANCES FROM ENTERING THE WATER.
4. ANY SPILLS RESULTING FROM REFUELLING OPERATIONS, HYDRAULIC LEAKS, MAINTENANCE ETC. MUST BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO THE CONTRACT ADMINISTRATOR WHO WILL THEN NOTIFY THE SPILLS ACTION CENTRE IF REQUIRED.
5. ALL MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF SITE PREPARATION AND PROJECT COMPLETION SHOULD BE OPERATED AND STORED IN A MANNER THAT PREVENTS ANY DELETERIOUS SUBSTANCE (E.G. PETROLEUM PRODUCTS, SILT, DEBRIS, ETC) FROM ENTERING THE WATER.
6. THE AREA OF DISTURBANCE WITHIN THE CHANNEL AND ON THE STREAMBANKS MUST BE KEPT TO A MINIMUM. HEAVY EQUIPMENT TRAFFIC WILL BE RESTRICTED TO ESTABLISHED TRAVEL PATHWAYS.
7. STOCKPILE AND STAGING AREAS SHOULD BE WELL REMOVED FROM THE WATERCOURSE AND CONTAINED BY APPROPRIATE SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROLS.
8. SEDIMENT AND EROSION CONTROL MEASURES SHOULD BE INSTALLED AND MAINTAINED THROUGHOUT THE CONSTRUCTION PERIOD. THE INSTALLED MEASURES SHOULD BE ROUTINELY INSPECTED TO ENSURE THAT THEY ARE FUNCTIONING AS INTENDED. DISTURBED SOILS SHOULD BE STABILIZED IMMEDIATELY WITH SUITABLE PLANTINGS/SEED/MAT. MAINTENANCE SHOULD CONTINUE UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE DISTURBED AREAS ARE SUFFICIENTLY STABILIZED THROUGH VEGETATIVE GROWTH.
9. TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN OR CROSSING CONSTRAINTS - SPAN STRUCTURE ONLY. SPECIFIC DETAILS TO BE PROVIDED BY CONTRACTOR.
10. WEATHER CONDITIONS SHOULD BE MONITORED TO ADEQUATELY PREPARE THE SITE FOR RAIN EVENTS.
11. AS CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES IN AND AROUND WATER IS CHALLENGING, WITH A SIGNIFICANT POTENTIAL FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECT, IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE CONTRACTOR ORGANIZE AN IN-WATER CONSTRUCTION TEAM WHICH WILL CONSIST OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL MONITOR, SUPERVISOR, SELECTED MACHINE OPERATORS AND GENERAL LABOURERS. THIS TEAM WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE CHANNEL INCLUDING THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE CHANNEL AND RE-GRADING OF THE STREAMBANKS AND FLOODPLAINS.

DRAFT

date: 2026/04/08

No.		DATE	BY	REVISIONS
1	20260227	EEG		60% DESIGN SUBMISSION
DATE: February 27, 2026				
SCALE:				
CONSULTANT				
water s edge ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS TEAM				
Hamilton Conservation Authority				
A Healthy Watershed for Everyone				
SALT FLEET CONSERVATION AREA SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN				
DETAILS				
DESIGN	EEG	PROJECT No.	22051	
CHECKED	EG	SHEET No.	14	



DRAFT
date: 2026/04/08

1	20260227	EEG	60% DESIGN SUBMISSION
No.	DATE	BY	REVISIONS
DATE:	February 27, 2026		
SCALE:	HORIZONTAL - 1:100 VERTICAL - 1:25		
CONSULTANT	 ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS TEAM		
	 A Healthy Watershed for Everyone		
	SALTFLEET CONSERVATION AREA SC-5 WETLAND DESIGN		
	TRAIL CULVERTS DETAIL		
DESIGN	EEG	PROJECT No.	22051
CHECKED	EG	SHEET No.	16

APPENDIX 3

Operational Revenue and Expenses - 2025

Devil's Punchbowl Operational Revenue and Expenses - 2025

Operation Revenues	Amount	% of Revenues
Admissions (Autogates)	\$ 90,906.05	87.5%
Other	\$ 13,009.57	12.5%
Total Revenues	\$ 103,915.62	100%
Operation Expenses	Amount	% of Expenses
Salaries – Wages and Benefits	\$ 91,977.70	80%
Contracts	\$ 7,899.60	6.9%
Office	\$ 7,128.76	6.2%
Taxes	\$ 2,135.72	1.9%
Maintenance	\$ 2,073.20	1.8%
Materials and Supplies	\$ 2,044.07	1.7%
Equipment	\$ 977.87	0.8%
Utilities	\$ 852.94	0.7%
Total Expenses	\$ 114,911.86	100%

APPENDIX 4

Visitor Data – Trail Counter Summary and Public Survey Results

Public Surveys – Summary of Key Comments and Resolutions



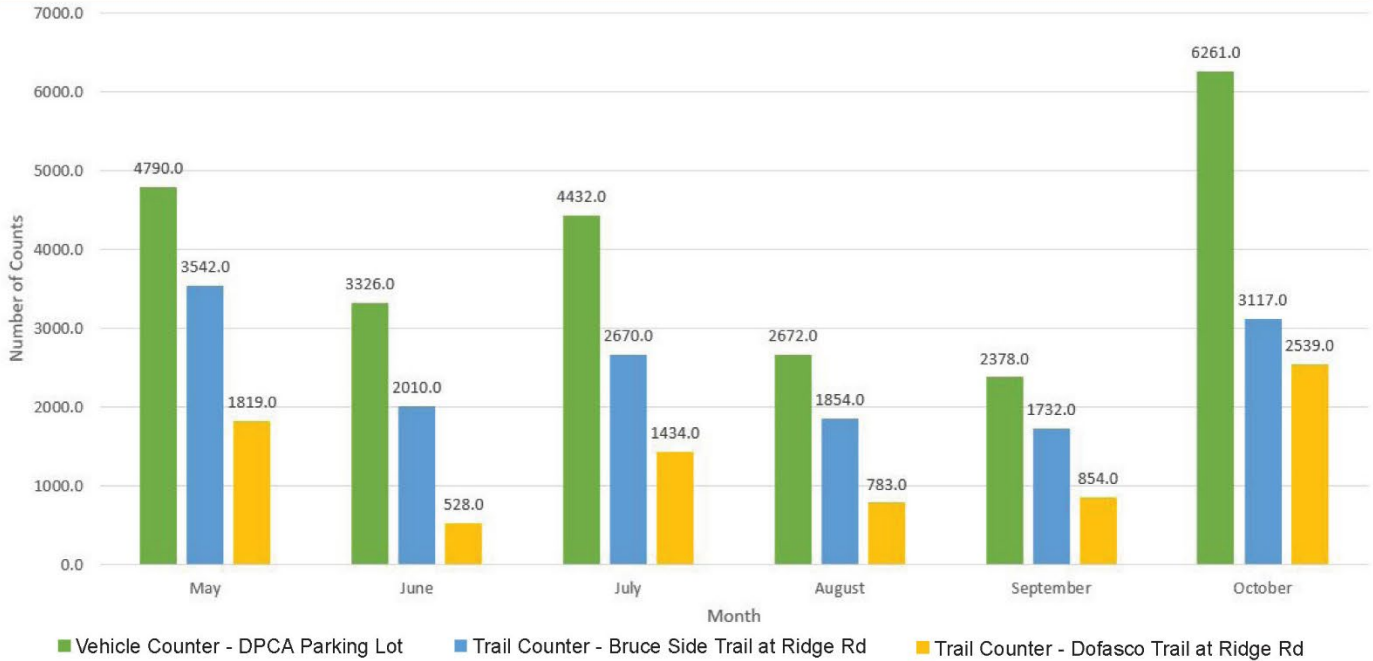
A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

Appendix 4

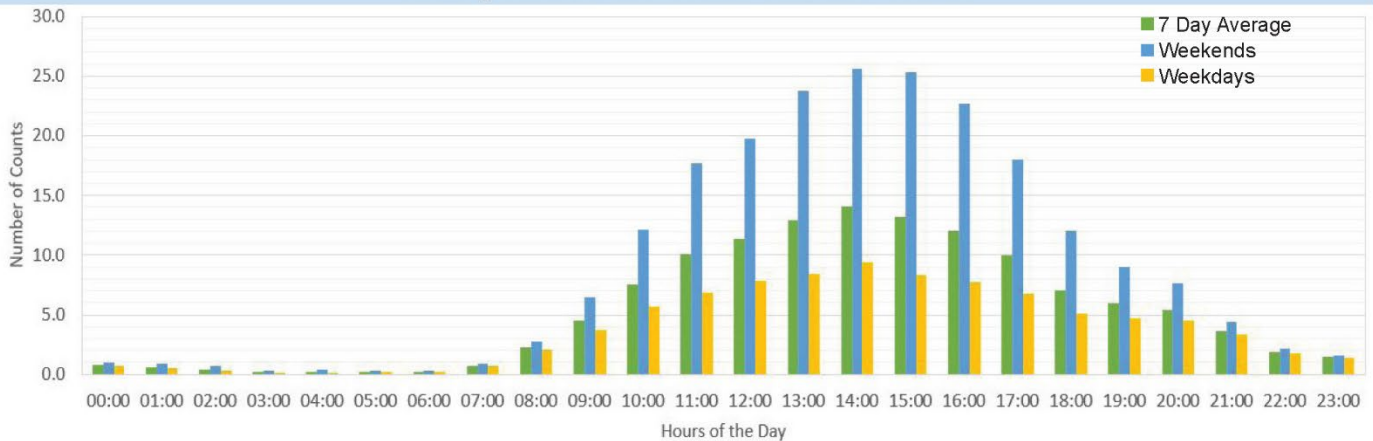
Devil's Punchbowl 2022 Trail and Vehicle Counters

Vehicle and Trail Counter Summary

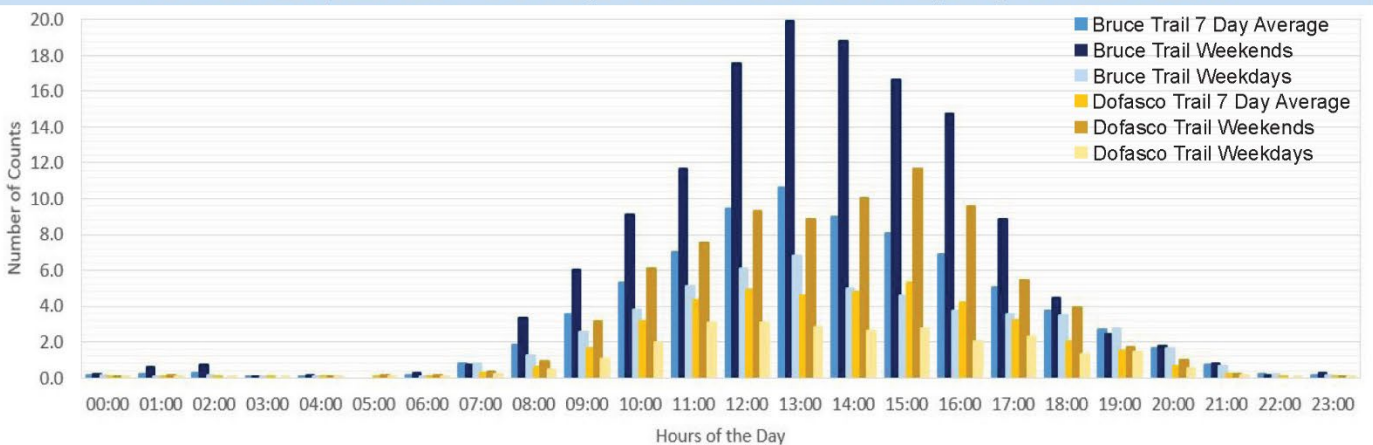
Devil's Punchbowl Vehicle and Trail Counters - Monthly Totals 2022



Parking Lot Vehicle Counter - 24 Hour Counts

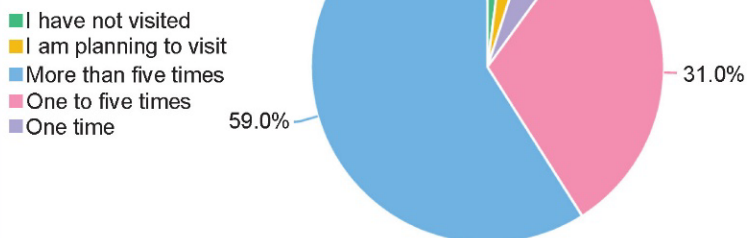


Trail Counters (Bruce Side Trail at Ridge Rd and Dofasco Trail at Ridge Rd) - 24 Hour Counts

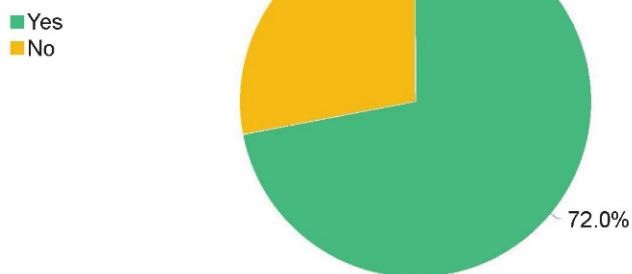


Devil's Punchbowl Survey Results Summary

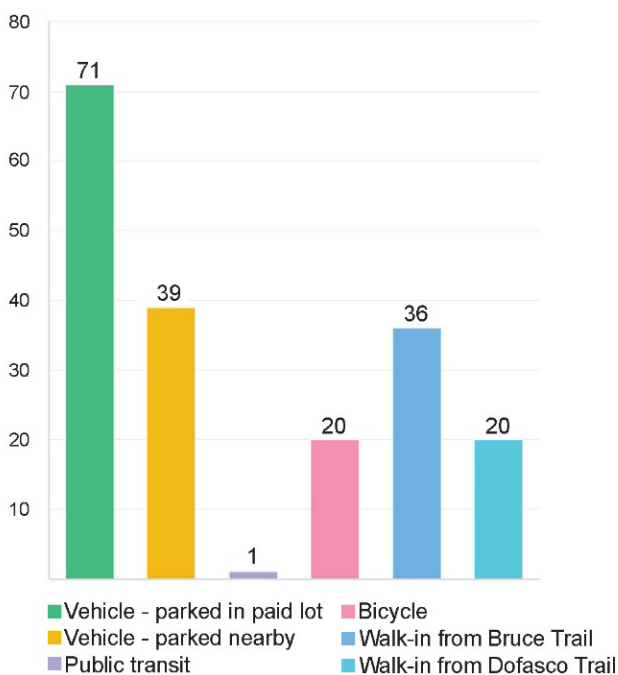
How many times have you visited Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area?



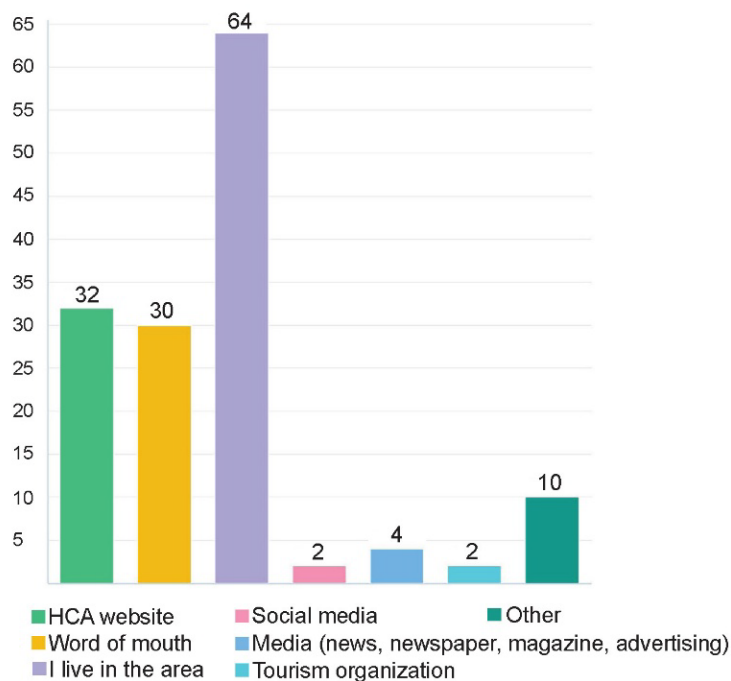
Are you an HCA Membership pass holder?



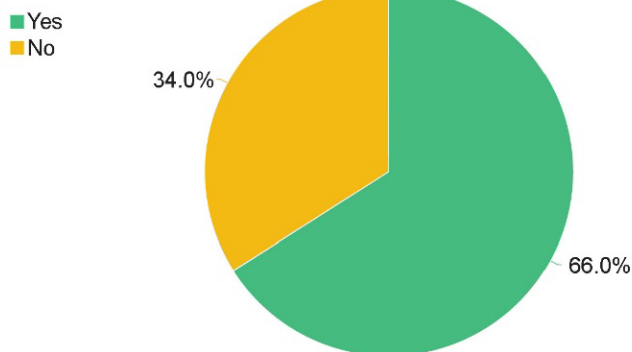
How did you travel to Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area? (Choose all that apply)



How did you learn about Devil's Punchbowl Conservation Area? (Choose all that apply)



Are you aware that the Dofasco 2000 Trail connects DPCA, Saltfleet and Vinemount Conservation Areas?



What was your favourite thing about your visit?

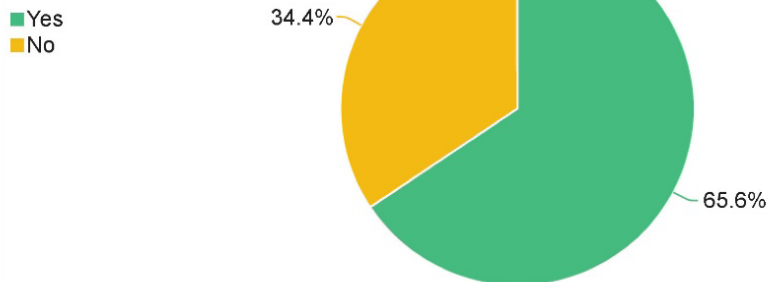
- The geological features
- The view
- Being in nature
- The accessibility
- The waterfall
- Different each time you see it
- The trails
- Visiting the market

Do you have any comments or suggestions for us?

- Improved directional signage
- More parking
- Connect to other trails
- Better access to market
- Access to washrooms
- More safety signage

DPCA Market Lands Survey Results Summary

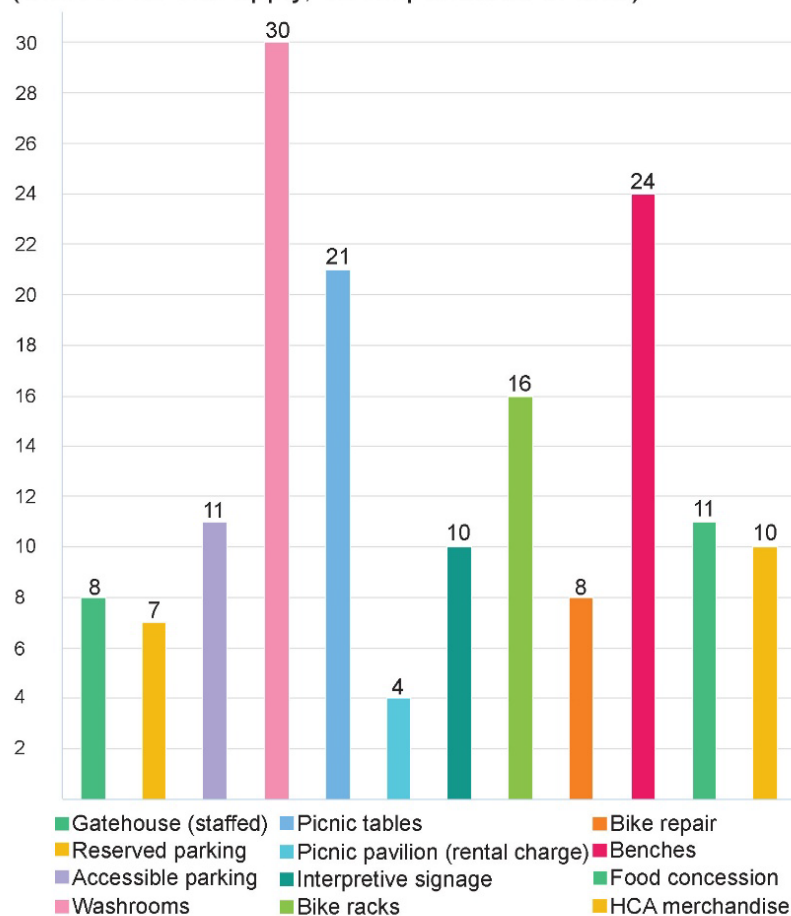
Do you visit the Punchbowl Market and Bakery from the conservation area?



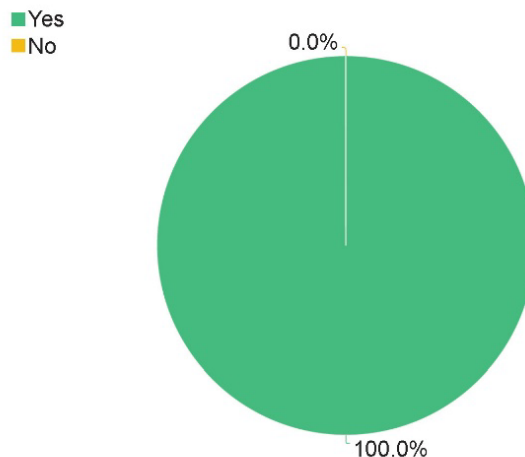
From the market site, would you hike or bike on the Dofasco Trail to Saltfleet Conservation Area?



