



Developing A New Policy Document & Procedural Manual
Updating Policies for the Administration of Ontario Regulation 155/06 and
the Planning Act, May 2020 Consolidation

VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSION

August 24, 2022
(6:30 pm – 8:30 pm)

Leilani Lee-Yates, David Deluce, Karen Wianecki & Sal Spitale

Land Acknowledgement

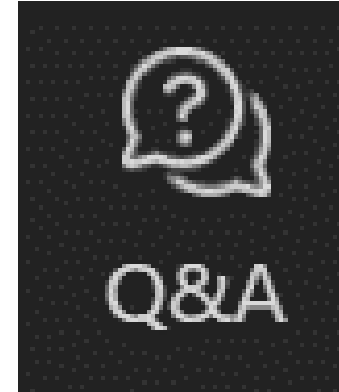
The Niagara Peninsula watershed is situated within the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Attiwonderonk (Neutral), and Anishinaabeg, including the Mississaugas of the Credit – many of whom continue to live and work here today.

This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties (No.3, 4, and 381) and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today, the watershed is home to many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit.

Teams Webinar Functions



- Click on the “Polls” icon to open the polling questions on the right side of your screen
- Provide your answers and view results



- Click on the “Q&A” icon to open the Q&A function on the right side of your screen
- Submit your questions

If you are experiencing technical difficulties, please send an email to kourtney@skycomp.ca

Poll Question #1

Where are you joining us from?

- City of Hamilton
- Haldimand County
- Niagara Region
- Other – Please specify in the Q&A

Poll Question #2

Please tell us about yourself. Are you...?

- An elected community leader
- A local resident
- A representative of the building industry
- An agricultural representative
- A consultant (planner, engineer, ecologist, biologist, architect, etc.)
- Member of an environmental organization
- Member of a ratepayer organization
- Municipal representative (staff)
- Representative from upper levels of government (Indigenous, Federal, Provincial)
- Other – Please specify in the Q&A

Introduction and Project Process

- Leilani Lee-Yates, B.E.S., MSPL.RPD, MCIP, RPP
- Director of Watershed Management



NPCA – Watershed Management Agency

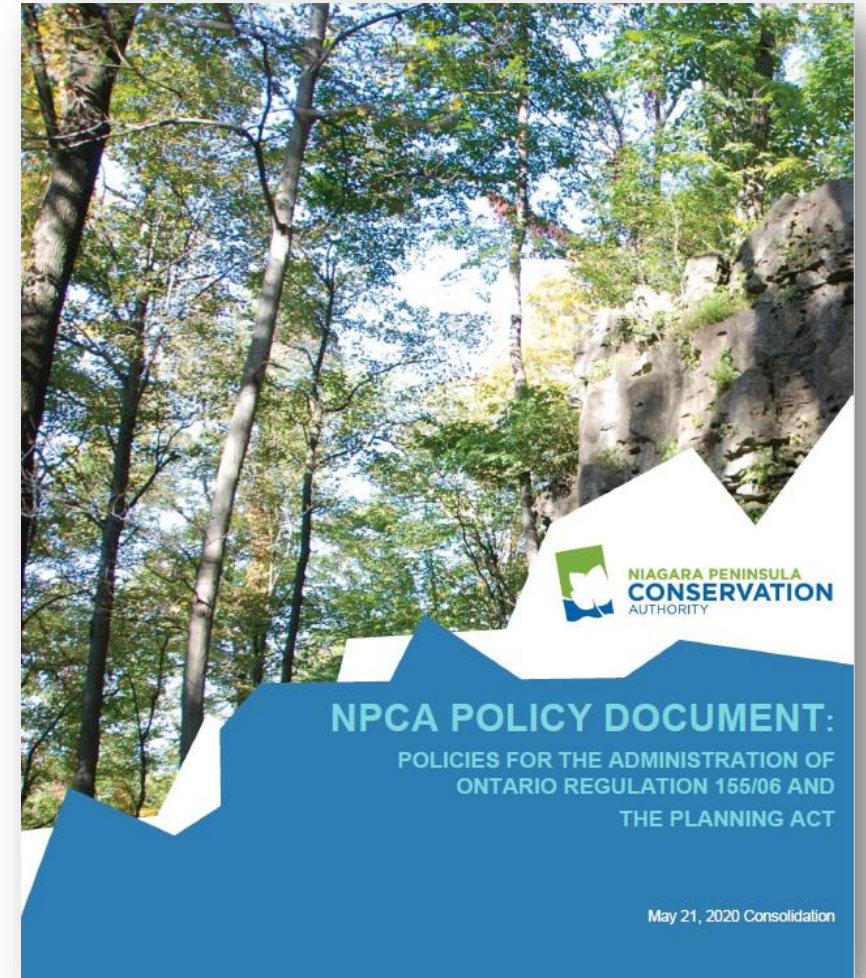
Roles & Responsibilities

- Formed in 1959 under the authority of the Conservation Authorities Act and performs a number of roles in keeping with assigned legislative and regulatory responsibilities:

Role of NPCA	Authority/Details
Regulatory Authority	Section 28 of the Conservation Authorities Act (CAA)
Representative of the Province	Delegated provincial interest for Section 3.1 of the PPS (Natural Hazards) and acts on behalf of the Province
Resource Management Agency	Under the CAA – develop programs that reflect local resource management needs within the watershed. These are approved by the CA Board of Directors.
Public Commenting Body	The Planning Act
Service Provider	Through agreements with other levels of government (regulatory and approval responsibilities)
Landowner	May be involved as a proponent or as a landowner impacted by adjacent development

Why is NPCA Updating its Policy Document?

