



**Conserving
Conservation in the
Niagara Region**

Environment in Ontario

- 2 main agencies responsible for environment in Ontario:
 - Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF), wildlife, watershed, habitat
 - Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC), (pollution prevention)

Environment in Ontario

- MNRF
 - Responsible for all 36 conservation authorities
 - Responsible for the policies that govern the CA's
- Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA)
 - Responsible for the entire Peninsula, parts of Haldimand and also parts of Hamilton

Conservation Authorities

- In Ontario, CAs are public sector organizations that develop and deliver resource management programs that safeguard our watersheds.
- They are governed by the Conservation Authorities Act, which is administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

(MNRF website)

Conservation authorities are responsible for

- **stewardship/conservation** (e.g. tree planting, habitat restoration)
- watershed studies, research and education programs
- recreation programs (e.g. operating conservation areas)
- other services to municipalities (e.g. storm water management advice, tree planting, assessment of environmental impacts, septic system reviews)

Conservation Authorities

- are the advocate for our natural heritage
- they are the caretakers or custodians of the environment

They speak for a critical segment of our world that has very little voice,

THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Conservation Authorities Act

- The objects (**mandate**)_{sic} of an authority are to establish and undertake, in the area over which it has jurisdiction, a program designed to further the conservation, restoration, development and management of natural resources other than gas, oil, coal and minerals.

NPCA MISSION STATEMENT

- **To manage our watershed's natural resources by balancing environmental, community, and economic needs.**

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- To manage our watershed's natural resources by **balancing** environmental, community, and **economic** needs.

Balancing environment and economic needs?

- There is no environmental policy in Ontario that empowers CA's to act as economic moderators for their region
- Who at the NPCA is qualified to know when this balance has occurred, who are the economic experts at the CA?

Balancing environment and economic needs?

- 90% of our natural heritage has already been destroyed in the name of “economic needs”
- When a state of imbalance clearly exists the only way to achieve **balance** is to implement strong environmental protection and move the pendulum back

Balancing Economic Needs, what does that look like?

- There are carpenters and trades people employed in the home building industry, skilled workers in manufacturing whose plant can't expand, and farmers looking to maximize yields through expanding their land use.

Balancing environment and economic needs?

“MPP Forster is choosing to ignore their concerns and appears to listen only to those with an apparent singular agenda. In effect, she seems to be pandering to one special interest group, and only one. **The NPCA will not do that”.**

NPCA Chairman Sandy Annunziata (Fort Erie Regional Councillor)

Balancing Economic Needs, what does that look like?

- Coyle Creek
 - A developer illegally dumps hundreds of tonnes of dirt in an environmentally protected area and is caught...no action taken
- Draper's Creek
 - A developer illegally installs a drain pipe in a protected wetland and drains it. The NPCA refuses to issue a statement to the OMB in spite of the overwhelming and irrefutable evidence
- Thundering Waters
 - A developer needs provincial protections removed from a protected wetland to allow for a mega-development on pristine natural space, the NPCA hires lobbyists to solicit the removal of these protections and mounts a campaign of deception in order to facilitate the development

Coyle Creek before..



A photograph showing a steep, eroded hillside. The soil is light-colored and heavily cracked, indicating severe drought or erosion. Sparse green vegetation is scattered across the slope, with a prominent cluster of plants with reddish leaves in the middle ground. A wire fence runs across the lower right portion of the image. The overall scene depicts a degraded natural habitat.