HCA is considering the market lands to be the “gateway” to Devil’s Punchbowl Conservation Area. Along with expanded parking, what services would be important to you? (Choose all that apply, 32 respondents in total)



New wetlands are being planned for part of the market lands. Would you visit the wetlands while at the conservation area?



What is your favourite thing about your visit to the market and bakery?

- Supporting small business
- Delicious baked goods
- Local produce
- Friendly staff
- Nice treat after hiking
- Souvenirs

Do you have any comments or suggestions for us?

- Keep focus on nature and conservation
- Improved pedestrian paths along Ridge Road
- Opportunities for guided visits
- Include directional signage
- Make sure the area is accessible
- Garbage and recycling facilities

Public Surveys – Summary of Key Comments and Resolutions

Summary of participants: The surveys were made public on HCA’s website for any person who was interested in the project. There were posters on site at DPCA with a QR code and website link for the surveys, the surveys were promoted on HCA’s social media platforms, and links were sent by email to all HCA newsletter subscribers.

Key Comments Received	Solutions Included in the Plan
Question: “Have you ever tried to visit DPCA by vehicle, but could not get into the parking lot?”	
42% of respondents selected “yes”.	• Optimizing the existing parking lot at DPCA by formalizing the overflow parking area will almost double the parking capacity. • Adding a new entry/exit laneway to the existing parking lot will help traffic flow and reduce congestion at the entrance. • Adding new parking at the Market property will greatly increase capacity.
Most common themes in response to question: “Do you have any comments or suggestions for us?” (open ended) with regard to Devil’s Punchbowl Conservation Area.	
17% of respondents identified a need for more wayfinding and informational signage.	• Proposed addition of new trailhead signage at the existing DPCA parking lot and on the Market property. • Proposed addition of new trail wayfinding signage across properties on either side of Ridge Road. • Proposed addition of new safety and warning signage above and below the Punchbowl gorge. • Proposed addition of new interpretive signs across the properties with information about the conservation area and the ecology of the area.
17% of respondents identified the need for more parking spaces.	• Optimizing the existing parking lot at DPCA by formalizing the overflow parking area will almost double the parking capacity. • Adding new parking at the Market property will greatly increase capacity.
15% of respondents suggested that they are	• Paid parking at this area allows respondents access to other HCA areas for the same day, HCA is taking this into account in their visitor services marketing moving forward.

unwilling to pay for parking at the conservation area.	Adding more features on the south side of Ridge Road will offer visitors more to see and do when they visit, which could increase the perceived value of purchasing parking.
12% of respondents identified increasing safety precautions at the top of the Escarpment as a top priority.	- Proposed addition of new safety and warning signage above and below the Punchbowl gorge. - Proposed re-routing of the Bruce Trail side trail off of Ridge Road onto the Market property where possible. - Improvements to Ridge Road crossing at existing DPCA parking lot. - Ongoing maintenance and review of structures including the lookout platform, the Cross, fences and guardrails.
12% of respondents suggested that protecting natural areas should be seen as a top priority.	- Sustain DPCA's natural resource value by limiting activities to the zones outlined in this Plan. - Proposed addition of new signage below the Escarpment in the gorge clearly identifying natural areas off-limits to the public. - Proposed addition of new interpretive signage to educate visitors on the natural areas around them and why they are valuable. - Implementation of recommendations from Section 5.15 Natural Areas Recommendations. - Construction of the new wetland complex south of Ridge Road will create new habitat and protect the environment downstream by reducing flooding.
5% of respondents suggested an increase to the number of trails accessible from DPCA.	- Proposed addition of new signage highlighting connections to other natural areas and trails from DPCA. - Addition of new trails on the Market property south of Ridge Road once the wetland project has been completed. - Enhance and promote the connection between DPCA and Saltfleet Conservation Area by the Dofasco Trail.
Top 5 most popular responses to question: HCA is considering the market lands to be the 'gateway' to the Devil's Punchbowl. Along with more expanded parking, what services would be important to you? (Check all that apply).	

94% of respondents identified “washrooms” as important to them.	The addition of public washrooms is proposed for the existing buildings on the Market property south of Ridge Road.
75% of respondents identified “benches” as important to them.	- Rest areas with benches will be included in the development of new trails on the Market property once the wetland is completed. - Benches will be included near the building on the south side of Ridge Road after it is open to the public.
66% of respondents identified “picnic tables” as important to them.	Picnic areas will be included near the building on the property south of Ridge Road after it is open to the public.
50% of respondents identified “bike racks” as important to them.	Bike racks will be included near the building on the south side of Ridge Road after it is open to the public.
34% of respondents identified “accessible parking” as important to them.	- Accessible parking spaces will be included in the new parking lot on the Market property. - Accessible parking will be created at the existing DPCA parking lot as part of optimization.
Question: “From the market site, would you hike or bike on the Dofasco Trail to Saltfleet Conservation Area?”	
91% of respondents selected “yes”.	- The Dofasco Trail will be re-established to connect DPCA and Saltfleet after the completion of the new wetland complex south of Ridge Road. - Addition of new trails on the Market property once the wetland project has been completed will provide connections from the proposed parking lot over to the First Road East crossing. - Proposed addition of new signage highlighting connections to other natural areas and trails from DPCA.

Natural Inventory – Species List

- 5.1 Plants
- 5.2 Breeding Birds
- 5.3 Mammals
- 5.4 Butterflies and Dragonflies

Plant Species Inventoried

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
x	x	P-ACENEGU	Acer negundo	Manitoba Maple
x		P-ACESANI	Acer nigrum	Black Maple
x	x	P-ACEPLAT	Acer platanoides	Norway Maple
x		P-ACESACC	Acer saccharinum	Silver Maple
x	x	P-ACESASA	Acer saccharum	Sugar Maple
x	x	P-ACTPACH	Actaea pachypoda	White Baneberry
x	x	P-ACTRUBR	Actaea rubra	Red Baneberry
x		P-AESHIPP	Aesculus hippocastanum	Horse Chestnut
x	x	P-EUPRUGO	Ageratina altissima var. altissima	Common White Snakeroot
x		P-AGRGRYP	Agrimonia gryposepala	Hooked Agrimony
x		P-AGR_SP	Agrimonia sp.	Agrimony Species
x		P-ARGGIGA	Agrostis gigantea	Redtop
x		P-ALIPLAN	Alisma triviale	Northern Water-plantain
x	x	P-ALLPETI	Alliaria petiolata	Garlic Mustard
x		P-ALLTRIC	Allium tricoccum	Wild Leek
x		P-AMB_SP	Ambrosia sp.	Ragweed Speices
t	t	P-AQUCANA	Aquilegia canadensis	Red Columbine
x		P-ARANUDI	Aralia nudicaulis	Wild Sarsaparilla
x	x	P-ARCLAPP	Arctium lappa	Great Burdock
x	x	P-ARITRTR	Arisaema triphyllum ssp. triphyllum	Jack-in-the-pulpit
x	x	P-ASACANA	Asarum canadense	Canada Wild-ginger
x	x	P-ASCSYRI	Asclepias syriaca	Common Milkweed
x		P-AST_SP	Aster sp.	Aster Species
t	t	P-BARVULG	Barbarea vulgaris	Bitter Wintercress
x	x	P-BETPAPY	Betula papyrifera	Paper Birch
x		P-BIDFRON	Bidens frondosa	Devil's Beggarticks
x		P-BID_SP	Bidens sp.	Beggar-ticks Species
x		P-BRA_SP	Brassica sp.	Mustard Species
x		P-BROININ	Bromus inermis	Smooth Brome
x	x	P-CARCONC	Cardamine concatenata	Cut-leaved Toothwort
x		P-CARDIPH	Cardamine diphylla	Two-leaved Toothwort
x		P-CARALBU	Carex albursina	White Bear Sedge

Plant Species Inventoried (cont.)

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
x		P-CARCEPD	Carex cephaloidea	Thin-leaved Sedge
x		P-CARPLAN	Carex plantaginea	Plantain-leaved Sedge
t	t	P-CARPLAT	Carex platyphylla	Broad-leaved Sedge
x		P-CARVULP	Carex vulpinoidea	Fox Sedge
x		P-CARCORD	Carya cordiformis	Bitternut Hickory
x	x	P-CAUGIGA	Caulophyllum giganteum	Giant Blue Cohosh
x		P-CAUTHAL	Caulophyllum thalictroides	Blue Cohosh
t	t	P-CERCANA	Cercis canadensis	Eastern Redbud
x	x	P-CHEMAJU	Chelidonium majus	Greater Celandine
x	x	P-CICINTY	Cichorium intybus	Chicory
x		P-CIRLUCA	Circaea canadensis ssp. canadensis	Canada Enchanter's Nightshade
x		P-CIRVULG	Cirsium vulgare	Bull Thistle
x	x	P-CORALTE	Cornus alternifolia	Alternate-leaved Dogwood
x		P-CORFORA	Cornus racemosa	Gray Dogwood
x	x	P-CORRUGO	Cornus rugosa	Round-leaved Dogwood
x		P-CORSTOL	Cornus sericea	Red-osier Dogwood
x		P-CRA_SP	Crataegus sp.	Hawthorn Species
x	x	P-CYSBULB	Cystopteris bulbifera	Bulblet Fern
x		P-DACGLOM	Dactylis glomerata	Orchard Grass
x	x	P-DAUCARO	Daucus carota	Wild Carrot
x		P-DICCANA	Dicentra canadensis	Squirrel-corn
x	x	P-DICCUCU	Dicentra cucullaria	Dutchman's Breeches
x	x	P-DIPFUSY	Dipsacus fullonum	Common Teasel
x	x	P-DRYMARG	Dryopteris marginalis	Marginal Wood Fern
x		P-ELYCANA	Elymus canadensis	Canada Wildrye
x		P-ELYRIPA	Elymus riparius	Eastern Riverbank Wildrye
x		P-ELYVIVI	Elymus virginicus var. virginicus	Virginia Wildrye
x		P-ERIANNU	Erigeron annuus	Annual Fleabane
x		P-ERIPHPH	Erigeron philadelphicus var. philadelphicus	Philadelphia Fleabane
x	x	P-ERYAMAM	Erythronium americanum ssp. americanum	Yellow Trout-lily
x		P-EUOOBOV	Euonymus obovatus	Running Strawberry Bush
x		P-EUPPERF	Eupatorium perfoliatum	Common Boneset

Plant Species Inventoried (cont.)

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
x		P-ASTMACR	Eurybia macrophylla	Large-leaved Aster
x		P-EUTGRAM	Euthamia graminifolia	Grass-leaved Goldenrod
x	x	P-FAGGRAN	Fagus grandifolia	American Beech
t	t	P-FRAVEAM	Fragaria vesca ssp. americana	American Woodland Strawberry
x	x	P-FRAVIRG	Fragaria virginiana	Wild Strawberry
x	x	P-FRAAMER	Fraxinus americana	White Ash
x		P-FRAPENN	Fraxinus pennsylvanica	Green Ash
t	t	P-GALAPAR	Galium aparine	Cleavers
x	x	P-GERROBE	Geranium robertianum	Herb-Robert
x		P-GEUALEP	Geum aleppicum	Yellow Avens
x		P-GEU_SP	Geum sp.	Avens Species
t	t	P-GEUURBA	Geum urbanum	Wood Avens
x		P-GLEHEDE	Glechoma hederacea	Ground Ivy
x	x	P-HAMVIRG	Hamamelis virginiana	American Witch-hazel
t	t	P-HEMFULV	Hemerocallis fulva	Orange Daylily
x	x	P-HESMATR	Hesperis matronalis	Dame's Rocket
x		P-HIE_SP	Hieracium sp.	Hawkweed Species
x	x	P-HYDVIRG	Hydrophyllum virginianum	Virginia Waterleaf
x		P-IMPCAPE	Impatiens capensis	Spotted Jewelweed
x		P-IMP_SP	Impatiens sp.	Jewel-weed Species
x	x	P-JUGCINE	Juglans cinerea	Butternut
x		P-JUGNIGR	Juglans nigra	Black Walnut
x		P-LAC_SP	Lactuca sp.	Lettuce Species
x	x	P-LAPCANA	Laportea canadensis	Wood Nettle
x	x	P-LAPCOMM	Lapsana communis	Common Nipplewort
x		P-LEEORYZ	Leersia oryzoides	Rice Cutgrass
x	x	P-LEOCACA	Leonurus cardiaca ssp. cardiaca	Common Motherwort
x		P-CHRLEUC	Leucanthemum vulgare	Oxeye Daisy
x		P-LIGVULG	Ligustrum vulgare	European Privet
t	t	P-LINVULG	Linaria vulgaris	Butter-and-eggs
x		P-LON_SP	Lonicera sp.	Honeysuckle Species
x		P-LONTATA	Lonicera tatarica	Tartarian Honeysuckle

Plant Species Inventoried (cont.)

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
x	x	P-LOTORN	Lotus corniculatus	Garden Bird's-foot Trefoil
x		P-LYCUNIF	Lycopus uniflorus	Northern Water-horehound
x		P-LYTSALI	Lythrum salicaria	Purple Loosestrife
x	x	P-MAIRARA	Maianthemum racemosum	Large False Solomon's Seal
x		P-MALPUMI	Malus pumila	Common Apple
x		P-MEDLUPU	Medicago lupulina	Black Medic
x		P-MELALBA	Melilotus albus	White Sweet-clover
x		P-MELOFFI	Melilotus officinalis	Yellow Sweet-clover
x		P-MEN_SP	Mentha sp.	Mint Species
x	x	P-MONFIST	Monarda fistulosa	Wild Bergamot
x		P-MOR_SP	Morus sp.	Mulberry Species
x		P-PREALTI	Nabalus altissimus	Tall Rattlesnakeroot
x		P-GRA_SP	no data1	Grass Species
x		P-MOS_SP	no data2	Moss Species
x	x	P-OSTVIRG	Ostrya virginiana	Eastern Hop-hornbeam
x		P-PARQUIN	Parthenocissus quinquefolia	Virginia Creeper
x		P-PAT_SP	Parthenocissus sp.	Virginia Creeper Species
x		P-PARINSE	Parthenocissus vitacea	Thicket Creeper
x		P-POLHYDR	Persicaria hydropiper	Marshpepper Smartweed
x		P-POLHYDS	Persicaria hydropiperoides	False Waterpepper
x		P-POLPERS	Persicaria maculosa	Spotted Lady's-thumb
x		P-PHAARUN	Phalaris arundinacea	Reed Canary Grass
x		P-PHLPRAT	Phleum pratense	Common Timothy
x		P-PHRAUST	Phragmites australis	Common Reed
x	x	P-PICGLAU	Picea glauca	White Spruce
x		P-PICPUNG	Picea pungens	Blue Spruce
x	x	P-PILPUMI	Pilea pumila	Dwarf Clearweed
x		P-PIL_SP	Pilea sp.	Clearweed Species
x		P-PINRESI	Pinus resinosa	Red Pine
x	x	P-PINSTRO	Pinus strobus	Eastern White Pine
x		P-PLAMAJO	Plantago major	Common Plantain
x		P-PODPELT	Podophyllum peltatum	May-apple

Plant Species Inventoried (cont.)

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
x		P-POPDEDE	Populus deltoides ssp. deltoides	Eastern Cottonwood
x		P-POPTREM	Populus tremuloides	Trembling Aspen
t	t	P-POTRECT	Potentilla recta	Sulphur Cinquefoil
x		P-PRUAMER	Prunus americana	American Plum
x	x	P-PRUAVIU	Prunus avium	Sweet Cherry
x	x	P-PRUSERO	Prunus serotina	Black Cherry
x	x	P-PRUVIVI	Prunus virginiana	Choke Cherry
x	x	P-PYRCOMM	Pyrus communis	Common Pear
t	t	P-QUEALBA	Quercus alba	White Oak
x		P-QUEBICO	Quercus bicolor	Swamp White Oak
x		P-QUEMACR	Quercus macrocarpa	Bur Oak
x		P-QUERUBR	Quercus rubra	Northern Red Oak
x	x	P-RANACRI	Ranunculus acris	Tall Buttercup
x		P-RANRECU	Ranunculus recurvatus	Hooked Buttercup
x	x	P-RHACATH	Rhamnus cathartica	Common Buckthorn
x	x	P-RHUTYPH	Rhus typhina	Staghorn Sumac
x		P-RIBAMER	Ribes americanum	Wild Black Currant
x		P-RIBCYN	Ribes cynosbati	Prickly Gooseberry
x		P-ROBPSEU	Robinia pseudoacacia	Black Locust
x		P-ROSCARO	Rosa carolina	Carolina Rose
x	x	P-ROSMULT	Rosa multiflora	Multiflora Rose
t	t	P-ROSRUGO	Rosa rugosa	Rugosa Rose
x	x	P-RUBOCCI	Rubus occidentalis	Black Raspberry
x	x	P-RUBODOR	Rubus odoratus	Purple-flowering Raspberry
x		P-RUM_SP	Rumex sp.	Dock Species
x		P-SAL_SP	Salix sp.	Willow Species
x		P-SAMCANA	Sambucus canadensis	Common Elderberry
x	x	P-SAMRAPU	Sambucus racemosa ssp. pubens	Red Elderberry
x		P-SANCANA	Sanguinaria canadensis	Bloodroot
x		P-SCIVALI	Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani	Soft-stemmed Bulrush
t	t	P-SCISIBE	Scilla siberica	Siberian Squill
x		P-SIUSUAV	Sium suave	Hemlock Water-parsnip

Plant Species Inventoried (cont.)

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
x	x	P-SOLDULC	Solanum dulcamara	Bittersweet Nightshade
x		P-SOLALAL	Solidago altissima var. altissima	Eastern Tall Goldenrod
x		P-SOLCAES	Solidago caesia	Blue-stemmed Goldenrod
x		P-SOLCANA	Solidago canadensis	Canada Goldenrod
x	x	P-SOLFLEX	Solidago flexicaulis	Zigzag Goldenrod
x		P-SOL_SP	Solidago sp.	Goldenrod Species
x		P-SON_SP	Sonchus sp.	Sow-thistle Species
x		P-ASTCORD	Symphyotrichum cordifolium	Heart-leaved Aster
t	t	P-ASTERER	Symphyotrichum ericoides var. ericoides	White Heath Aster
x		P-ASTLATE	Symphyotrichum lateriflorum	Calico Aster
x		P-ASTNOVA	Symphyotrichum novae-angliae	New England Aster
x		P-ASTPUPU	Symphyotrichum puniceum var. puniceum	Swamp Aster
x		P-ASTUROP	Symphyotrichum urophyllum	Arrow-leaved Aster
x	x	P-TANVULG	Tanacetum vulgare	Common Tansy
x	x	P-TAROFFI	Taraxacum officinale	Common Dandelion
x		P-THADIOI	Thalictrum dioicum	Early Meadow-rue
x	x	P-TILAMER	Tilia americana	American Basswood
x		P-TORJAPO	Torilis japonica	Erect Hedge-parsley
x		P-RHURADI	Toxicodendron radicans	Poison Ivy
x		P-RHURARY	Toxicodendron radicans var. rydbergii	Western Poison Ivy
t	t	P-TRAPORR	Tragopogon porrifolius	Purple Goat's-beard
t	t	P-TRAPRPR	Tragopogon pratensis	Meadow Goat's-beard
x	x	P-TRIPRAT	Trifolium pratense	Red Clover
x		P-TRIPEPE	Trifolium repens	White Clover
x	x	P-TSUCANA	Tsuga canadensis	Eastern Hemlock
x	x	P-TUSFARF	Tussilago farfara	Colt's-foot
x		P-ULMAMER	Ulmus americana	American Elm
x		P-ULMRUBR	Ulmus rubra	Slippery Elm
x		P-URTDIDI	Urtica dioica ssp. dioica	European Stinging Nettle
t	t	P-UVUGRAN	Uvularia grandiflora	Large-flowered Bellwort
x		P-VERURTI	Verbena urticifolia	White Vervain
x		P-VIBACER	Viburnum acerifolium	Maple-leaved Viburnum

Plant Species Inventoried (cont.)