- Compendium of NPCA's official "opinion" for the purposes of applying Subsection 3(1) of Ontario Regulation 155/06
- NPCA staff rely on the policies contained in this Policy Document, as does the NPCA Board and those who are seeking a permit from NPCA or looking for a recommendation from NPCA in the case of Planning Act applications
- Needs updating based on change of corporate direction through the new Strategic Plan 2021-2031, on-going partner municipal Official Plan Reviews, Provincial legislation and/or recent and pending changes to the Conservation Authorities Act and related Regulations



June

July - August

August - September

September - November

Data Gathering,
Technical Study
& Analysis



Engagement &
Consultation



Draft Policy
Development



Preparation of
Policy
Document &
Procedural
Manual



- Buffer Technical Analysis & Discussion Paper
- Interim s. 28 EIS Guideline
- Interim Wetland Procedure Document
- Internal engagement & consultation
- Identify policy themes & options

- Buffer Technical Analysis & Discussion Paper
- Policy themes & policy directions
- External engagement & consultation

- Assess input & feedback
- Summary of engagement & consultation
- Identify proposed policy changes
- Draft policies for priority areas

- Release of Draft Updated Policy Document & Procedural Manual for consultation
- Engagement & consultation
- Final Policy Document & Procedural Manual

Board of Directors

Public Information Session

Board of Directors

Board of Directors

Governance Committee

Important Key Messages

- This work builds on the analysis and findings from Phase 1
- Phase 1 scope included:
 - Gaps, deficiencies and inconsistencies in the existing NPCA Policy Document
 - Jurisdictional Review – other High Growth GGH CA's (good practices and policy approaches)
 - Identification of technical studies and/or mapping gaps needed to support the new Policy Document
- Phase 1 Report presented to NPCA Board with direction to proceed with Phase 2 - Development of the new Policy Document and Development of the accompanying Procedural Manual
- Conclusion from Phase 1 – NPCA policies meet the intent of the Provincial Policy Statement, and policies address the "Five Tests" of a permit application under s.28 of the Conservation Authorities Act and O. Reg. 155/06. Some policies appear to be more flexible than other Conservation Authority policy documents.
- **Themes identified in Phase 2 were not selected at random – they emerged in Phase 1**
- **Themes are comprehensive – they will provide needed clarity for staff, Board and partners**

Why Does This Initiative Matter To You?

- The new Policy Document will consist of a compendium of all NPCA planning and permitting policies
- All policies will be located in one document and they will be up-to-date and reflective of current provincial direction, policy, legislation and regulations
- The new Policy Document will be used by NPCA to:
 - comment on planning applications submitted for approval to watershed planning partners under The Planning Act
 - Review permit applications submitted to NPCA under Section 28 of The Conservation Authorities Act
- It will contain key policy opinion and information that may be of interest to you as a landowner, community member, community leader, watershed partner or industry/business owner

Meeting Purpose & Objectives

- Karen Wianecki, M.Pl., MCIP, RPP
- Director of Practice, Planning Solutions Inc.



Information Session Outcomes:

Purpose & Objectives:

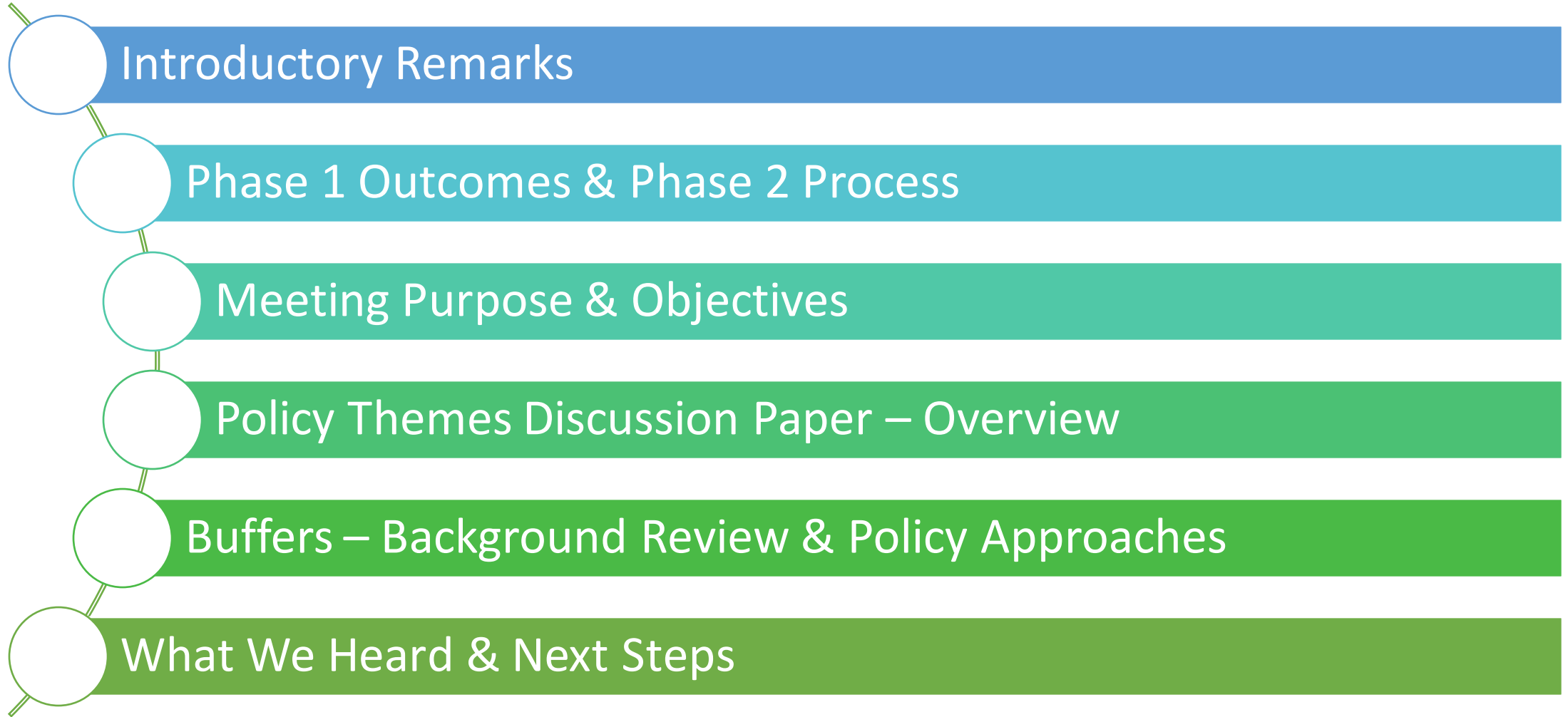
1. Present an overview of:

- Phase 2 process, timing and deliverables
- Policy Themes Discussion Paper and key questions
- Buffer Width Discussion Paper and key questions

2. Obtain feedback/input from participants regarding:

- Governing Fundamentals
- Feature/Resource Specific Policy Themes
- Implementation and Customer/Client Service
- Additional Issues of Importance

