



NIAGARA PENINSULA  
**CONSERVATION**  
AUTHORITY

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April 5, 2014

Dear Chair, Mayors and Councillors;

Please review the NPCA response to MPP Cindy Forester's letter to Minister David Orazietti. We wrote the Minister and have copied MPP Forster, following the protocol she felt was appropriate in this matter. We have no record of a request to the NPCA Board or staff for a meeting to discuss the concerns expressed by her constituents.

We have requested a meeting with MPP Forster as soon as we were aware of her questions to the Minister but we have not as yet received any response.

We will be pleased to present our Strategic Plan to Municipal Councils through your appointed Board members as soon as it fits into your Council agenda.

I hope the attached response to the Minister will be helpful in the short term.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Bruce Timms".

D. Bruce Timms, P. Eng.  
Chair, NPCA  
Regional Councillor, St. Catharines  
Regional Municipality of Niagara



April 4, 2014

The Honourable David Orazietti, MPP  
Minister of Natural Resources  
Suite 6630, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Whitney Block  
99 Wellesley Street West  
Toronto, Ontario M7A 1W3

Dear Minister;

RE: Comments by Member Cindy Forster – Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority

On March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 Member Cindy Forster rose in the House with comments regarding the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority. We respect the efforts that the member, Ms. Forster has taken to address the concerns of her constituents. I am writing to clarify some inaccuracies in the information presented and also provide some insight regarding recent operational decisions as they relate to the concerns expressed.

Upon being made aware of the concerns, we have attempted to meet with member Forster directly to clarify the issues raised. We regret that there has been no indication that member Forster or her staff made contact with the NPCA board members or its staff to verify information or facts prior to her comments in the House. We have requested a meeting with member Forster in response to her questions to the minister in the legislature. We have not received a reply at this time.

As you noted in the legislature, these concerns will be better addressed with the municipalities. We would suggest it should be done through their appointed board members. By way of background, board members of the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority Board are appointed by the member municipalities; in Niagara's case this includes 12 members appointed by Niagara Region, 2 members appointed by the City of Hamilton and 1 member by Haldimand County. Members bring a broad cross section of experience to the board and are very committed to fulfilling the objects of the authority as stated in the Conservation Authorities Act '...to establish and undertake in the area over which it has jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, development and management of natural resources other than gas, oil, coal and minerals.' R.S.O. 1990, c. C. 27 s. 20. To that point, we encourage the member to speak to the board chair.

As stated by member Forster, the conservation authority board recently approved its Strategic Plan 2014-2017, a document that sets out the goals, values, objectives and vision of the NPCA and will guide decisions concerning program and project priorities in keeping with its mandate. The plan was undertaken and completed through a full public process that provided six separate opportunities for public participation. As you can appreciate, throughout the process we sought and received input from watershed residents across all sectors to ensure balanced decision making. Decisions are made taking all viewpoints into account with the NPCA working towards watershed management policies that balance both economic and environmental needs.

The plan addresses' streamlining the way NPCA delivers all its services in order to meet a mixture of community program needs.

Within that context, operational changes have been recommended in order to streamline the way the NPCA delivers services including a pragmatic solution-based process for processing permit applications under our jurisdiction. This is done in an effort to ensure fiscal responsibility for long term program delivery. This

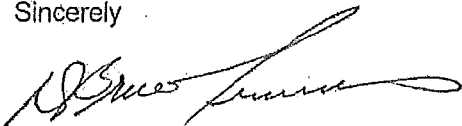
includes a full and open review of our land acquisition criteria and management options of current land holdings.

Contrary to the comments made by member Forster, the emphasis of our Strategic Plan does not refocus our efforts towards land disposal and development. The NPCA acknowledges that our mandate is to conserve and protect environmentally sensitive and significant land within our jurisdiction.

There are no plans in the near future for the NPCA to sell any of its lands. In fact, the NPCA recently made a significant environmental purchase of property in the Township of Wainfleet which includes population/habitat for the Fowler's Toad. The 15 acre acquired lands was a part of a larger parcel which has been part of the long term acquisition strategy and was acquired at a cost below the appraised value. In addition to the habitat protection, the lands provide opportunities for environmental interpretation and additional public beach access on the largely privately owned shoreline of Lake Erie. This acquisition is also consistent with the Lakefront Enhancement Strategy recently approved by the Niagara Region. The NPCA will be undertaking a comprehensive master planning exercise for this new property with full public participation opportunities.

In closing, I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you in person, at your convenience, to reiterate our commitment to fulfilling the responsibilities of a Conservation Authority. We have also extended an invitation to member Forster and look forward to addressing the concerns of her constituents.

Sincerely



D. Bruce Timms, P.Eng.  
Chairman, NPCA  
Regional Councillor, St. Catharines, Regional Municipality of Niagara

cc: Cindy Forster, MPP  
Conservation Ontario  
Regional Municipality of Niagara, Chair & Council  
City of Hamilton, Mayor & Council  
County of Haldimand, Chair & Council  
Welland Mayor & Council  
Port Colborne Mayor & Council  
Thorold Mayor & Council  
Pelham Mayor & Council  
Niagara Falls Mayor & Council  
Niagara-on-the-Lake Mayor & Council  
Fort Erie Mayor & Council  
West Lincoln Mayor & Council  
Grimsby Mayor & Council  
St. Catharines Mayor & Council  
Wainfleet Mayor & Council  
Lincoln Mayor & Council  
MPP Jim Bradley  
MPP Tim Hudak  
MPP Wayne Gates  
MPP Toby Barrett  
MPP Paul Miller  
MPP Andrea Horwath  
MPP Monique Taylor  
MPP Linda Jeffrey