HCA staff	iNat	SPECIES_CODE	SCIENTIFIC_NAME_NHIC	COMMON_NAME_NHIC
t	t	P-VIBLANA	Viburnum lantana	Wayfaring-tree
x		P-VICCRAC	Vicia cracca	Tufted Vetch
x		P-VICTETR	Vicia tetrasperma	Four-seeded Vetch
t	t	P-VIOCANA	Viola canadensis	Canada Violet
x		P-VIOPUBE	Viola pubescens	Yellow Violet
x	x	P-VITRIPA	Vitis riparia	Riverbank Grape

Breeding Bird Species Inventoried

ebird Data	NAI	HCA Staff	HCA Staff	iNat	Species_Code	OFO_Scientific_Name	OFO_Common_Name
x					B-COHA	Accipiter cooperii	Cooper's Hawk
x					B-SSHA	Accipiter striatus	Sharp-shinned Hawk
	x				B-SPSA	Actitis macularius	Spotted Sandpiper
x					B-NSWO	Aegolius acadicus	Northern Saw-whet Owl
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-RWBL	Agelaius phoeniceus	Red-winged Blackbird
x					B-WODU	Aix sponsa	Wood Duck
x					B-MALL	Anas platyrhynchos	Mallard
	x				B-RTHU	Archilochus colubris	Ruby-throated Hummingbird
x					B-GBHE	Ardea herodias	Great Blue Heron
x					B-LEOW	Asio otus	Long-eared Owl
x	x (PO)	x		x	B-CEDW	Bombycilla cedrorum	Cedar Waxwing
x	x (PR)				B-CAGO	Branta canadensis	Canada Goose
x	x (CO)			x	B-RTHA	Buteo jamaicensis	Red-tailed Hawk
x					B-RSHA	Buteo lineatus	Red-shouldered Hawk
x					B-BWHA	Buteo platypterus	Broad-winged Hawk
x	x (CO)	x	x	x	B-NOCA	Cardinalis cardinalis	Northern Cardinal
x	x (PO)		x	x	B-TUVU	Cathartes aura	Turkey Vulture
x					B-BRCR	Certhia americana	Brown Creeper
x	x (PO)				B-CHSW	Chaetura pelagica	Chimney Swift
x	x				B-KILL	Charadrius vociferus	Killdeer
x					B-NOHA	Circus hudsonius	Northern Harrier
x	x (PO)				B-YBCU	Coccyzus americanus	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
x					B-BBCU	Coccyzus erythrophthalmus	Black-billed Cuckoo
x	x (CO)		x		B-NOFL	Colaptes auratus	Northern Flicker
x	x (PO)				B-RODO	Columba livia	Rock Pigeon
x					B-OSFL	Contopus cooperi	Olive-sided Flycatcher
x	x (PO)	x	x	x	B-EAWP	Contopus virens	Eastern Wood-Pewee
x					B-BLVU	Coragyps atratus	Black Vulture
x	x (PR)		x	x	B-AMCR	Corvus brachyrhynchos	American Crow
x					B-CORA	Corvus corax	Common Raven
x	x (CO)	x	x	x	B-BLJA	Cyanocitta cristata	Blue Jay
	x (PO)				B-BOBO	Dolichonyx oryzivorus	Bobolink
x	x (PR)	x	x	x (winter)	B-DOWO	Dryobates pubescens	Downy Woodpecker
x	x (PO)				B-HAWO	Dryobates villosus	Hairy Woodpecker
x	x (CO)	x	x		B-GRCA	Dumetella carolinensis	Gray Catbird
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-ALFL	Empidonax alnorum	Alder Flycatcher
x	x (PO)				B-LEFL	Empidonax minimus	Least Flycatcher

Breeding Bird Species Inventoried (cont.)

ebird Data	NAI	HCA Staff	HCA Staff	iNat	Species_Code	OFO_Scientific_Name	OFO_Common_Name
x	x	x			B-WIFL	Empidonax traillii	Willow Flycatcher
	x				B-HOLA	Eremophila alpestris	Horned Lark
x					B-RUBL	Euphagus carolinus	Rusty Blackbird
x					B-MERL	Falco columbarius	Merlin
x					B-PEFA	Falco peregrinus	Peregrine Falcon
x	x				B-AMKE	Falco sparverius	American Kestrel
	x				B-MOWA	Geothlypis philadelphia	Mourning Warbler
x	x (PO)	x			B-COYE	Geothlypis trichas	Common Yellowthroat
x	x (PO)				B-HOFI	Haemorhous mexicanus	House Finch
x					B-BAEA	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Bald Eagle
x	x (PO)				B-BARS	Hirundo rustica	Barn Swallow
	x (PO)				B-WOTH	Hylocichla mustelina	Wood Thrush
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-BAOR	Icterus galbula	Baltimore Oriole
x	x				B-OROR	Icterus spurius	Orchard Oriole
x					B-DEJU	Junco hyemalis	Dark-eyed Junco
x					B-NSHR	Lanius borealis	Northern Shrike
x	x				B-HERG	Larus argentatus	Herring Gull
x	x				B-RBGU	Larus delawarensis	Ring-billed Gull
x	x	x	x		B-RBWO	Melanerpes carolinus	Red-bellied Woodpecker
x					B-WITU	Meleagris gallopavo	Wild Turkey
	x				B-SWSP	Melospiza georgiana	Swamp Sparrow
x	x (CO)	x	x		B-SOSP	Melospiza melodia	Song Sparrow
	x (CO)				B-NOMO	Mimus polyglottos	Northern Mockingbird
x					B-BAWW	Mniotilta varia	Black-and-white Warbler
x	x (PR)	x			B-BHCO	Molothrus ater	Brown-headed Cowbird
x	x (PO)		x		B-GCFL	Myiarchus crinitus	Great Crested Flycatcher
x					B-TEWA	Oreothlypis peregrina	Tennessee Warbler
x					B-NAWA	Oreothlypis ruficapilla	Nashville Warbler
x					B-OSPR	Pandion haliaetus	Osprey
	x				B-NOWA	Parkesia noveboracensis	Northern Waterthrush
x	x (PO)				B-HOSP	Passer domesticus	House Sparrow
	x (PO)				B-SAVS	Passerculus sandwichensis	Savannah Sparrow
x	x (PO)	x	x	x	B-INBU	Passerina cyanea	Indigo Bunting
x					B-DCCO	Phalacrocorax auritus	Double-crested Cormorant
x	x (PO)				B-RINP	Phasianus colchicus	Ring-necked Pheasant
x	x (PO)				B-RBGR	Pheucticus ludovicianus	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
x	x (PO)				B-SCTA	Piranga olivacea	Scarlet Tanager

Breeding Bird Species Inventoried (cont.)

ebird Data	NAI	HCA Staff	HCA Staff	iNat	Species_Code	OFO_Scientific_Name	OFO_Common_Name
x					B-SNBU	Plectrophenax nivalis	Snow Bunting
x	x (CO)	x	x		B-BCCH	Poecile atricapillus	Black-capped Chickadee
x	x				B-BGGN	Polioptila caerulea	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
				x	B-VESP	Poocetes gramineus	Vesper Sparrow
x	x (PO)				B-PUMA	Progne subis	Purple Martin
x	x (CO)				B-COGR	Quiscalus quiscula	Common Grackle
x					B-RCKI	Regulus calendula	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
x					B-GCKI	Regulus satrapa	Golden-crowned Kinglet
x	x				B-BANS	Riparia riparia	Bank Swallow
x					B-EAPH	Sayornis phoebe	Eastern Phoebe
x	x				B-AMWO	Scolopax minor	American Woodcock
x	x (PO)				B-OVEN	Seiurus aurocapilla	Ovenbird
x					B-NOPA	Setophaga americana	Northern Parula
x					B-BTBW	Setophaga caerulea	Black-throated Blue Warbler
x					B-BBWA	Setophaga castanea	Bay-breasted Warbler
		x			B-HOWA	Setophaga citrina	Hooded Warbler
x	x				B-YRWA	Setophaga coronata	Yellow-rumped Warbler
x					B-BLBW	Setophaga fusca	Blackburnian Warbler
x					B-MAWA	Setophaga magnolia	Magnolia Warbler
x					B-PAWA	Setophaga palmarum	Palm Warbler
x			x		B-CSWA	Setophaga pensylvanica	Chestnut-sided Warbler
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-YWAR	Setophaga petechia	Yellow Warbler
x	x (PO)				B-AMRE	Setophaga ruticilla	American Redstart
x	x				B-BLPW	Setophaga striata	Blackpoll Warbler
x					B-CMWA	Setophaga tigrina	Cape May Warbler
x					B-BTGW	Setophaga virens	Black-throated Green Warbler
x	x				B-EABL	Sialia sialis	Eastern Bluebird
x					B-RBNU	Sitta canadensis	Red-breasted Nuthatch
x	x (PO)	x		x	B-WBNU	Sitta carolinensis	White-breasted Nuthatch
x					B-PISI	Spinus pinus	Pine Siskin
x	x (PR)	x	x	x	B-AMGO	Spinus tristis	American Goldfinch
	x				B-CCSP	Spizella pallida	Clay-colored Sparrow
x	x (PO)				B-CHSP	Spizella passerina	Chipping Sparrow
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-FISP	Spizella pusilla	Field Sparrow
x				x (winter)	B-ATSP	Spizelloides arborea	American Tree Sparrow
x	x (CO)				B-NRWS	Stelgidopteryx serripennis	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
x	x (PO)				B-EAME	Sturnella magna	Eastern Meadowlark

Breeding Bird Species Inventoried (cont.)

ebird Data	NAI	HCA Staff	HCA Staff	iNat	Species_Code	OFO_Scientific_Name	OFO_Common_Name
x	x (CO)		x		B-EUST	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	European Starling
x	x	x			B-TRES	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	Tree Swallow
x	x (PO)				B-CARW	<i>Thryothorus ludovicianus</i>	Carolina Wren
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-HOWR	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	House Wren
x	x (PO)				B-WIWR	<i>Troglodytes hiemalis</i>	Winter Wren
x	x (PO)	x	x	x	B-AMRO	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	American Robin
x	x (PR)				B-EAKI	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	Eastern Kingbird
x	x				B-WAVI	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>	Warbling Vireo
x	x (PO)	x	x		B-REVI	<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	Red-eyed Vireo
x					B-PHVI	<i>Vireo philadelphicus</i>	Philadelphia Vireo
x					B-BHVI	<i>Vireo solitarius</i>	Blue-headed Vireo
x	x (PO)				B-MODO	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>	Mourning Dove
x	x (VO)				B-WTSP	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	White-throated Sparrow

Mammal Species Inventoried

NAI	HCA Staff	iNat	Species_Code	Scientific_Name_NHIC	Common_Name_NHIC
x		x	M-NSTS	Blarina brevicauda	Northern Short-tailed Shrew
	x		M-COYO	Canis latrans	Coyote
x			M-VIOP	Didelphis virginiana	Virginia Opossum
x			M-WOOD	Marmota monax	Woodchuck
x			M-MEVO	Microtus pennsylvanicus	Meadow Vole
x			M-MINK	Neovison vison	American Mink
x			M-WTDE	Odocoileus virginianus	White-tailed Deer
		x	M-MUSK	Ondatra zibethicus	Muskrat
x			M-WFMO	Peromyscus leucopus	White-footed Mouse
x		x	M-RACC	Procyon lotor	Northern Raccoon
x	x		M-GRSQ	Sciurus carolinensis	Eastern Gray Squirrel
x			M-EACO	Sylvilagus floridanus	Eastern Cottontail
x	x		M-EACH	Tamias striatus	Eastern Chipmunk
x			M-RESQ	Tamiasciurus hudsonicus	Red Squirrel

Butterflies and Dragonflies Inventoried

NAI	HCA Staff	iNat	Species_Code	NHIC_Scientific_Name	NHIC_Common_Name
x			O-GRDA	Anax junius	Common Green Darner
x			L-LESK	Ancyloxypha numitor	Least Skipper
x			O-EBJE	Calopteryx maculata	Ebony Jewelwing
x			L-SPAZ	Celastrina lucia	Northern Spring Azure
x			L-SUAZ	Celastrina neglecta	Summer Azure
x		x	L-WONY	Cercyonis pegala	Common Wood-Nymph
x			L-CORI	Coenonympha tullia	Common Ringlet
x			L-ORSU	Colias eurytheme	Orange Sulphur
x		x	L-COSU	Colias philodice	Clouded Sulphur
x			L-ETBL	Cupido comyntas	Eastern Tailed Blue
x		x	L-MONA	Danaus plexippus	Monarch
x			O-FABL	Enallagma civile	Familiar Bluet
x		x	L-SSSK	Epargyreus clarus	Silver-spotted Skipper
x			O-EAPO	Erythemis simplicicollis	Eastern Pondhawk
x			L-SIBL	Glaucopsyche lygdamus	Silvery Blue
x			O-EAFO	Ischnura verticalis	Eastern Forktail
x			O-DTWH	Leucorrhinia intacta	Dot-tailed Whiteface
x			O-WISK	Libellula luctuosa	Widow Skimmer
x			O-TSSK	Libellula pulchella	Twelve-spotted Skimmer
x			L-VICE	Limenitis archippus	Viceroy
	x		L-WHAD	Limenitis arthemis arthemis	White Admiral
		x	L-GYMO	Lymantria dispar	Gypsy Moth
x			L-LWSA	Megisto cymela	Little Wood-Satyr
x		x	L-MOCL	Nymphalis antiopa	Mourning Cloak
x			L-COTO	Nymphalis l-album	Compton Tortoiseshell
x			L-TISW	Papilio glaucus	Eastern Tiger Swallowtail
x			L-BLSW	Papilio polyxenes	Black Swallowtail
x			L-COSW	Pholisora catullus	Common Sootywing
x			L-PHYPAS	Phyciodes cocyta	Northern Crescent
x			L-PECR	Phyciodes tharos	Pearl Crescent
x		x	L-CAWH	Pieris rapae	Cabbage White
x		x	O-COWH	Plathemis lydia	Common Whitetail
x			L-PESK	Polites peckius	Peck's Skipper
x			L-COMM	Polygonia comma	Eastern Comma
x			L-QUMA	Polygonia interrogationis	Question Mark
x			L-BAHA	Satyrium calanus	Banded Hairstreak
x			L-GSFR	Speyeria cybele	Great Spangled Fritillary
x			L-EUSK	Thymelicus lineola	European Skipper
x			O-BLSA	Tramea lacerata	Black Saddlebags
x		x	L-READ	Vanessa atalanta	Red Admiral
x			L-AMLA	Vanessa virginiensis	American Lady

APPENDIX 6

HCA Visitor Management and Vehicle Parking Review



Report

TO: Conservation Advisory Board

FROM: Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

RECOMMENDED & PREPARED BY: Gord Costie, Director, Conservation Area Services
Matthew Hall, Director, Capital Projects & Strategic Services
T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy CAO/Director, Watershed Planning & Engineering

DATE: October 10, 2019

RE: HCA Conservation Area - Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommend to the Board of Directors:

THAT Staff be directed to implement the following directions outlined in the report titled "HCA Conservation Area - Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review";

Recommendation #1 – HCA staff implement immediate parking enhancement opportunities at Artaban Road, Tiffany Falls, Devil's Punchbowl, Tew Falls and Westfield Heritage Village to optimize number of parking spaces, traffic flow and signage;

Recommendation #2- HCA staff undertake steps to consider expansion of the Artaban road parking lot through a Niagara Escarpment development permit;

Recommendation #3 – HCA staff undertake steps to establish an interim parking lot and trail connection to the Dofasco Trail for the Devil's Punchbowl at the Saltfleet Conservation Area;

Recommendation #4 – HCA staff further examine and explore additional options for safe visitor access to Tiffany Falls;

Recommendation #5 – HCA staff work with various agencies and partners such as City of Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton, Hamilton/Burlington Trails Council etc. to encourage transportation alternatives;

Recommendation #6 – HCA develop a marketing campaign and website enhancements to increase turnover and shorter term stays at areas with limited parking and encourage visitation to less frequented areas and when there is capacity;

Recommendation #7 – HCA staff ensure that the approved 10 year Masterplan Strategy incorporates detailed review of parking at all areas through the Master planning process.

BACKGROUND

In February 2019, a report titled “HCA Conservation Area Vehicle Parking Review” was presented to the Conservation Advisory Board with the following recommendation **“THAT HCA staff be directed to undertake the parking inventory as detailed in the report titled “HCA Conservation Area Vehicle Parking Study”, dated February 1, 2019.”** This recommendation was endorsed by the Conservation Advisory Board and approved by the Board of Directors at their March 7, 2019 meeting.

As noted in the report, the parking review will assess the supply at individual HCA areas and identify capacity gaps, provide potential recommendations for parking strategies that support these HCA areas while conserving the natural features of the area, and building upon the existing parking system.

A project steering committee comprised of senior HCA staff was struck and has met multiple times in the past months as part of finalizing the parking inventory assessment and obtained input from Conservation Area staff. From this work, the steering committee had identified steps that had already been taken to address visitor and parking issues by way of the following initiatives:

1. Implementing the shuttle service at Christie Lake to service Spencer Gorge Conservation Area on weekends April through October and examining each year how to make this more effective
2. Utilizing shuttles to bring visitors to the Telling Tales Festival event at Westfield Heritage Conservation Area by the third party organizers
3. Having HCA staff on site to meet with visitors to provide trail etiquette and information regarding other conservation areas to visit.
4. Increasing posting of trail signage and brochures highlighting the need to stay on the trail for visitor safety and conservation of the associated natural areas.
5. Working through HCA website and social media directing people to authorized access points and providing visitor education.
6. Working with the City of Hamilton regarding municipal No Parking and No Stopping signage and associated municipal by-law enforcement.

7. Installing automated access gates at conservation areas and installing trail and vehicle counters to provide information regarding the number of visitors accessing areas.
8. Allocating capital budget dollars to maintain internal HCA roads through tar and chip and/or paving.
9. Allocating capital budget dollars to improve various HCA parking areas with site specific measures such as clean up, line painting, creation of overflow parking and/or expansion
10. Re-opening both the Merrick lot and Artaban lot in the Dundas Valley

Following the review of work already undertaken, the committee then determined the next outcomes to be taken to further improve the situation. This report highlights five key visitor management and parking program areas with associated action items to be implemented.

Key Visitor Management and Parking Program Areas

1. Identifying High Use Conservation Areas through Parking review metrics
2. Addressing High Use Conservation Areas with Visitor and Parking Issues
3. Optimizing Mass Transit and Non-motorized Vehicle Access to Conservation Areas
4. Marketing and Communication
5. Master Planning and Operational Improvements

This review was undertaken with an understanding of our role as the area's leading environmental agency and our role as a landowner. The lands owned by the Hamilton Conservation Authority contain physical features, flora and fauna of national, provincial and local significance and these lands were acquired to preserve these features while developing these lands as appropriate for passive recreation and environmental education. In developing the five key program areas with the associated action items, the first priority is ensuring the environmental features of the lands are maintained and that the Hamilton Conservation Authority is leading by example as it relates to the management of our lands while ensuring positive and safe visitor experiences.

STAFF COMMENT

As noted in the background section above, five key visitor management and parking program areas have been identified with associated information and action items.

1. Identification of High Use Conservation Areas through Parking Review Metrics

HCA has approximately parking capacity for 7,322 vehicles in its parking areas, as shown in the table below with the vast majority at Christie Lake, our main event area and shuttle hub location for Spencer Gorge that can handle large numbers of cars.

Our major conservation areas generally have adequate capacity for current visitation, except for certain special events at Westfield Heritage Village.

2018 data from autogate and pay and display machines at our unattended parking areas demonstrate the high volume at three smaller parking facilities which tend to be associated with waterfalls or iconic escarpment areas. It is important to note that these figures do not include HCA annual vehicle pass holders or unpaid vehicles. Parking tickets issued in 2018 by City of Hamilton bylaw for road side waterfall areas also demonstrate pressure these areas experience. Ridge Road has armour stone along the road way to help prevent parking and likely results in the lower number of tickets, and staff also report visitors utilizing parking at the Devil's Punchbowl market and walking along Ridge Road.

Staff note through site visits and maintenance that Tiffany Falls, Devil's Punchbowl and Artaban Road are extremely busy on weekends and holidays throughout the year and vehicle congestion issues are common. Further, staff working in these areas have noticed a high turn-over at these locations as the hikes to the waterfall attractions are very short and staff report that through interaction with visitors that many are unaware of the Bruce Trail connection for Tiffany and Sherman Falls and greater connections to the Dundas Valley.

While Spencer Gorge is handled by the shuttle on weekends and public holidays during the operating season, staff report parking pressures at Tew Falls mid-week during the fall leaf colours in October.

CONSERVATION AREA or PARKING LOT NAME	PARKING SPACES	AUTOGATE PAID VEHICLES	CITY BY-LAW PARKING TICKETS
Fletcher Creek Ecological Preserve	12	no gate or pay machine	
Beverly Swamp	14	no gate or pay machine	
Tiffany Falls	20	10,314	378
Artaban Road	21	4616	775
Devil's Punch Bowl	22	10,433	186
Monarch Trail	22	367	
Chippawa Rail Trail	23	no gate or pay machine	
Iroquoia Heights	25	no gate or pay machine	
Borer's Falls	27	no gate or pay machine	
Felker's Falls	30	no gate or pay machine	
Dundas Valley HCA workshop & area	30	350	
Merrick Orchard	36	1908	
Hermitage	40	4226	
Hamilton to Brantford Rail Trail - West	42	no gate or pay machine	
Eramosa Karst	60	912	
Crooks' Hollow	86	941	
Spencer Gorge	248	23,162	2200
Dundas Valley Main Parking	265	4816	
Westfield Heritage Village	300	Staffed gate	
Valens Lake	354	Staffed gate	
Fifty Point	862	Staffed gate	
Christie Lake	4,783	Staffed gate	
TOTAL	7,322		

- **Paid Vehicles only entering through unattended parking areas, does not count HCA annual pass holders or unpaid visits**
- **Spencer Gorge parking lots are closed weekends and public holidays during shuttle operations**

2. Addressing High Use Conservation Areas with Visitor and Parking Issues

As part of the development of the parking inventory and through an understanding of current conservation area operations, Spencer Gorge Conservation Area, Tiffany Falls and Artaban Road in the Dundas Valley Conservation Area as well as the Devil's Punchbowl Conservation

Area have been identified as high use areas with associated parking issues. Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area also experiences parking issues during some special events.

Spencer Gorge / Tew Falls

- Visitation and parking issues at the Spencer Gorge are being addressed on weekends and public holidays through the high operating season through the operation of the visitor shuttle and partnership with Park Bus. The Board of Directors have provided direction to staff that this shuttle operation will continue as part of the annual operations for this conservation area.
- In season, during the week, Tew Falls parking area receives significant visitation and handles the bulk of vehicles for Spencer Gorge. Staff have identified that improvements to this lot would optimize traffic flow, number of parking spaces and visitor experience. This work could require an Environmental Impact Study (EIS), NEC review and approval based on final scale and scope of enhancements.