Public Information Session Agenda



Policy Themes Discussion Paper: Overview

- David Deluce, MCIP, RPP
- Senior Manager, Environmental Planning and Policy

Policy Themes Discussion Paper – Structure & Format

Preface

Introduction (Project Overview, Format of the Discussion Paper, Additional References/Resources, Links to Strategic Plan)

Policy Themes (Emerging From Phase 1)

Governing Fundamentals (Common Policy Themes)

Feature/Resource-Specific Policy Themes

Customer & Client Service & Policy Implementation Related Themes

Important Points of Note

- Some recommendations relating to natural hazards that are technical in nature are not presented in the Discussion Paper – they must be guided by Provincial technical guidance documents. NPCA will follow direction provided to ensure the updated direction is included in the new Policy Document
- The province is updating technical guidelines for lakeshore erosion management and these will guide updates to NPCAs Lake Ontario and Lake Erie shoreline management plans. The new document will be updated to reflect the new shoreline management plans

Governing Fundamentals - Common Policy Themes [N=8]

- Climate Change
- Cumulative Impacts
- Ecological Net Gain
- Intensification and Increasing Urban Density
- Minister's Zoning Orders
- Public Education and Awareness of Roles & Responsibilities
- Stormwater Management, Low Impact Development & Green Infrastructure
- Watershed and Sub-Watershed Planning

Feature/Resource Specific Policy Themes [N=3]

- Agriculture
- Buffers
- Natural Heritage Features and Areas
 - Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI's)
 - Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species
 - Significant Valleylands
 - Significant Wildlife Habitat
 - Significant Woodlands

Implementation & Customer/Client Service (N=4)

- Continuous improvement of NPCA Client Services Standard for Plan and Permit Review
- Refine decision-support tools
- Enhance Customer Service Feedback Mechanisms
- Communicate NPCA role/responsibilities in plan review and permitting

Governing Fundamentals

[Common Themes]

1. Climate Change

Current NPCA Policy

- S. 12.11 – high level reference to climate change and its impacts within the watershed
- Board direction to undertake programs and initiatives to assist in adaptation and mitigation
- NPCA to adopt a comprehensive approach, including new policies/programs to assist in adaptation and mitigation
- NPCA to coordinate and collaborate with municipal partners and other agencies to address climate change impacts



1. Climate Change

Policy Opportunities

- NPCA Board has declared a Climate Emergency – notice to Province to not remove any PSWs; watershed municipalities have also committed through policies and practices to reduce GHG and build more resilient communities; NPCA joined Niagara Municipalities, Institutions and Businesses in Call to Action
- Strategic Plan commits NPCA to be a leader in research and innovation
- Floodplain mapping and shoreline management plans will support risk management approach

Clear direction is needed in the new Policy Document:

- Ongoing and future technical work required to identify natural hazards
- Approach for incorporating impacts of climate change in managing risks
- Opportunities to collaborate with municipal partners
- Protection and enhancement policies to meet the 'conservation of land' test to obtain a S.28 permit

2. Cumulative Impacts

Current NPCA Policy

- No clear direction for assessing cumulative impacts of proposed development on natural hazards or ecological functions
- No definition of cumulative impacts



2. Cumulative Impacts

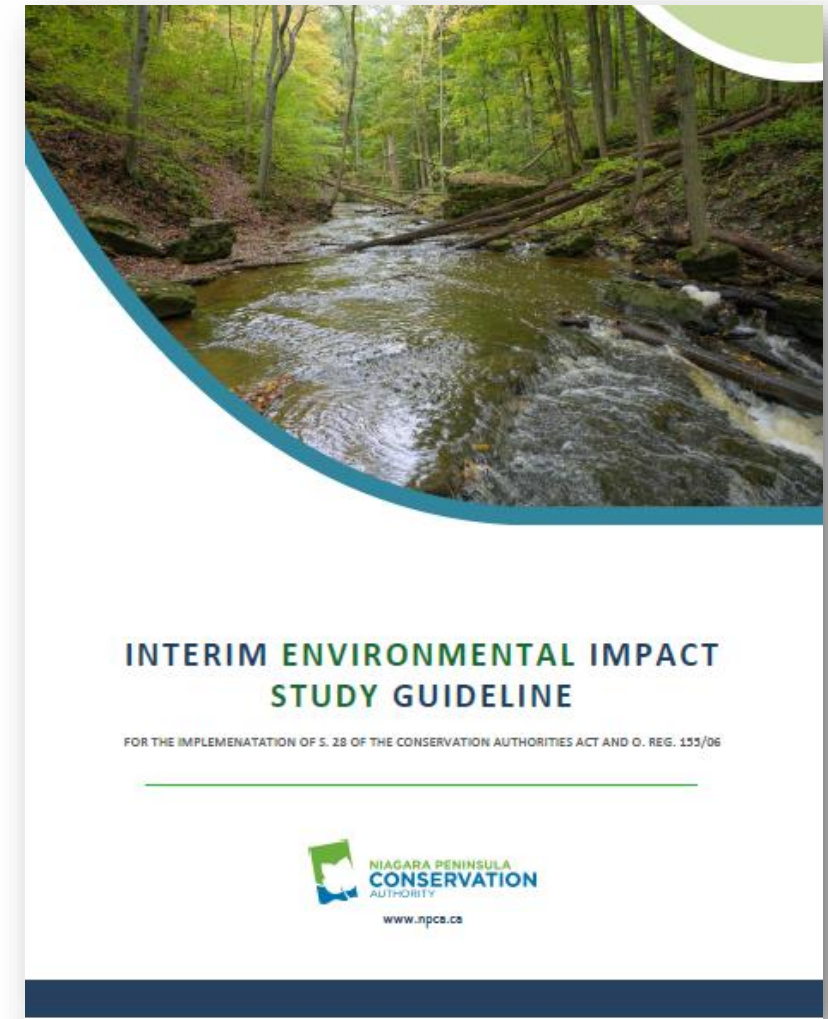
Policy Opportunities

- NPCA assesses cumulative impacts of hazards and land use changes on an ecosystem basis that transcends municipal/political boundaries and identifies applied solutions to address these impacts
- S.28 EIS Guidelines provide direction regarding work permit applications and emphasize need to evaluate cumulative impacts
- EIS Guidelines define cumulative impacts: “the effect on the physical and natural resources resulting from the incremental activities of development over a period of time and over an area.”

