

Niagara Coastal Community Collaborative

February 4th, 2019 5:00–8:00pm – Crystal Ridge Branch of the Fort Erie Public Library

Attendees:

Gregary Ford	Annie Michaud	Rick Froese
June Chipp	Gary Stemerding	Donna Cridland
Rick Stockton	Jack Hellinga	Paul Collard
Tim Seburn	Ian Twyford	Jody McKenna
Olivia Groff	Cheryl	Julia Hatcher
Jim Merrick	Schonewille	Jasmine Labelle (Niagara College Student)
Nadine Litwin	Deanna Lindblad	

Summary of Action Items:

- o Julia to scan FOFEC creek Kraft Drain report and circulate it to the group
- o Julia to share drone photos of crystal beach and Ducks Unlimited Historic Wetland Extent Polygons with Gregary for the wetland prioritization project
- o Gregary and other restoration council members to brainstorm website name
- o Nadine to monitor the collaborative email for website inquiries (additional volunteers welcome)

Member Updates:

- o Niagara College students starting at Waverly Beach and will be sampling 6 outfalls

Prioritizing Wetland Restoration Options: Gregary Ford

Coastal and inland wetlands were identified as restoration opportunities should funding become available.

- Point Abino
- Six Mile Creek (Fort Erie)
- Black Creek Wetland (riverine wetland that drains into the Niagara River)
- Empire Beach Backshore Basin Forest

Exploration of additional locations considering historic wetlands extent will continue.

Update on Website Design: Julia Hatcher

Generic Gmail account created linking to the website, including a **Google Drive** where major team documents and presentations will be stored for easy access.

Email: nccc.lakeeriecoast@gmail.com

Nadine volunteered to monitor the email for general inquiries.

Cladophora Citizen Science Monitoring Results: Julia Hatcher

Minimal variation seasonally and across the study area.

Suspended Cladophora appeared greater than that on the beach

Revisions to the methodology for next year include:

- Quantity of photos, required significant effort. Consider only one photo of each site per week.
- Reduce number of beach transects, as there was little variation across the 100m beach segment
- Improve method for estimating the amount of suspended (floating) Cladophora to improve consistency
- Categories variation was too small (e.g. backpack and wheelbarrow were too similar)

- Requested more training days

Survey material including the raw survey sheets, the manuals, and summary presentations were uploaded to the Google Drive for use or sharing with partners.

Funding Plans

Three funding sources that were being pursued on behalf of the Collaborative:

- Loblaw Water Fund: application submitted - results pending
- EcoAction: could not apply - failed to find 50% matching funds
- Trillium Fund: could not apply - ineligible because not incorporated as a collaborative

The group discussed the possibility of becoming incorporated so that they may directly apply for funds. It was noted that this may be the role of a coordinator in the future as it would require significant effort.

Alternative sources of funding were suggested for future exploration including, TD Bank, RBC Bank, New York Alliance. The Watershed Guardians and the Niagara Land Trust were identified as additional partners who may be interested in working with the group to secure funding and implement projects.

Swim Drink Fish Monitoring Hub Update

SDF has offered to partner with the Collaborative and Niagara College to host their citizen science recreational water quality monitoring hub in the Niagara stretch of Lake Erie. The Collaborative agreed that the partnership would be beneficial in meeting the goals of The Collaborative. Jody, Annie, and others will continue discussions with SDF to work out logistics and the details of how the coordinator will work with The Collaborative to meet its other objectives.

Collaborative Outreach

The group brainstormed a strategy to share the work of The Collaborative more broadly to garner more support and funding.

- Presentations to council should be done by local Collaborative members, and request specific support (e.g. funds, endorsement, staff expertise)
- Use members of the Environmental Advisory Committees to provide regular updates on The Collaborative's activities
- Target municipal staff who provided input to the Collaborative
- Reach out to Business Improvement Associations to highlight the economic benefits of our work which might foster financial support
- Look for media opportunities to share info on our group such as "taking Niagara by Storm"