Tiffany Falls

- Tiffany Falls is a highly visited area that is serviced by a small parking lot. It is important that HCA continue to work collaboratively with City bylaw enforcement to control and enforce no parking regulations to address spillover parking along Wilson Street. While there are no options available to physically enlarge the existing parking lot, some measures can be taken on site to optimize the lot to enhance traffic flow and angular parking.
- Additional options will need to be explored for this area, bearing in mind the single trail and viewing platform and overall limited space and capacity of the area. Several options for further detailed consideration and investigation have initially been identified to include:
 1. Continue with operation of the existing parking area with an increased focus on promoting short stays, increased visitor turnover and off-peak visitation. This would also involve signing the area to advise that picnics are not permitted in this location and reviewing photography permits and parking access for Bruce Trail members.
 2. Promote walk-in access through nearby HSR bus stop and Bruce Trail.
 3. Potential for the development of a new larger parking lot for this site on HCA lands adjacent to Tiffany Falls located north of Wilson Street with frontage on Lower Lions Club Road. There is additional work to be completed to determine the feasibility of this proposal. This includes:
 - i. Completion of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to determine if it is acceptable according to HCA and City of Hamilton requirements to develop a parking lot on the lands as the majority of the area is designated as an Environmentally Significant Area. This work would take approximately 1-year to complete and would require the services of an outside consultant.
 - ii. The subject lands are located within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, within the Protection Area designation and a Development Permit would be required for the development of a parking lot in this area. The above noted EIS would form part of this application.

- iii. A review of traffic issues and pedestrian crossing requirements would need to be completed and reviewed with the City of Hamilton. Wilson Street is a major thoroughfare within the City and specifically Ancaster with a 70km/hr speed limit at the Tiffany Falls area

Artaban Road Parking Lot

- This parking lot receives significant visitation, particularly now that Lions Club road has been signed as No Parking. Its popularity is associated with visitation with Sherman Falls which is not owned by HCA but is located adjacent to HCA lands and associated trail system. It is important that HCA continue to work collaboratively with City bylaw enforcement to control and enforce No Parking regulations to address spillover parking on Lions Club Road.
- Staff have identified that improvements to this lot would optimize traffic flow, number of parking spaces and visitor experience and could be promoted further as an offsite parking location for Tiffany Falls for visitors to access by walking the Bruce Trail connection.
- There is the potential to formally expand the parking lot at Artaban Road adjacent to the existing HCA parking lot. There is additional work to be completed to determine the feasibility of this proposal. This includes:
 - i. Completion of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS) to determine if it is acceptable according to HCA and City of Hamilton requirements to develop a parking lot on the lands as the majority of the area is designated as an Environmentally Significant Area. This work would take approximately 1-year to complete and would require the services of an outside consultant.
 - ii. The subject lands are located within the Niagara Escarpment Plan area, within the Protection Area designation and a Development Permit would be required for the development of a parking lot in this area. The above noted EIS would form part of this application.

Devil's Punchbowl

- Auto gates installed in this parking lot have demonstrated its popularity and high utilization. Staff have identified that improvements to this lot could optimize traffic flow, number of parking spaces and visitor experience
- While the current lot would benefit from improvements, there are opportunities for additional parking to be created within the adjacent lands that comprise part of the Saltfleet Conservation Area to provide additional parking on an interim basis until the design work for the wetland is completed in 2020 and Master Plan which is timed for 2021. Subject to the above, on the east side of First Road East with an existing driveway, a parking area and a trail could be created to connect to the Dofasco Trail. Signage and promotional materials would be needed to inform the public of this option.
- In the longer term, as additional lands are acquired, there is potential for a gateway to service the Devil's Punchbowl area.

Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area

- Staff have identified that improvements to this lot would optimize traffic flow, number of parking spaces and visitor experience

- Lack of sufficient event parking at certain special events at Westfield have been identified as an issue to address parking and crowd management.
- Staff are bringing forward a separate report entitled “2020 Christmas Ticket Purchase Pilot” for consideration on managing parking and visitation during high volume special events for the area.

3. Optimizing Mass Transit and Non-motorized Vehicle Access to Conservation Areas

- As noted in earlier comments above, efforts have been made to encourage visitors to utilize services such as Park Bus or through public transit as available or regional and local trail and cycling networks. These efforts should be enhanced to promote transit through municipal transit (HSR), enhancing as appropriate trail connections and regional trail and road hiking and cycling networks to reduce parking demand
- Through the parking review, staff have identified three areas with HSR connections

Parking Areas with HRS stop within 500 metres

CONSERVATION AREA	BUS NUMBER	BUS NAME	STOP LOCATION
Dundas Valley	5	DELAWARE	MAIN at EWEN
Felker's Falls	43	STONE CHURCH	PARAMOUNT opposite AUCKLAND And PARAMOUNT at APEX
Tiffany Falls	5	DELAWARE	At 1039 WILSON

- Staff have identified that it would be beneficial to inquire with HSR the possibility of moving the bus stop location on Wilson Street closer to the Tiffany Falls parking lot
- The overall work of promoting transit and local trails will involve a high degree of public education and is also part of the action items noted in Section 4, Marketing and Communications.

4. Marketing and Communication

- For specific high use areas, identify the closest off-site parking areas, linked by trails and create walking tour suggestions for visitors to access the areas from a little further away, and highlighting places and sights along the way, to make the hike more appealing. For example, accessing the Devil's Punchbowl by getting there along the Dofasco 2000 Trail, seeing the boardwalk section through the Vinemount Swamp and other sights along the escarpment brow.

- Increase and improve on-site messaging. Signage could be created along the lines of “Found it a little busy here today? Try visiting during the week or earlier in the morning for a more secluded experience.” This can also be encouraged on Instagram and Facebook.
- Improve website messaging with peak times and suggested times to visit for the best experience and also add parking information to each of the affected area’s section of the website.
- A brochure could be created for all of our East Mountain areas (Devil’s Punchbowl, Saltfleet, East Mountain Trail Loop, Dofasco Trail, Karst, etc.), both for area information and to communicate the needed messages in these areas.
- Update information on our Trip Advisor and Google pages and as well as Waterfalls Hamilton website through the City of Hamilton.
- Automatic Gates and Pay and Display Machines – a new ticket with multi conservation area access is a new option. There are 10 locations that have this feature for 2019, with additional areas proposed in 2020. This feature can be marketed once all machines are operational. This option allows for a visitor to go to multiple locations for one daily price and the idea is that it will encourage shorter term stays as visitors can attend multiple locations thereby increasing turnover.

5. Master Planning and Operational Improvements

- In addition to the above noted items that have either been implemented or will be implemented within existing programs or through further site specific considerations as appropriate, there are issues that require further consideration which can be identified through the development of master plans/management plans or through conservation area operations. This would include such items as:
 - i. Continued implementation of the HCA’s auto-gates and pay and display for parking areas.
 - ii. Refinement of parking use and parking lot configuration to maximize the area available for parking within existing parking lots.
 - iii. Visitor and parking management through such initiatives as a limited number and specific date ticketing system for events and programs.
 - iv. Continued work with our municipal partners regarding “No Stopping” and “No Parking” signs and enforcement in these areas. It is important to note that the HCA can only manage issues on HCA lands, issues related to the use of municipal roads and road right of ways is the responsibility of the affected municipality.
 - v. Development of master plans and management plans to guide the management of our conservation areas with an eye to anticipate long term visitation trends with associated infrastructure requirements.
 - vi. Including information within master plans as guidance regarding the use of conservation areas and trail classification to better understand how visitors can impact the natural features of the lands and also how the number of visitors can impact visitor experience.

- vii. Providing direction regarding the need for continued land acquisition to ensure the conservation of our watersheds natural features while providing passive recreation opportunities. The Land Securement Strategy will also provide direction in this regard.

STRATEGIC PLAN LINKAGE

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2019 - 2023:

- o **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
 - o Initiatives - Update our website to increase access to information and services
- o **Strategic Priority Area – Conservation Area Experience**
 - o Initiatives – Develop visitor and parking management strategies to support conservation areas for sustainable recreation, education and tourism
 - o Initiatives - Continue to expand installation of automatic gates across our conservation areas
 - o Initiatives - Work with partners such as the City of Hamilton, the Cootes to Escarpment Ecopark System, and the Hamilton Burlington Trails Council, to enhance trail networks for recreational uses

AGENCY COMMENTS

Program implementation will require working with partner agencies such as the City of Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton and the Niagara Escarpment Commission. This work would include no parking and no stopping signage as appropriate, parking enforcement on City roadways, working with City of Hamilton Natural Heritage Planners regarding development within environmentally significant areas, promotion and visitor education with Tourism Hamilton as well as working through development permits for new or expanded parking areas with the Niagara Escarpment Commission.

LEGAL/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Implementation of this program work will be incorporated into departmental work plans with associated approved operating and capital budget resources being utilized as approved and allocated annually. Some parking lot enhancements can be undertaken in 2019 through the 2019 capital budget as resources and time permits.

CONCLUSIONS

Visitor and parking management will continue to be a main program area for the HCA into the foreseeable future. The recommendations flowing from the five program areas outlined in this report will continue to be the primary focus of our efforts to preserve the natural resources on our conservation area lands while ensuring a positive visitor experience.

THAT Westfield initiate a pilot program for date specific ticket sales for the 2020 Christmas evening program and further,

THAT staff evaluate the effectiveness of the pilot and report back to CAB regarding its ongoing potential.

CARRIED

Resolution Number CA1936 from Conservation Advisory Board Minutes October 10, 2019 - Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review

BD12,2710

MOVED BY: Cynthia Janzen

SECONDED BY: Dan Bowman

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommend to the Board of Directors:

THAT Staff be directed to implement the following directions outlined in the report titled “HCA Conservation Area - Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review”;

Recommendation #1 – HCA staff implement immediate parking enhancement opportunities at Artaban Road, Tiffany Falls, Devil’s Punchbowl, Tew Falls and Westfield Heritage Village to optimize number of parking spaces, traffic flow and signage;

Recommendation #2- HCA staff undertake steps to consider expansion of the Artaban road parking lot through a Niagara Escarpment development permit;

Recommendation #3 – HCA staff undertake steps to establish an interim parking lot and trail connection to the Dofasco Trail for the Devil’s Punchbowl at the Saltfleet Conservation Area;

Recommendation #4 – HCA staff further examine and explore additional options for safe visitor access to Tiffany Falls;

Recommendation #5 – HCA staff work with various agencies and partners such as City of Hamilton, Tourism Hamilton, Hamilton/Burlington Trails Council etc. to encourage transportation alternatives;

Recommendation #6 – HCA develop a marketing campaign and website enhancements to increase turnover and shorter term stays at areas with limited parking and encourage visitation to less frequented areas and when there is capacity;

Recommendation #7 – HCA staff ensure that the approved 10-year Masterplan Strategy incorporates detailed review of parking at all areas through the Master planning process.

CARRIED

9.2. Foundation Chairman's Report

Margaret Reid presented the report.

Donations

We received a total of **\$89,350** in donations in October. They break down as follows:

- \$50,390 for the Dobson-McKee Outdoor Education Endowment Fund
- \$25,520 for Outdoor Environmental Education
- \$9,650 for the Dundas Valley Trail System
- \$2,125 for our new Tribute Tree Fund which will help fund HCA plantings throughout the watershed.
- The remaining \$1,665 came in donations for Westfield Heritage Village, Tribute Benches, Land Securement, Stewardship and our Area of Greatest Need Fund.

This brings our total for the current fiscal year (Dec 2018 to Oct 31) to **\$572,974**

Events

The Foundation has a fundraiser planned for November 13th

- Adam Shoalts: Modern Day Explorer - Wednesday, November 13, 7:30pm – Westdale Theatre. More information available on the Foundation website and tickets can be purchased online via The Westdale or at the door.

BD12,2711

**MOVED BY: Esther Pauls
SECONDED BY: Cynthia Janzen**

APPENDIX 7

References

References

Archaeological Research Associates Inc. Stage 2 Archaeological Assessment - Devil's Punchbowl Wetland Design (SC-5). Hamilton Conservation Authority. March 10, 2025

Hamilton Conservation Authority Board of Directors. Report 9.1.2 November 7, 2019, Board Recommendations and Approval. HCA Conservation Area – Visitor Management & Vehicle Parking Review. October 10, 2019

Ministry of Northern Development, Mines, Natural Resources and Forestry. Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System Planning Manual (2021). Queen's Printer for Ontario. 2021

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, in association with Tucker-Reid & Associates and The JF Group. City of Hamilton Recreation Master Plan. City of Hamilton. July 21, 2022

The City of Stoney Creek Planning Department. By-Law No. 4134-94 to designate the property known municipally as 228 Ridge Road being of Architectural and Historical Value or Interest. Enacted and Passed December 13, 1994.

Silv-Econ Ltd., David Puttock R.P.F. Managed Forest Plan 2018-2037. Hamilton Conservation Authority. July 2017

Water's Edge Environmental Solutions Team. Battlefield Creek Wetland Storage Facility Design Report (BC-1). Hamilton Conservation Authority. August 20, 2021

Water's Edge Environmental Solutions Team. Saltfleet Conservation Area Battlefield Creek BC-1 Wetland Drawings. Hamilton Conservation Authority. August 20, 2021



A Healthy Watershed for Everyone

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Ancaster, Ontario, L9G 4X1
905-525-2181 www.conservationhamilton.ca

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Report to: Conservation Advisory Board

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy CAO/ Director, Watershed Management Services

Prepared By: Bryson McEwen, Invasive Species Technician
Jeff Stock, Stewardship Technician
Lesley McDonell, Supervisor, Stewardship & Ecological Services
Mike Stone, Senior Manager, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

Meeting Date: August 13th, 2026

Subject: Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program: Financial Assistance Guidelines Revisions

Recommendation:

THAT the Conservation Advisory Board recommends to the Board of Directors;

THAT the revised *Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program: Financial Assistance Guidelines* (July 2026) be adopted.

Executive Summary:

The Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program (WQHIP) is a publicly available grant funding program provided by the Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program (HWSP). The WQHIP Financial Assistance Guidelines provide standards for the administration of this funding program and include applicant requirements and responsibilities, eligible and ineligible project types, and a framework which details grant rates and caps by project category.

The purpose of this revision is to adjust project rates and caps to more closely match the guidelines of stewardship-based financial assistance programs provided by other

Conservation Authorities. It is also to update the eligible project categories to more effectively capture common and desirable project submissions. Sections of the eligibility requirements, WQHIP process, and project descriptions have also been updated to improve clarity for prospective applicants.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

Program Overview

The HWSP has a long history of engaging and supporting private landowners in the watersheds of the Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) to promote the conservation and restoration of natural areas. The delivery of technical advice and financial assistance through WQHIP enables landowners to undertake water quality improvement and ecological stewardship projects on privately owned lands. A wide variety of projects have been completed under this program including habitat restoration through native planting and seeding, invasive species removal, fish habitat improvement through the removal of in-stream barriers, riparian buffer enhancement and creek restoration.

The program helps to advance HCA's strategic priorities related to natural heritage conservation and public engagement. Importantly, WQHIP also supports the objectives of the Hamilton Harbour Remedial Action Plan by implementing projects which help to reduce sediment and nutrients for entering watercourses that drain to the harbour.

The administration of this program is governed by the WQHIP Financial Assistance Guidelines, which outline relevant information for both HCA staff and program applicants.

Summary of Changes

In 2025, HWSP staff identified three areas within the Financial Assistance Guidelines which presented opportunity for improvement.

Firstly, the grant funding rates and caps for all available project categories were evaluated and updated to reflect the offerings of other Conservation Authority stewardship programs and to more accurately match current average project costs. Categories with updated rates and caps include aquatic habitat enhancement, watercourse access restriction, hazardous storage, in-stream barrier mitigation, stormwater low impact development, and manure, milkhouse, and wastewater management. These changes will more effectively incentivize landowners to implement more costly projects that will have a greater impact on improving water quality and habitat in the watershed.

Secondly, staff identified eligible project types offered by other Conservation Authority stewardship programs which were not explicitly listed as categories within HCA's existing guidelines. These categories were evaluated for merit and two were

chosen to be added to the WQHIP guidelines: technical studies (including managed forest plans) and invasive species management. Further to this, nutrient management strategy and nutrient management plan grant funding was added within the manure storage project type.

Thirdly, the document received minor edits to clarify the application process and to simplify technical language with the goal of improving accessibility for interested landowners.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Water Resources Management**
 - Promote our Watershed Stewardship Program to further strengthen landowner education and restoration efforts on private lands and to align with the heightened public focus on climate change.
- **Strategic Priority Area – Natural Heritage Conservation**
 - Engage our watershed residents and stakeholders to enhance and restore natural features through participation in stewardship programs, education initiatives, and adoption of best management practices.

Agency Comments:

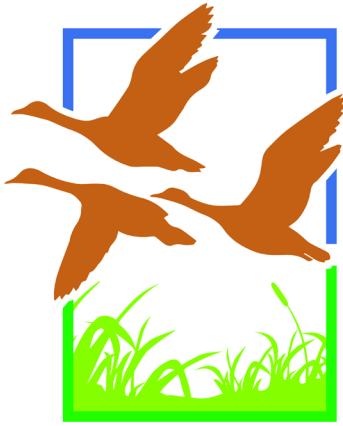
N/A

Legal / Financial Implications:

Additional financial resources are not required to support the proposed revisions to the eligible project types and grant rates and caps. The proposed changes are intended to provide greater opportunity and incentive for private landowners to develop and implement water quality and habitat improvement projects that will benefit the health of the HCA watersheds and Hamilton Harbour. The program is financially supported by both municipal levy and grant funding, including significant support from the federal government for many years. The proposed changes are expected to be accommodated within existing program funding, as current municipal levy and external grant funding are sufficient to support anticipated demand. Staff will continue to monitor program uptake and adjust annual allocations within approved budgets as required.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Attachment A – Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program: Financial Assistance Guidelines (August 2026)



**Hamilton Watershed
Stewardship Program**

Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program

Financial Assistance Guidelines

HAMILTON CONSERVATION AUTHORITY



CONTENTS

1.0 Background.....	2
2.0 WQHIP Eligibility requirements.....	3
3.0 Financial Assistance Framework	4
4.0 WQHIP Grant Application, Review and Award Process Process.....	10
5.0 Responsibilities of Program Participants.....	12
Appendix A: Hamilton Conservation Authority Watershed Map.....	14
Appendix B: Project Specific Guidelines.....	16



A completed rain garden in urban Hamilton.



Farmers discussing best management practices.

1.0 BACKGROUND

Private property owners play a critical role in managing their lands and working towards the Hamilton Conservation Authority's (HCA) vision of a 'healthy watershed for everyone'.

In 1994, the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, Conservation Halton and the Bay Area Restoration Council, developed the Hamilton-Halton Watershed Stewardship Program. The program has evolved over time, and the now Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program (HWSP) continues to support private property owners in their efforts to conserve, protect and enhance privately-owned natural areas, with free on-site consultations, technical advice, and financial assistance through the delivery of the Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program (WQHIP).

The HWSP works with landowners to help them understand, develop and implement eligible project types as detailed in the WQHIP Guidelines. The main goal of the WQHIP is to provide technical assistance and financial cost-share incentives to support eligible land management projects that private landowners undertake on their properties to improve or restore surface and ground water quality, biodiversity, and fish and wildlife habitat. The HWSP funds a wide variety of projects, including many best management practices recommended by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFRA).



Before and after photos of a livestock restriction fencing project in Spencer Creek.

2.0 WQHIP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible to apply for financial assistance:

2.1. The applicant must be:

- A resident of Ontario, and
- A registered owner of a property within the HCA watershed (see Appendix A for map) or
- A property tenant with written approval of the registered owner (co-signer).

A partnership or corporation controlled by Ontario residents can be considered an applicant.

2.2. Where applicable, completion of a 4th or 5th edition Environmental Farm Plan is strongly encouraged and will be given priority in the ranking of applications.

2.3. The project being proposed must include the adoption of land management practices, or implementation of measures, to improve existing water quality impairments, or enhance or create fish or wildlife habitat, and/or through the upgrading or removal of existing structures. Eligibility requirements are further specified in section 3.1 and Appendix B.

2.4. Applicants may be eligible to access other funds for water quality improvement and habitat enhancement projects through other Federal, Provincial or Municipal programs. WQHIP funds can be utilized as either the main source of funding or to complement other funding sources. The total grants from all sources combined are not to exceed 100% of total expenses.

2.5. The proposed project must not have been ordered to be completed by a governing authority, including, but not limited to, the Hamilton Region Conservation Authority, any municipality provincial ministry or federal department.

NOTE: Although the HCA and the HWSP may provide technical information and recommendations, it is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that any projects or practices implemented are suitable for the applicant's property, and technically and structurally adequate. Neither the members of the HCA, the HWSP or the Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) are liable for any loss arising from the use of any advice or information provided as part of or under this program.



This site (captured on air photo in 2015 at left) with assistance from the HWSP, planted a variety of native trees and shrubs, thereby enhancing the woodland buffer (photo at right, 2025).

3.0 FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

Grant rates and caps vary between types of projects as outlined below (Table 1). For specific project details, please refer to the individual project guidelines in Appendix B.

This list of projects is not all-inclusive and the HWSP welcomes hearing from applicants about management practices and restoration projects that align with goals of the WQHIP for funding consideration.