Clear direction is needed in the new Policy Document and Procedural Manual for assessing cumulative impacts within the watersheds as a result of proposed development

Interim Section 28 Environmental Impact Study (EIS) Guidelines

- Key recommendation from Phase 1 gap analysis to provide clear guidance for NPCA EIS study requirements
- Provides direction to landowners considering development or site alteration in or near NPCA regulated features and areas and EIS practitioners to determine when an EIS is required and the procedure for completing an EIS in support of an NPCA work permit
- Helps explain roles and responsibilities of the NPCA in relation to the EIS process and provides tools for improving the process and considering options for study avoidance, where appropriate



3. Ecological Net Gain

Current NPCA Policy

- There are policies for reconfiguring and compensation for Non-PSW but these do not apply to PSW and are considered only where there is no reasonable alternative to locate a proposed development, site alteration or activity outside of a Non-PSW
- When the policy is implemented, NPCA aims to achieve ecological net gain to natural system functions
- NPCA Interim Wetlands Procedure Document provides guidance on NPCA expectations and requirements for satisfying various tests of this policy



3. Ecological Net Gain

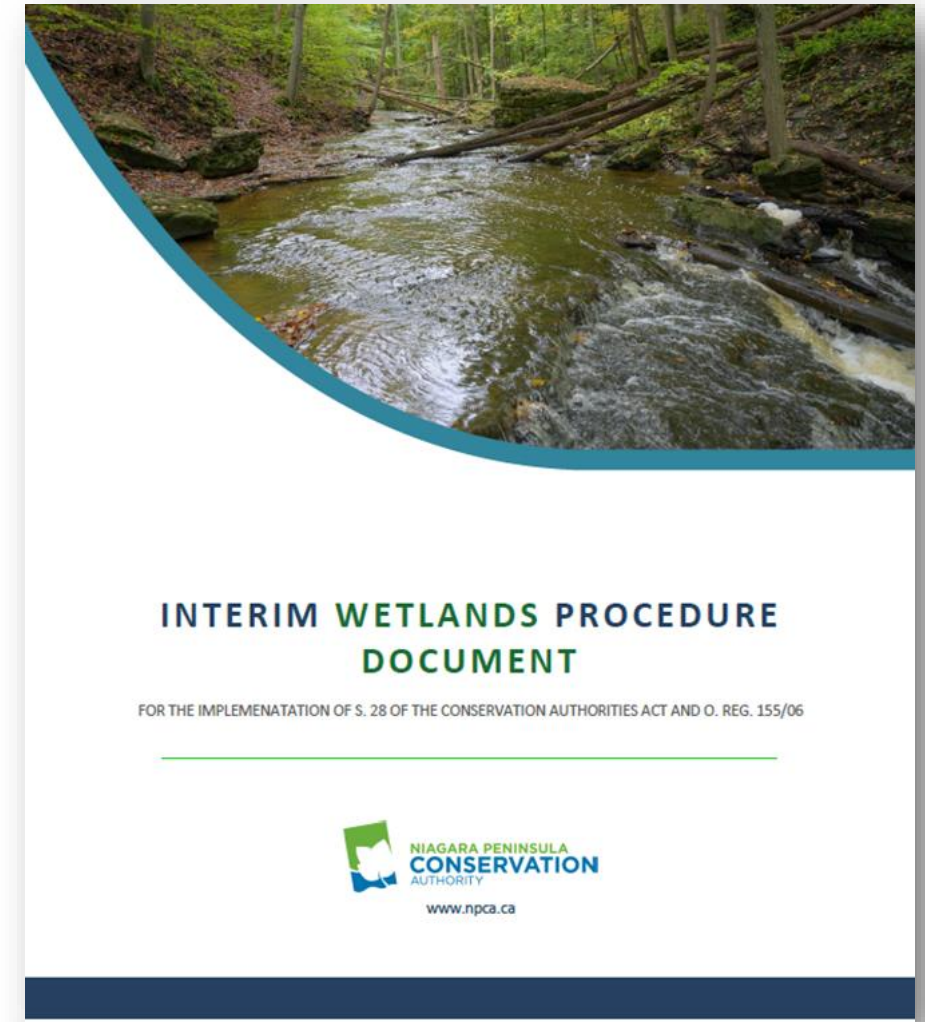
Policy Opportunities

- Policy needs to be clarified regarding the protection hierarchy when consideration is given to reconfiguring Non-PSW to achieve overall ecological net gain to the natural system functions:
 - All efforts to protect the natural feature must be exhausted
 - All alternatives to be examined before reconfiguring or re-creating the feature can be considered
- NPCA position and practice has been that monetary compensation for wetland removal or stream alignment as part of a development proposal is not a form of mitigation and does not achieve ecological net gain

Where there is an approved EA or MZO that results in the removal of regulated features and areas such as wetlands... clear direction is needed in the new Policy Document and Procedural Manual for considering the use of mitigation through reconfiguration and re-creation of features for ecological net gain, or where mitigation cannot be achieved, the consideration of monetary compensation

Interim Section 28 Wetlands Procedure Document

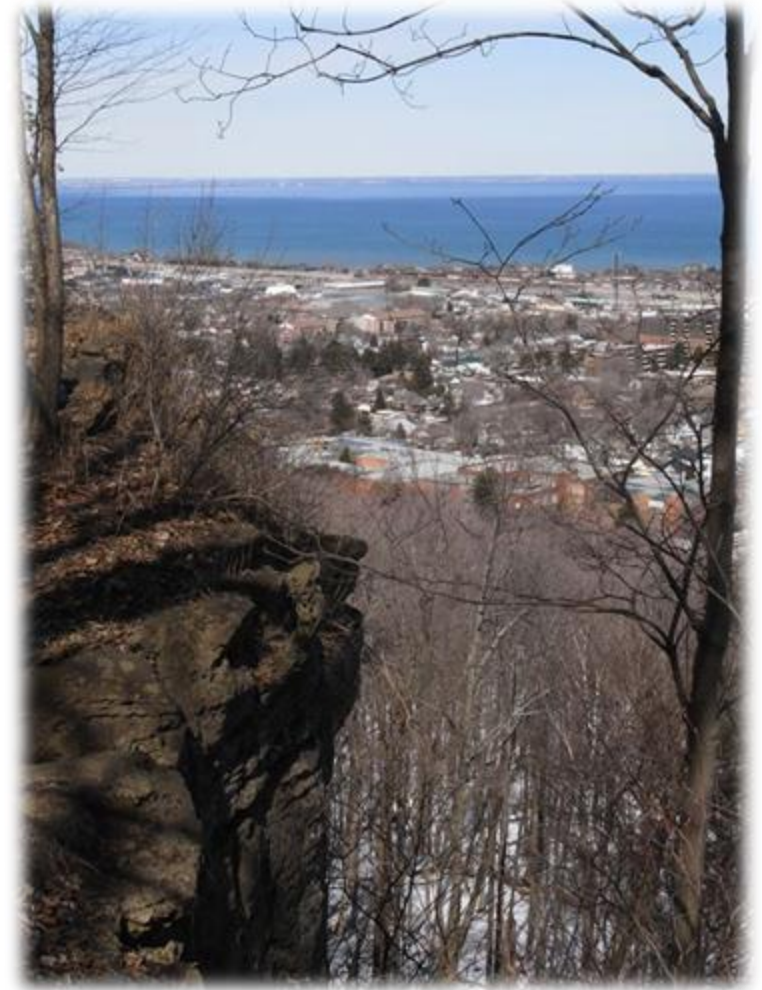
- Key recommendation from Phase 1 gap analysis to provide clear guidance for NPCA study requirements
- Outlines the process and study requirements for the identification, evaluation, study, protection and enhancement of regulated wetlands. To be read in conjunction with the NPCA Interim Section 28 Environmental Impact Study Guideline
- Provides NPCA staff, the Board of Directors, municipal staff, developers and the public with the specifications and references with which the Authority will further the conservation, restoration and management of wetlands within its jurisdiction through NPCA work permits



