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**Waterdown -Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands Management Plan - August 2016**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this Management Plan for the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands is to develop a set of management directions for the Current EcoPark System Lands owned by Conservation Halton, City of Burlington, Halton Region and the Bruce Trail Conservancy. This Management Plan will inform the protection, enhancement and communication of the important natural and cultural features within the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands, one of the six core natural areas within the Cootes to Escarpment EcoPark System. This Management Plan is a compilation of detailed information about the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands and the articulation of the partner agencies' joint vision for the holistic management of their lands. It provides a framework for future planning and implementation actions at the individual site level.

Development of this Management Plan involved community consultation to identify priorities and concerns as well as compilation of information on the recreational, natural and cultural resources of the Heritage Lands (detailed in the Inventory, Opportunities and Issues report prepared for the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands, under separate cover). This Management Plan was also developed using the Niagara Escarpment Parks and Open Space System planning framework to identify classifications and zones (detailed in the Classification and Zoning report prepared for the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands, Appendix 1 of this Management Plan).

This Management Plan contains a summary of the background and context of the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands area followed by a summary of significance. Further detailed information can be found in the Inventory, Opportunities and Issues Report (North-South Environmental et al. 2016). Section 3.0 discusses issues and opportunities. Section 4.0 summarizes the management recommendations for the Heritage Lands, including the classification and zoning of the Heritage Lands, followed by implementation recommendations in Section 5.0 and monitoring recommendations in Section 6.0.

This Management Plan recommends several actions for consideration for future management of the Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands. The recommendations are organized in three categories:

- Approach to Management Recommendations;
- Overarching Management Recommendations; and
- Waterdown-Sassafras Woods Heritage Lands Management Recommendations.

Implementation of the recommended management actions is organized under high priority management tasks; recommended EcoPark System Guidelines for trails, education and signage, vegetation management, and edge management; and site-specific management tasks. Following the outline for implementation of the recommended management actions, monitoring and evaluation of Management Plan implementation is reviewed.