Note that landowners may apply for funding from multiple project types in a single year and may reapply over multiple years as needed (and is encouraged for certain categories). Landowners may also apply to external funding sources to stack grant opportunities. Total grant(s) received cannot exceed cost of project(s).

3.1. HWSP WQHIP Grant Rates and Caps

Table 1 - Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Projects

Project Type	Description	Grant Rate and Cap
Alternative Watering Systems	To improve water quality by restricting livestock access to watercourses and surface waters. Eligible Project Types: Nose Pumps, Solar Pumps, Troughs, Gravity Systems	75% up to \$5,000

Project Type	Description	Grant Rate and Cap
Rural Runoff Diversion	To reduce the amount of contaminated runoff from manure storages and Outdoor Confinement Areas (as defined by OMAFA) by diverting stormwater away from sources of contamination to a satisfactory outlet. Eligible Project Types: Eavestroughs, Berms/Ditches, Permanently Vegetated Areas/Vegetated Filter Strip, Roofed Outdoor Confinement Areas	75% up to \$5,000
Watercourse Access Restriction	To prevent livestock and/machinery from crossing/accessing watercourses that are in environmentally sensitive areas. Eligible Project Types: Improved/replaced/new creek crossings for livestock and/or machinery, Exclusion Fencing, Clear Span Bridges, Culverts or Bed Level Crossings	75% up to \$,10,000 (\$18/metre of fencing)
Erosion Control	To control or remediate existing soil erosion impairments that impact surface water quality or soil quality and/or fish and wildlife habitat. Eligible Project Types: • Conservation tillage – including residue management, no-till and mulch tillage • Contour cropping • New cover crops • Grassed waterways • Water and sediment control basins (WASCoBs) • Riparian buffer strips	75% up to \$5,000 Cover Crops: Approved fields paid an incentive of \$100 per acre up to 30 acres.

Project Type	Description	Grant Rate and Cap
Terrestrial and Aquatic Habitat Enhancements	To restore or enhance terrestrial (land based) and/or aquatic (water based) habitats. Eligible Project Types: • Seeding, planting, or live staking of native plant species • Habitat features (e.g., turtle nesting bed, osprey platform, snake hibernaculum) • Prairie burns/controlled burns • Watercourse or stream channel restoration/enhancements • Streambank stabilization • Wetland creation	Terrestrial - 75% up to \$5,000 Aquatic- 75% up to \$10,000
Invasive Species Management	To remove or manage non-native invasive plant species. Eligible Project Types • Terrestrial or aquatic invasive species removal • Herbicide applications • Manual removals of herbaceous or shrubby invasive plant species • Mechanical removals using machinery such as forestry mulchers, chainsaws, or other approved methods	75% up to \$5,000
Hazardous Storage	To prevent contamination of ground and/or surface water by hazardous products by upgrading existing facilities. Eligible Project Types: Chemical, Fertilizer, Fuel or Pesticide Storages	75% up to \$3,000

Project Type	Description	Grant Rate and Cap
In-Stream Barrier Mitigation	To restore or enhance aquatic habitat through the remediation of an existing impairment to fish habitat. Impairments may include, but are not limited to, online ponds, dams, culverts, etc. Eligible Project Types: • Bypass Channel installation • Dam Removal • Debris Removal • Culvert Retrofit • Online Pond Mitigation	75% up to \$10,000
Manure, Milkhouse and Wastewater Management	To prevent contamination of surface and groundwater during the storage and composting of manure, milkhouse wastewater and/or raw organic materials (e.g. fruit and vegetable waste, deadstock) and to encourage manure handling and spreading best management practices. Eligible Project Types: • Roofed solid manure storages with runoff containment • Unroofed solid manure storages with runoff containment or treatment • Concrete/steel liquid manure storage tanks with/without covers • Milking centre improvements • Waste water – treatment	Manure storage – 75% up to \$20,000 Milking centre washwater treatment and disposal: 75% up to \$5,000. *eligibility to scale Nutrient management Plan (NMP) Nutrient Management Strategy (NMS) NMP – 75% up to \$3,000 NMS – 75% up to \$2,000

Project Type	Description	Grant Rate and Cap
Stormwater Low Impact Development	To reduce the volume and improve the quality of stormwater runoff flowing into the municipal sewer system, local watercourses or designated natural areas. Eligible Project Types: RESIDENTIAL - • Downspout disconnection (per downspout) • Rain Garden • Rain Barrel INSTITUTIONAL/COMMERCIAL – • Stormwater Landscaping	See appendix for rate and cap breakdown
Technical Studies	Certain technical studies, assessments and plans may be supported where they are required to inform the design and implementation of water quality and habitat improvement projects. This may include, but is not limited to: • Fluvial geomorphological investigations • Managed Forest Plan (MFP) • Habitat assessment & species inventory Restoration design • Invasive species management plans • Erosion and sediment evaluation • Culvert and barrier assessment	Aquatic – 75% up to \$5,000 Terrestrial – 75% up to \$2500 MFP - 75% up to \$500

3.2. Eligible Costs

Applicants are eligible to apply for financial assistance towards the costs associated with the design and implementation of the discussed project. Generally, applicants are eligible to apply for financial support for the following project costs:

- Purchased materials and supplies (including but not limited to, plant material, soil, mulch, landscape fabric, tree shelters, etc.)
- Equipment rentals
- Professional design, consulting and construction fees
- Fees for supervision and inspection.

3.3. Ineligible Costs

The following costs are not considered eligible for financial assistance, including, but not limited to:

- Tools
- Farm equipment
- Mileage
- In-kind contributions such as time, labour and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents or the applicant's business
- NEW agricultural/business operations, new buildings, additions to homes, or building expansions to increase herd capacity
- HST if the applicant is entitled to an HST rebate.

3.4. Limitations of Funding

- Any applicant who proceeds with a project before it has been approved by the Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) and HWSP has no assurance that financial assistance will be provided.
- An applicant must specify the program year in which the project will be completed. If the project cannot be completed within the specified year the grant may not be available. However, the applicant may request a deferral in writing to HWSP staff for consideration of an extension.
- If the final project costs submitted for reimbursement by the applicant exceeds the proposed project budget, the grant rate and cap noted in the formal acceptance of the project stands. If the final project costs submitted by applicant are less than the proposed costs, the grant rate applied in the formal acceptance of the project will be applied to the lower cost.
- The PTAC and HWSP may restrict the number of grants available to meet local priorities and budgets.
- Once the annual Water Quality and Habitat Improvement Program budget has been committed, no further approvals will be given.

4.0 WQHIP GRANT APPLICATION, REVIEW, AND AWARD PROCESS

There are three steps in the process of developing a project. These include filling in the grant application. This process can be completed by the landowner or with assistance from HCA stewardship staff. The application review process begins internally with program staff and via correspondence with the applicant to ensure a complete application. These are then reviewed by a Project Technical Advisory Committee and recommendation for awarding the grant money. The money then is provided subject to this process. The following describes the process and steps for developing and implementing a project with support from WQHIP.

- 4.1.** The applicant contacts HCA requesting onsite consultation with the HWSP technician.
- 4.2.** A site visit occurs with the applicant and HWSP technician. HWSP technician confirms project eligibility and acquires before photos of the proposed project.
- 4.3.** After this consultation the applicant submits their project application to the HWSP for review.
- 4.4.** The HWSP technician consults with other HCA staff with expertise relevant to the project as required and may ask applicants for additional information or clarification to complete the application.
- 4.5.** Some proposals may require additional review/approvals by one of more of the following: Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness, Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association, Conservation Authority, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, or the respective Municipality. HWSP staff can assist landowners with connecting to the applicable agency.
- 4.6.** HWSP staff present grant applications anonymously to the Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC). The PTAC determines a projects' merit to receive financial assistance.
- 4.7.** Funding is allocated on a merit basis. Project merit is assessed based on the following considerations:
 - Does the project directly address, or contribute to improving a water quality impairment?
 - Does the project directly address, or contribute to improving habitat?
 - Does the property owner demonstrate environmentally conscious land management practices?
 - Is the project located adjacent to, or in close proximity to a wetland, grassland/prairie, forest or other significant natural area?
 - Does the project support a designated Species at Risk?
 - Does the project raise public awareness of water quality and habitat issues or opportunities?

- Has the applicant provided in-kind or financial contribution towards the project and committed to the maintenance of the project?
 - Projects assessed to have the highest merit will be funded. Depending on the number of applications received and the available WQHIP funding each year, it is possible that not all projects having merit will be funded.
- 4.8.** Applicants will be notified by HWSP staff as to whether their project has been awarded a grant following the PTAC project evaluation process. Funding may be conditional on changes to the project plan as requested by PTAC.
- 4.9.** Grant approval is based on the design and project costs submitted in the original application. Any design or budget changes to the project post funding approval must be submitted to the HWSP for review to determine if the proposed project will still be eligible for the grant.
- 4.10.** The project will be processed for grant payment once:
- The project has been completed.
 - Copies of all relevant invoices, paid receipts, cancelled cheques, certificates and permits have been received by the Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program.
 - Post management/project completion photographs have been taken by stewardship staff.
- 4.11.** The applicant must:
- Contact HWSP staff to arrange an on-site consultation, so HWSP staff can verify the proposed project meets the eligibility requirements.
 - Complete and submit a WQHIP project application form prior to the works commencing (retroactive applications MAY be considered provided the proposed project meets eligibility requirements).
 - First drafts of applications are due by October 15th annually. This allows time for HWSP to provide comments and review prior to submitting a final copy by the December 1st submission deadline.
 - Complete all utility locates.
 - Obtain all necessary approvals or permits (including neighbouring properties if applicable).
 - Ensure that all proposed structures or land practices meet all zoning, technical, structural and legal requirements where applicable, including, but not limited to: Canada Farm Building Code, Ontario Building Code, Provincial Acts, Provincial and Municipal highway setbacks, Municipal official plans and by-laws, and Conservation Authority regulations (facilitated by HWSP staff), and
 - Allow HWSP and other relevant agency staff on site to confirm project completion, by November 15th of the project implementation year. The applicant must provide all relevant receipts or proof of payment for materials or items purchased and copies of supporting cancelled cheques or proof of financing to receive reimbursement.

5.0 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

5.1. The Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program (HWSP):

- Establishes the WQHIP Project Guidelines with assistance from PTAC and partners and regularly reviews and evaluates the financial assistance framework to ensure the program is properly administered and the financial assistance available aligns with the goals of the WQHIP.
- Ensures that information on the administration of the program is available to all potential applicants.
- Provides information to landowners regarding conservation, land management and stewardship practices and measures that may qualify for grants.
- Conducts site visits to evaluate the potential sources, pathways, and magnitude of water quality impairment or potential for habitat creation.
- Provides management and remedial options to reduce pollution potential from identified sources.
- Ensures the anonymity of project applicants when funding applications/project proposals are presented to PTAC.
- Acts as an intermediary between the PTAC and the application should clarification be required during PTAC project review.
- Verifies that projects have been completed.
- Ensures that payment is issued to the landowner upon project and administrative completion.
- Undertakes monitoring of the completed project where applicable.

5.2. The Project Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC):

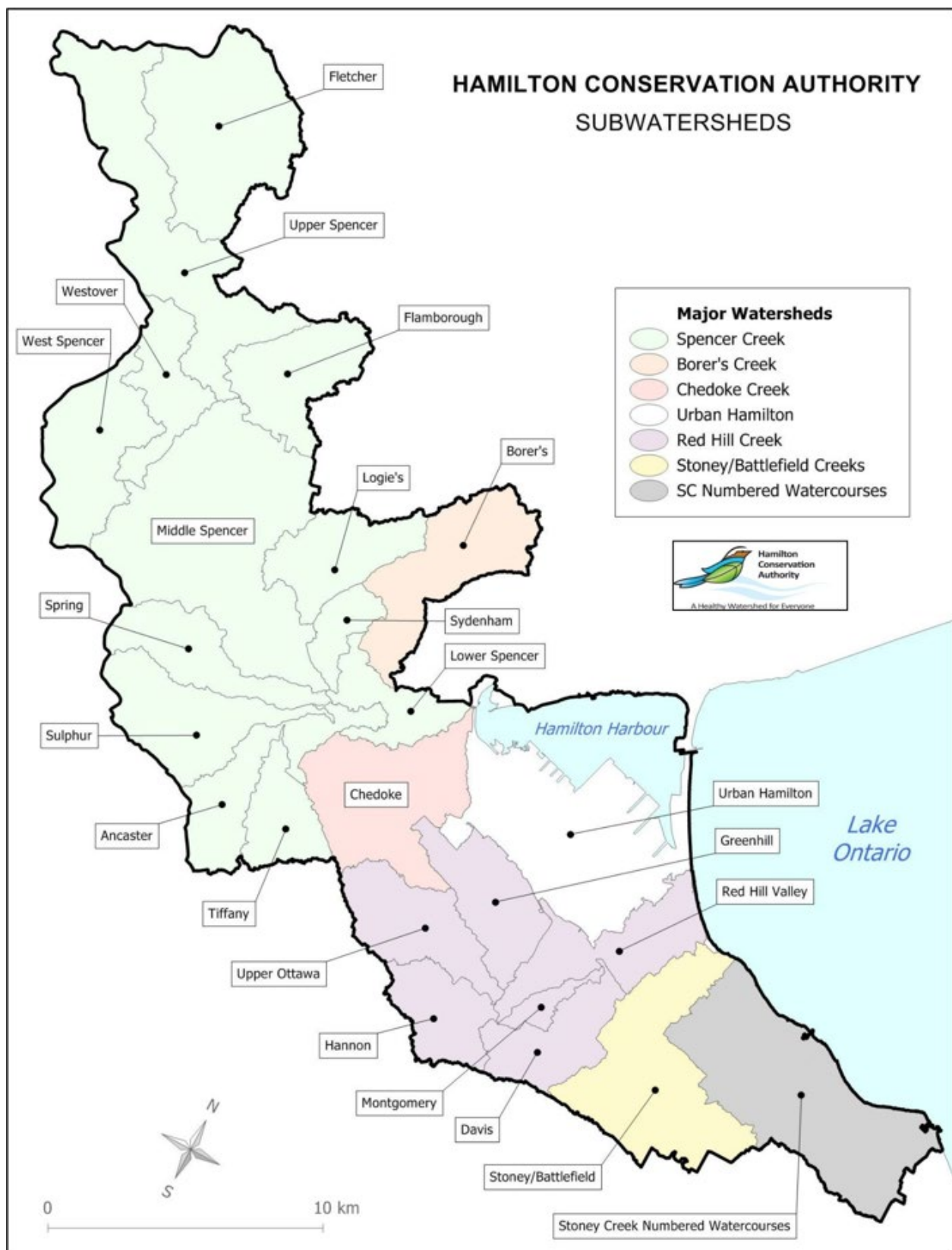
- Ensures that the program is administered in accordance with the program guidelines.
- Evaluates each project on its potential to improve and protect habitat and/or water quality.
- Evaluates project merit and recommends projects to be funded.

5.3. The Applicant:

- Contacts Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Staff (HWSP) to verify that the proposed project meets the WQHIP eligibility requirements.
- Contacts HWSP staff to arrange an on-site consultation. HWSP will be available to help plan the project and assist the applicant in applying for the WQHIP grants.
- Ensures that the information on the application is complete and correct.
- Ensures that the project meets all relevant local, provincial and federal laws and regulations.
- Ensures that appropriate approval/permits are obtained prior to construction and that all utility locates have been completed.
- Ensures that HWSP is notified as soon as possible of any changes to the project as proposed, either before works commence or during construction.

- Contacts HWSP staff promptly once projects have been completed so that field verification of the projects can occur.
- Acknowledges, via the signing and submission of their WQHIP application, their commitment to maintain restored/enhanced areas and/or use new structures, or implement the proposed project in accordance with their WQHIP application for a period of not less than 10 years or the life of the structures.
- Provides all relevant receipts or proof of payment for materials or items purchased and copies of supporting cancelled cheques or proof of financing to receive the grant.
- Agrees to provide, if the property is sold, a copy of the approved WQHIP application and associated documents to the new landowner.
- Agrees to allow the HWSP and the HCA to promote the project to demonstrate the positive actions that are being taken by private property owners within the HCA watershed.
- Agrees to implement or allow HCA to implement post restoration monitoring suitable to the project type a minimum of 3-5 times in the first 10 years. Specific monitoring requirements will be outlined in project plans.

***APPENDIX A: HAMILTON CONSERVATION
AUTHORITY WATERSHED MAP***



APPENDIX B: PROJECT SPECIFIC GUIDELINES



Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

Purpose: To improve water quality by restricting livestock access to watercourses and surface waters.

Eligible Project Types: Nose Pumps, Solar Pumps, Troughs, Gravity Systems.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Alternative watering systems/devices are eligible for funding only the project improves an existing environmental impairment, evidence of the impairment is present, and the project results in restricting livestock from the watercourse
- Livestock must be on the farm and have been present in the watercourse in the last year.
- A perimeter fence must currently be in place
- Wherever practical, livestock are being restricted from watercourses and other natural areas
- Consideration should be given to install tank away from surface water or sensitive areas and on well drained ground
- Overflow devices should be installed and runoff from the watering site should be managed to prevent soil erosion and runoff into surface water.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees
- Alternative watering systems may be eligible for additional funding if runoff diversion projects are also being undertaken.

Ineligible Costs:

- Costs associated with a project that would encourage land, pasture, or environmentally sensitive areas to be put at risk or impairment
- Purchase of tools or machinery
- Primary hydro lines
- Drilling new water wells
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business.

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS ALTERNATIVE WATERING SYSTEMS

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$5,000



Insulated water trough with solar panels at right.
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***WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS
RURAL RUNOFF DIVERSION
GRANT RATE AND CAP: 75% UP TO \$5,000***

**Hamilton Watershed
Stewardship Program**

Purpose: To reduce the amount of contaminated runoff from manure storages and Outdoor Confinement Areas (as defined by OMAFA) by diverting stormwater away from sources of contamination to a satisfactory outlet.

Eligible Project Types:

- Preventative measures to prevent stormwater from coming into contact with manure, including, but not limited to eavestrough, berms or ditches that direct stormwater away from outdoor confinement areas or manure storage areas.
- Runoff diversion structures such as berms and ditches that direct stormwater away from an outdoor confinement area or manure storage
- Roofed permanent outdoor confinement areas
- Vegetated filter strip system
- Permanently vegetated area.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Projects must address an existing water quality impairment.
- Runoff must be managed in compliance with the Nutrient Management Regulation, O. Reg. 267/03
- If the operation is required to have a Nutrient Management Strategy (NMS), all nutrients and runoff must be managed according to the NMS and the applicant must provide a copy of the Nutrient Management Strategy to the HWSP for review with the submitted application
- The applicant agrees to allow the HWSP to consult with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness during the application process
- Runoff containment facilities must meet siting requirements as per Municipal by-laws and as outlined in Section 63 of the Nutrient Management Regulation, O. Reg. 267/03.
- Vegetated filter strip systems should meet the standards as outlined in the Nutrient Management Regulation, O. Reg. 267/03, and if the standards cannot be met a Certificate of Approval for a sewage works under the Ontario Water Resources Act must be obtained

- Permanently vegetated areas can be utilized where the risk of contamination is low and manure is comprised of at minimum 30% dry matter, and must meet all the following criteria:
 - Have at least 0.5m soil depth
 - Be a minimum of 3m from field tile drains, and
 - Be a minimum of:
 - 100m from municipal wells,
 - 15m from drilled wells,
 - and 30m from any other well
- Downspouts located where livestock can access them must be made of schedule 40 PVC (or stronger materials) and be well secured to prevent dislodging and prevent ice damage
- Eavestrough directed into a tile must also include debris traps to ensure that tiles do not become plugged
- All project types must discharge or divert stormwater away from any source of contamination and not pose any other hazards such as soil erosion
- Stormwater must not be discharged or diverted directly to a watercourse or wetland
- Berms, tile outlets and ditches must be permanent structures, require little maintenance, and be properly protected to prevent erosion, scouring or rodent damage
- The Review Committee may require an applicant to install an emergency shutoff valve if there is concern for conveyance of a spilled contaminant.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees
- Professional assessment of surface and groundwater properties to verify the project meets required structural and environmental criteria.

Ineligible Costs:

- Costs associated with a project that would encourage new land, pasture, or environmentally sensitive areas to be put at risk or impairment
- Purchase of tools or machinery
- Paving of exercise yards or outdoor confinement areas where no permanent feeding/watering stations are present
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business
- Vegetation that is not native to Ontario
- When roofing an exercise yard, the Clean Water Diversion grant cannot be combined with the funds available under Manure Storage.



WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS WATERCOURSE ACCESS RESTRICTION

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$10,000

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

Purpose: To prevent humans, livestock and/machinery from crossing/accessing watercourses that are environmentally sensitive areas.