4. Intensification & Increasing Urban Density

Current NPCA Policy

- Upper-tier and single-tier municipalities have updated Official Plans to conform to the Provincial Growth Plan and have updated policies to manage growth within urban areas (compact development; complete communities)
- Document is silent with respect to forms of development that support urban intensification/increased density that would be located in regulated areas



4. Intensification & Increasing Urban Density

Policy Opportunities

- Demands for housing and growth may result in more marginal land being considered for development, including areas susceptible to erosion/flooding
- NPCA has an important role to play to uphold provincial interests and assess plan review and permit applications for development in areas subject to natural hazards and hazardous lands

Clear direction is needed in the new Policy Document to guide NPCA's ability to review and consider permissions for forms of development that aim to support municipal intensification targets. Focusing on a high-quality pre-consultation process with applications and municipalities outlined in the new Procedural Manual would assist NPCA to identify planning and permit application submission requirements when infill development is proposed on lands constrained by regulated features and areas.

5. Minister's Zoning Orders (MZOs)

Current NPCA Policy

- Does not address recently amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act regarding permits for approved MZOs
- No policies/guidance for reviewing municipal requests for MZOs or processing permit applications for approved MZOs



5. Minister's Zoning Orders (MZO's)

Policy Opportunities

- CAs to issue a permit and may impose conditions
 - Appeals process and Agreement requirements as specified in the amendments to the Conservation Authorities Act
- Procedural direction on the process for commenting on municipal requests for an MZO, and the permitting process (high-quality pre-consultation process with applicants and municipalities)
 - Where approved MZO results in removal of regulated features/areas, clear policies and procedures are needed for considering the use of mitigation through reconfiguration and re-creation of features with a view to achieving ecological gain, or where mitigation cannot be achieved, the consideration of monetary compensation

Poll Question #3

Where there is an approved Environmental Assessment, or a Minister's Zoning Order that results in the removal of regulated features and areas such as wetlands, do you support the use of mitigation through reconfiguration and re-creation of features for ecological net gain (or where mitigation cannot be achieved, the consideration of monetary compensation?)

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

6. Public Education and Awareness of Roles and Responsibilities

Current NPCA Policy

- Identifies several NPCA roles:
 - Regulatory Authority
 - Representative of the Province of Ontario (s. 3.1, Natural Hazards, of Provincial Policy Statement)
 - Resource Management Agency
 - Public Commenting Body
 - Service Provider
 - Landowner



6. Public Education and Awareness of Roles and Responsibilities

Policy Opportunities

- Better clarify the roles and responsibilities of NPCA:
 - Climate resilience
 - Sustainable growth across the watershed
 - Other legislated approval processes (Municipal EA, NEP Development Permits)
 - Other agreements
- Clearer policies and procedures are needed to identify the roles and responsibilities assigned to NPCA under various pieces of legislation
 - Clearer delineation of 'Who Does What' – roles and responsibilities of other agencies is needed to ensure there is a clear understanding of the functional split between NPCA and partner agencies/organizations

Poll Question #4

What additional information would you like to know about NPCA?

- NPCA's role in permitting?
- NPCA's role in plan review?
- Additional programs and services that NPCA offers?
- More detailed information about application requirements?
- How NPCA works with watershed municipal partners?
- Who is responsible for what across the watershed?
- Other – Please specify in the Q&A?

7. Stormwater Management, Low Impact Development & Green Infrastructure

Current NPCA Policy

- S.12.4.8.1 includes guidance for completion of a Stormwater Management (SWM Plan) (required for a permit or planning application)
- No policy direction for NPCA to review permit or planning applications with associated SWM facilities that are affected by regulated areas and natural hazards
- Low Impact Development (LID) is referenced as a method for mitigating climate change (12.1.3.2) – but no policies to support implementation of LID or green infrastructure through permit and planning approvals



Source: TRCA

7. Stormwater Management, Low Impact Development & Green Infrastructure

Policy Opportunities

- Include policies that clarify the roles and responsibilities of NPCA in SWM review to include review of SWM facilities and outlets within regulated areas where natural hazards can affect cumulative impacts related to erosion, sediment and flooding in regulated areas
 - NPCA Strategic Plan commits NPCA to lead implementation of sustainable technologies, such as LID and green infrastructure best practices for climate resilience and sustainability
 - Engaging municipalities, the development community, and other private landowners will be key for implementing green infrastructure and sustainability best practices and actions within the NPCA's watersheds
- Include policies and technical guidance for NPCA to advocate for integration of sustainable technologies and green infrastructure in site designs

8. Watershed and Sub-Watershed Planning

Current NPCA Policy

- S.2.1 describes NPCA's Integrated Watershed Management (IWM) approach to planning
- S.12.5 identifies the role of watershed plans in managing watershed resources
- Does not provide direction or guidance for the role of NPCA in supporting watershed municipalities in undertaking watershed planning or sub-watershed planning to inform future growth, as directed by the Province through provincial legislation and plans