Coyle Creek now

unchecked erosion, destroyed habitat

Thundering Waters



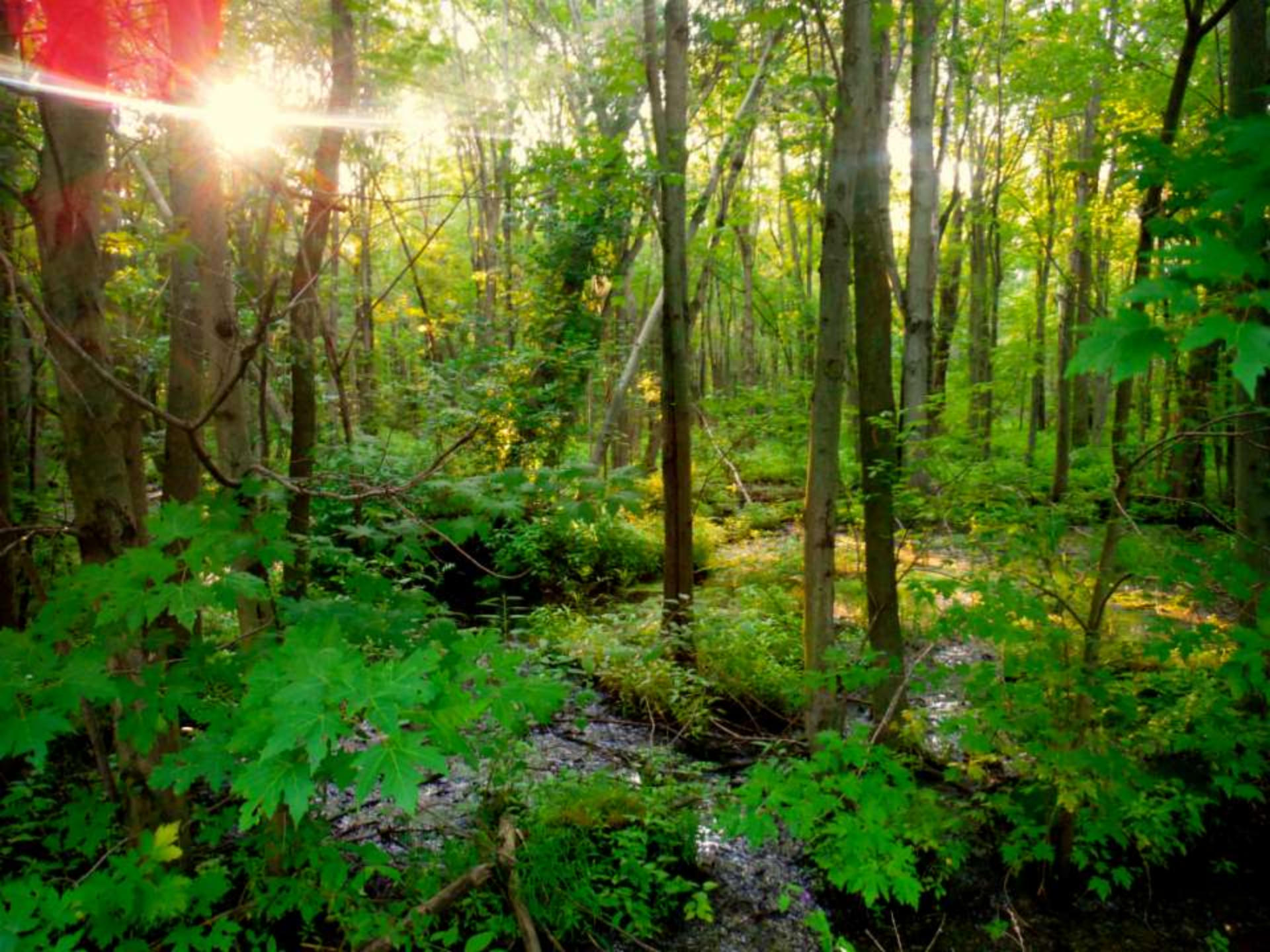














NPCA created marsh



Conserving Conservation?

Conclusion

- NPCA LEADERSHIP has lost public confidence, they have abdicated their role as advocates for the environment, they are advocates for developers
- Public must assume the role to the extent possible, but this is not the sustainable solution

Solution

- Dissolution of the NPCA Board and senior leadership
- A new Board comprised of well informed stakeholders who are interested in pursuing the true mission and goals of a Conservation Authority
- Provincial Policy that will make it impossible for this to happen again

A sunlit forest scene with a stream and dense green foliage. The sun is shining from the upper left, creating a bright lens flare effect. The forest floor is covered in green plants and a small stream flows through the center. The trees are tall and thin, with green leaves.

NOW WHAT?

- **The NPCA 11 must be held accountable**
- **Elections are 18 months away, now is the time to start preparing**
- **We will continue our pressure for a transparent audit**
- **Citizen action is being organized, we will need your help**
- **Lawsuits continue**