Eligible Project Types:

- Improved/replaced creek crossing for livestock and/or machinery
- New watercourse crossing for livestock and/or machinery
- livestock/human access restriction from watercourses, sensitive areas or species at risk habitats
- Exclusion fencing for livestock
- Clear span bridges for livestock or machinery
- Culvert crossings for livestock or machinery
- Bed level crossings for livestock or machinery.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Projects must obtain approval from appropriate agencies (e.g. Conservation Authority, OMAFA, Municipality, Drainage Superintendent etc.)
- Project must remediate an existing water quality or terrestrial or aquatic habitat impairment
- For bed-level crossings, gates must be installed at each streambank to allow livestock to be restricted out of the crossing. Gates shall be opened only for the purposes of moving livestock to the other side for pasture rotation purposes
- Watering facilities must be available on both sides of the stream
- To be eligible for cost-share on a livestock crossing or livestock access restriction:
 - Fencing along the watercourse must either be undertaken concurrently or currently in existence and in good repair
 - The applicant must currently have livestock on the pasture or field, or present within the last year
 - The field must be seeded to pasture
 - Evidence of the environmental impairment must be present, and
 - Whenever practical livestock has been restricted from all areas at risk

- For fencing projects:
 - Replacement fence may be considered, if the new fence is installed to provide significant environmental gain such as a wider buffer on a stream or wetland.
 - New fencing installed on existing farms, to create a new pasture area, may be eligible for funding if the project clearly demonstrates protection of an environmentally sensitive feature
 - Fencing will be funded to a maximum rate of \$18.00 per metre.
 - Funding will only be provided for the portion of fencing that protects an environmentally sensitive feature, natural area, watercourse, wetland or significant woodlot
 - The proposed fence should restrict livestock access over the entire length of the natural feature and access should be discouraged by locating salt and mineral feeders away from the natural area
 - Temporary or alternative fencing may be considered in areas where permanent fencing is prone to damage due to ice floes/spring freshet flows
- If the project is on a municipal drain, the applicant must consult with the local drainage superintendent
- All bridge crossings must be engineered and the applicant and the contractor/engineer will be responsible for the structural integrity of the crossing
- During construction all field erosion control measures shall be implemented.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees
- Permanent and temporary fencing
- Livestock crossings as outlined above.

Ineligible Costs:

- Costs associated with a project that would encourage new land, pasture, or environmentally sensitive areas to be put at risk or impairment
- Purchase of tools or machinery
- Primary hydro lines
- Drilling new water wells
- Temporary fencing
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business.



WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS EROSION CONTROL

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$5,000

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

Purpose: To control or remediate existing soil erosion impairments that impact surface water quality, air or soil quality and/or fish and wildlife habitat.



A well-designed grassed waterway allows water to flow without eroding the channel and importantly, allows farm machinery to cross safely.

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Eligible Project Types:

- Conservation tillage – including residue management, no-till and mulch tillage
- Contour cropping
- Cover crops (approved fields paid an incentive of \$100.00 per acre, up to 30 acres)
- Grassed waterways
- Residue management
- Water and sediment control basins (WASCoBs)
- Riparian buffer strips.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Projects must obtain approval from appropriate agencies (e.g. Conservation Authority, OMAFA, Municipality, etc.)
- Projects on Municipal Drains must be approved by the applicable Drainage Superintendent
- Preference will be given to erosion control projects where conservation tillage practices are utilized on adjacent fields
- Projects must be planned and designed based upon the best management practices as outlined in the OMAFA BMP Guide: Controlling Soil Erosion on the Farm

- Projects must be constructed to standards as outlined in the Agricultural Erosion Control Structures: A Design and Construction Manual - Publication 832 and works must be supervised or completed by a qualified contractor
- For larger or more complex projects, engineered designs may be advised
- All collected water must be taken to a sufficient and legal outlet.
- For Tile Drain Control Structures:
 - Where applicable, drainage headers should be utilized to reduce the number of required control structures
 - Only commercial tile drain control structures will be funded
 - The retro-fitting of tile drain control structures into existing tile drainage and the addition of tile drain control structures to new tile drainage installations is eligible
- For Cover Crops:
 - Priority will be given to areas directly adjacent to watercourses or environmentally significant areas
 - Applicant should register all potential fields and provide a crop rotation plan
 - Crops may be tilled no sooner than the spring of the year following planting (may be chemically killed the previous fall) and cover crops must be destroyed before June 1
 - Only cover crops used exclusively for cover are eligible for grants such as rye buckwheat and oilseed radish - this excludes crops that are harvested or grazed such as winter cereals, winter canola, and forages
 - An applicant may apply for the cover crop incentive on the same field in different years where the applicant plants a different cover crop species or species mix in the second application year
 - The cover crop must be verified by Program staff and the applicants are responsible for contacting Program staff prior to being chemically destroyed, winter freeze, or before tillage to ensure that the cover crop is providing at least 50% ground cover.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees.

Ineligible Costs:

- Costs associated with a project that would encourage new land, pasture, or environmentally sensitive areas to be put at risk or impairment
- Purchase of tools or machinery
- Systematic tile and subsurface drainage that is not an integral part of an erosion control structure
- Catch-basins without adequate sediment control
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business
- Installation or repair of the tile drainage system
- Maintenance of installed structures.



Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

HABITAT REHABILITATION TERRESTRIAL AND AQUATIC HABITAT ENHANCEMENT

Grant Rate and Cap: Terrestrial - 75% up to \$5,000 Aquatic – 75% up to \$10,000

Purpose: To restore or enhance terrestrial and/or aquatic habitats.

Eligible Project Types:

- Seeding, planting, or live staking of native species of flora
- Habitat features (e.g. spawning substrate, turtle nesting bed, osprey platform, snake hibernaculum)
- Prairie burns
- Watercourse or stream channel reconstruction/enhancements
- Streambank stabilization
- Wetland creation.

A nesting structure was built for the provincially threatened Barn Swallow, left, with evidence of its success on one of its nesting ledges inside, right.



Eligibility Requirements:

- Projects must obtain approval from appropriate agencies (e.g. Conservation Authority, OMAFA, Municipality, etc.) and projects on Municipal Drains must be approved by the applicable Drainage Superintendent.
- Preference will be given to projects where best management practices are utilized on the property.
- HWSP grants may be combined with other funding sources, however grants are not to exceed 100% of total expenses.
- Applicants must inform HWSP staff of additional cost share funding.
- A plan is required specifying species, planting density, location, site preparation and maintenance; to promote approval, the plan should be developed in conjunction with Conservation Authority or HWSP staff or a private consultant.
- Trees must be planted in a manner that will not result in snow drift accumulation on the road (as a general rule, trees should be located 30m back from the edge of the road).
- Proper site preparation is required for planting and seeding, including the removal of any invasive species (see guidelines for invasive species management).
- The applicant is responsible for the care and maintenance of plantings - mowing or trimming may be needed during the establishment period to reduce competition from broadleaf annual weeds.
- Livestock must be excluded from the site; special consideration may be given for prairie restoration.
- Appropriate native species are mandatory, no cultivars or varieties, and invasive species are not eligible (staff can provide native plant supplier list). Should aim to have species that are suitable for [plant hardiness Zone 6b](#).
- Windbreaks should have 30-50% porosity during periods of highest risk for erosion and consideration should be given to utilizing plastic mulch to reduce competition.
- If the plantings area is adjacent to leased agricultural lands, a copy of the planting plan must be provided to the lease holder and the boundaries of the planting must be clearly marked at a height visible to farm equipment operators.
- Riparian zone and streambank stabilization plantings should be designed to establish a vegetative cover and be a minimum of 5 metres wide to provide proper filtering action
- Seeding should only take place when sufficient moisture is present and the soil is rough enough to hold the seed.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees
- Trees, shrubs and planting costs (costs for taller/larger stock may be considered where site conditions warrant its use)
- Tree protection systems
- Site preparation and establishment of cover crops on tilled land (in conjunction with tree planting).



Work was completed to remove a significant debris jam in 2019 (left photo prior to work), restoring fish passage to the creek as well as improving overall stream hydrology (right photo taken in 2020, a year after work was completed).



Ineligible Costs:

- Commercial stock, fruit trees or Christmas tree species which are commercially marketable in less than 15 years are not eligible
- Farmstead landscaping
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business
- Irrigation ponds
- Non-native species of flora.



HABITAT REHABILITATION INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$5,000

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

Purpose: To remove, treat, or otherwise manage eligible non-native, invasive plant species to rehabilitate degraded terrestrial and/or aquatic habitats.

Eligible Project Types:

- Herbicide applications by a licensed pesticide applicator to control invasive plant species
- Manual removals of herbaceous or shrubby invasive plant species, such as pulling, digging, and tarping
- Mechanical removals or invasive species using machinery such as forestry mulchers, chainsaws, or other approved methods.



*A stand of **Phragmites australis** (Common Reed), pre and post treatment.*

Eligibility Requirements:

- Projects must obtain approval from appropriate agencies (e.g. Conservation Authority, OMAFA, Municipality, etc.) if applying pesticides on private property, which may include a Letter of Opinion from the provincial regulatory agency.
- Landowners and contractors must follow best management practices (BMPs) for the removal, treatment, or management of invasive species in order to receive funding. This includes timelines for treatment, using best practices for removal, following up on multi-year management, and other relevant conditions.
- Pesticide applications must be applied by a licensed pesticide contractor.
- Landowners must indicate whether their initiative is a multi-year project on their application.
- Landowners must consider and make staff aware of their long-term plans for the site, which should include future restoration plans including the replanting of native stock
- Invasive species managed must be approved by Hamilton Conservation Authority staff, and recognized as a high priority species.
- Species present must be in an area of natural importance, including woodlands and woodlots, wetlands, riparian corridors, floodplains, prairies, meadows, or other non-manicured or actively farmed environments.

Eligible Costs:

- Professional contracting services, including but not limited to pesticide applicators, landscapers, or other environmental restoration services
- Disposal of vegetation
- Costs associated with permits or fees for management work
- Rental of tools and equipment.

Ineligible Costs:

- Major clearing of field, forests, or other natural landscapes
- Purchase of cultivation equipment for vegetation control
- Chemicals (herbicides and pesticides), spraying equipment, and personal protective equipment used for the purposes of applying pesticides, unless explicitly approved
- Costs associated with the removal, control, or management of plants not identified as invasive. Note some species may be non-native but not invasive, and all species managed must be approved by Hamilton Conservation Authority staff.



Volunteers manually removing *Hedera helix* (English Ivy).



Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

CHEMICAL, FERTILIZER, PESTICIDE AND FUEL HAZARDOUS STORAGE

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$3,000

Purpose: To prevent contamination of ground and/or surface water by hazardous products by upgrading existing facilities.

Eligible Project Types: chemical, fertilizer, fuel or pesticide storages.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Completion of an Environmental Farm Plan is encouraged.
- Storage structures must meet or exceed the necessary regulatory requirements, including, but not limited to; O. Reg. 63/09 Pesticides Act, R.S.O. 1990 (if applicable), the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA), the Highway Traffic Act, the Liquid Fuels Handling Code (LFHC), the Ontario Fire Code (OFC), Municipal-by-laws, the Conservation Authorities Act, and the Ontario Building Code.
- Structures must be located an adequate distance away from water wells and surface water and obtain an EFP separation distance rating of 3 or better where reasonable.
- A copy of an emergency plan for accidental exposure/spills must be submitted prior to grant payment.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees
- Labour and materials associated with the construction of storage upgrades.

Ineligible Costs:

- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business
- Pumps, nozzles or hoses
- Primary hydro.



HABITAT REHABILITATION IN-STREAM BARRIER MITIGATION

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$10,000

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

Purpose: To restore or enhance aquatic habitat through the remediation of an existing impairment to fisheries habitat. Impairments may include, but are not limited to, online ponds, dams, culverts, etc.

Eligible Project Types:

- Bypass channel
- Dam removal
- Debris removal
- In-stream barrier mitigation
- Culvert retrofit
- Online pond mitigation.

The removal of an online pond on this property led to the resurrection of a previously decommissioned tributary of Ancaster Creek that had been filled in decades earlier. This project led to the creation of 420m of tributary and improved and increased the amount of barrier-free habitat available to local fish populations.



Eligibility Requirements:

- Projects must obtain approval from appropriate agencies (e.g. Conservation Authority, OMAFA, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, MNR, Municipality, etc.) and projects on Municipal Drains must be approved by the applicable Drainage Superintendent
- For larger or more complex projects, engineered designs may be required
- Project must remediate an existing water quality impairment
- During construction all field erosion control measures shall be implemented
- Structures should be properly engineered to withstand expected water volume and velocities, the applicant and their contractor/engineer will be responsible for the structural integrity of the project.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees.

Ineligible Costs:

- Installation or repair of the tile drainage system
- Maintenance of existing structures.



Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS MANURE, MILKHOUSE AND WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$20,000

Nutrient Management Plan: 75% up to \$3,000

Nutrient Management Strategy: 75% up to \$2,000

Purpose: To prevent contamination of surface and groundwater during the storage and composting of manure and/or raw organic materials (e.g. fruit and vegetable waste, deadstock) and to encourage manure handling and spreading best management practices. To prevent water quality impairment from milkhouse wastewater discharges to surface and ground water, and to encourage milkhouse waste management best management practices.

Eligible Project Types:

- Roofed solid manure storages with runoff containment
- Unroofed solid manure storages with runoff containment or treatment
- Concrete/steel liquid manure storage tanks with/without covers
- A 3-year Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) created using OMAFRA's NMAN software program. Milkhouse washwater storage within an existing or proposed manure storage system that meets the minimum storage requirements
- Storage in a separate milkhouse washwater storage tank
- Washwater treatment in a treatment trench system that meets the building permit standards
- Innovative treatment systems will be considered on a case-by-case basis.



A covered manure storage eliminates runoff.

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Eligibility Requirements:

- Must have a certified Nutrient Management Strategy and Nutrient Management Plan unless:
 - If under the Nutrient Management Act and municipal by-laws, the manure storage facility does not require a certified Nutrient Management Strategy and the manure

- storage is less than 5 Nutrient Units, HWSP staff will work with technical advisors and the applicant to determine appropriate sizing
 - Manure is not spread on the applicant's farm. In this instance, Program staff will work with technical advisors and the applicant to determine appropriate BMPs to address disposal of manure
- All manure storages, regardless of operation size or status must meet the requirements of Regulation 267/03 under the Nutrient Management Act - this includes the Siting and Construction Standards which require manure storage facilities to be designed and inspected by a professional engineer
- Applicants are responsible for determining the requirements for their proposed storage; contact OMAFOMA for this service
- Applicants must complete a nutrient management plan and it must be submitted to HWSP staff for review prior to works proceeding - this approval does not replace or supersede approval required through the Municipality, Conservation Authority, Building Permit process or the Nutrient Management Act
- A copy of the approved building permit must be submitted
- All manure and runoff storages must:
 - Have a minimum of 250-day storage capacity. Adequate storage capacity must be provided for both solid and liquid fractions of manure, as well as contaminated precipitation and washwaters (where applicable). Facilities with greater than 400 days of storage will be cost-shared to the equivalent of 400 days
 - Have runoff containment from exercise yards, and
 - Permanent ladders must not be installed in manure storages.
- For solid/liquid manure storages:
 - If a new barn is constructed, funding eligibility will be pro-rated to the volume of storage that was required for the existing/previous conditions (e.g. in cases where the structure has been sized and constructed for an expanded operation, a simple arithmetic formula will be used - a farmer currently has a herd of 50 dairy cows (including heifers and dry cows) and plans to expand to 75; the storage is sized and constructed for the 75 herd size and the eligible grant would be calculated based on 50/75 or 66% of the final cost of the project
 - Where the herd size has not increased and/or in the event the structure completed is larger than the proposed structure in the approved WQHIP application, or the volume of the approved structure will be divided by the volume of the structure constructed to arrive at the pro-rating factor
- For roofed solid storages, three walls must be concrete at least 4 ft (1.2 m) above grade and the roof must provide adequate clearance for tractor and loader operation
- The floor of the storage must be sloped to contain any liquids within the storage and the storage entrance must be raised to prevent the entry of surface water from outside and to contain liquids inside
- Livestock access to solid manure storage areas should be discouraged
- All open liquid and runoff storages must be protected by permanent barrier and gates designed to prevent child entry - suitable fencing would include chain link types, solid

steel, wood fencing, etc. and the total barrier height (storage wall and fence) must be at least 5 ft (1.5 m) above the closest adjacent ground level

- Safety fence design specifications shall meet the minimum standards as stated in the most recent version of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs' Agricultural Pollution Control Manual
- Fences may be placed up to 15 ft (4.6 m) away from the storage where equipment access is necessary
- Where flat covers, at or near ground level, are not designed for livestock or vehicle loads, a safety fence and a permanent warning sign must be installed.
- Access ports must have covers weighing at least 45 lb. (20.4 kg) and have a chain bolted to the storage top
- Gates with secure childproof latches must be installed at access points and all fencing and safety requirements must be met.
- Manure hopper openings at or below floor level shall be fitted with a safety railing or floor grill spacing between rails of not more than 4 inches (10 cm).
- Where a separate liquid manure storage tank is connected to a livestock building, traps or valves shall be installed to prevent gases from the manure storage from entering the building.
- For milkhouse facilities:
 - A sign indicating the danger due to toxic gases must be installed at every access to a liquid manure or milkhouse/milking parlour wash water storage tank or under floor manure transfer chamber
 - Systems proposing liquid storage of milkhouse/milking parlour wastes must provide at least 250-day capacity for the wash water produced and the minimum storage volume is 5700 cubic feet (36,000 gallons or 160,000 liters)
- For deadstock composting facilities:
 - Compost facilities must meet the most recent OMAFA guidelines and Provincial regulations. Information on deadstock disposal options can be found on OMAFA's website: www.omafra.gov.on.ca
 - Where a deadstock composting facility is constructed as part of a roofed solid manure storage, it must have a separate entrance from outside the building and be separated from the manure storage by a concrete wall
- For other composting facilities:
 - Green manure composting facilities (generated from vegetable and fruit waste) will be considered on a project by project basis
 - Further details on green manure composting structures can be found on OMAFA's website: www.omafra.gov.on.ca
 - The applicant is responsible for ensuring the technical adequacy of the project and that the structure is sized to contain 100% of the materials generated on-farm
 - Green manure composting structures must prevent or contain or treat any runoff from the compost pile - to prevent, contain or treat compost runoff, the following design criteria should be considered: a roof or other method of cover, a holding tank and/or a permanently vegetated area to filter run-off

- Applicants are responsible for obtaining approvals from appropriate agencies prior to construction.
- For Nutrient Management Plans (NMP):
 - A printout or electronic summary from the NMAN Program containing the following information must be submitted to HWSP staff for review;
 - For each farm property, a Farm Unit Summary
 - Manure/nutrient source summary, manure/nutrient information (type, analysis, etc.)
 - If applicable, MSTOR manure storage sizing calculations & storage information (yearly amount, number of days of storage, amount remaining)
 - Manure/nutrient application graph (tracks total (all types), amount remaining)
 - Manure/nutrient application summary (for each field, the rate, source, amount, method, setback), and
 - Field summary (field id, soil information, area, crop type, # of nutrient applications)
 - To receive funding, the nutrient management plan must adequately supply the required crop nutrients without over applying and producing 'red flags' in the NMAN program.

Eligible Costs:

- Materials, labour, equipment rentals, professional services, permits and engineering fees
- Professional fees for preparation of a nutrient management plan
- Registration fees for nutrient management training sessions. Software is available at www.nutrientmanagement.ca
- Transfer pumping equipment and piping
- Walls around yards to direct contaminated precipitation into a runoff storage, regardless of height, only an equivalent 1 ft (0.3 m) concrete wall and the footing will be funded
- Storage covers and roofs
- Upgrading storages to increase the capacity of existing storages to a minimum 250 days and a maximum of 400 days
- Temporary storage sumps for use prior to transfer to long term storage
- Permanent transfer piping from the barn gutters or sumps to long term storage
- Gas traps incorporated to prevent gases from entering the barn
- Professional assessment of the surface and groundwater properties of the site and soil materials for the purpose of verifying that the project meets prescribed structural and environmental criteria
- Constructing a permanent roof over an existing storage
- Permanent transfer piping from the milkhouse or parlour to a suitable storage
- Sump (when required) plus all associated electrical connections for milkhouse operations.

Ineligible Costs:

- Crop scouting fees
- Fees associated with the completion of a NMP required by the Nutrient Management Act
- Pumping equipment to empty long term storages
- Manure spreading equipment
- Slats or solid floors over in-barn storages including support posts, beams and roofs
- Barn gutters with less than 60-day capacity
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business
- Equipment associated with moving manure to a permanent manure storage
- Equipment associated with the land application of manure
- Slats or solid floors over in-barn storage including support posts, beams and roofs
- Barn gutters
- Timbers that are treated with creosote, pentachlorophenol or other toxic substances
- Compost barrels, open heaps on bare soil, plastic bag composting or prefabricated composting structures
- Repair or maintenance of an existing compost structure
- Tarps and associated items used to temporarily cover the compost structure
- Cost of milkhouse and/or parlour structure.



WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS STORMWATER LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT

Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

<i>Project Type</i>	<i>Grant Rate*</i>	<i>Cap*</i>
<i>(Residential)</i> <i>Downspout Disconnection (per downspout)*</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>\$200</i>
<i>Rain Garden*</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>\$2,000</i>
<i>(Commercial / Institutional)</i> <i>Rain Barrel*</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>\$50</i>
<i>Stormwater Landscaping**</i>	<i>75%</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>

Notes:

The above noted grant rates and caps are applied to eligible project costs only which vary by Project Type, see further detailed information below on eligible costs.

*Grants for these project types can be stacked as follows:

- A maximum of 3 LID project types per property will be considered
- To be considered for funding, rain barrels must be installed in conjunction with another proposed project type
- Only one Rain Garden per property will be considered

****This grant is only open to commercial/institutional properties.** To be eligible for consideration for a Stormwater Landscaping grant, the property works are being completed on must:

- Be in an area serviced by combined sewers
- Be professionally designed to promote infiltration and incorporate a minimum of 3 of the following stormwater lid practices (excluding rain barrels); Bioretention, Bioswales, Downspout Disconnection, Dry Ponds, Enhanced Swales, Infiltration Basins/Chambers/Trenches, Rain Gardens, Swales, Vegetated Filter Strips or Wetlands

Purpose: The aim of the stormwater low impact development grants is to conserve and improve the quality of stormwater runoff water by:

- Supporting the water cycle and improving water quality through the retention, infiltration, evaporation and/transpiration of stormwater

- Focusing on runoff prevention and treating stormwater runoff as close to the source as possible

In light of the purpose of the stormwater low impact development grants, priority consideration will be given to project applications where:

- The property is serviced by combined sewers
- The application incorporates more than one project type to reduce stormwater runoff.