8. Watershed and Sub-Watershed Planning

Policy Opportunities

- Growth Plan and Provincial Policy Statement emphasize the need for watershed planning to inform land use planning
 - Upper-Tier and Single-Tier have developed policies that require certain land use decisions be informed by watershed or sub-watershed planning. Watershed planning is also required to inform municipal decisions regarding growth and infrastructure
 - NPCA is committed through the NPCA's 10-Year Strategic Plan to implement a proactive sub-watershed work program to complement and inform the quaternary and sub-watershed planning for growth areas within the NPCA jurisdiction within Niagara Region and support municipal partners with watershed data collection and analysis to understand cumulative impacts
- Opportunity to clarify the role of NPCA as a resource management agency, regulatory authority, and service provider within the watershed and through sub-watershed planning work that informs watershed resource management programs and land use planning

Feature/Resource Specific Policy Themes

1. Agriculture

Current NPCA Policy

- S.3.2 (Guiding Principle) recognizes that healthy communities require a sustainable balance between agricultural, environmental, social and economic priorities, interests and uses
- S.3.3.4.1 and S.3.3.4.2 identifies when works on agricultural lands do not require an NPCA work permit
- Certain forms of value-added, agri-tourism uses, and agricultural activities that require a Building Permit may require a work permit from the NPCA (depending on the nature of the application and considerations relating to the Five Tests under the Conservation Authorities Act)



1. Agriculture

Policy Opportunities

- Unique microclimate and rich soils support one of Ontario's most productive agricultural systems (vineyards, tender fruit orchards, livestock, specialty crops)
 - Official Plans (OP's) are being updated to reflect new or amended provincial agricultural policies
 - Need to examine existing NPCA policies to determine whether clarification is needed to support the agricultural industry (permitting agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses within NPCA regulated areas in accordance with updated OP policies and the Five Tests of the CAA and O. Reg. 155/06)
- Examine existing NPCA policies to determine whether clarification is needed to support the agricultural industry with respect to permitted agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses within the NPCA regulated areas, in accordance with updated OP policies and the Five Tests of the CAA and Ontario Regulation 155/06

Poll Question #5

Are NPCA agricultural policies currently supportive of the agricultural industry?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Poll Question #6

Do the current policies need to be clarified with respect to permitted uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses within the NPCA regulated areas in accordance with updated municipal Official Plan policies and the Five Tests of the Conservation Authorities Act and Ontario Regulation 155/06?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

2. Buffers

Current NPCA Policy

- Includes policies specific to buffer widths for different regulated features and areas
- Inconsistencies for buffer requirements in the policies:
 - S.8.2.3.3 provides criteria where reductions to the 30 metre buffer requirement for wetlands may be reduced to as low as 5 metres
 - S.8.2.3.5 provides an opportunity to reduce the 30 metre wetland buffer requirement for major development with no bare minimum
- Inconsistencies appears to allow a major development to potentially have a smaller buffer requirement than a smaller-scale development



2. Buffers

Policy Opportunities

- On December 17, 2021, NPCA Board directed staff to propose amendments to NPCA policies to set a minimum 30m buffer for natural hazards, wetlands and watercourses and to review the policy regarding exceptions
- Work underway to address this Board direction through the Buffer Width Discussion Paper

- Buffer Width Discussion Paper summary of recommendations on Slide 58

3. Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Current NPCA Policy

- Policy is silent with respect to natural heritage features and areas not regulated by NPCA that are protected and managed under municipal and provincial policies or plans, including:
 - Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSIs)
 - Habitat of Endangered and Threatened Species
 - Ecological Linkages
 - Significant Valleylands
 - Significant Wildlife Habitat
 - Significant Woodlands



3. Natural Heritage Features and Areas

Policy Opportunities

- S.12.4 includes guidance for studies that NPCA requires as part of a permit or planning application submission
 - Natural heritage features and areas are protected and managed through municipal OP policies and provincial plans.
 - Current MOU's with municipalities call for NPCA to provide plan review services and comment on impacts to natural heritage features and areas within regulated areas, as it relates to the ecological function of the regulated features.
 - Municipalities review planning applications for impacts on natural heritage features and areas within their natural heritage system
 - Other CA Policy Documents include guidance policies for natural heritage features and areas when providing their plan review services to municipal partners through established MOUs
 - Clarify NPCAs role under the plan review MOUs and provide guidance for reviewing planning applications (EIS requirements) related to natural heritage features and areas outside of regulated areas
- There is an opportunity to clarify through the Policy Document and Procedural Manual to clarify NPCA roles and responsibilities under the plan review MOUs with partner municipalities and guidance for reviewing planning applications in relation to natural heritage features and areas

Poll Question #7

Should the new Policy Document explain who is responsible for natural heritage features and areas beyond NPCA regulated features?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Implementation and Customer, Client Services

Implementation and Customer, Client Services

Current NPCA Policy

- S.12.4 includes guidance for studies that NPCA requires as part of a permit or planning application
- Current Strategic Plan and Conservation Ontario Client Services Streamlining Initiative (2019), NPCA is committed to maintaining a high standard of client services
- NPCA is committed to:
 - Continuous improvement
 - Refining the decision-support tools for efficient application management and review
 - Enhancing customer service feedback mechanisms to support performance evaluation and reporting
 - Communicating the role and responsibilities of NPCA in plan review and permitting



Implementation and Customer, Client Services

Policy Opportunities

- NPCA is committed to maintaining a high standard of client services, tools and procedures for planning review and permits
 - All parties need the right tools, access to updated standards, procedures and techniques to support policy implementation
 - Develop and/or adopt tools and standards to effectively implement policies (i.e., EIS Guidelines, Interim Wetlands Procedure Document, etc.)
- Ensure procedures are documented and that the policies are updated to develop/adopt tools and standards to support the effective implementation of NPCA policies
 - All parties need the right tools, access to updated standards, procedures and techniques to support policy implementation

Poll Question #8

Can NPCA do more to improve the level of service?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Poll Question #9

What improvements need to be made?