Eligibility Requirements:

To be eligible to apply for a Stormwater LID grant ALL projects must:

- Be able to demonstrate that the proposed project will result in improving or enhancing the ability of the site to absorb stormwater runoff rather than directing it to local sewers, downspout sewer connections or into nearby or adjacent watercourses/waterbodies.
- Incorporate recommended LID best management practices, design considerations and construction specifications (See [https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/LID BMP Fact Sheets](https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/LID_BMP_Fact_Sheets)).
- Meet any additional criteria listed by project type below
 - ensure that any overflow from the installed project drains onto the applicant's property or flows safely to a suitable sewer connection
 - Ensure that installed LID features maintain any setbacks listed here/per project type below are applied to both the property featuring the installation and also to adjacent/neighbouring properties
 - be a minimum of 4m downslope from all buildings and foundations
 - be a minimum of 4m from wells and septic beds, and if the LID feature is uphill of a septic a minimum setback of 15m is required
 - for Downspout Disconnections the downspout must outlet at minimum of 2m from foundations
 - Avoid the installation of Stormwater LID features where the increased filtration of stormwater into the soils could result in damage, erosion, or contamination, so any projects being installed under the following site conditions ARE NOT eligible to receive funding:
 - Installation site is over shallow bedrock, shallow water table, near karst, spill prone areas, contaminated soils, or areas where there is risk to mature trees, sensitive natural areas, property or infrastructure (including underground utilities)
 - Installation sites have a shallow well(s) <3m in depth
 - Installation sites that are on/within drainage swales, snow storage areas, engineered Stormwater LID features, or interfere with existing lot drainage
 - Installation sites fall within 2-year time of travel wellhead protection areas in Greensville and Freelon, (See <https://www.protectingwater.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/02/swp03-Appendix-B-Hamilton-Vulnerability-Report-v32-final.pdf>, refer to pages 140,141).

Eligible costs:

- For downspout disconnections only: downspout extension, downspout elbow
- For rain barrels only: rain barrel, fixtures/hosing to enhance overflow
- For rain gardens only:
 - Compost, sand or soil amendment (peat is not eligible)
 - Native plants (please note that non-native species, and cultivars or varieties of native plants are not eligible for funding).

Ineligible costs:

- Soffits and fascia, horizontal eavestroughs
- Purchasing of tools and/machinery
- Contractor costs, labour and/design costs
- Peat or peat-based soil amendment
- Lawn seed
- Non-native species, and cultivars or varieties of native plants.

Eligibility requirements for Rain Garden installations:

To be eligible to apply to receive funding, proposed rain gardens must meet the following criteria (please refer to the diagram below for further details):

- Be in a relatively flat area with contributing slopes between 1-5%
- Be excavated to a minimum basin depth of 85 cm
- Be designed so that the ponding depth (area where stormwater may accumulate during storm events) is within the excavated basin and at least 5cm of space is between the ponding depth and the original ground level
- Be designed so that the area of the garden (LXW) is 10-15% of the contributing drainage area
- Soil amendments like sand or compost must be used to amend native soils to create loam soils to increase the amount of water absorbed/infiltrating into the garden
- The inflow must be above the outflow
- Suitable native species that tolerate both drought and periodic flooding will be planted – see the following for recommendations <https://cvc.ca/document/plant-list-native-plants-for-rain-ready-landscapes/?access=0fa290a78fd5934ad7848f934da7322d>.

Rain gardens being installed that have any of the following features, or where the noted site conditions are present **ARE NOT** eligible to receive funding (HWSP Stewardship Technician's can help confirm):

- A contributing drainage area to the rain garden that exceeds 100m²
- A contributing slope to the rain garden that exceeds 5%
- The rain garden is within 15m of a slope that exceeds 15%.

Eligibility requirements for a Stormwater Landscaping grant:

To be eligible for consideration for a Stormwater Landscaping grant:

- The property works are being completed on must be in an area serviced by combined sewers
- The property must be commercial, and or institutional
- The proposed project must be professionally designed/engineered to promote infiltration and incorporate a minimum of 3 of the following stormwater lid practices (excluding rain barrels, green/blue roofs): Bioretention, Bioswales, Downspout Disconnection, Dry Ponds, Enhanced Swales, Infiltration Basins/Chambers/Trenches, Permeable Pavement, Rain Gardens, Swales, Vegetated Filter Strips or Wetlands
- The proposed features must incorporate recommended LID design considerations, recommendations and construction specifications (See [https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/LID BMP Fact Sheets](https://wiki.sustainabletechnologies.ca/wiki/LID_BMP_Fact_Sheets))
- The proposed project must include an appropriate monitoring and maintenance plan per the above recommended best practices.

Eligible Costs for Stormwater Landscaping grants only:

- Materials and equipment rentals
- Labour and/professional services
- Permits and engineering fees
- Native plant species (no cultivars or varieties).

Ineligible Costs:

- Purchase of tools or machinery
- Vehicle rentals
- Labour, mileage, in-kind contributions and/or machinery use of the applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business
- Impermeable liner/geomembrane, weeping tile or other subsurface drainage to protect foundations
- Soffits or fascia, horizontal eavestroughs
- Non-native species of plants
- Disposal fees.



Hamilton Watershed Stewardship Program

WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS TECHNICAL STUDIES

*Grant Rate and Cap: 75% up to \$2,500 for Terrestrial,
75% up to \$5000 for Aquatic,
75% up to \$500 for Managed Forest Plan*

Purpose: support the undertaking of professional technical studies to advance aquatic ecosystem restoration, terrestrial habitat enhancement, and sustainable land management practices through actionable report recommendations.

Eligible Project Types:

- Ecological, terrestrial, and aquatic habitat assessments, including Ecological Land Classification and species-at-risk evaluations
- Restoration and naturalization planning for streams, riparian areas, wetlands, meadows, forests, and other natural features
- Woodland, forest, and invasive species management planning
- Water quality, hydrology, stormwater, and aquatic ecosystem investigations and monitoring
- Erosion, sediment transport, slope stability, and fluvial geomorphology studies;
- Fisheries habitat, fish passage, and aquatic habitat enhancement assessments, including culvert and barrier evaluations.

Eligibility Requirements:

To qualify for funding assistance, technical studies should:

- Demonstrate a clear and actionable report that provides a framework detailing both the impact and proposed implementation of restoration or stewardship projects
- Be completed by qualified professionals with appropriate accreditations and expertise
- Comply with applicable municipal, provincial, and federal legislation
- Provide a clear and actionable timeline where applicable for time sensitive projects.

Eligible Costs:

- Consulting and technical professional fees
- Field investigations, site assessments, and environmental surveys
- Ecological, aquatic, forestry, hydrologic, or geomorphic analysis
- Water quality sampling and laboratory testing
- Mapping, modeling, and technical reporting
- Project-related data collection and field expenses.

Ineligible Costs:

- Studies completed prior to approval
- Costs solely related to development or regulatory requirements
- Recoverable taxes, equipment purchases, and unrelated overhead costs.

Report to: Board of Directors

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: Gord Costie, Director, Conservation Area Services

Prepared By: Liam Fletcher, Eastern Senior Manager Conservation Area Services

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Appointment of Officers under the *Conservation Authorities Act*

Recommendation:

THAT the HCA Board of Directors appoint the staff identified in Attachment A as Officers under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*, for the purposes of enforcing the *Conservation Authorities Act* and related regulations, as well as the *Trespass to Property Act*, as more specifically identified in Attachment A.

Executive Summary:

HCA staff in the Conservation Area Services Division have responsibilities related to the administration and enforcement of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and its regulations. In this regard, Conservation Area Managers, Superintendents, and Assistant Superintendents within Conservation Areas Services Division have responsibilities related to the administration and enforcement of Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and *O. Reg. 688/21: Rules of Conduct in Conservation Areas*.

Under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* an Authority may appoint Officers for the purposes of ensuring compliance with the Act and the regulations. The appointment of Officers under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* is necessary in order to fulfill class designation requirements for HCA Officers to be designated as Provincial Offences Officers. On March 20, 2024, the Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry issued a class designation under the authority of subsection 1(3) of the *Provincial Offences Act* to designate Officers appointed under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* as Provincial Offences Officers for the purpose of enforcing the *Conservation Authorities Act* and its regulations, as well as the *Trespass to Property Act*, within the jurisdiction of their Conservation Authority.

The purpose of this report is to seek the appointment of the HCA staff identified in Attachment A, as Officers of the HCA and Provincial Offences Officers.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

HCA staff in Conservation Area Services Divisions have responsibilities related to the administration and enforcement of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and its regulations. This includes enforcing rules of conduct in Conservation Areas and supporting court proceedings and prosecutions when necessary. Appointment of HCA staff in Conservation Area Services Division as Officers under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* provides staff with the necessary authorities to carry out their job duties.

The staff identified in Attachment A have satisfied the criteria for appointment as Officers under Section 30.1 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* as outlined in the *Protocol for Conservation Authority Designation of a Provincial Offences Officer* developed by Conservation Ontario, which requires:

1. The officer shall provide proof of a clean criminal record check
2. The officer shall be adequately trained in the legislation they are to enforce (i.e. the *Conservation Authorities Act*, *Provincial Offences Act*, and the *Trespass to Property Act*).

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
 - Promote employee training, engagement, well-being, diversity, and inclusivity to strengthen our organizational resilience and ensure employees are equipped with the necessary skills to address emerging needs

Agency Comments:

Not applicable.

Legal / Financial Implications:

Not applicable

Related Reports and Appendices:

Attachment A, HCA Staff Appointments, Provincial Offences Act

ATTACHEMENT A

HCA staff appointments for the purposes of enforcing Section 29 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and related regulations, as well as the *Trespass to Property Act*

Cari Hobbs, Superintendent, Christie Lake Conservation Area

Ethan Goodale, Assistant Superintendent, Dundas Valley Conservation Area

Scott Sheppard, Assistant Superintendent, Confederation Beach Park

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Report to: Board of Directors

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Reviewed & Prepared By: Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting #026-0740
Proposed Regulation – Appointment of Members to Regional Conservation Authorities

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors receive Environmental Registry of Ontario (ER) Posting #026-0740 regarding appointment of members to regional conservation authorities as information and that it be submitted as formal comments to the province of Ontario.

Executive Summary:

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) has released a proposed regulation for public consultation under Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) Posting #026-0740 as part of the implementation of Ontario's regional conservation authority model.

The proposed regulation would establish a prescribed Tiered Allocation Formula to determine the number of members each participating municipality appoints to a regional conservation authority based on its proportion of the regional authority's population. Under the proposal, the future Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority (WLOORCA) would have a 16-member Board comprised of four members appointed by Peel Region, three members each appointed by Halton Region, Niagara Region and the City of Hamilton, and one member each appointed by Wellington County, Haldimand County and Dufferin County.

The proposed allocation reflects a significant change in governance for the Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA), which is currently a stand-alone conservation authority with two participating municipalities. HCA's current 11-member Board consists of 10 members appointed by the City of Hamilton and one member appointed by the Township of Puslinch. Under the proposed regional governance model, HCA will become part of a regional conservation authority comprising seven participating municipalities, and Hamilton would appoint three members to the 16-member Board. Wellington County would appoint one member representing the portion of the future regional authority currently located within Wellington County.

Participating municipalities will be responsible for appointing their representatives. Staff support the proposed Tiered Allocation Formula as an objective and consistent basis for establishing the initial Board composition. Staff also consider it appropriate for the Province to recognize that effective regional governance involves considerations beyond population, including geographic and watershed interests, municipal responsibilities and financial contribution.

The consultation period closes on September 12, 2026.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

The proposed Tiered Allocation Formula is intended to establish a consistent, province-wide approach for determining municipal representation on regional conservation authority boards. Under the proposal, the number of members appointed by each participating municipality would be based on that municipality's proportion of the total population within the regional conservation authority. Municipalities would appoint between one and four members according to prescribed population thresholds as outlined in the table below.

Table 1 – Proposed Tiered Allocation Formula

Tier	Percent of regional CA Population	Number of Members
4	>30%	4
3	>15% to <30%	3
2	>5% to <15%	2
1	<5%	1

Proposed Board Representation

For the proposed Western Lake Ontario Regional Conservation Authority, the formula would establish a 16-member Board comprised of:

Table 2: Current and Proposed Board

Current HCA Board	Proposed WLORCA Board
11 members	16 members
Hamilton – 10 *	Peel – 4
Puslinch – 1	Halton – 3
	Niagara – 3
	Hamilton – 3
	Wellington – 1
	Haldimand – 1
	Dufferin – 1

*Note that in 2001 following municipal amalgamation, City of Hamilton appoints 10 members by special agreement which was reaffirmed in 2021 by both City of Hamilton and the Township of Puslinch.

Table 3: Summary of Number of Participating Municipalities and members under proposed Tiered Allocation Formula per Regional CA

Regional CA	Number of participating Municipalities	Number of Members:
Northwestern Ontario	8	11
Northeastern Ontario	15	22
Western Lake Erie	13	22
Eastern Lake Erie	17	23
Lake Huron	13	21
Western Lake Ontario	7	16
Central Lake Ontario	6	13
Eastern Lake Ontario	16	25
St. Lawrence River	10	14

Under the proposed formula, representation is based on the population within the regional conservation authority rather than the municipality's total population. Where only part of a municipality falls within the regional authority, its population is adjusted based on the percentage of its geographic area within the authority. For Hamilton, 73 per cent of the City's geographic area is within the proposed WLORCA, resulting in an adjusted population of approximately 415,600, or 19 per cent of the regional population. This places Hamilton in the three-member tier.

The proposal also permits participating municipalities to enter into an alternative agreement respecting Board composition following the initial appointments to the regional conservation authority. However, the initial appointments must be made using the prescribed Tiered Allocation Formula. Any future agreement could not increase the total Board size beyond that established by the formula, nor could any municipality appoint more than five members.

Implications for HCA

The proposed regulation represents a significant change in governance for HCA. HCA would transition from a stand-alone conservation authority with two participating municipalities and an 11-member Board to a regional conservation authority with seven participating municipalities and a 16-member Board. Under the proposed allocation, the City of Hamilton would appoint three members, compared with the 10 members it currently appoints to the HCA Board. This change should be understood in the context of the broader regional governance structure rather than solely as a reduction in Hamilton's representation. The future WLCRA Board would be responsible for governing a larger regional authority and representing municipal interests across the participating municipalities and watersheds.

The proposed structure would introduce a more regionally balanced model, while requiring participating municipalities to develop a shared approach to governance and decision-making. The proposed Board composition reflects the Province's objective of establishing a consistent, population-based governance model across regional conservation authorities. Staff support the use of a consistent population-based formula for the initial appointments because it provides an objective and transparent starting point and ensures that all participating municipalities receive representation on the WLCRA Board.

At the same time, population alone may not capture all factors relevant to effective regional governance. Participating municipalities differ in their geographic presence within the regional authority, the watershed interests located within their boundaries, the population residing within the authority and their financial contributions. Staff therefore consider these factors relevant when assessing whether the proposed allocation provides an effective and balanced framework for representation. Where only part of a municipality is located within the regional authority, particular attention should be given to the population and watershed interests associated with the portion within the authority.

The proposed regulation would require the initial WLCRA appointments to be made using the prescribed Tiered Allocation Formula. Following the transition to the regional authority, participating municipalities may enter into an alternative agreement respecting Board composition, subject to the proposed limits on total Board size and the maximum number of members appointed by any one municipality. Staff consider this flexibility useful because it would allow participating municipalities to assess the effectiveness of the initial governance structure once the regional authority is operational. Any future review could consider population, geographic and watershed interests, municipal responsibilities, financial contribution and the need to maintain an effective Board size. A periodic review mechanism would also help ensure that representation remains appropriate as populations, municipal boundaries, financial arrangements or watershed priorities change.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**

Agency Comments:

As part of preparing these comments, HCA staff reached out to the City Manager /CAO of both participating municipalities—the City of Hamilton and the Township of Puslinch—to make them aware of ERO Posting #026-0740. At the time this report was prepared, HCA had not received any formal comments or resolution from the City of Hamilton regarding the posting.

The Township of Puslinch has advised that Township Council is considering a motion at its meeting of August 26, 2026. The proposed motion addresses matters that extend beyond the Tiered Allocation Formula. In particular, the motion requests that future regulations respecting Watershed Advisory Committees provide meaningful opportunities for lower-tier municipal representation and participation, recognizing that lower-tier municipalities would no longer directly appoint members to regional conservation authority Boards. The motion is included for information purposes as Appendix A to ensure that the Board is aware of the position being considered by one of HCA's participating municipalities.

Legal / Financial Implications:

N/A

Appendix A – Township of Puslinch Council Motion August 26, 2026

Whereas, the Province of Ontario has proposed the consolidation of Ontario's existing conservation authorities into nine Regional Conservation Authorities (RCA), with a proposed transition date of February 1, 2027, or such later date as may be prescribed; and

Whereas, Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting No. 026-0740 proposes regulations respecting the method for determining the number of members appointed by participating municipalities to RCAs and additional eligibility criteria for appointments to the Board of Directors of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA); and

Whereas, under the proposed governance framework, upper-tier and single-tier municipalities will be responsible for appointing members to RCAs, resulting in lower-tier municipalities no longer having the ability to directly appoint representatives to the governing board; and

Whereas, lower-tier municipalities continue to have a direct and significant interest in the programs, services, land use planning matters, natural hazard management, environmental protection and other responsibilities undertaken by conservation authorities within their communities; and

Whereas, meaningful local and watershed-based representation will be essential to ensuring that local municipal priorities, knowledge and watershed-specific considerations continue to inform decision-making within the new RCA structure; and

Whereas, the geographic size of the proposed RCAs further emphasizes the importance of ensuring that appointed Board members have a meaningful connection to the watershed they are responsible for governing; and

Whereas, there remains a need for additional information and guidance respecting several significant aspects of the proposed transition and future operation of the RCAs, including the governance framework, member recruitment and eligibility, travel and time commitments, budgeting, financial responsibility and the future apportionment and payment of conservation authority levies;

Therefore be it resolved, that the Council of the Township of Puslinch supports continued consultation with municipalities and existing local Conservations Authorities on the development and implementation of the new RCA governance framework; and

That the Province of Ontario be requested to ensure that any individual appointed to a RCA Board of Directors reside within the applicable watershed of

the RCA to which they are appointed, in order to ensure that Board members have a direct and meaningful connection to the communities, municipalities and watershed they are responsible for governing; and

That the future regulations establishing the composition, role and operation of Watershed Advisory Committees provide meaningful opportunities for lower-tier municipal representation and participation, recognizing that lower-tier municipalities will no longer directly appoint members to RCA Boards; and

That the Province be requested to reconsider the proposed eligibility restrictions for the OPCA Board in order to establish a meaningful connection between the RCAs and the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency, including consideration of providing for at least one representative from each RCA on the OPCA Board, or another formal mechanism to ensure direct communication and coordination between the two levels of governance; and

That the Province be requested to provide clear guidance to upper-tier and lower-tier municipalities respecting the recruitment and appointment of RCA Board members, including eligibility criteria, desired qualifications and expertise, expected roles and responsibilities, anticipated meeting frequency, travel requirements and the time commitment associated with serving on the larger regional authorities; and

That the Province be requested to provide municipalities with additional information regarding the financial and operational implications of the consolidation, including how RCA budgets will be developed and approved, how municipal levies and apportionment will be determined and collected, whether upper-tier and single-tier municipalities will assume responsibility for levy payments on behalf of lower-tier municipalities, and how costs and financial obligations will be allocated throughout the transition and ongoing operation of the new RCAs; and

That the Province be encouraged to provide this information as soon as possible to allow municipalities sufficient time to understand the governance, operational and financial implications of the new model and to prepare for implementation; and

That this resolution be forwarded to the Honourable Todd McCarthy, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; the Environmental Registry of Ontario as the Township's comments on ERO Posting No. 026-0740; the Association of Municipalities of Ontario; the Rural Ontario Municipal Association; Conservation Ontario; MRR Racinsky; the County of Wellington; and all Ontario municipalities.

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Report to: Board of Directors

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Reviewed & Prepared By: Lisa Burnside, Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Environmental Registry of Ontario Posting #026-0740
Proposed Regulation – Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency
Board Member Ineligibility

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors receive Environmental Registry of Ontario (ERO) Posting #026-0740 regarding Ontario Provincial Agency Board Member Ineligibility as information and direct that it be submitted as formal comments to the province of Ontario.

Executive Summary

The Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks has posted ERO No. 026-0740 for public comment. The posting includes a proposed regulation that would establish additional ineligibility criteria for appointments to the Board of Directors of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA).

The proposed regulation would make the following individuals ineligible for appointment to the OPCA Board:

- A registered lobbyist under Ontario's *Lobbyists Registration Act*;
- A current member of a conservation authority; or
- A current conservation authority officer or senior staff member.

These proposed restrictions apply only to appointments to the OPCA Board. They do not determine the composition or appointment process for the boards of regional conservation authorities. The consultation closes on September 12, 2026.