- Ensure policy is driven by science when available
- Publish up-to-date policies that are easily accessible
- Develop and utilize a decision support tool for establishing buffer widths
- Create stronger partnerships with watershed municipalities
- Work more closely with other partners
- Other – Please specify in the Q&A

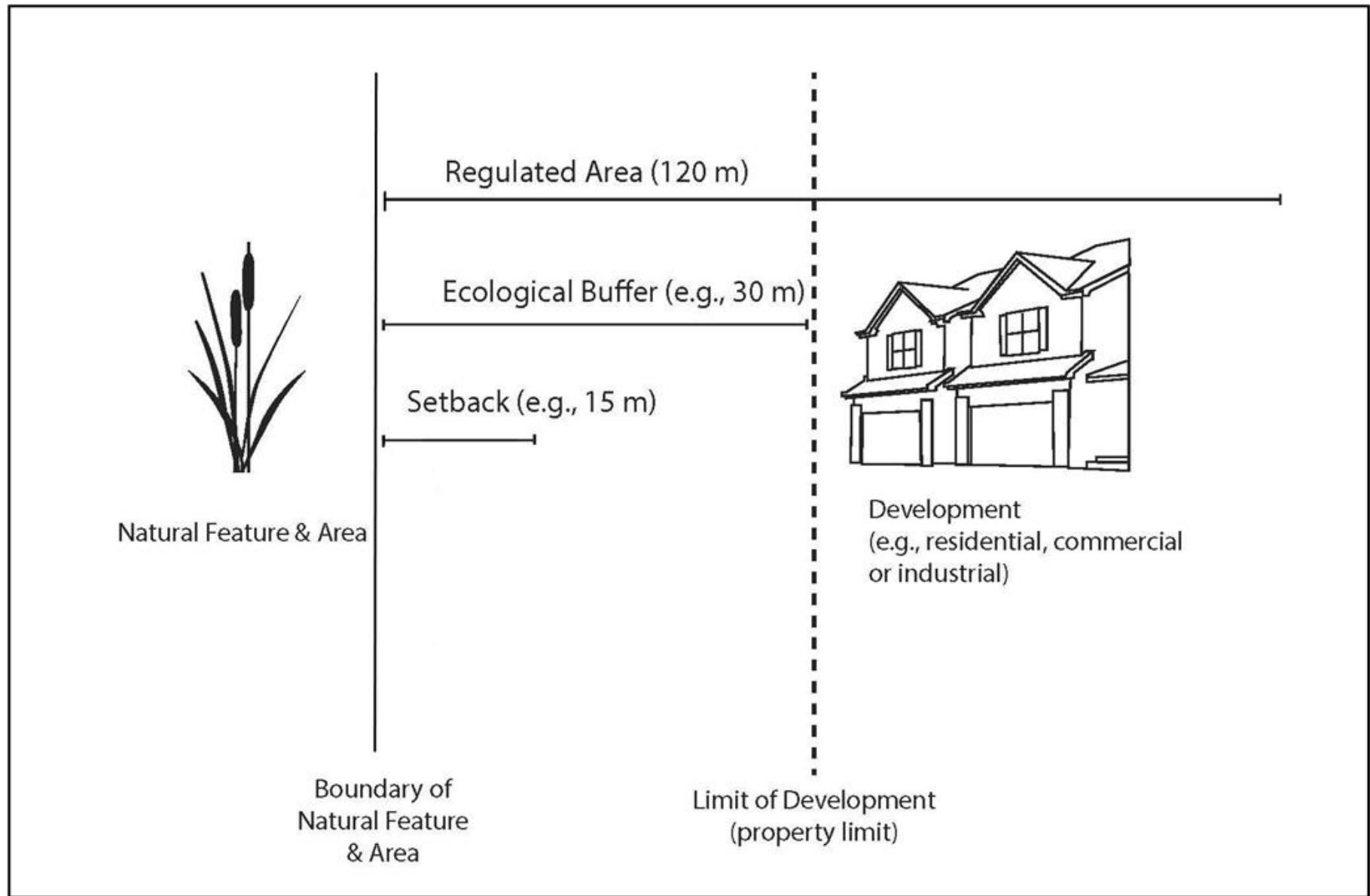
Buffers – Background Review and Policy Approaches

- Sal Spitale, B.Sc., M.E.S.
- Principal and Co-owner, North-South Environmental Inc.

Buffers – Direction from Phase 1 Report

- NPCA - Policy Document Update, Phase 1 Report
 - Consideration for a 30 m buffer to regulated features and areas (e.g., wetlands, watercourses, etc.)
- Prepare a Buffer Width Technical Analysis and Discussion Paper to inform policy development in Phase 2
 - Review best practices and scientific literature, undertake a jurisdictional review of policies related to buffer widths, and review decision support tools that are used to inform the determination of appropriate buffer widths

Setbacks vs. Buffers



Buffer Between Development and Feature



Summary of Technical Review

- Scientific literature varies on effective buffer widths
- General ecological concepts that inform buffer widths
 - Wider is better
 - Denser vegetation better
 - Feature type (i.e., sensitivity), type of adjacent land use (i.e., potential for impacts)
 - Slopes, soils
- Buffers are typically defined to describe their composition (i.e., vegetated), purpose, and role in mitigating impacts

Summary of Technical Review cont...

- Buffers are widely accepted (and often required)
- Where buffers widths are prescribed in planning and policy documents, they vary in width depending on the feature type and sensitivity of ecological functions
- Informed by vision, goals, objectives and principles established in policy and Strategic Plan
- Policies often permit refinement (i.e., reduction or increase) and allow for some "compatible" uses within the buffers

Summary of Technical Review cont...

- Buffer widths are typically determined based on the following factors:
 - sensitivity of the feature and ecological functions;
 - the potential impact from the adjacent land use;
 - biophysical factors of the adjacent lands such as slope, soils, hydrology and vegetation;
 - other mitigating factors (e.g., fencing between adjacent land use and buffer); and
- Buffers are informed by environmental studies (e.g., EIS) that consider site context (i.e., feature sensitivity and type of development)

Summary of Technical Review cont...