Staff Comment / Discussion

Context

ERO No. 026-0740 contains two proposed regulations under the *Conservation Authorities Act*. One would establish a method for determining the number of members appointed by participating municipalities to regional conservation authorities. The other would establish additional ineligibility criteria for appointments to the OPCA Board. This report addresses only the proposed OPCA eligibility criteria.

The *Conservation Authorities Act* was amended in November 2025 to establish OPCA. OPCA is responsible for overseeing the transition to a regional, watershed-based conservation authority system and providing centralized leadership and oversight. Further amendments in April 2026 provided for the consolidation of conservation authorities into nine regional conservation authorities, anticipated to occur on February 1, 2027, or a later date established by regulation. OPCA will coordinate transition activities and support provincewide initiatives, including performance standards, centralized data management, floodplain mapping, and a digital permitting platform.

The *Conservation Authorities Act* already provides that members of Parliament and members of the Legislative Assembly are ineligible for appointment to the OPCA Board. The proposed regulation would add the following categories:

- Registered lobbyists under Ontario's *Lobbyists Registration Act*;
- Current members of a conservation authority; and
- Current conservation authority officers or senior staff members.

The proposed restrictions are intended to reduce potential conflicts of interest and support public confidence in the governance of OPCA.

Comment

Staff have no specific concerns with the proposed ineligibility criteria. The proposed restrictions appear reasonable in principle and are limited to appointments to the OPCA Board.

Staff's only observation is that the effectiveness of the restrictions will depend on appointing an OPCA Board with a balanced mix of governance experience, professional expertise, and knowledge of the conservation authority sector.

The Province should also provide clear direction on the respective roles of OPCA and regional conservation authority boards. Regional boards should retain responsibility for organizational direction, budgets, risk oversight, operations, and local priorities, subject to provincial legislation, regulations, policies, and performance standards. Clear direction would help prevent uncertainty, duplication, or unnecessary overlap between OPCA and regional boards.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 – 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**

Agency Comments:

N/A

Legal / Financial Implications:

N/A

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Report to: Board of Directors

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: T. Scott Peck, MCIP, RPP, Deputy CAO/Director, Watershed Management Services

Prepared By: Mike Stone, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Watershed Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System MOU Renewal

Recommendation:

THAT the Board of Directors authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the “Letter of Agreement to extend the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System from 1 January 2027 through 31 December 2031”.

Executive Summary:

Hamilton Conservation Authority (HCA) is a participating agency in the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System collaborative. The current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that establishes and governs the partnership expires at the end of 2026. HCA staff continue to see value and benefit in the EcoPark System partnership and are seeking Board approval to enter into an agreement for the renewal of the MOU for a term of five years.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

Background on the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System

The Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System is a voluntary collaboration of government agencies and non-governmental organizations in Hamilton and Burlington for conservation purposes in the area around Cootes Paradise Marsh,

Lower Spencer Creek and Lower Grindstone Creek. As of 2026 the participating agencies include:

- Royal Botanical Gardens
- Bruce Trail Conservancy
- Hamilton Naturalists' Club
- McMaster University
- Regional Municipality of Halton
- City of Burlington
- City of Hamilton
- Halton Region Conservation Authority
- Hamilton Conservation Authority

The participating agencies manage any lands they own on an individual basis but collaborate on areas of mutual interest, with the shared vision of establishing the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System as a permanently protected natural lands sanctuary linking Cootes Paradise Marshlands with Hamilton Harbour and the Niagara Escarpment.

The governance arrangement of the EcoPark System program reflects a voluntary alliance. Regular decisions are made by a Management Committee consisting of one representative from each participating agency. Higher governance matters are decided by a Governing Council consisting of senior staff members within each agency. A Secretariat coordinates actions and organizes meetings. The cost of the Secretariat, primarily the salary of a single staff member, is supported by annual payments from each of the participating agencies on a schedule established in the MOU.

The idea of a partnership around these natural areas was first brought forward in 2006 by the Natural Heritage Planning Committee of the Bay Area Restoration Council. Following extensive background research and consultation a first strategic plan, the *Cootes to Escarpment Park System: Conservation Land Management Strategy*, was finalized in 2009 and approved in principle by all participating agencies' boards and councils in 2010. The participating agencies agreed to establish the EcoPark System as a voluntary collaboration operating under a three-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in 2013, which was amended and extended for five years in 2016.

In 2021, a Strategic Plan updating the goals and objectives set out in the 2009 plan was completed with partner, stakeholder and public input. The 2021 Strategic Plan set directions and actions for the EcoPark System partner agencies to achieve by 2030. To facilitate advancement of the plan's priorities and actions, a revised five-year Memorandum of Understanding was developed and included both a Project Charter and partnership Agreement. This MOU expires at the end of 2026.

The current EcoPark System Strategic Plan, 2021-2030, outlines five strategic priority areas of focus and a series of directions and actions under each priority area. Renewal of the MOU past 2026 would provide for program continuity and allow the partner agencies to continue to work together to advance the priorities and actions outlined in the current EcoPark System Strategic Plan. HCA staff are of the opinion there continues to be value and benefit to EcoPark system collaboration and are therefore supportive of renewal of the MOU.

MOU Renewal Process

Recognizing the 2022-2026 MOU was expiring at the end of 2026, the EcoPark System Management Committee began discussions in 2025 on the process for renewal of the MOU. As a result of these discussions, Management Committee has proposed that the existing MOU could be extended through a simplified Letter of Agreement (Attachment A). Under this approach, the participating agencies would agree to continue the voluntary collaboration in the EcoPark System for a further five years without any substantive changes to the Agreement or Project Charter as contained in the current MOU. An updated “Schedule of Contributions of Participating Agencies 2027 – 2031” is included in the Letter of Agreement.

The proposed Letter of Agreement approach to extending the MOU from 2027-2031 has been endorsed by the EcoPark System Governing Council and now been circulated to participating agencies for execution by signature.

Strategic Plan Linkage:

The initiative refers directly to the HCA Strategic Plan 2025 - 2029:

- **Strategic Priority Area – Organizational Excellence**
 - Initiative - Uphold our ties to federal, provincial, and municipal partners to work together to advance conservation efforts.

Agency Comments:

On May 1, 2026, conservation authorities received direction from the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks under section 1.14 of the *Conservation Authorities Act*. The direction provided is effective May 1, 2026, and is noted to be for the purpose of ensuring a stable transition to the new regional conservation authority structure. Under the direction, a conservation authority is prohibited from making decisions regarding significant financial, asset or employment matters without prior written authorization from the chief executive officer of the Ontario Provincial Conservation Agency (OPCA).

HCA staff have consulted OPCA regarding the renewal of the EcoPark System MOU, noting that the arrangement is collaborative and non-procurement in nature and if it would be considered outside the intended scope of the Direction. OPCA has confirmed they do not have any concerns regarding extension of the agreement.

Legal / Financial Implications:

Under the Letter of Agreement to renew the MOU, each participating agency would continue to provide financial contributions in accordance with Table 1, Schedule of Contributions of Participating Agencies 2027- 2031. HCA's contribution in 2027 would be \$17,596, which would then increase by 2% annually until 2031.

Related Reports and Appendices:

Attachment A – Letter of Agreement to extend the Memorandum of Understanding regarding the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System from 1 January 2027 through 31 December 2031

Attachment A

**LETTER OF AGREEMENT TO EXTEND THE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
REGARDING THE
COOTES TO ESCARPMENT ECOPARK SYSTEM
FROM 1 JANUARY 2027 THROUGH 31 DECEMBER 2031**

BETWEEN:

THE BRUCE TRAIL CONSERVANCY
and
THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON
and
THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON
and
THE HALTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
and
CITY OF HAMILTON
and
HAMILTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY
and
HAMILTON NATURALISTS' CLUB
and
McMASTER UNIVERSITY
and
ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

(hereafter "the Parties" or singularly, "Party")

1. Declaration

This Letter of Agreement is entered into by the nine Parties listed above.

The Parties agencies agree to continue their voluntary collaboration in the EcoPark System for a further period of five years, from 1 January 2027 through 31 December 2031. This extension is under the terms and conditions established in the Memorandum of Understanding and Project Charter agreed by the Parties in 2022, concluding 31 December 2026.

Under this Letter of Agreement:

- Royal Botanical Gardens shall continue to serve as the Implementing Partner and manage the Secretariat of the EcoPark System.
- Each participating agency shall continue to provide financial contributions in accordance with Table 1, the Schedule of Contributions of Participating Agencies 2027-2031, attached below.
- The Secretariat shall operate within the framework of the approved budget attached below as Table 2: General Budget Provisions for the Secretariat, 2027-2031.
- All other provisions of the 2022 Memorandum of Understanding and Project Charter remain in effect during the extension period.

This Letter of Agreement takes effect upon execution by all nine Parties, to follow the end of the Memorandum of Understanding and Project Charter agreed by the Parties in 2022, on 31 December 2026.

Table 1: Schedule of Contributions of Participating Agencies 2027–2031

Annual contributions are adjusted by 2% per annum to accommodate inflation.

Financial Contributions from Participating Agencies: 2027 - 2031						
Calendar Year:	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Bruce Trail Conservancy	1,257	1,282	1,307	1,334	1,360	6,540
The Corporation of the City of Burlington	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
City of Hamilton	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
Conservation Halton	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
Halton Region	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
Hamilton Conservation Authority	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
Hamilton Naturalists' Club	1,257	1,282	1,307	1,334	1,360	6,540
McMaster University	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
Royal Botanical Gardens	17,596	17,948	18,307	18,673	19,046	91,570
TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS	125,685	128,199	130,763	133,378	136,046	654,070

Table 2: General Budget Provisions for the Secretariat, 2027-2031

Annual expenditures are adjusted by 2% per annum to accommodate inflation.

General Operating Budget for Secretariat: 2027 - 2031						
Calendar Year:	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Staff salaries and benefits (Coordinator plus 20.41% MERCs)	96,104	98,026	99,986	101,986	104,026	500,128
Communications (website maintenance, newsletter and graphic design software, printing, and other media production costs.)	801	817	833	849	866	4,166
Meeting Expenses (EcoPark System Governing Council, Management Committee, and as needed subcommittee meetings)	2,500	2,550	2,601	2,653	2,706	13,010
Contract Services and Operating Supplies (As needed partner or external support to deliver strategic priorities, including land securement and private land-owner outreach).	20,830	21,247	21,672	22,105	22,547	108,400
Community Engagement (Support for Secretariat led or collaborative partner-led efforts that provide opportunities for local community members to participate in)	2,100	2,142	2,185	2,229	2,273	10,928
Finance and administration (annual overhead payment to RBG)	3,351	3,418	3,486	3,556	3,627	17,437
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	125,685	128,199	130,763	133,378	136,045	654,070

2. Authorizing Signatures

IN WITNESS WHEREOF the Parties have signed this Agreement with an effective date of 1 January 2027.

THE BRUCE TRAIL CONSERVANCY

_____	_____
Per Michael McDonald Chief Executive Officer	Date

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF BURLINGTON

_____	_____
Per Scott Hamilton Commissioner, Public Works, Public Works (Division)	Date

THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON

_____	_____
Per Carolina Daza Ortiz Director Infrastructure and Environmental Services	Date

THE HALTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

_____	_____
Per Chandra Sharma President and CEO	Date

CITY OF HAMILTON

Per Anita Fabac
 Director Planning and Chief Planner

Date

HAMILTON REGION CONSERVATION AUTHORITY

Per Lisa Burnside
 Chief Administrative Officer

Date

HAMILTON NATURALISTS' CLUB

Per Jackson Hudecki
 President

Date

McMASTER UNIVERSITY

Per Dr. Bruce Newbold
 Dean Faculty of Science

Date

ROYAL BOTANICAL GARDENS

Per Nancy Rowland
 Chief Executive Officer

Date

Memorandum to: Board of Directors

Approved for Circulation By: Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: Mike Stone, MA, MCIP, RPP, Senior Manager, Planning, Stewardship & Ecological Services

Prepared By: Jonathan Bastien, P. Eng., Manager, Water Resources Engineering

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Watershed Conditions Memorandum

Executive Summary:

During the period of June 22nd to August 24th 2026, there were no significant watercourse flooding events, and no Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events. However, one storm (July 27th to 29th) warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of watercourse conditions.

Currently, there are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant watercourse flooding, localized watercourse flooding of low-lying areas that typically flood during higher water levels, or significant water safety concerns. Current flows are estimated to range from near baseflow conditions in some watercourses (Lower Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek and Redhill Creek) to slightly elevated above baseflow conditions but well below thresholds for significant water safety concerns in other watercourses (Upper and Middle Spencer Creek).

The average monthly flows for August so far have ranged between slightly above long-term averages to significantly above long-term averages. The average monthly flows for July ranged between slightly below long-term averages to significantly above long-term averages. The average monthly flows for June ranged between below long-term averages to well above long-term averages. The average monthly flows for May ranged between near long-term averages to slightly above long-term averages.

Currently, there are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake is 33 cm above average for this time of year, as of yesterday.

Christie Lake levels are currently within preferred summer operating levels. Valens Lake levels are currently not available, but are expected to be slightly below preferred summer operating levels.

The most recent drought assessment indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed at that time.

There are currently no significant rainfall events (+20 mm in a day) forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks. There are currently no significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events forecasted over the next 2 weeks. HCA staff will continue to undertake monthly drought assessments, and coordinate with the Hamilton Low Water Response Team if drought conditions warrant actions.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

CURRENT WATERSHED CONDITIONS – August 24th, 2026

Current Flows in Major Area Watercourses

Currently, there are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant watercourse flooding, localized watercourse flooding of low-lying areas that typically flood during higher water levels, or significant water safety concerns.

Current flows are estimated to range from near baseflow conditions in some watercourses (Lower Spencer Creek, Ancaster Creek and Redhill Creek) to slightly elevated above baseflow conditions but well below thresholds for significant water safety concerns in other watercourses (Upper and Middle Spencer Creek). The five available streamflow gauges are Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road, Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5, Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street, Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street and Red Hill Creek at Barton Street.

The average monthly flows for August so far have ranged between slightly above long-term averages to significantly above long-term averages. Monthly flow in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road has been 195% of long-term averages (considered well above average). Monthly flow in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 has been 185% (considered well above average). Monthly flow in Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street has been 171% (considered well above average). Monthly flow in Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street has been 122% (considered slightly above average). Monthly flow in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street has been 223% (considered significantly above average).

The average monthly flows for July ranged between slightly below long-term averages to significantly above long-term averages. Monthly flow in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road was 217% of long-term averages (considered significantly above average). Monthly flow in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 was 143% (considered above average). Monthly flow in Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street was 151% (considered well above average). Monthly flow in Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street was 72% (considered slightly

below average). Monthly flow in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street was 154% (considered well above average).

The average monthly flows for June ranged between below long-term averages to well above long-term averages. Monthly flow in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road was 198% of long-term averages (considered well above average). Monthly flow in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 was 117% (considered slightly above average). Monthly flow in Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street was 128% (considered above average). Monthly flow in Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street was 68% (considered below average). Monthly flow in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street was 138% (considered above average).

The average monthly flows for May ranged between near long-term averages to slightly above long-term averages. Monthly flow in Upper Spencer Creek at Safari Road was 101% of long-term averages (considered near average). Monthly flow in Middle Spencer Creek at Highway 5 was 92% (considered near average). Monthly flow in Lower Spencer Creek at Market Street was 97% (considered near average). Monthly flow in Ancaster Creek at Wilson Street was 95% (considered near average). Monthly flow in Red Hill Creek at Barton Street was 119% (considered slightly above average).

Current Lake Ontario Water Levels

Currently, there are no observations, reports, or expectations of significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level in the Hamilton area was 75.26 m IGLD85 as of yesterday. The Lake Ontario mean daily water level averaged across the entire lake (75.24 m IGLD85 as of yesterday) is 33 cm above average for this time of year.

Current Storages in HCA Reservoirs

Christie Lake levels (771.12 ft) are currently within preferred summer operating levels (771.00 to 771.50 ft).

Valens Lake levels are currently not available, but are expected to be slightly below preferred summer operating levels (275.25 to 275.45 m).

Current Soil Conditions

Surface and root-zone soils are expected to be wet to saturated, and fully thawed, across the watershed.

RECENT STORM EVENTS

During the period of June 22nd to August 24th 2026, there were no significant watercourse flooding events, and no Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events.

However, one storm warranted issuing messages and additional monitoring of watercourse conditions.

Potential for Watercourse Flooding During Rain Storm

July 27th to 29th, 2026

On July 27th, the forecasts for July 27th and 28th expected a combined 16 to 79 mm of total rain, including thunderstorms. There was considerable uncertainty as to the amount of runoff that would occur. HCA staff continued to monitor watercourse and weather conditions closely and reassessed the potential for flooding.

The recorded amount of total precipitation at the HCA gauges located across the watershed ranged between 1 and 48 mm for the period of July 27th and 28th.

There were no received observations, reports, or expectations of significant watercourse flooding, localized watercourse flooding of low-lying areas that typically flood during higher water levels, or significant water safety concerns.

HCA engineering staff issued the following messages related to this event, to communicate the potential watercourse flooding and water safety concerns to the community:

- July 27th: Flood Watch – Inland Lake and River Flooding
- July 29th: Cancellation of Flood Watch – Inland Lake and River Flooding

RECENT WATERSHED LOW WATER CONDITIONS

The most recent drought assessment (including data up to July 31) indicated that normal conditions are an appropriate overall characterization of the watershed at that time.

FORECASTED WATERSHED CONDITIONS

Watercourse Flooding

There are currently no significant rainfall events (+20 mm in a day) forecasted for the watershed over the next 2 weeks. HCA staff continue to monitor conditions and forecasts routinely. Resultant water levels and flows from currently anticipated rain are not expected to result in significant watercourse flooding.

Lake Ontario Shoreline Flooding

There are currently no significant Lake Ontario shoreline flooding events forecasted over the next 2 weeks. HCA staff continue to monitor conditions and forecasts routinely.

Watershed Low Water Conditions

HCA staff will continue to undertake monthly drought assessments, and coordinate with the Hamilton Low Water Response Team if drought conditions warrant actions.

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Memorandum to: Board of Directors

**Approved for
Circulation By:** Lisa Burnside, CAO

Reviewed By: Gord Costie, Director, Conservation Area Services

Prepared By: Brandon Good, Senior Manager, Conservation Area Services

Meeting Date: September 3, 2026

Subject: Conservation Areas Experience Update

Executive Summary:

HCA Conservation Areas had a successful summer season, with solid visitation across camping, boating, day use, recreation, and programming. The Learn to Fish program, run with the Ministry of Natural Resources, drew over 300 participants across 12 days. The Outdoor Education Summer Day Camp also saw strong attendance, and Westfield Heritage Village had a successful season highlighted by events like Milk and Honey. HCA continues to support community events including the BRIGHT Run and Ancaster A.M. Autumn Stroll. Wild Waterworks and Lakeland Pool wrap up their season at Labour Day. Staff are now shifting to fall operations across all Conservation Areas.

Staff Comment / Discussion:

• HCA Conservation Areas

Camping, day use, marina operations, and recreation performed well this summer, with canoe, kayak, and paddle board rentals remaining popular. All Conservation Areas will be open for Labour Day weekend with expected high visitation for the final long weekend of the summer season.

• Learn to Fish Program

HCA's new Learn to Fish program, delivered with support from the Ministry of Natural Resources, drew over 300 participants across 12 days at Christie Lake, Valens Lake, and Fifty-Point Conservation Areas. Led by HCA's Program Ambassadors, the program

combined instruction and hands-on experience, reflecting strong demand for outdoor recreation and environmental education.

- **Outdoor Education Summer Day Camp**

HCA's Outdoor Education Summer Day Camp operated successfully again this year, with solid attendance throughout the summer. The program provides children with opportunities to explore the outdoors, learn about the natural environment, and participate in hands-on activities.

- **Christie Lake Conservation Area – BRIGHT Run**

The 19th annual BRIGHT Run returns to Christie Lake on Saturday, September 12, 2026. The family-friendly event is non-competitive 1 km/5 km walk/run supporting breast cancer research at Juravinski Cancer Centre and McMaster University. The event is entirely volunteer run, so all participant funds go directly to research. The 2025 event drew roughly 1,700 participants and 200 volunteers. (www.brightrun.ca)

- **Dundas Valley Conservation Area – Ancaster A.M. Autumn Stroll**

HCA and the Rotary Club of Ancaster A.M. will host the 28th annual Ancaster Autumn Stroll at Dundas Valley Conservation Area on Sunday, September 13, 2026, featuring trail walks paired with local wine, craft beer, cocktails, and cuisine. (www.autumnstroll.ca)

- **Westfield Heritage Village Conservation Area**

Westfield had a successful summer with a series of programs, including the Milk and Honey event, which explored dairy and honey production traditions with support from the local dairy community. These programs reinforce Westfield's role as both a heritage destination and conservation area, providing visitors with opportunities to experience local history while enjoying the natural landscape.

- **Spencer Gorge Conservation Area**

Spencer Gorge remains one of HCA's popular destinations, especially as fall colour season approaches. Staff are monitoring visitation with municipal partners, and the Board-approved reservation system takes effect Saturday, September 26, 2026, requiring reservations seven days a week to manage peak fall visitation. This will be communicated via the HCA website, social media, signage, and media releases.

- **Wild Waterworks and Lakeland Pool**

With Labour Day fast approaching, Wild Waterworks and Lakeland Pool are at the end of another successful summer operating season. Both facilities continue to provide important recreational opportunities for residents and visitors during the summer months.