- There is no consistently applied buffer width to features, however the following buffer widths to regulated features are most commonly identified:
 - 15 m for warm water (Type 2 and 3 fish habitat) watercourses and intermittent streams
 - 30 m for cool/cold water (Type 1 fish habitat) watercourses and permanent streams
 - 15 m for non-Provincially Significant Wetlands
 - 30 m for Provincially Significant Wetlands and locally significant wetlands
 - 10 m - 15 m for valleylands
 - 30 m for shorelines to lakes and water bodies

Buffer Width Decision Support Tool

- Designed with consideration of the following:
 - the sensitivity of the feature;
 - potential for impacts resulting from change in adjacent land use;
 - biophysical characteristics of the adjacent lands (e.g., slope, soils, vegetation cover, hydrology); and
 - other mitigating factors that may supplement the effectiveness of the buffer.
- Use a "risk-based" approach (e.g., high risk, medium risk, low risk)
- Set the amount of reduction or increase to buffer based on starting point (i.e., min. buffer or robust buffer) and risk-based assessment

Summary of Recommendations

- Buffers should be prescribed in policy
- Recommended approaches to prescribing buffers in policy:
 1. Minimum buffer widths with no opportunity to reduce the width, but can be increased through an environmental study; or
 2. Minimum buffer widths that can be reduced or increased with support from an environmental study.
- A decision support tool and/or EIS Guidelines will be required to ensure an objective and consistent approach is applied to determining an appropriate ecological buffer width
- The buffer policies, prescribed buffer width(s) and decision support tool should be developed with consideration of the goals, objectives and targets (if any) for protection, maintenance and enhancement of the natural features and ecological functions

Poll Question #10

Should the new Policy Document contain prescribed policies relating to buffers?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Poll Question #11

If you support prescribed buffer policies, would you recommend that NPCA adopt a policy approach that focuses on (a), (b), or (c) below:

- a) Minimum buffer widths with no opportunity to reduce the width but can be increased through an environmental study;
- b) Robust buffer widths that can be reduced or increased with support from an environmental study; or
- c) None of the above.



Recap Discussion

What we heard from you today

- Karen Wianecki, M.Pl., MCIP, RPP
- Director of Practice, Planning Solutions Inc.

Poll Question #12

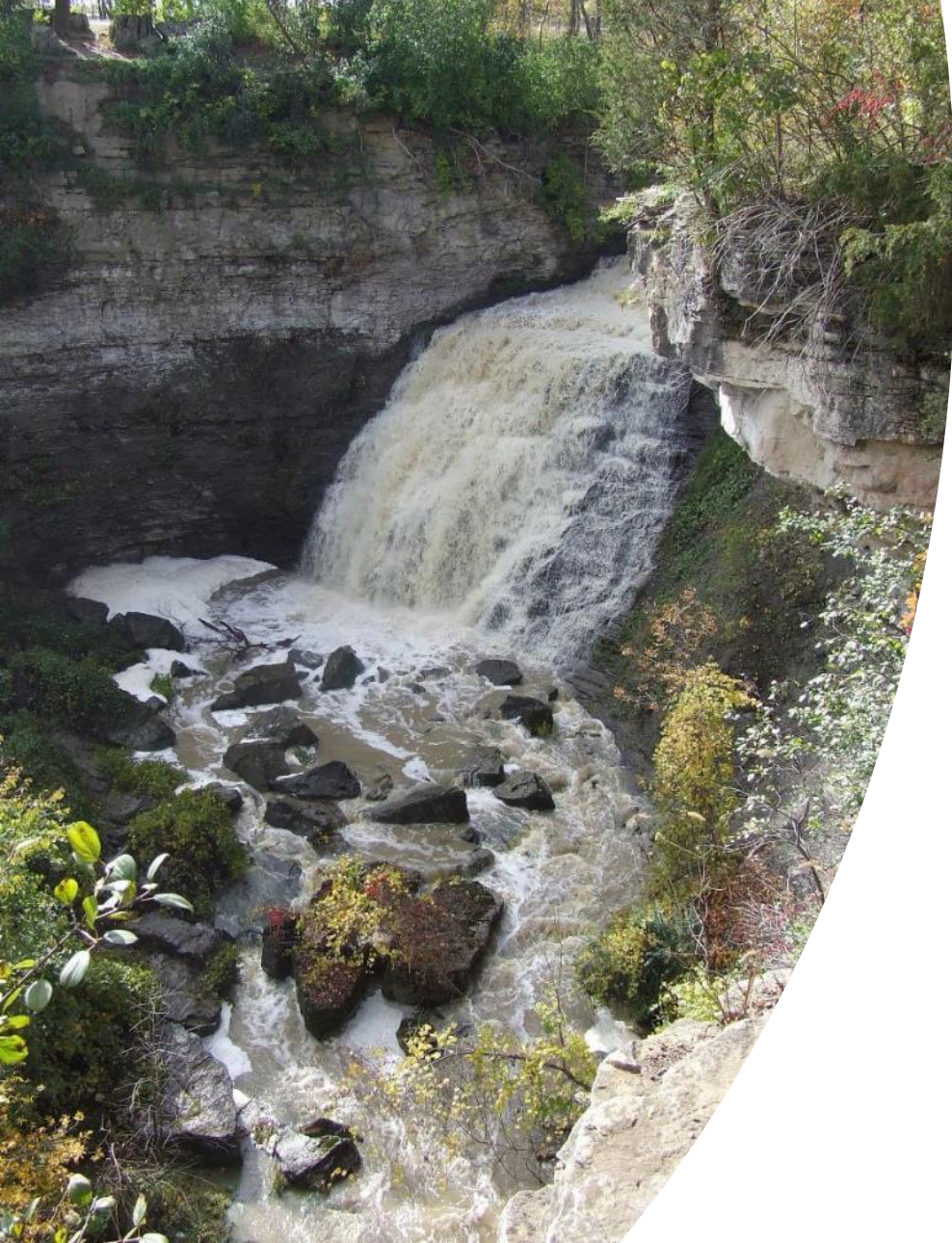
What policy theme is most important to you?

- Climate Change
- Cumulative Impacts
- Urban Intensification
- Watershed and Sub-watershed Planning
- Buffers
- Ecological Net Gain
- Stormwater Management, Low Impact Development and Green Infrastructure
- Public Education and Awareness of Roles and Responsibilities
- Application Requirements
- Agriculture
- Natural Heritage Features and Areas
- Implementation and Customer, Client Services

We want to hear from you...

- Online Survey: <https://getinvolved.npca.ca/>
- Written comments: policy_review@npca.ca
- Copy of the Public Information Session will be posted on project online portal
- **Comment deadline...September 9th, 2022**





THANK YOU!

Leilani Lee-Yates, Director, Watershed Management
David Deluce, Senior Manager, Environmental Planning and Policy
Karen Wianeki, Director of Practice, Planning Solutions Inc.
Sale Spitale, Principal and Co-owner, North-South Environmental Inc.

Policy Document Review & Procedural Manual Project Email:
policy_review@npca.ca